

Google Wave

Music Library Association Annual Meeting, March 24, 2010
"A Match Made in Heaven: Merging Emerging Technical and Public Services"
Nara Newcomer
Assistant Music Librarian, East Carolina University
newcomern@ecu.edu

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

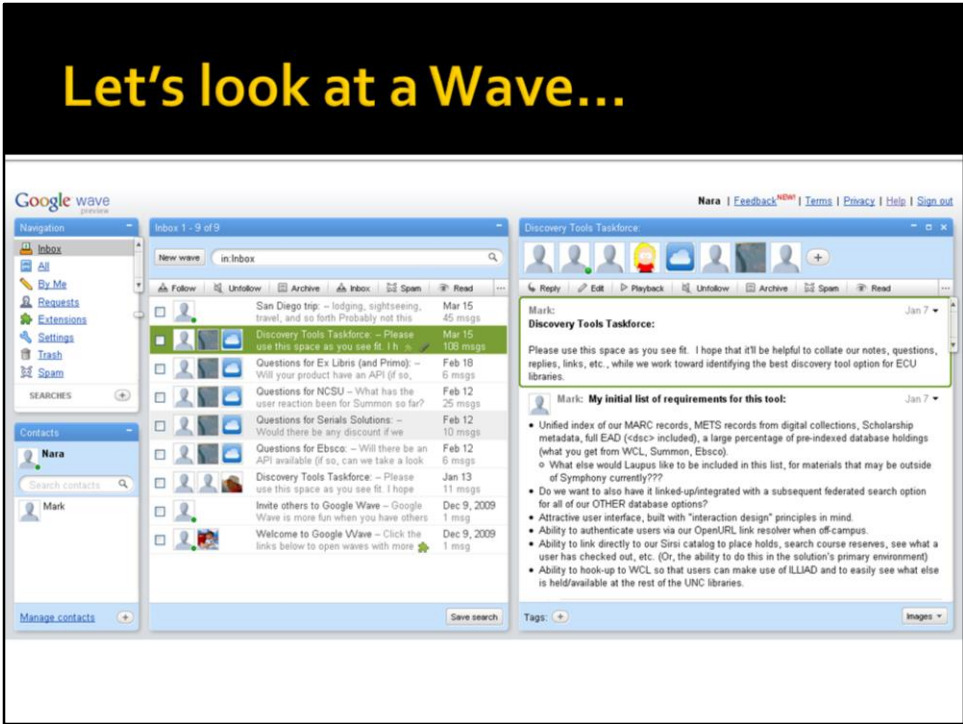
What is Google Wave?

"Google Wave is an online communication and collaboration tool that makes real-time interactions more seamless -- in one place, you can communicate and collaborate using richly formatted text, photos, videos, maps, and more."

