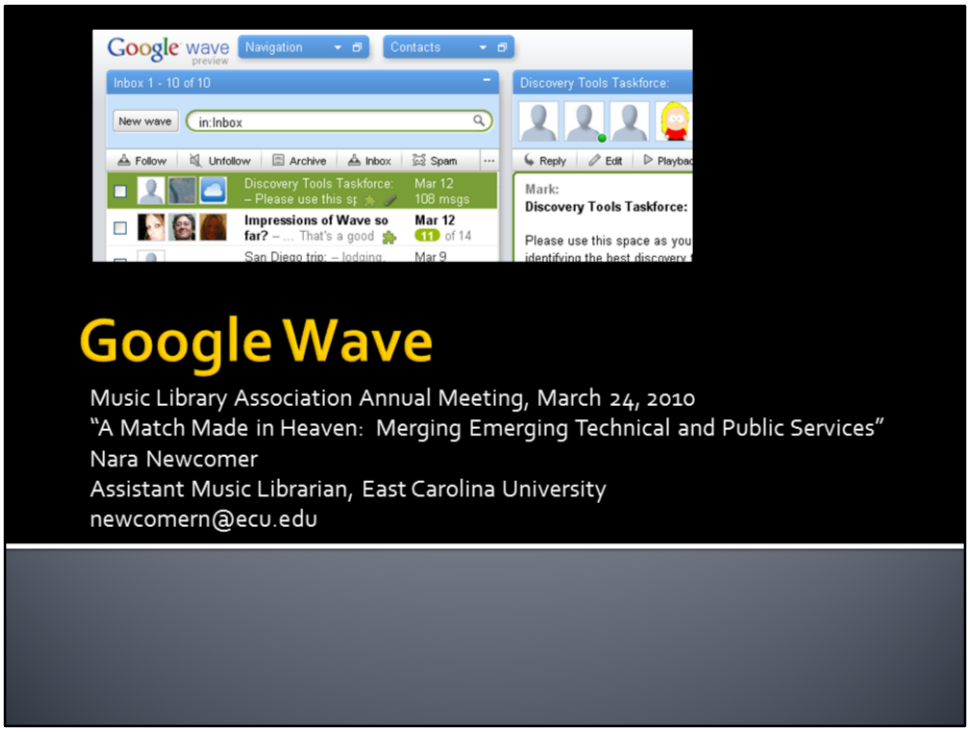
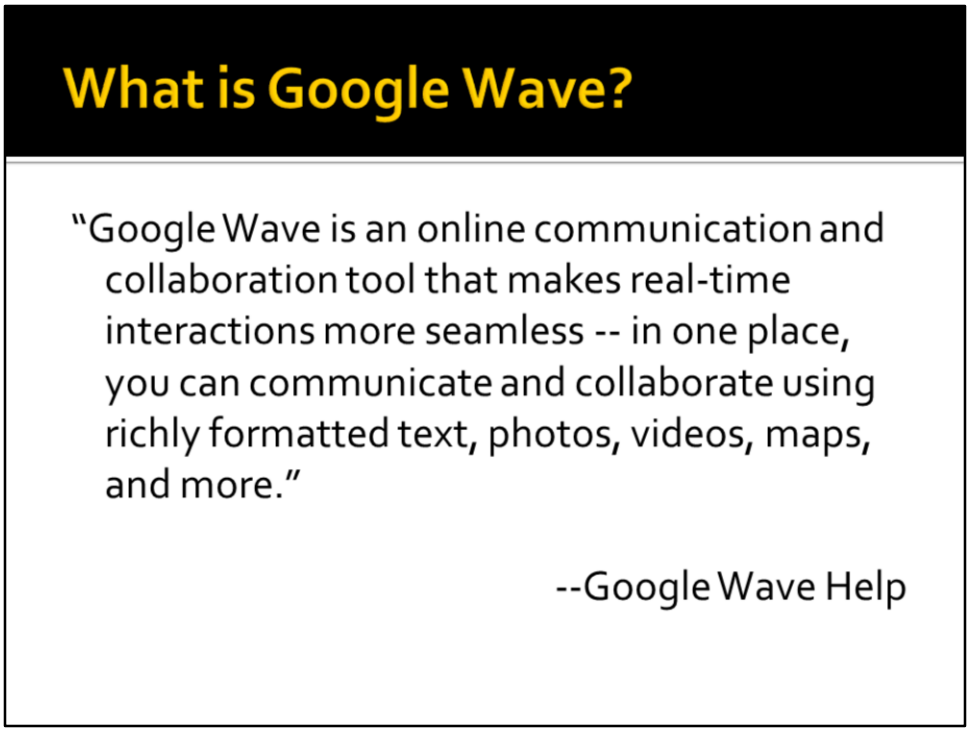


Hello, I'm Nara Newcomer, the Assistant Music Librarian at East Carolina University and today I'll be talking about Google Wave.

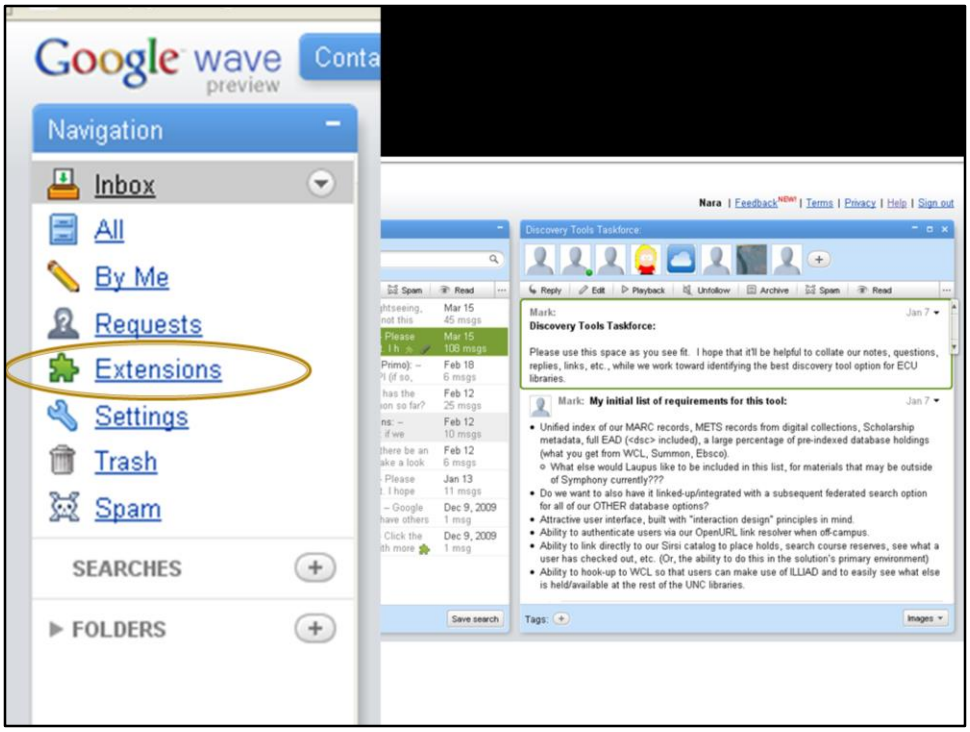


Google released Google Wave in Fall 2009. Google wave is still in limited beta release. To get a wave account, you must get an invitation from an existing waver or you can specifically request one from Google. You also will need a google account. I've been using Google Wave since this January, as a communication tool for a committee and for personal use.

