

If This Then What

Simple Social Media Integration
Into
Moodle Forums

Richard Oelmann



If This Then What

Requirement:

- * Encourage staff to make use of Moodle tools for course and programme level communication
- * Enable use of existing (and new) social media tools and channels without increasing workload
- * Write once, publish many



If This Then What

Initial solution:

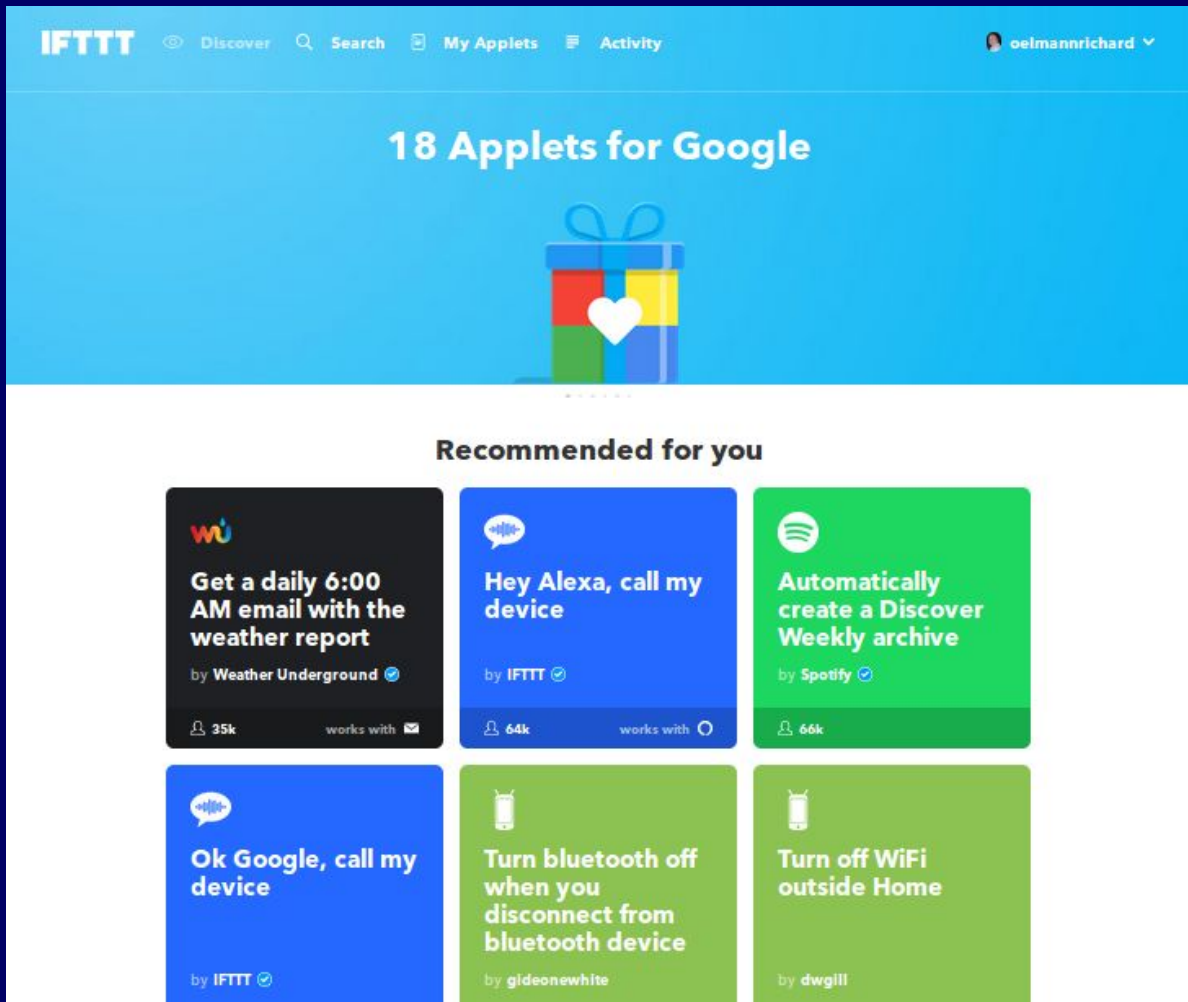
- * Set up messaging plugins to integrate Moodle messaging with the likes of Telegram, Slack and other services.

