



## Tales from the Terminal Room June 2010, Issue No. 90

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Tales from the Terminal Room (TFTTR) is an electronic newsletter that includes reviews and comparisons of information sources; useful tools for managing information; technical and access problems on the Net; and news of RBA's training courses and publications. Many of the items and articles will have already appeared on Karen Blakeman's Blog at <http://www.rba.co.uk/wordpress/>

Tales from the Terminal Room can be delivered via email as plain text or as a PDF with active links. You can join the distribution list by going to <http://www.rba.co.uk/tfttr/> and filling in the form. You will be sent an email asking you to confirm that you want to be added to the list. TFTTR is also available as an RSS feed. The URL for the feed is <http://www.rba.co.uk/rss/tfttr.xml>

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## Volcano watching

The eruption of “that volcano” in Iceland, which resulted in so much travel chaos in Europe, may have stopped for the time being but there is the threat of it restarting and also that its larger neighbour Katla may spring into action. For those of us who had to work and live with the disruption volcano watching became a way of life. There is a myriad of resources providing information on volcanoes in general, the progress of ash clouds, and links to live volcano web cams including Eyjafjallajökull.

Let’s start with the web cams.

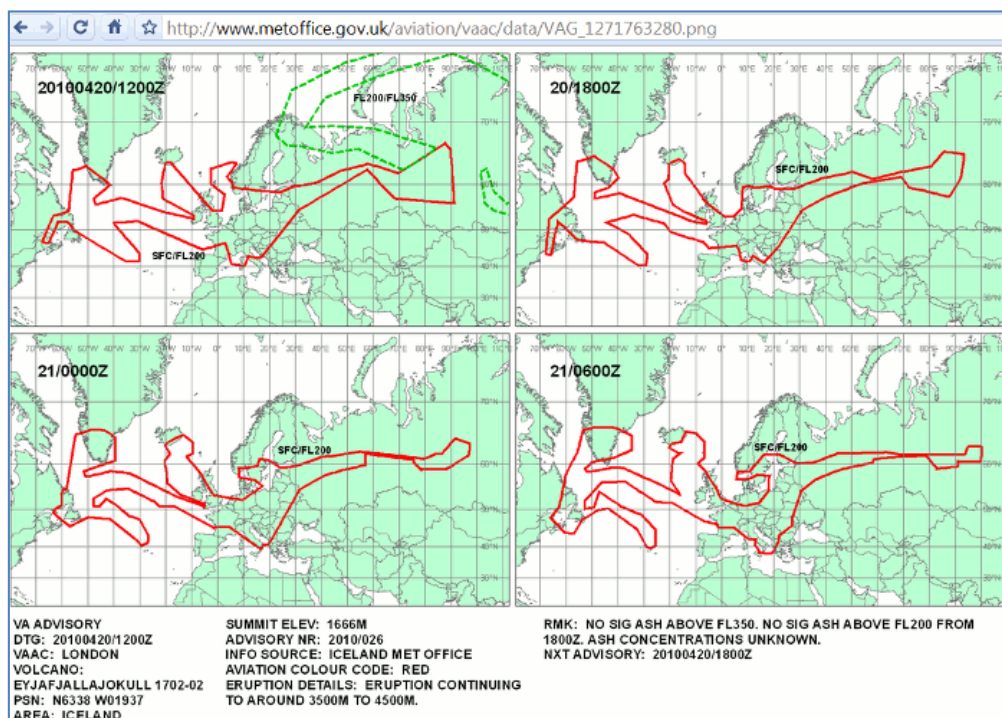
Volcano Web Cams – John Seach <http://www.volcanolive.com/volcanocams.html> has links to some of them including Eyjafjallajökull and Katla.

A list of US volcano web cams is on the US Geological Survey web site at Volcano Hazards Program Webcams <http://volcanoes.usgs.gov/images/webcams.php>.

For volcanoes elsewhere, Volcano WebCams around the Pacific Ring of Fire and Beyond is at <http://www.skimountaineer.com/ROF/VolcanoWebCams.php>.