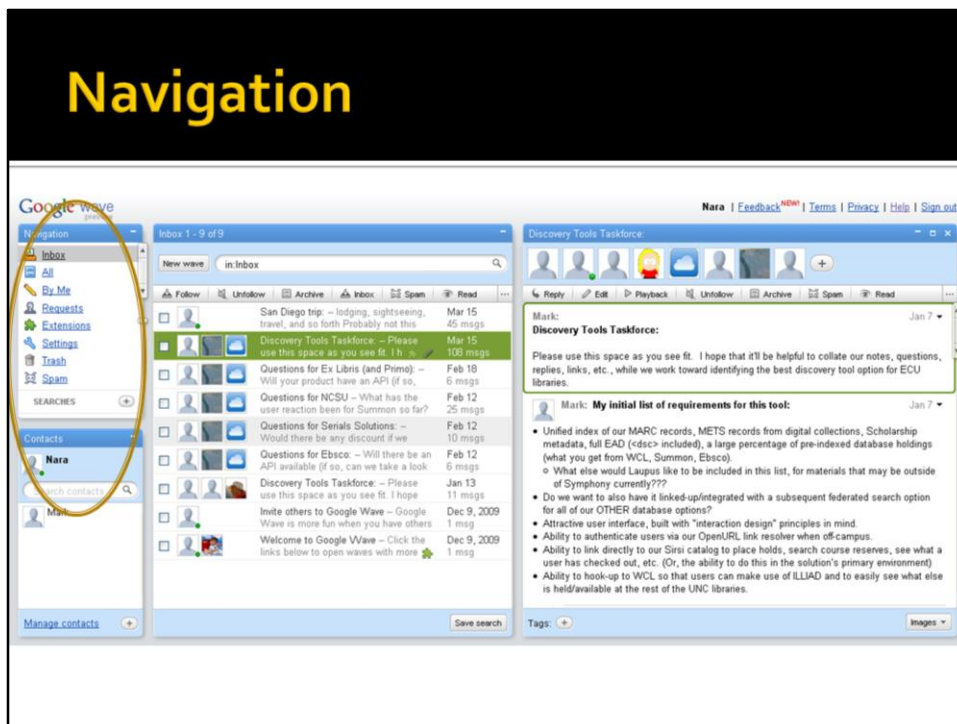
--Google Wave Help

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.

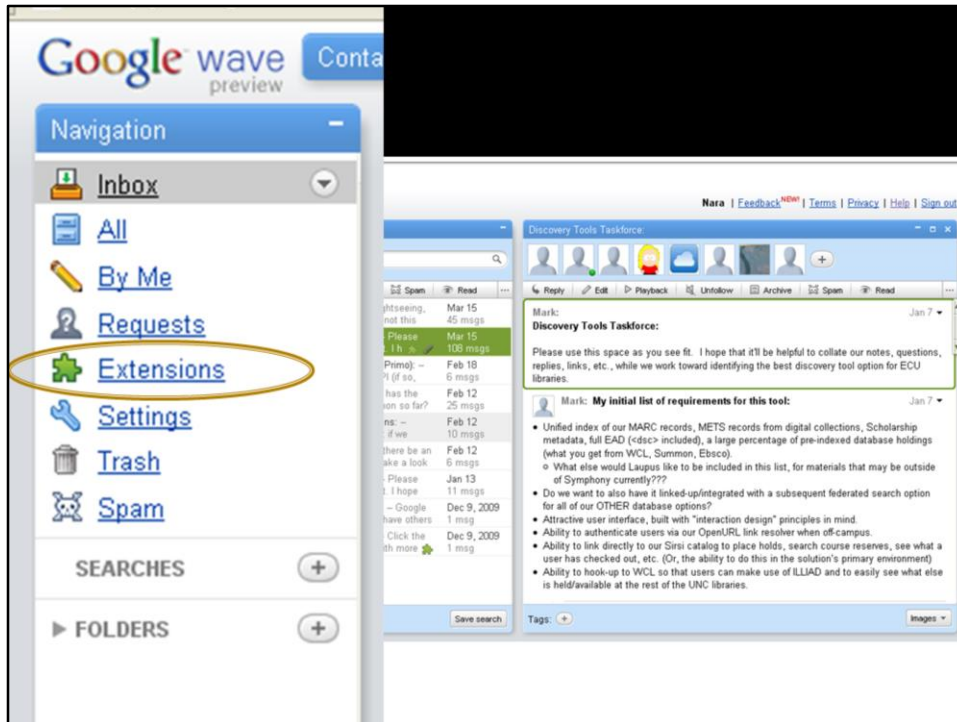
So you're wondering ... what is Google Wave? Google's own definition covers it as well as any. I've also heard it called a cross between IM and email, with the ability to add media thrown in. Basically, in real time, you and other people can post messages, including embedding media, and it's all saved 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.