So you're wondering … what is Google Wave? Google's own definition covers it as well as any. I've also heard it called a cross between IM and email, with the ability to add media thrown in. Basically, in real time, you and other people can post messages, including embedding media, and it's all saved and recorded in the wave. The best way to understand Wave, though is to see it. Let's take a quick tour.

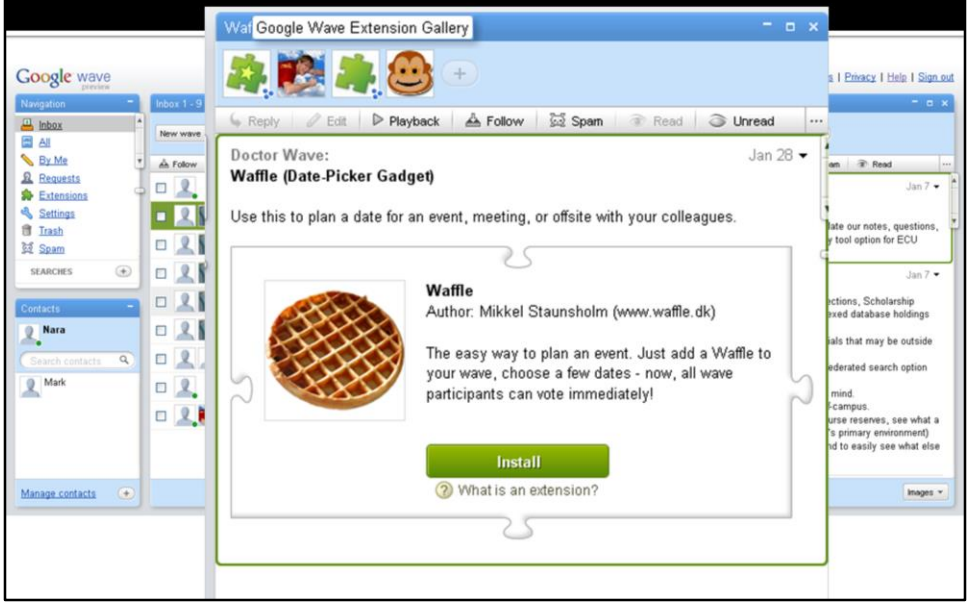
This is my Google Wave inbox.

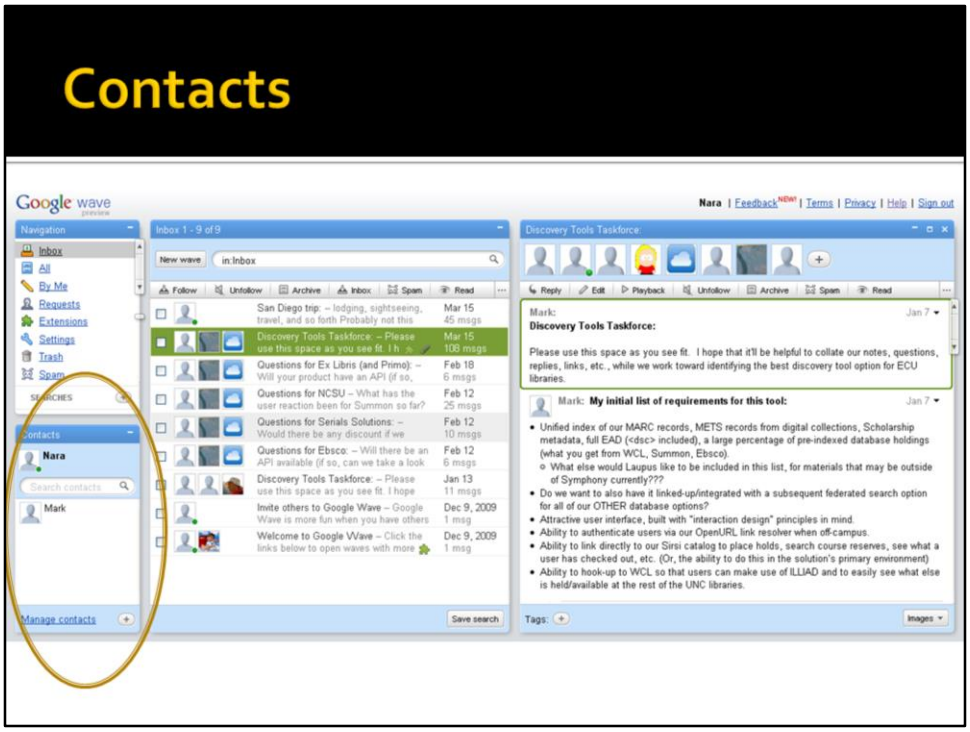
First we'll look at the navigation menu. This is pretty straightforward, and similar to email.