Rejected:

- * Maintenance/support issues
- * Need to support so many potential tools – and new ones when they come out



If This Then What



The screenshot shows the IFTTT website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the IFTTT logo, links for Discover, Search, My Applets, and Activity, and a user profile for 'oelmannrichard'. Below the navigation bar, a banner features the text '18 Applets for Google' and an illustration of a gift box with a white heart. The main content area is titled 'Recommended for you' and displays six applets in a grid:

- Get a daily 6:00 AM email with the weather report** by Weather Underground (35k users, works with email)
- Hey Alexa, call my device** by IFTTT (64k users, works with Alexa)
- Automatically create a Discover Weekly archive** by Spotify (66k users, works with Spotify)
- Ok Google, call my device** by IFTTT
- Turn bluetooth off when you disconnect from bluetooth device** by gideonwhite
- Turn off WiFi outside Home** by dwgill

ITTT – If This Then That
<https://ifttt.com/discover>

A free online service that enables apps to work together



If This Then What

Recommended for you

Get a daily 6:00 AM email with the weather report
by Weather Underground
35k users works with Weather Underground

Hey Alexa, call my device
by IFTTT
64k users works with Alexa

Automatically create a Discover Weekly archive
by Spotify
66k users works with Spotify

Ok Google, call my device
by IFTTT
43k users works with Google Assistant

Turn bluetooth off when you disconnect from bluetooth device
by gideonwhite
20k users works with Bluetooth

Turn off WiFi outside Home
by dwglll
27k users works with HomeKit

Sync your Amazon Alexa to-dos with your reminders
by IFTTT
86k users works with Alexa

If connects to a Bluetooth device, then play music
by kacperhaha11
2.5k users works with Bluetooth

Automatically unmute your Android when you get back home
by IFTTT
190k users works with Android

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If This Then What

App 1 – Trigger



Event – App 2



Event – App 3



Event – App 4



If This Then What

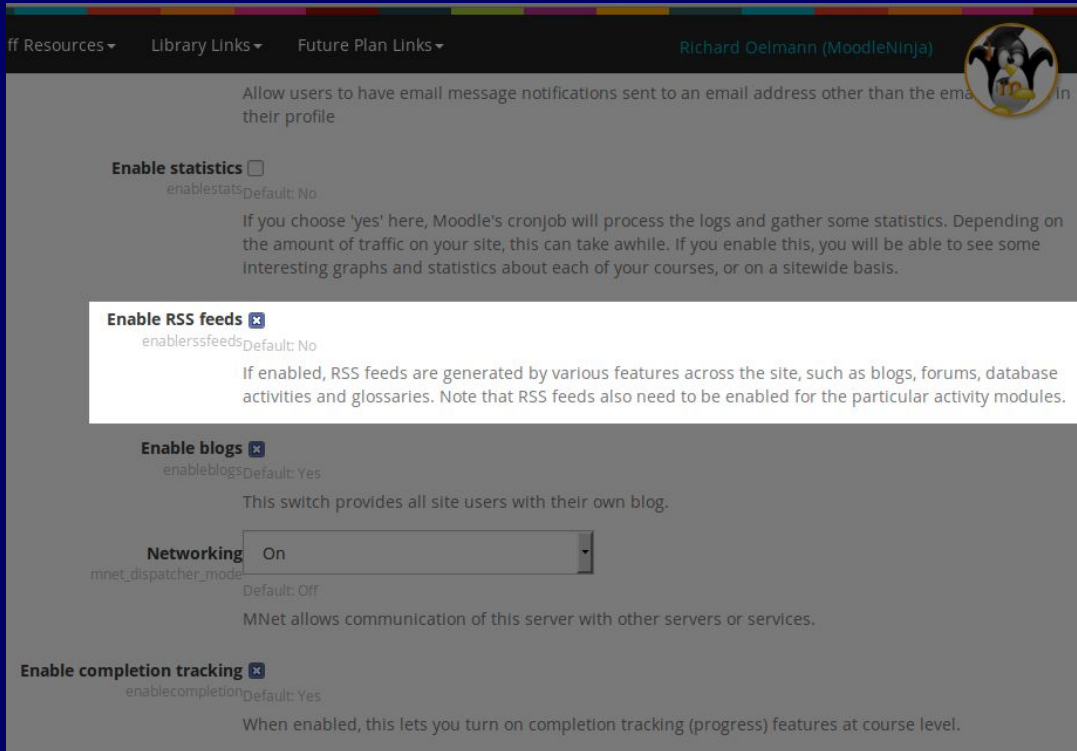
Unfortunately, Moodle isn't one of the services included on ITTT as a trigger

BUT

RSS feeds are...