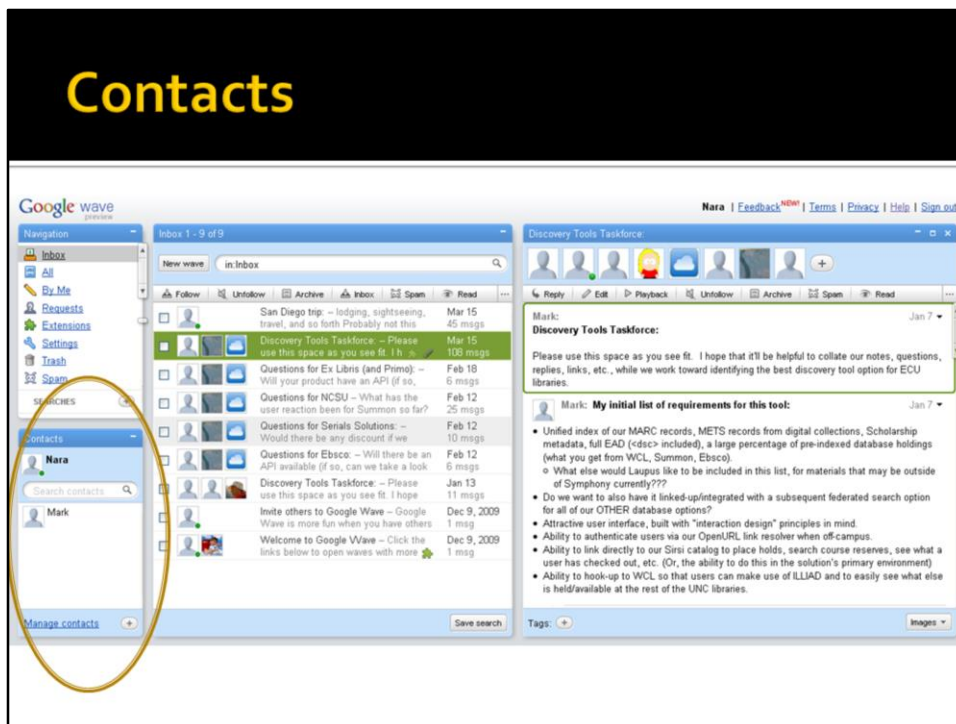
First we'll look at the navigation menu. This is pretty straightforward, and similar to email.



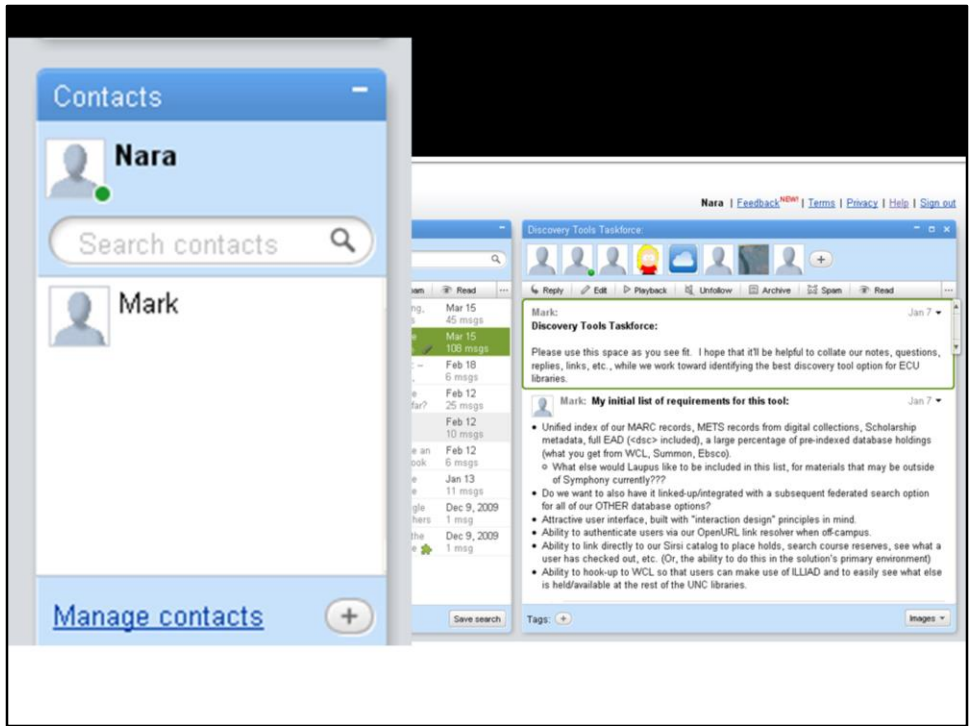
"Extensions" are for extra things you add to your wave.