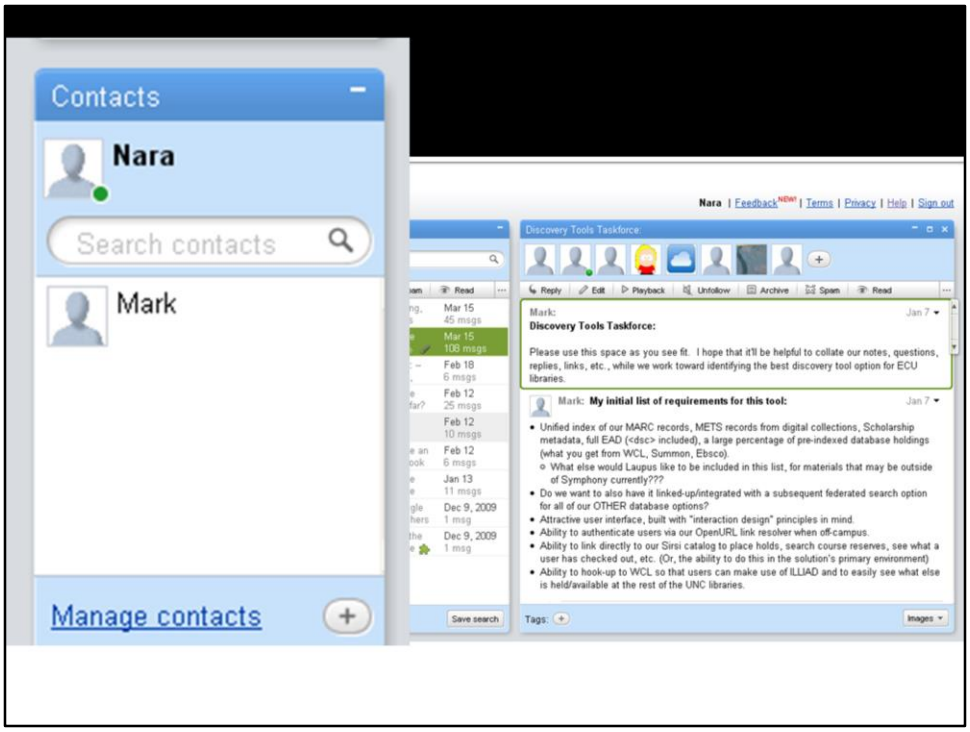
"Extensions" are for extra things you add to your wave.

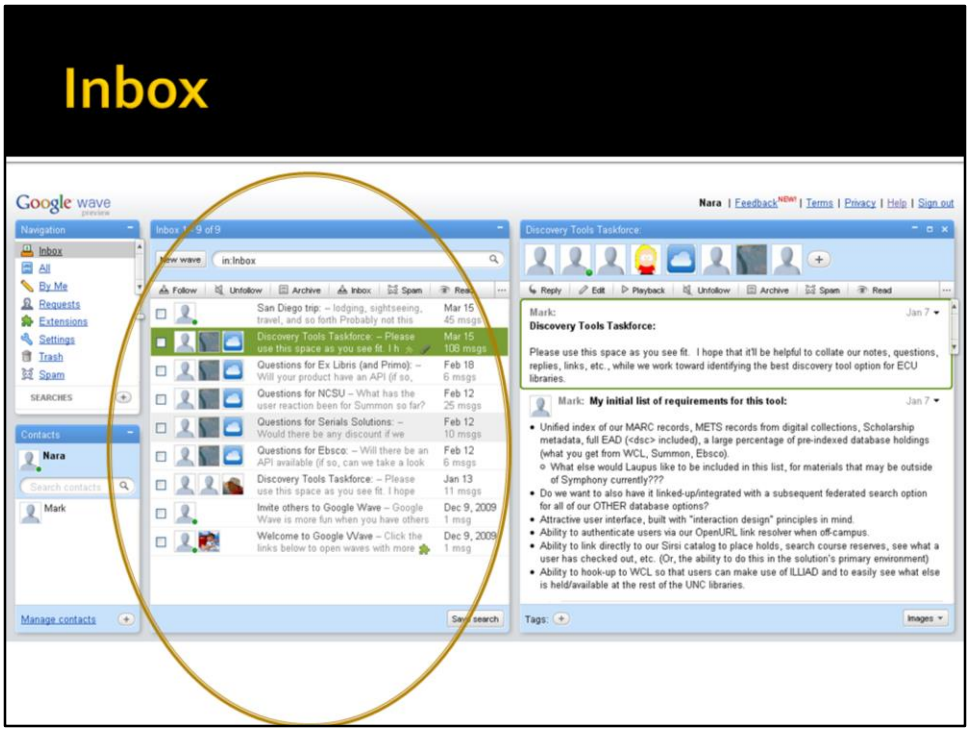
Extensions


Google Wave Extension Gallery
Reply
Edit
Playback
Follow
Spam
Read
Unread
Doctor Wave:
Jan 28
Waffle (Date-Picker Gadget)
Use this to plan a date for an event, meeting, or offsite with your colleagues.
Waffle
Author: Mikkel Staunsholm (www.waffle.dk)
The easy way to plan an event. Just add a Waffle to your wave, choose a few dates - now, all wave participants can vote immediately!
Install
What is an extension?
Google wave
Navigation
Inbox
All
By Me
Requests
Extensions
Settings
Trash
Spam
SEARCHES
Contacts
Nara
Mark
Manage contacts
New wave
Follow