If This Then What



The screenshot shows the Moodle site administration interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'Resources', 'Library Links', and 'Future Plan Links'. The user is identified as 'Richard Oelmann (MoodleNinja)'. The main content area displays several settings:

- Enable statistics** (checkbox): Default: No. Description: 'If you choose 'yes' here, Moodle's cronjob will process the logs and gather some statistics. Depending on the amount of traffic on your site, this can take awhile. If you enable this, you will be able to see some interesting graphs and statistics about each of your courses, or on a sitewide basis.'
- Enable RSS feeds** (checkbox): Default: No. Description: 'If enabled, RSS feeds are generated by various features across the site, such as blogs, forums, database activities and glossaries. Note that RSS feeds also need to be enabled for the particular activity modules.'
- Enable blogs** (checkbox): Default: Yes. Description: 'This switch provides all site users with their own blog.'
- Networking** (dropdown): Set to 'On'. Default: Off. Description: 'MNet allows communication of this server with other servers or services.'
- Enable completion tracking** (checkbox): Default: Yes. Description: 'When enabled, this lets you turn on completion tracking (progress) features at course level.'

Enable RSS Feeds – site wide

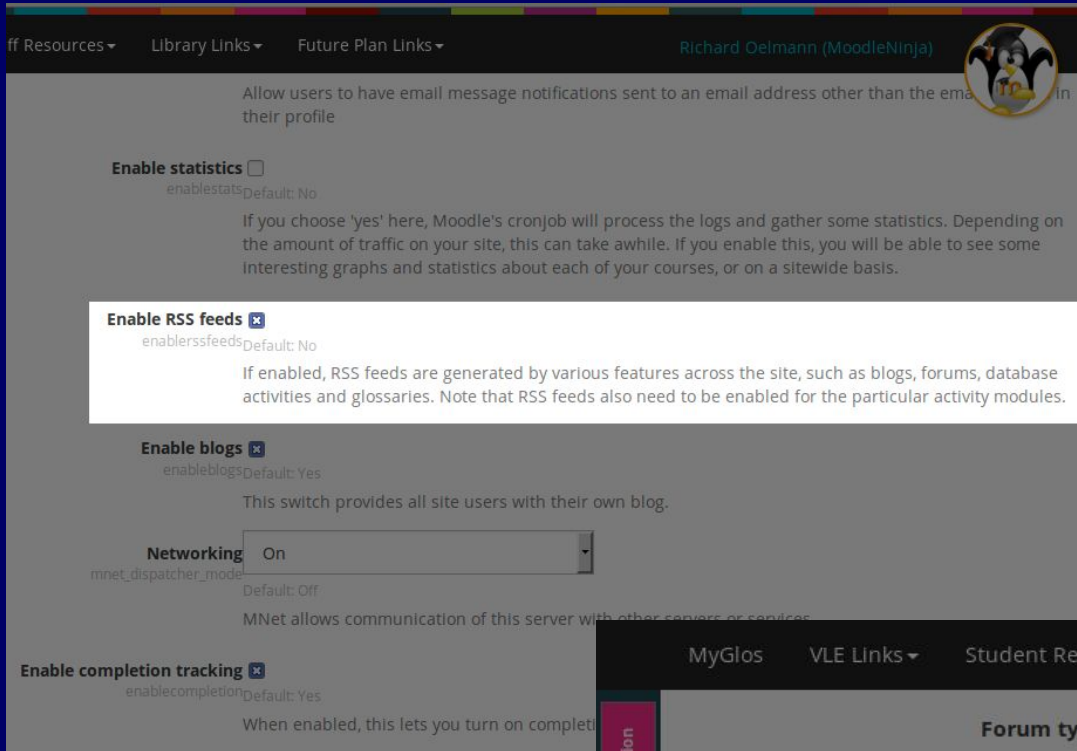
Site Administration > Advanced features

For the Forums activity

Site Administration > Plugins > Activity modules > Forums



If This Then What



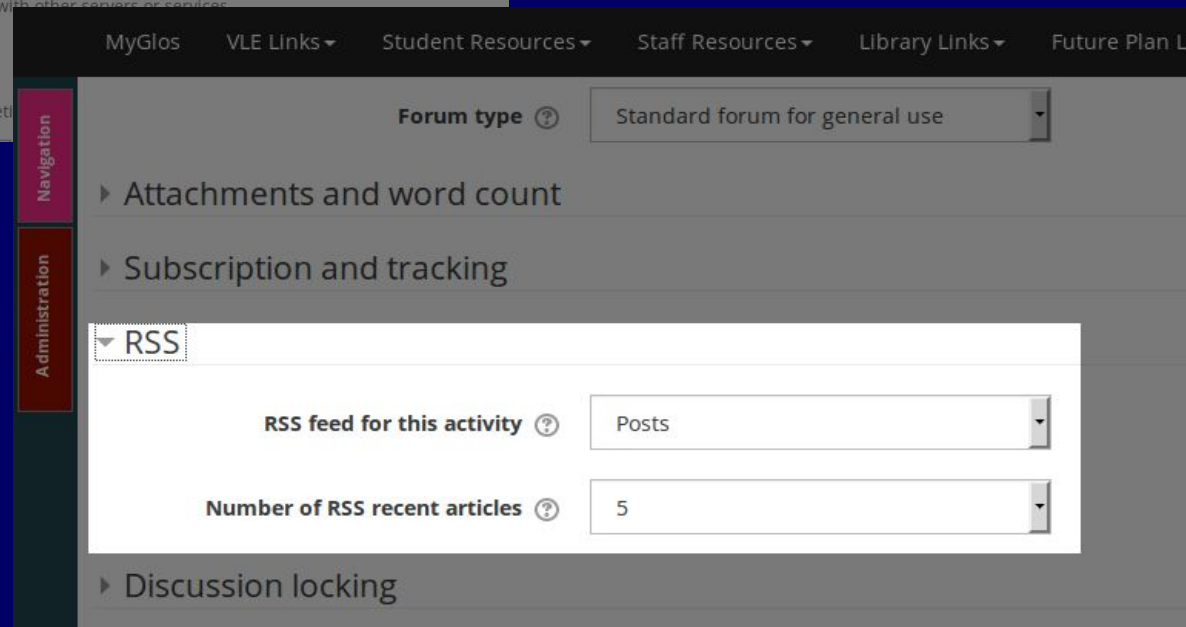
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Site Administration > Advanced features

For the Forums activity

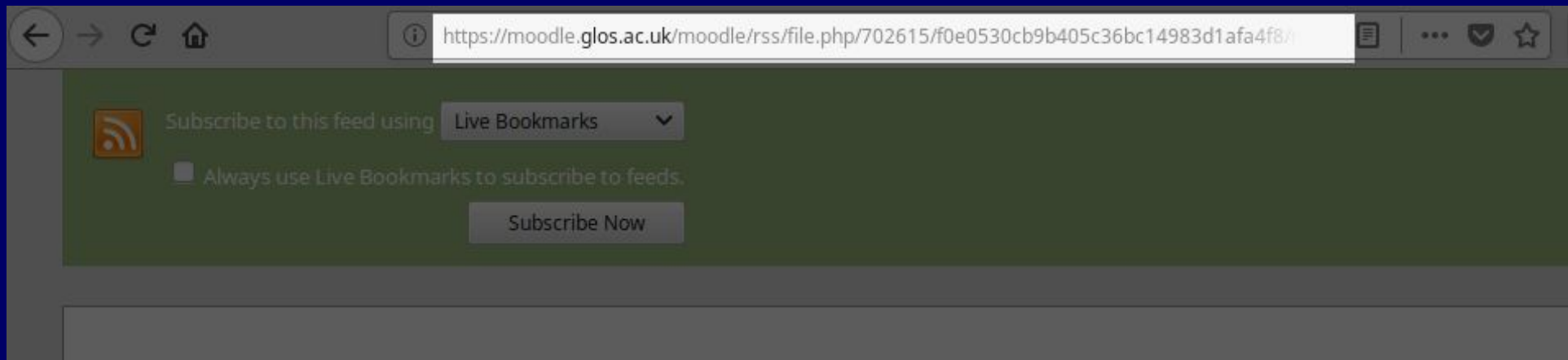
Site Administration > Plugins > Activity modules > Forums