General information and data on US volcanoes is available via the USGS at <http://volcanoes.usgs.gov/vhp/observatories.php>. If you are worried about supervolcano Yellowstone going up, that has its own observatory at <http://volcanoes.usgs.gov/yvo>. For volcanoes worldwide there is a comprehensive list at the Smithsonian Institution Global Volcanism Program (<http://www.volcano.si.edu/>) that you can download in Excel format. The list is also available on the Guardian datablog at “Volcanic ash: how do you spot the next volcano to disrupt flights?” <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2010/apr/20/volcanic-ash-smithsonian-icao>. In addition The Guardian article includes the ICAO map (International Civil Aviation Organization) that shows how flight routes cross volcanic risks.

The London Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre at the UK Met Office issues updated graphics of the ash cloud at [http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/aviation/vaac/vaacuk\\_vaq.html](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/aviation/vaac/vaacuk_vaq.html).



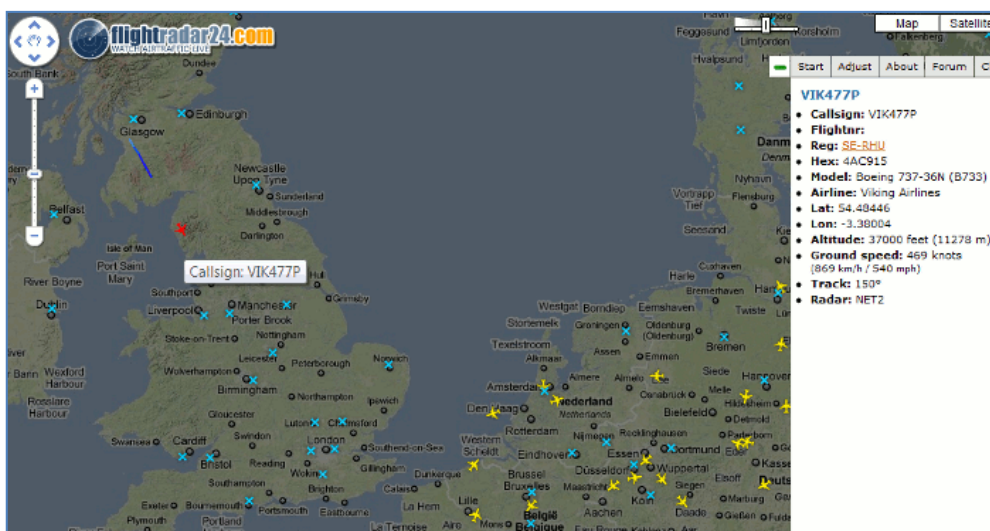
And finally, there are some spectacular and beautiful photographs at “More from Eyjafjallajökull” [http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2010/04/more\\_from\\_eyjafjallajokull.html](http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2010/04/more_from_eyjafjallajokull.html)

## Flightradar24 – watch air traffic live

The recent volcanic eruptions in Iceland wreaked havoc with flights over Europe and delayed and cancelled flights were the norm. Occasionally there was a gap in the ash cloud that allowed a few flights to take off and some of us who were not desperately waiting to embark on a journey or get back home started watching the air traffic on Flightradar24. Flightradar24.com shows live aircraft traffic in the airspace above Europe. It is a mashup of Google Maps, airport locations, broadcast air traffic data and photos of some of the aircraft.

It uses data a flight information system called ADS-B (Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast) and this data is provided by a network of 100 volunteers equipped with ADS-B receivers, most of who are in Europe. Not all aircraft are picked up; only about 60% of passenger planes and only a few military and private planes have an ADS-B transponder. A list of aircraft models that are visible and those that are not can be found at <http://www.flightradar24.com/about.php>.