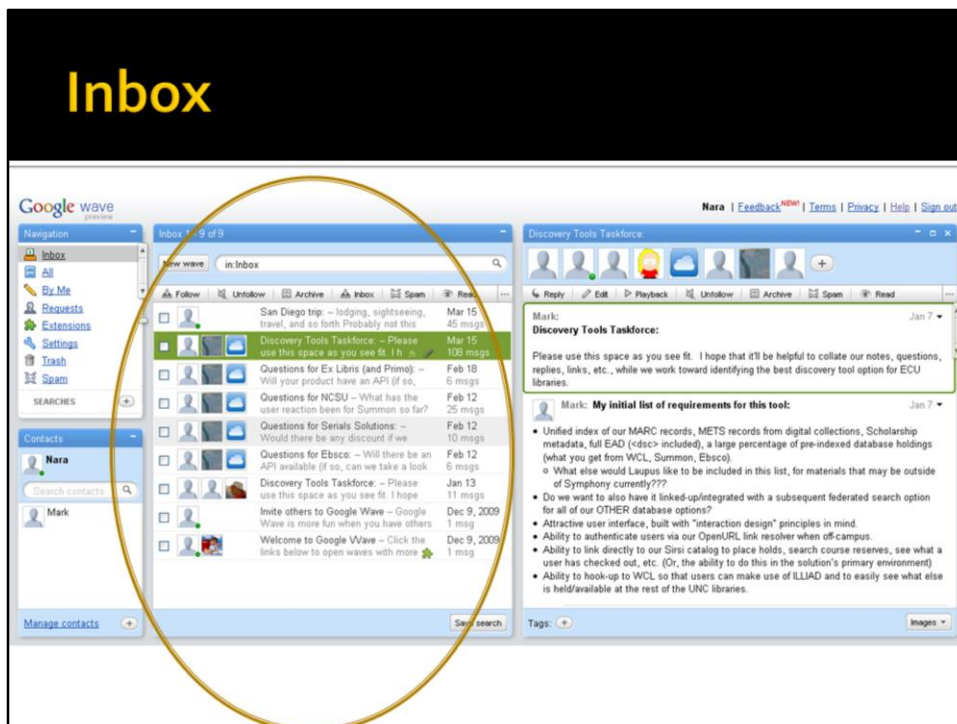
Extensions

The screenshot displays the Google Wave interface with a 'Google Wave Extension Gallery' window open. The gallery window has a title bar 'Waf Google Wave Extension Gallery' and a toolbar with icons for 'Reply', 'Edit', 'Playback', 'Follow', 'Spam', 'Read', and 'Unread'. The main content area of the gallery features a card for the 'Waffle (Date-Picker Gadget)' extension. The card includes a small image of a waffle, the author's name 'Mikkel Staunsholm (www.waffle.dk)', and a description: '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!'. Below the description is a green 'Install' button and a link that says 'What is an extension?'. The background shows the Google Wave interface with a navigation sidebar on the left containing 'Inbox', 'By Me', 'Requests', 'Extensions', 'Settings', 'Trash', and 'Spam'. The 'Contacts' section is visible with entries for 'Nara' and 'Mark'. The main content area of the wave shows a list of messages with dates like 'Jan 26' and 'Jan 7'.



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.





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.

The screenshot displays a Google Wave interface. On the left, a navigation sidebar includes 'Inbox', 'By Me', 'Requests', 'Extensions', 'Settings', 'Trash', and 'Spam'. Below this are sections for 'CONTACTS' (listing 'Nara' and 'Mark') and 'SEARCHES'. The main area shows an 'Inbox 1 - 9 of 9' with a search bar containing 'in:Inbox'. The inbox list includes:

- Discovery Tools Taskforce: - Please use this sp (108 msgs) - Mar 12
- San Diego trip: - lodging, sightseeing, travel, and so (45 msgs) - Mar 9
- Questions for Ex Libris (and Primo): - Will your (6 msgs) - Feb 18
- Questions for NCSU - What has the user (25 msgs) - Feb 12
- Questions for Serials Solutions: - Would there (10 msgs) - Feb 12
- Questions for Ebsco: - Will there be an API (6 msgs) - Feb 12
- Discovery Tools Taskforce: - Please use this space (11 msgs) - Jan 13
- Invite others to Google Wave - Google Wave is (1 msg) - Dec 9, 2009
- Welcome to Google Wave - Click the links below (1 msg) - Dec 9, 2009