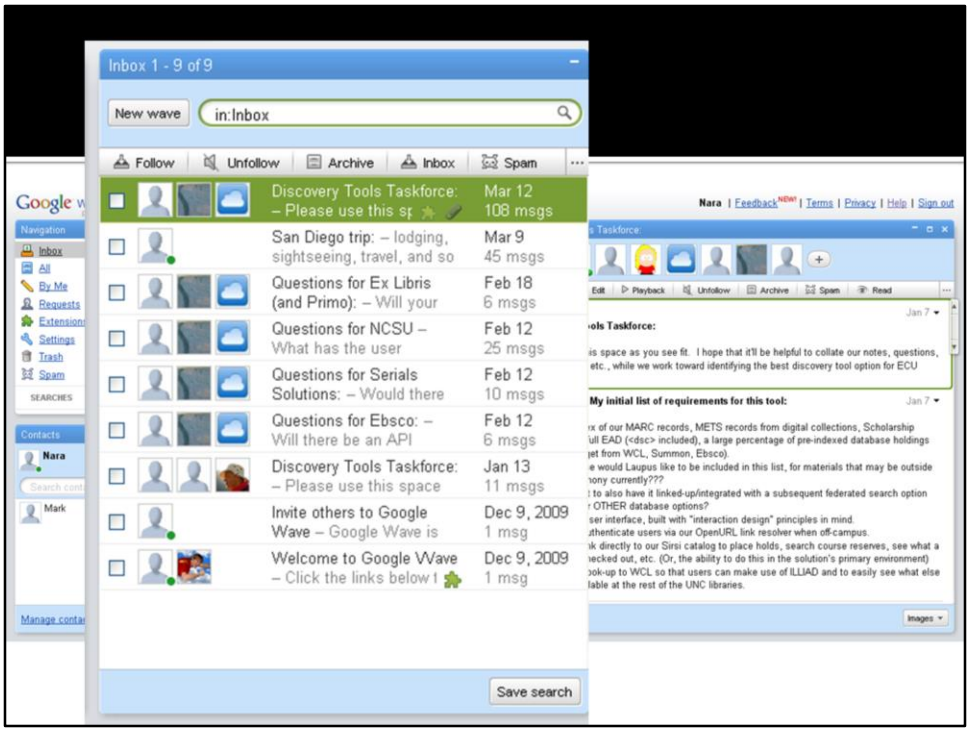


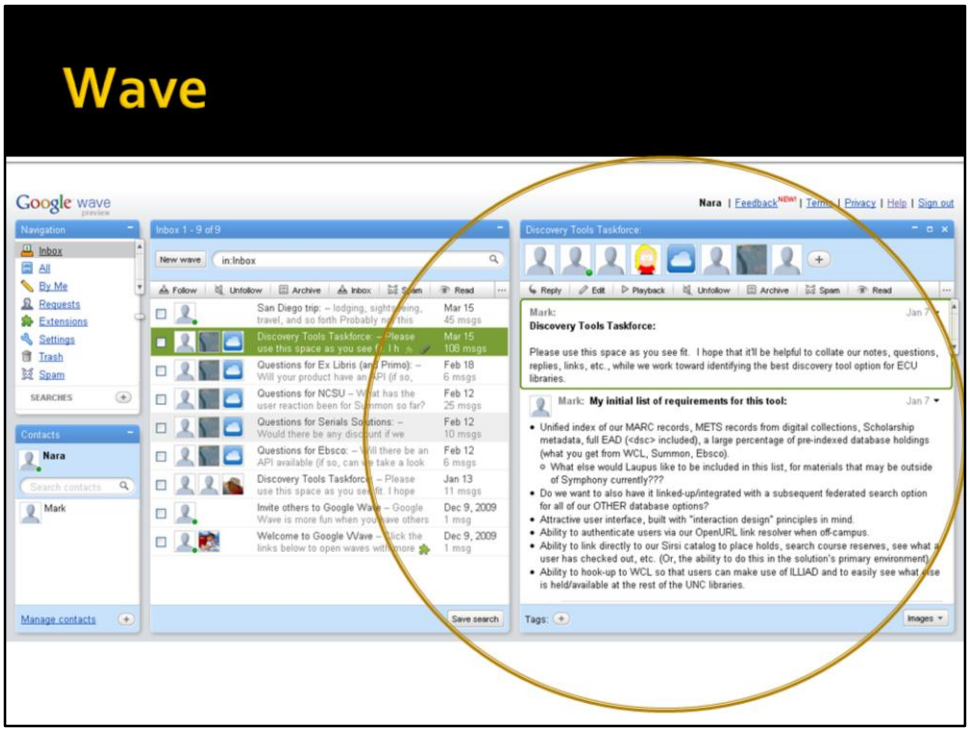
Contacts are your "friends" on Google Wave. If you have email contacts in the gmail account you use for Google Wave, they will be imported, even if they aren't actually on Google Wave yet. People have to be in your contacts for you to add them to a wave. However, if someone else adds you to a wave, or you use a public wave, other people don't have to be your contacts.


Contacts
Nara
Search contacts
Mark
Manage contacts
Nara | Feedback | Terms | Privacy | Help | Sign out
Discovery Tools Taskforce:
Reply
Edit
Playback
Unfollow
Archive
Spam
Read
Mark:
Jan 7
Discovery Tools Taskforce:
Please use this space as you see fit. I hope that it'll be helpful to collate our notes, questions, replies, links, etc., while we work toward identifying the best discovery tool option for ECU libraries.
Mark: My initial list of requirements for this tool:
Jan 7
Unified index of our MARC records, METS records from digital collections, Scholarship metadata, full EAD (<dsc> included), a large percentage of pre-indexed database holdings (what you get from WCL, Summon, Ebsco).
What else would Laupus like to be included in this list, for materials that may be outside of Symphony currently???
Do we want to also have it linked-up/integrated with a subsequent federated search option for all of our OTHER database options?
Attractive user interface, built with "interaction design" principles in mind.
Ability to authenticate users via our OpenURL link resolver when off-campus.
Ability to link directly to our Sirsi catalog to place holds, search course reserves, see what a user has checked out, etc. (Or, the ability to do this in the solution's primary environment)
Ability to hook-up to WCL so that users can make use of ILLIAD and to easily see what else is held/available at the rest of the UNC libraries.
Tags:
Images
Save search
Mar 15
45 msgs
Mar 15
108 msgs
Feb 18
6 msgs
Feb 12
25 msgs
Feb 12
10 msgs
Feb 12
6 msgs
Jan 13
11 msgs
Dec 9, 2009
1 msg
Dec 9, 2009
1 msg

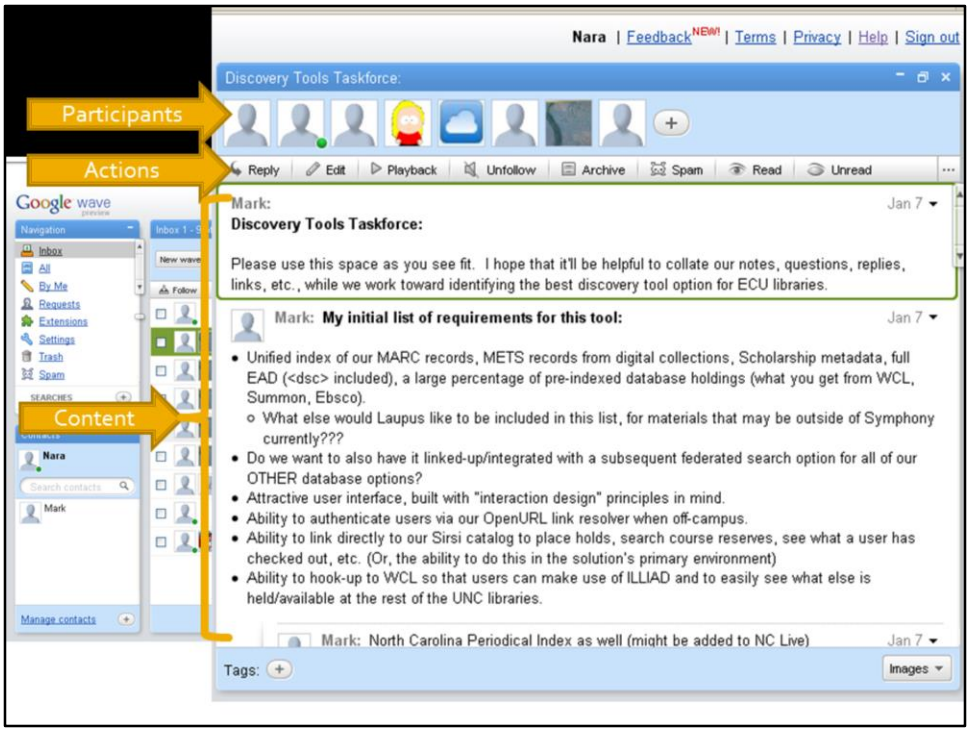


Your inbox functions similarly to an email inbox. This shows all the waves you're currently following. You can also create other folders and sort the waves into the folders.