Major airports are marked on the map with a blue cross and the position of airplanes with – erm – airplane icons. (Please note that the image below was taken during the recent suspension of flights over most of the UK)



*Image courtesy of Flightradar24*

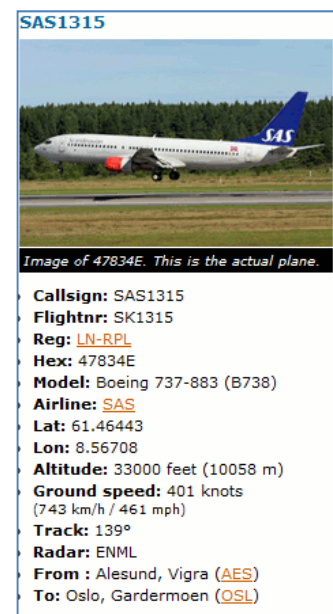
Click on a plane and the path that it has taken is displayed. The colour of the trail behind the plane shows the altitude the aircraft had at that position. (An explanation of the trail colours is at <http://www.flightradar24.com/about.php>).

Additional information on the flight appears on the right of the screen and includes – when available – flight number, airline, the type of plane, altitude, speed, where the flight took off and destination. For many of the Scandinavian airlines' planes there are also photos and for some planes you can view their recent flight history.

On a technical note this site relies heavily on the use of JavaScript so to get the best out of this site users are advised to use Firefox or Google Chrome.

Other issues to bear in mind are that even for Europe coverage is not 100% and, most important of all, it is seriously addictive!

*Image courtesy of Flightradar24*



## Social media in health care libraries – wikis and Netvibes win

I recently ran a version of my social media workshop for a group of health care librarians and information professionals in Liverpool. The group were LIHNN (Library and Information Health Network North West) and HCLU (Health Care Libraries Unit). (For further information about them see their web site at <http://www.lihnn.nhs.uk/>).

I was forewarned that many of them have limited access to social media. Several confirmed that Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and blogs were all blocked in their workplace, yet most of them came from organisations that had set up YouTube channels, Twitter streams and Facebook pages! This raises an interesting question: if they receive a query about, for example, an event listed on their Facebook page or the content of a video on YouTube how are they supposed to respond if they are not able to check the content at the time of the enquiry? I find this mass blocking of social media web sites by organisations totally bizarre and ludicrous. The blocking is not even consistent. Slideshare may be blocked but other presentation sharing sites are often accessible. Add to this the antediluvian technology most of them are forced to use – in particular IE6 – and we end up with organisations that are out of touch with their users and communities, and have no idea what is being discussed or said about them.

But health care librarians and information professionals, and health care practitioners are an inventive lot. There is plenty of evidence of them having circumvented the barriers put in their way. The excellent Liz Azyan published a series of blog postings on social media and health care just before the workshop took place and they provide plenty of examples and support for those putting together a case for access to social media.

The postings are:

- Social Media for Medical Practitioners <http://www.lgeoresearch.com/social-media-for-medical-practitioners/>
- Social networks for medical practitioners <http://www.lgeoresearch.com/social-networks-for-medical-practitioners/>
- Web 2.0 & social media for patients <http://www.lgeoresearch.com/web-2-0-social-media-for-patients/>
- Cool Health Related Web 2.0 & Social Media Stuff by and for Patients <http://www.lgeoresearch.com/cool-health-related-web-2-0-social-media-stuff-by-patients/>
- Slideshare presentation slides for social media and web 2.0 for healthcare <http://www.lgeoresearch.com/7-slideshare-presentation-slides-for-social-media-and-web-2-0-for-healthcare/>
- E-Learning: Web 2.0 & Social Media examples and quotes for Health Informatics <http://www.lgeoresearch.com/e-learning-web-2-0-social-media-examples-and-quotes-for-health-informatics/>

The Liverpool workshop participants were equally innovative. During the practical sessions they were able to test out social media for providing up to date information on their services and current awareness to their users. The winners were wikis for creating mini-websites and Netvibes for presenting RSS feeds and current awareness. The NHS Bolton Library wiki at <http://boltonpct.pbworks.com/> and Shrewsbury and Telford Health Libraries Netvibes Team Knowledge Update at <http://www.netvibes.com/sathlibraries> are just two examples. There was also a great deal of interest in Twitter and blogs for at least monitoring “conversations” on health related topics and the delegate’s own organisations, and word clouds for analysing the content of documents (Tagxedo, Wordle etc).