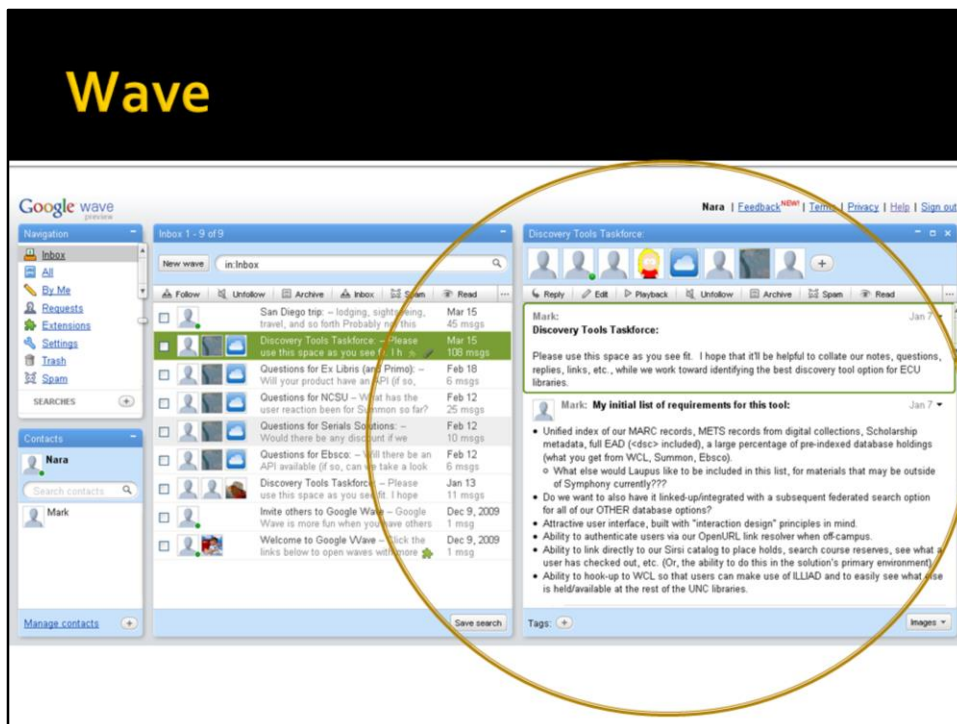
On the right, a 'Taskforce' conversation window is open, showing a message from 'Discovery Tools Taskforce' dated Jan 7. The message content includes:

is space as you see fit. I hope that it'll be helpful to collate our notes, questions, etc., while we work toward identifying the best discovery tool option for ECU

My initial list of requirements for this tool:

- ix of our MARC records, METS records from digital collections, Scholarship
- ull EAD (<doc> included), a large percentage of pre-indexed database holdings
- et from WCL, Summon, Ebsco)
- e would Laupus like to be included in this list, for materials that may be outside
- ony currently???
- ! to also have it linked-up/integrated with a subsequent federated search option
- ' OTHER database options?
- ser interface, built with "interaction design" principles in mind.
- thenticate users via our OpenJURL link resolver when off-campus
- ik directly to our Sirsi catalog to place holds, search course reserves, see what
- hecked out, etc. (Or, the ability to do this in the solution's primary environment)
- ook-up to WCL so that users can make use of ILLIAD and to easily see what else
- lable at the rest of the UNC libraries.

At the bottom of the inbox view, there is a 'Save search' button.



Here's the interesting part. The actual waves.