Inbox 1 - 9 of 9
New wave
in:Inbox
Follow
Unfollow
Archive
Inbox
Spam
Discovery Tools Taskforce: – Please use this sp Mar 12 108 msgs
San Diego trip: – lodging, sightseeing, travel, and so Mar 9 45 msgs
Questions for Ex Libris (and Primo): – Will your Feb 18 6 msgs
Questions for NCSU – What has the user Feb 12 25 msgs
Questions for Serials Solutions: – Would there Feb 12 10 msgs
Questions for Ebsco: – Will there be an API Feb 12 6 msgs
Discovery Tools Taskforce: – Please use this space Jan 13 11 msgs
Invite others to Google Wave – Google Wave is Dec 9, 2009 1 msg
Welcome to Google Wave – Click the links below t Dec 9, 2009 1 msg
Save search
Google
Navigation
Inbox
All
By Me
Requests
Settings
Trash
Spam
SEARCHES
Contacts
Nara
Mark
Nara | Feedback | Terms | Privacy | Help | Sign out
Edit
Playback
Unfollow
Archive
Spam
Read
Jan 7
My initial list of requirements for this tool:
Images



Here's the interesting part. The actual waves.
Patrticipants in the wave are shown at the top, along with their person icon, if they have one.
Wave actions are fairly straightforward.
The actual content of the wave is the most interesting part.
Within the wave, participants can say something in a "blip". Here you can see the most simple form of blips, simply typing text.


Participants
Actions
Content
Nara | Feedback NEW! | Terms | Privacy | Help | Sign out
Discovery Tools Taskforce:
Reply
Edit
Playback
Unfollow
Archive
Spam
Read
Unread
Google wave
Navigation
Inbox
All
By Me
Requests
Extensions
Settings
Trash
Spam
SEARCHES
Nara
Search contacts
Mark
Manage contacts
Mark: Jan 7
Discovery Tools Taskforce:
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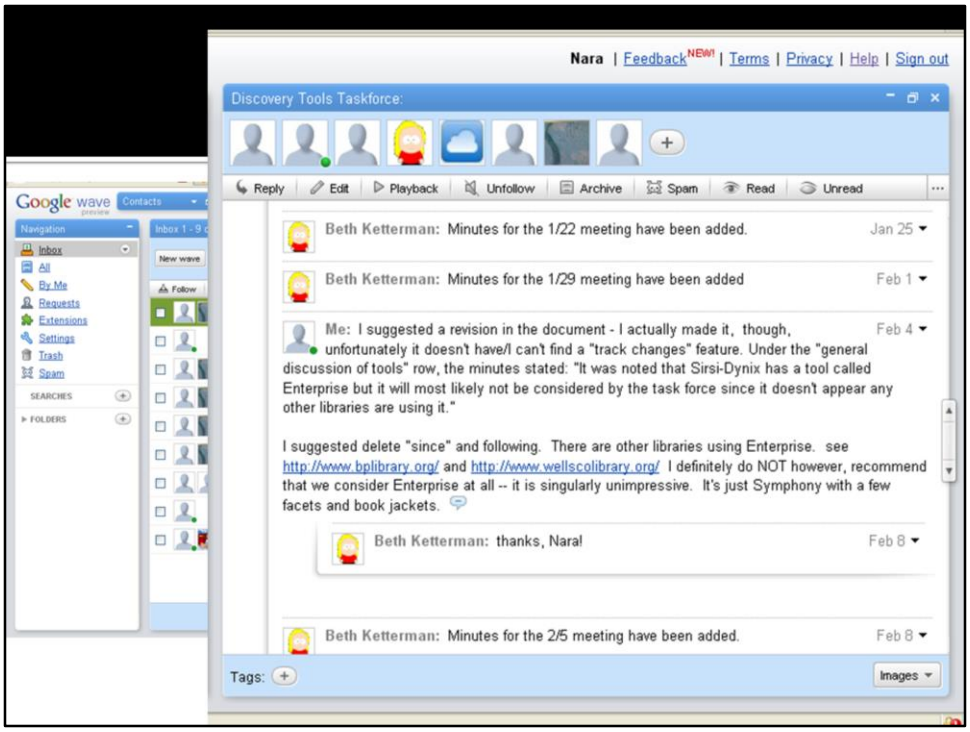
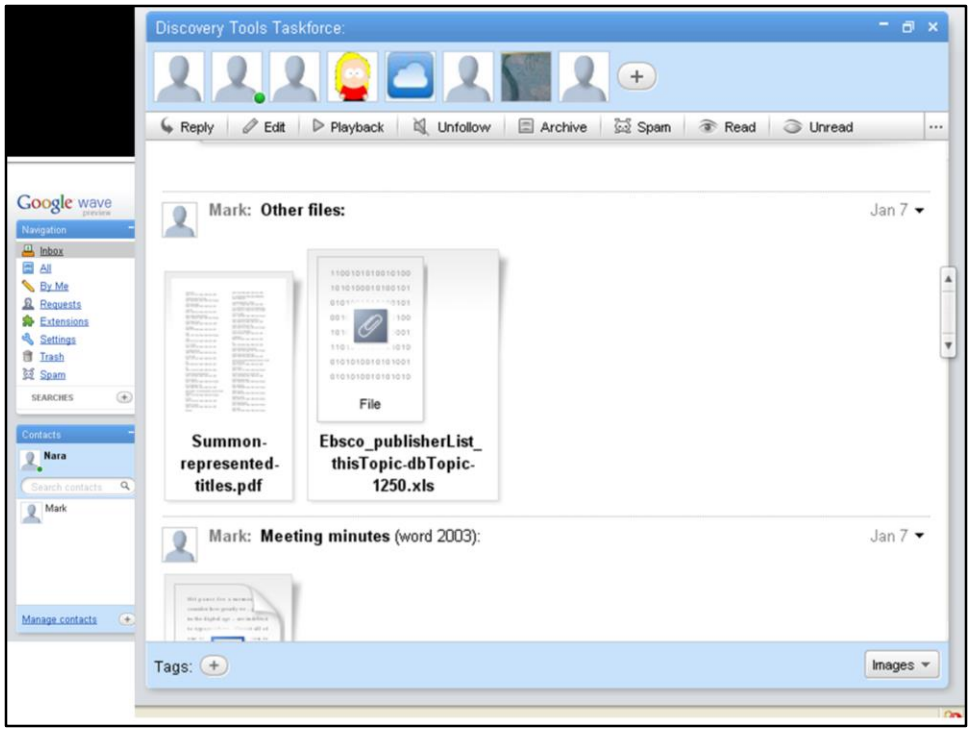
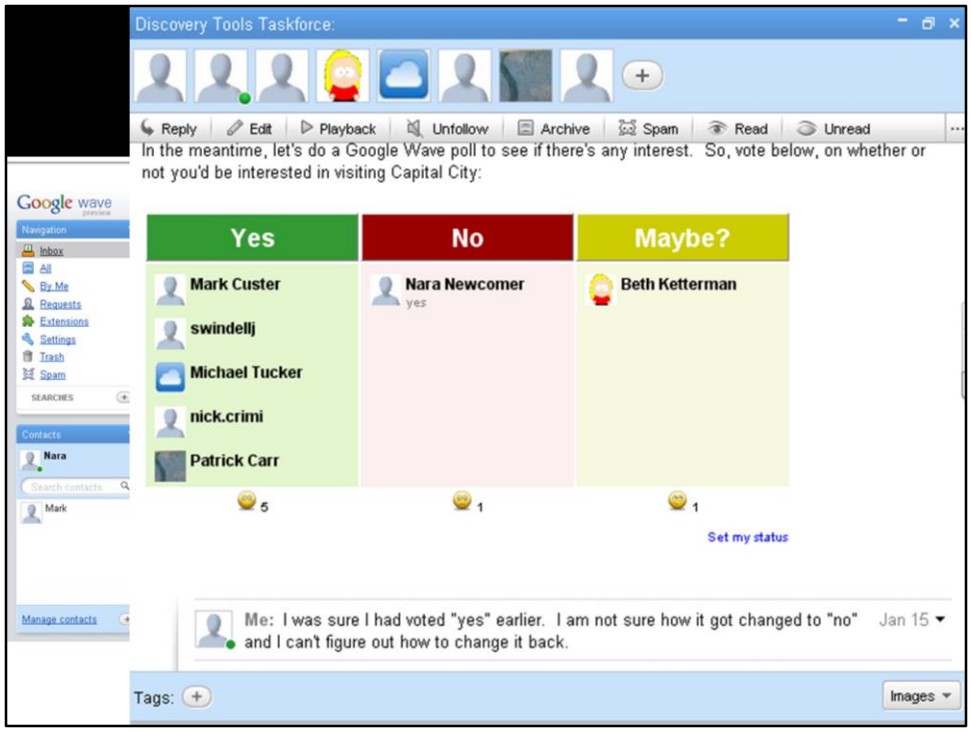
Ability to hook-up to WCL so that users can make use of ILLIAD and to easily see what else is held/available at the rest of the UNC libraries.
Mark: North Carolina Periodical Index as well (might be added to NC Live) Jan 7
Tags:
Images