Facebook did not win any converts, nor did Second Life.

My PowerPoint presentation for the day is available in several places, and you should be able to view or download it from at least one of them:

<http://www.rba.co.uk/web2/2010HCLUSocialMedia.ppt>

<http://www.slideshare.net/KarenBlakeman/social-media-for-libraries-health-care-information>

<http://www.slideboom.com/presentations/169731/Social-Media-for-Libraries-%28Health-Care-Information%29>

## Information for Energy Group: Advanced Search, Statistics & Market Research

I have now uploaded the slides for my workshop at the Information for Energy Group (IFEG). As usual, I have uploaded them to several different web sites in case one or more are blocked by corporate firewalls. If you have problems accessing any of the locations, let me know and I'll sort out some other means of getting the presentation to you.

**Workshop:** Advanced Internet Searching for Energy Information & Market Research

**Organised for:** Information for Energy Group

**Venue:** The Energy Institute, New Cavendish Street, London.

**Date:** Thursday 13 May 2010

PowerPoint Presentation <http://www.rba.co.uk/as/2010AdvancedSearchIFEG.ppt>  
(download from the RBA site – 7.5 MB)

authorSTREAM <http://www.authorstream.com/Presentation/karenblakeman-390395-searching-energy-information-search-strategies-techniques-ifeg-group-2010advancedsearchifeg-others-misc-ppt-powerpoint/>

Slideboom <http://www.slideboom.com/presentations/167752/Advanced-Internet-Searching-for-Energy-Information-%26-Market-Research>

Slideshare <http://www.slideshare.net/KarenBlakeman/advanced-internet-searching-for-energy-information-market-research>

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## Business Information Resources

### Updates to Company Registers page

For those of you who need to track down official company information, the following updates have been made to the RBA Official Company Registers page at <http://www.rba.co.uk/sources/registers.htm>:

#### Austria

Updated link: please use <http://dataweb.telekom.at> and click on Firmenbuch 'Details'. Thanks to Herbert Tischler, [Telekom Austria TA AG](#) for the correction.

#### Bulgaria

Update: an electronic version of the register is available at <http://www.brra.bg/>, but only in Bulgarian at present. Thanks to Orlin Nedkov for the update.

#### Isle of Man

The Isle of Man Companies Registry has changed its web address to <http://www.gov.im/ded/companies/companiesregistry.xml>. Thanks to Mark Collister from [City Trust](#) for the alert.

#### Panama

Registro Público de Panamá <http://www.registro-publico.gob.pa/>  
The Public Registry for incorporations of Companies and Foundations in Panama. There is a searchable online register but only in Spanish. Click on the white box "Consulta Registral", which is towards the bottom of the page, and you will then be taken to the register which currently at <https://www.registro-publico.gob.pa/scripts/nwwisapi.dll/conweb/prinpage>  
In Spanish only. Thanks to Tord Coucheron of [Hatfield Oak International](#) for the information.

## Searching Questions

### What services and applications does Google have me down for?

#### Question:

What services and applications does Google have me down for? I have heard that Google sometimes automatically "enables" new applications on your Google account without telling you. Is there some way I can check?

#### Answer:

All your settings and services are displayed on your Google Dashboard. Go to <http://www.google.com/dashboard/> and sign in with your account. At the top of your dashboard is your personal information: name, nickname, user name and email address but also included in this group is "Websites authorized to access the account" and this where your first surprise might be lurking. Nothing of interest here, I thought, when I looked at one of my own accounts, but I had forgotten that a few months ago I had been testing out Mapalist, a tool that enables you to create mashups of data with Google maps. I had allowed Mapalist access to Google Docs so that I could create a spreadsheet within Docs that could then be combined with a Google map. It is worth regularly checking this section to make sure that no unwanted applications have sneaked in. Also, an application that you are quite happy to allow could be sold to an organisation that has very different intentions and ideas of how it wants to use your data, and it may not necessarily be to your advantage.