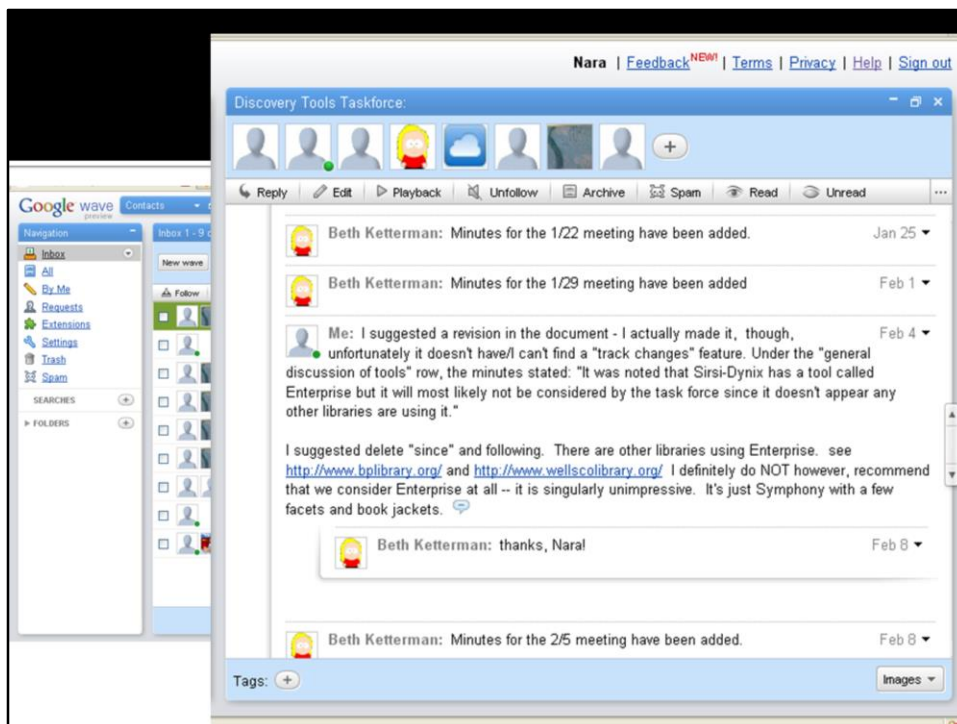
Participants in the wave are shown at the top, along with their person icon, if they have one.

Wave actions are fairly straightforward.

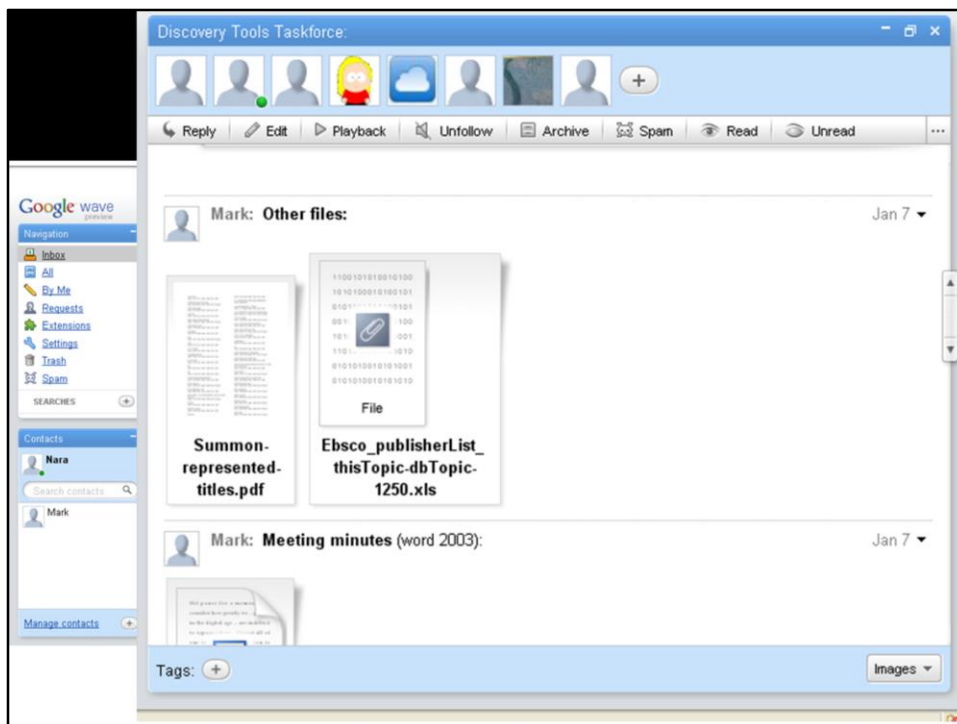
The actual content of the wave is the most interesting part.