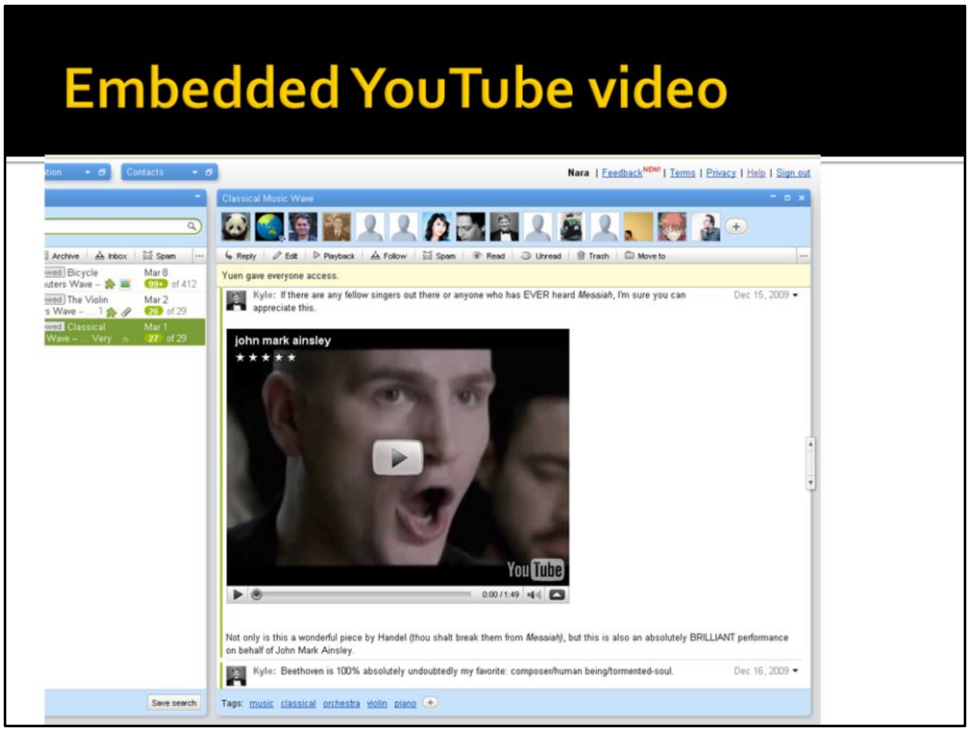
The waves are threaded, so you can reply to a wave and have it indented as a child wave.