Then for each forum you want to publish through RSS/IFTT



If This Then What

You'll need the RSS link later -
Forum administration > RSS Feed

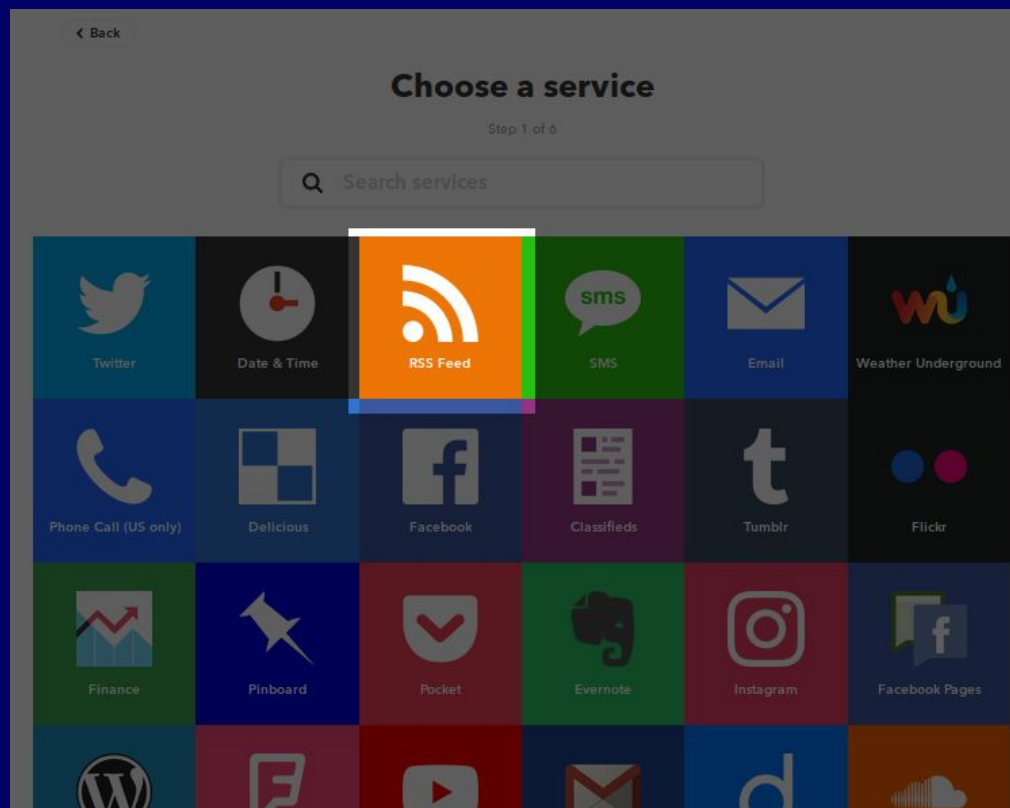


If This Then What

IFTTT

- You'll need an account to set up a new app

Choose a service to be your trigger:

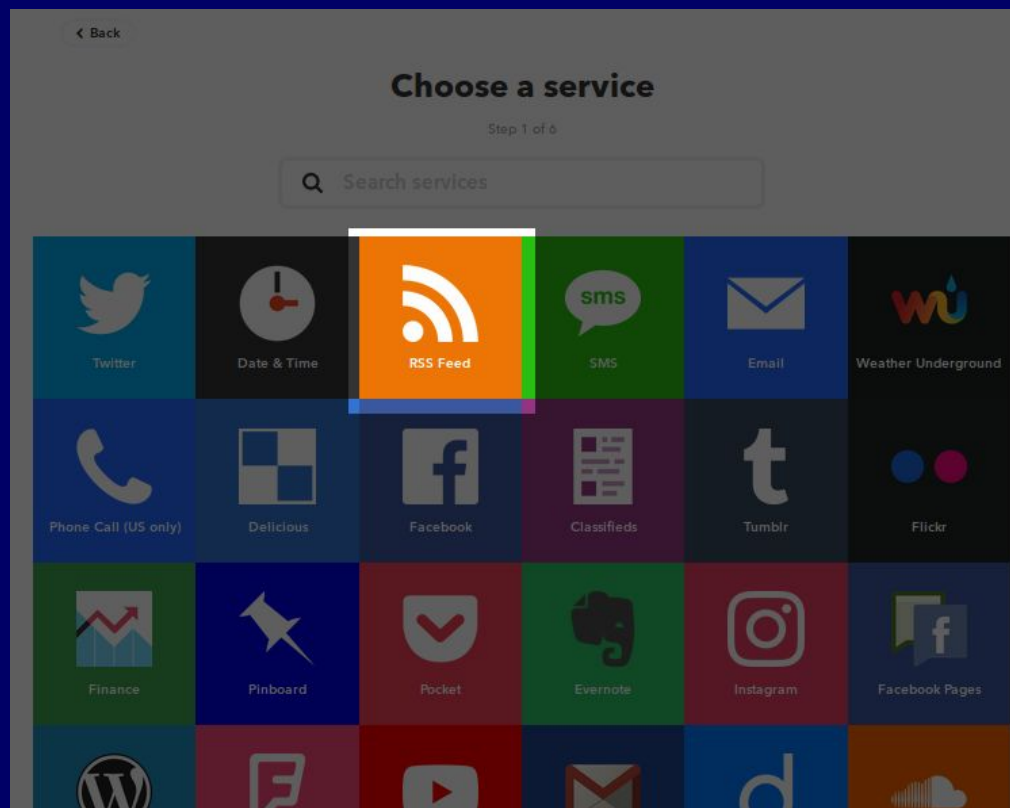


If This Then What

IFTTT

- You'll need an account to set up a new app

Choose a service to be your trigger:



If This Then What

IFTTThink!

Do you want it to trigger EVERY time? Or when the post matches a particular feature?

New feed item matches

This Trigger fires every time a new item in the feed you specify contains a particular keyword or simple phrase.

Keyword or simple phrase

Search operators are not supported.

Feed URL

for feed URL requirements, [visit the help page](#)

Create trigger

I used a hashtag as the trigger keyword...



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Add the RSS feed URL we noted earlier



If This Then What

IF RSS T What?

What do you want it to do?



For example:

Twitter – post a tweet
Include the Entry Title, the URL
and the content

A screenshot of a 'Post a tweet' action configuration interface. The title is 'Post a tweet'. Below the title is a note: 'This Action will post a new tweet to your Twitter account. NOTE: Please adhere to Twitter's Rules and Terms of Service.' There is a section for 'Tweet text' containing three input fields: 'EntryTitle', 'EntryUrl', and 'EntryContent'. Below these fields is an 'Add Ingredient' button. At the bottom of the configuration box is a large 'Create action' button.

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If This Then What

if  **Trigger**
Every Applet starts with a trigger.

RSS Feed

New feed item matches


This Trigger fires every time a new item in the feed you specify contains a particular keyword or simple phrase.

Field label
Keyword or simple phrase

Visibility
 Hidden from user Chosen by user

Value
#uoglearningtechdev

Search operators are not supported

then 

Field label
Feed URL

Visibility
 Hidden from user Ch

Value
https://moodle.glos.ac.uk/moodle/rss/feed/0e0530cb9b405c36bc14983d1afa4f/rss.xml

for feed URL requirements, [visit the help page](#)

Trigger

Action
Every Applet ends with at least one action.

Twitter

Post a tweet


This Action will post a new tweet to your Twitter account. NOTE: Please adhere to Twitter's Rules and Terms of Service.

Field label
Tweet text

Visibility
 Hidden from user Chos

Value
EntryTitle UoG Moodle Forum link En
EntryContent

Action

then 

Action
Every Applet ends with at least one action.

WordPress

Create a post

This Action will create a normal post on your WordPress blog.

Field label
Title

Visibility
 Hidden from user Chosen by user

Value
EntryTitle

[Add Ingredient](#)

Field label
Body

Visibility
 Hidden from user Chosen by user

Value
EntryContent

from FeedTitle EntryUrl
via IFTTT

Some HTML ok [Add Ingredient](#)

Action



If This Then What

Gotchas!

The notifications action (Push notifications to mobile phone)

Set up a separate app – the user needs to give their mobile number

Forums on an authenticated Moodle site

Set up a separate app, triggered by the Wordpress post, that sends a second tweet with that WP link



If This Then What

Usage

Started out as a proof of concept for the 'User Story'
“We want tutors to make more use of social media, but do it from within Moodle courses”

Using to disseminate developments on UoG Learning Systems

Several staff interested to use it during the summer semester and give feedback



If This Then What

Finishing touch

Add the Twitter feed back as an HTML block on your Moodle pages

<https://twitter.com/settings/widgets>



If This Then What

If This Then That - <https://ifttt.com/>

Slideshare - <http://bit.ly/2piEycj>

Twitter - @Oelmann_Richard

Or find me around the Moot, or on the Moodle.org forums