Within the wave, participants can say something in a "blip". Here you can see the most simple form of blips, simply typing text.

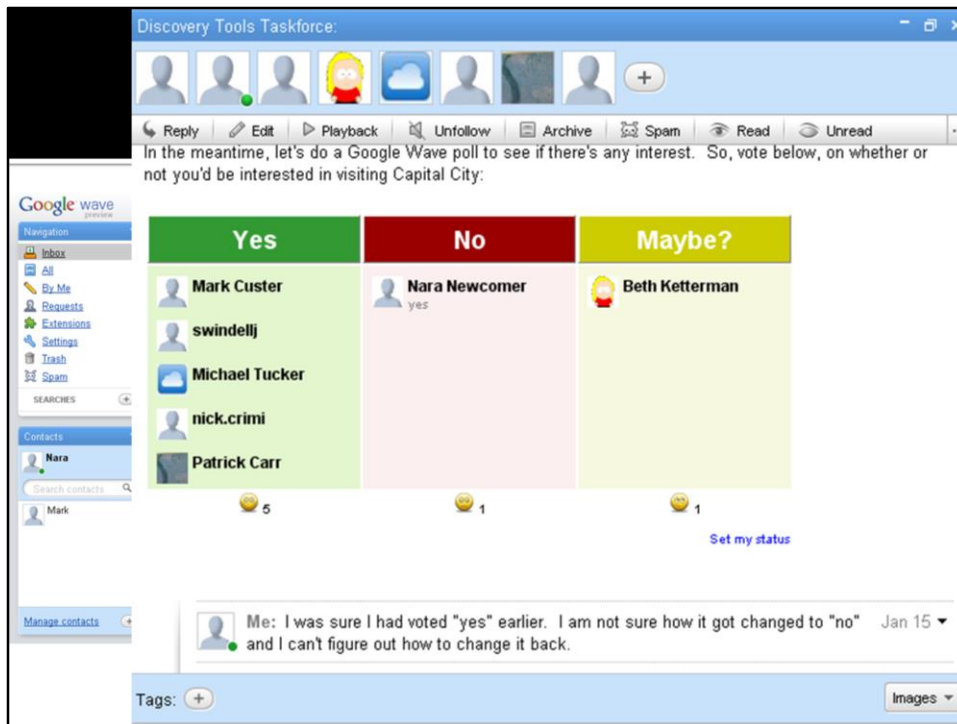
The screenshot shows a Google Wave window titled "Discovery Tools Taskforce". At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for "Nara", "Feedback", "Terms", "Privacy", "Help", and "Sign out". Below this is a header bar containing several participant avatars and a plus sign for adding more. A row of action icons (Reply, Edit, Playback, Unfollow, Archive, Spam, Read, Unread) is visible. The main content area features a message from "Mark" dated "Jan 7" with the subject "Discovery Tools Taskforce:". The message text reads: "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." Below this is a sub-header "Mark: My initial list of requirements for this tool:" followed by a bulleted list of requirements. The list includes: a unified index of MARC records, METS records, and Scholarship metadata; a large percentage of pre-indexed database holdings; an attractive user interface; authentication via OpenURL; and the ability to link to the Sirsi catalog and WCL. A subsequent message from "Mark" dated "Jan 7" mentions "North Carolina Periodical Index as well (might be added to NC Live)". At the bottom, there is a "Tags" field with a plus sign and an "Images" dropdown menu. On the left, a navigation sidebar shows options like "Inbox", "By Me", "Requests", "Extensions", "Settings", "Trash", and "Spam". Three yellow arrows point to specific parts of the interface: "Participants" points to the header bar, "Actions" points to the action icons, and "Content" points to the main message text.