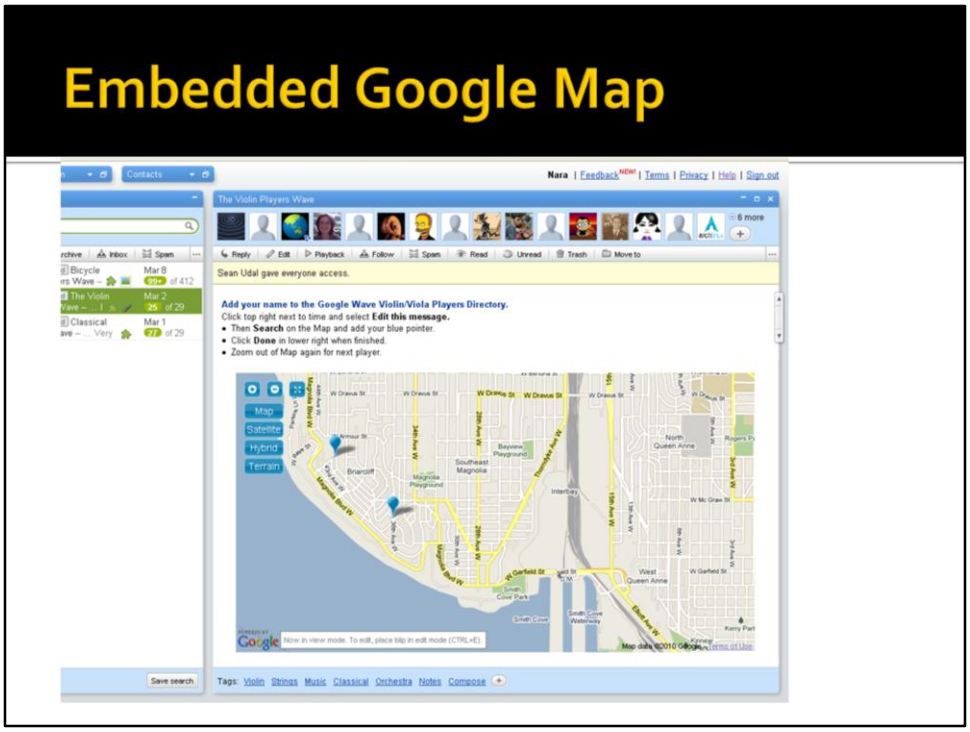
You can attach files.



Here's an example of using a polling tool to take a quick survey of wave participants.



Embedded YouTube video.

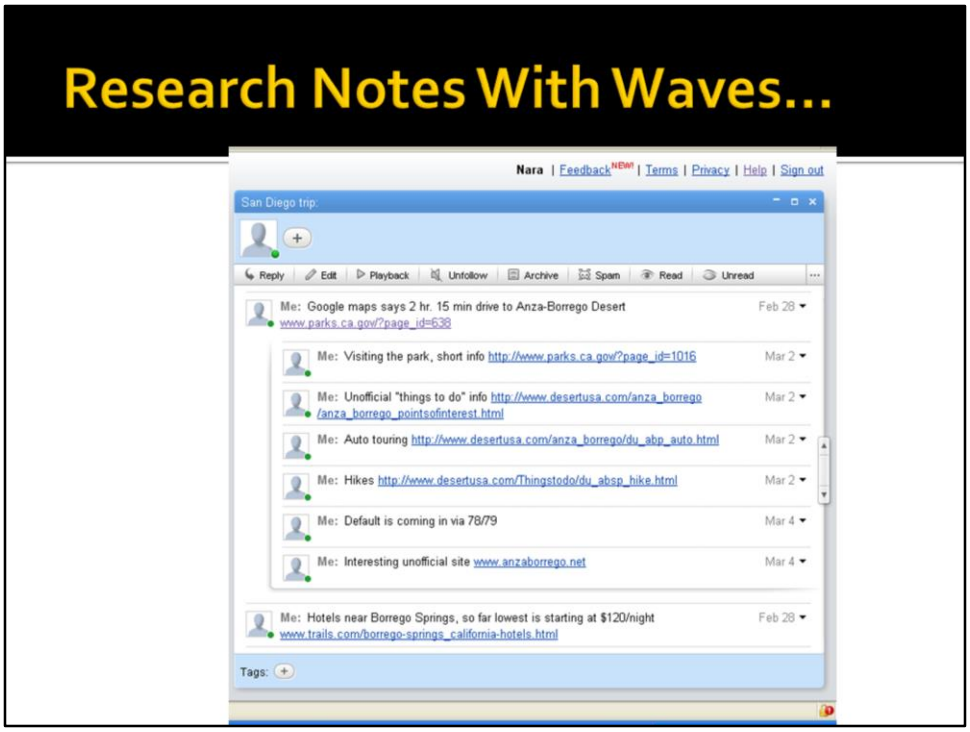


Embedded map – participants can add locations to the map.

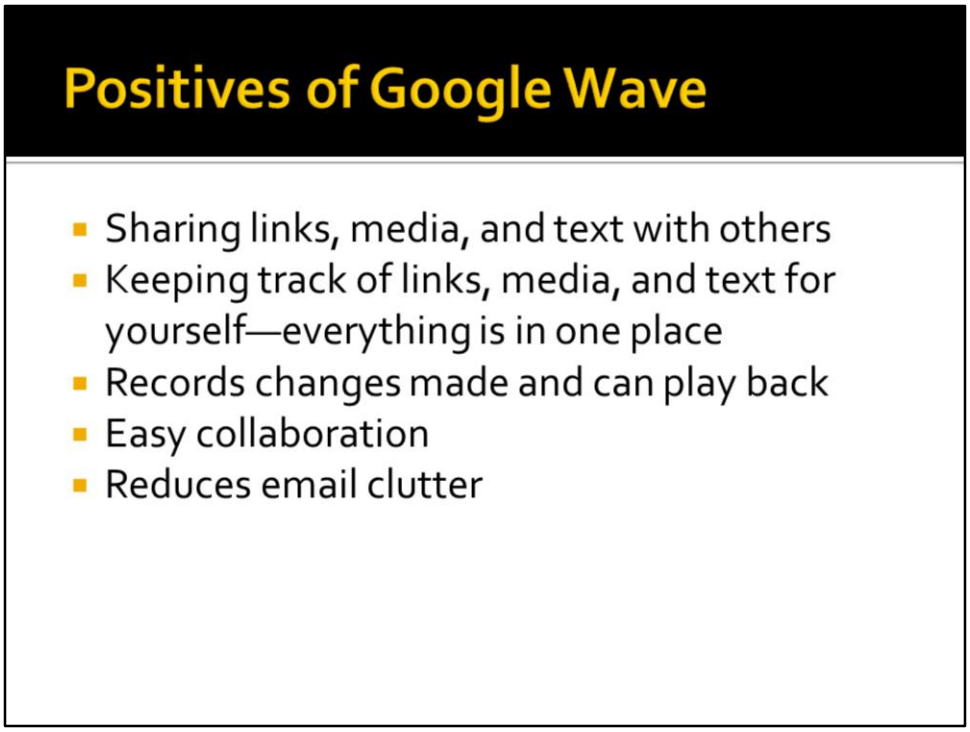
Except for this slide and the previous one, these examples came from a wave I've been on with a small task force (8 people) at the library, to evaluate a discovery tool. We used the wave as an alternative to email to communicate and share information we found. It worked pretty well to share links and conversations and keep most of our work out of email. One problem was that as the wave gets longer, it gets harder and harder to evaluate the whole or refer back to specific pieces of information, since there's no way to sort it.