Most of the dashboard sections and applications are what you might expect. Alerts are fairly straightforward but it is worth clearing out of unwanted search alerts. Then on my account there was Analytics, Books and My Library, Gmail and contacts, Google Buzz and my followers and following, Calendar, Custom Search for the custom search engines that I have set up, details of my Google Docs, my iGoogle tabs and gadgets and maps that I have created, Google reader subscriptions. Web history, assuming it is switched on, is also listed.

Another surprise for me was Picasa. I was certain that I had never uploaded any images but there were three photos sitting in the account. They had been put there by Google when I was playing around with the latest Google customisable home page background image. I vaguely recall Google telling me it was going to do that but did not take much notice at the time. I don't have any problems with them being there but it is an example of how Google sucks you into services that you would not normally consider using.

And then there is YouTube. In my account this shows my YouTube username, gender, age and post code, all of which I had supplied when I set up the account. Also displayed were my viewing history, favourites, subscriptions and contacts.

The "Other products" section summarises Google products that you are using but which are not yet available on the dashboard. In my case there was my Feedburner account, Google Groups and Google Squared documents.

The Google dashboard serves as a reminder of which Google products you have signed up for and what Google has made publicly available. It also highlights how much information you have given to Google about yourself. Google makes a lot of user generated content public by default, for example Maps and My Library, and all the public 'stuff' in your dashboard have a small people icon next to it. If you do nothing else, work your way through everything in your dashboard and double check the privacy settings for each application and document. Equally important, it emphasises the importance of signing out of your Google account before leaving your machine unattended. Leave your browser signed in and anyone can come along and see in detail what you have on your Google account.

## Meetings and Seminars

**Workshop:** The changing landscape of search: essential new tools for finding information

**Date:** Wednesday, 14th July 2010

**Venue:** The John Rylands University Library, University of Manchester

**Organiser:** UKeiG

**Presenter:** Karen Blakeman

**Outline:** The major search engines are playing leap-frog in an effort to out-do each other with new search features. Google is personalising everyone's search. Bing is taking over Yahoo. Exalead Labs is busy experimenting with new approaches to search. Image search options are expanding: creative commons, colour, similar images. More specialist search tools for the "hidden web" are emerging, and social networks and Web 2.0 are now an essential part of the search mix. This workshop will look at the new services that are emerging and how to use them effectively to find relevant information.

**Cost:** UKeiG members £180 + VAT (£211.50 including VAT); others £220.00 (£258.50 including VAT)

**URL:** <http://www.ukeig.org.uk/trainingevent/changing-landscape-search-essential-new-tools-finding-information-please-note-course-n>

**Workshop:** How to stay ahead of the game with Web 2.0

**Date:** Tuesday, 7 September, 2010 09:30 - 16:30

**Venue:** The Learning Centre, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham

**Organiser:** UKeiG

**Presenter:** Karen Blakeman

**Outline:** The term Web 2.0 covers a multitude of sins - and many virtues! The terminology and jargon sometimes inhibits the take up of tools that can significantly improve the effectiveness of your services and the way you work. These tools enable you to share presentations to promote your own and your department's skills and expertise; use RSS to keep you and your users up to date or to publish/republish information; create brief "how to" videos and tours of your library; tap into social and professional networks for research. The workshop takes a down to earth view of how applications can be used in the workplace and participants will have ample opportunity to try out services for themselves.

**Cost:** UKeiG members £180.00 (£211.50 including VAT); others £220.00 (£258.50 including VAT)

**URL:** <http://www.ukeig.org.uk/trainingevent/how-stay-ahead-game-web-20>

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