There are other ways to use Wave besides sharing among a small group. One example is public waves.

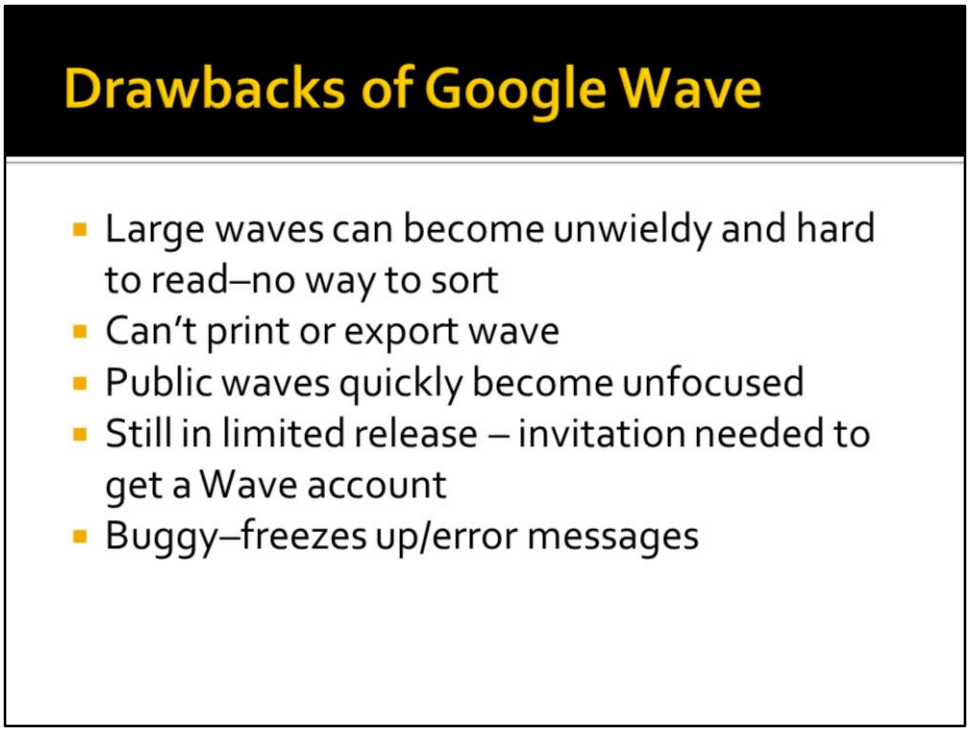
Anyone can make a wave public, and you can use keywords to search for public waves. For example, I searched for "Bach" and found 3 waves – The Bicycle Commuters Wave, Violin Players Wave, and Classical Music Wave. One problem with most of the public waves I saw is that they can quickly become unfocused and just a large discussion group.



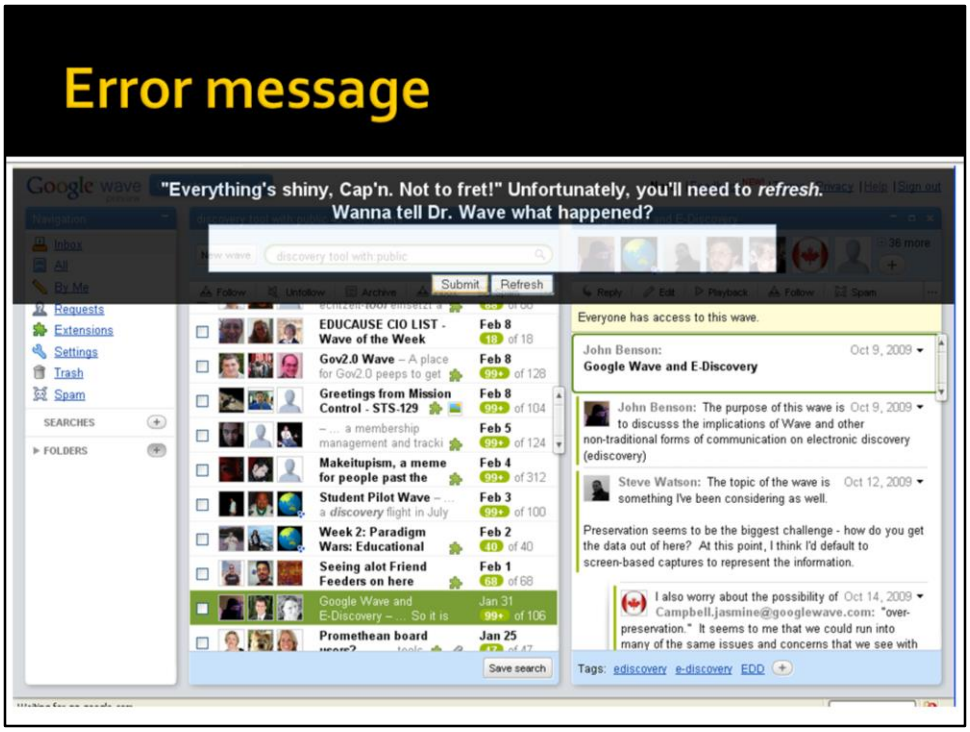
You can also create waves for just yourself. I've done this several times. I came to San Diego 2 days early and did some sightseeing and here is a wave I created to keep track of information and links of places I wanted to visit. I also created a wave once for my research on a new cell phone. This was a really useful way to keep all my notes on a subject together, and to have the info at my fingertips no matter what computer I was using. Along the same lines, you could use Wave to keep track of your notes for a research paper.



What are some of the best aspects of Google Wave?
It 's a great place to keep text, media, and links, whether for yourself or for others. Google Wave also records all the changes that you make and can play them back. Since it's in real time, it is easy to work with a group of people. You can even see when someone else is typing in the wave! Since many of its functions are things you might have otherwise used email for, it definitely reduceds email clutter. This was one of the best parts of using it with a task force.



Google Wave isn't without its drawbacks. Large waves can quicly become unwieldy since there's no way to sort them. You can't easily print or export the wave, so it can be a trick to get information out of the wave and put it somewhere else. Public waves easily become broad, unfocused discussion groups. Since Google Wave is still in limited release, not everyone you want to work with may be able to get an account. Many of these issues will hopefully be fixed. Google Wave is still definitely in the beta stage.



Periodically, it freezes up and you get this error message. I've never been able to tell what went wrong, other than that the message suddenly appeared.

All in all, Google Wave has a lot of potential, and is worth trying out even in its current beta stage.