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



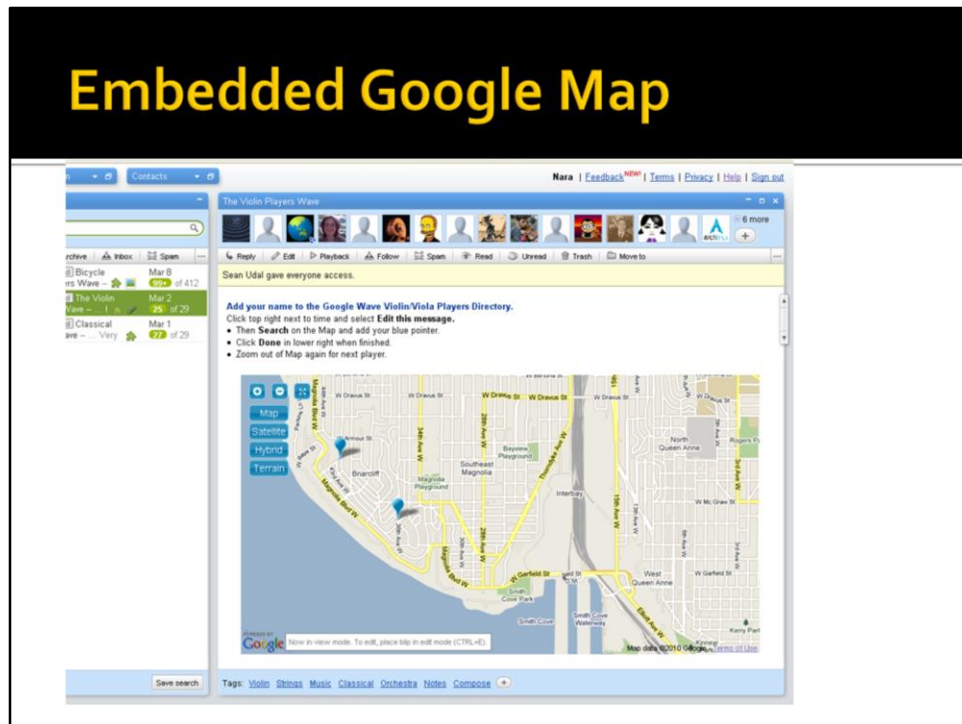
You can attach files.



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

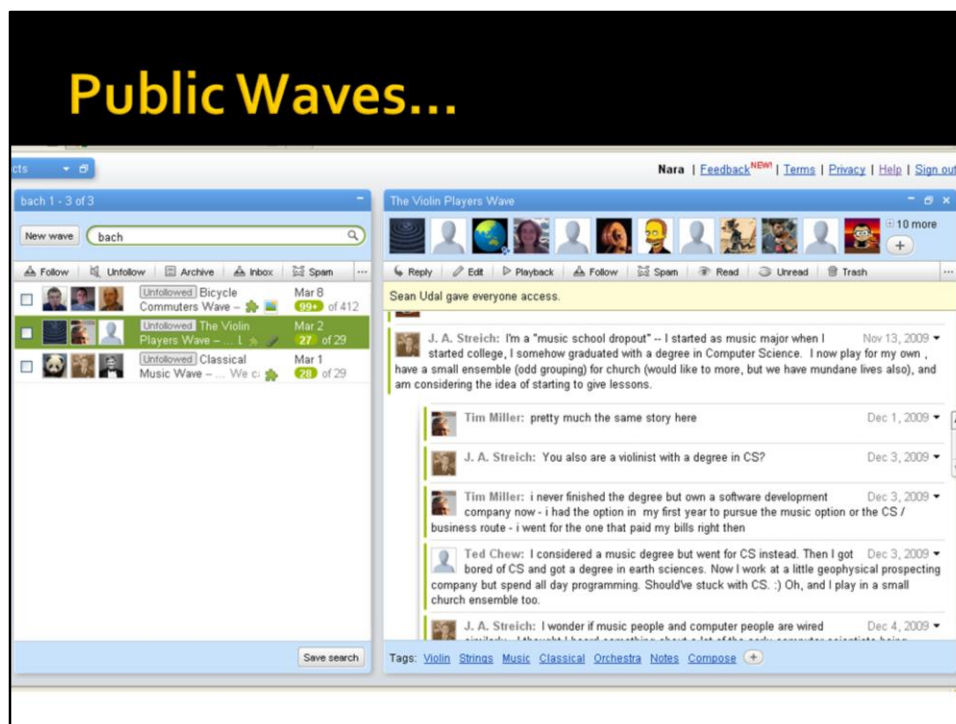


Embedded YouTube video.



Embedded map – participants can add locations to the map.

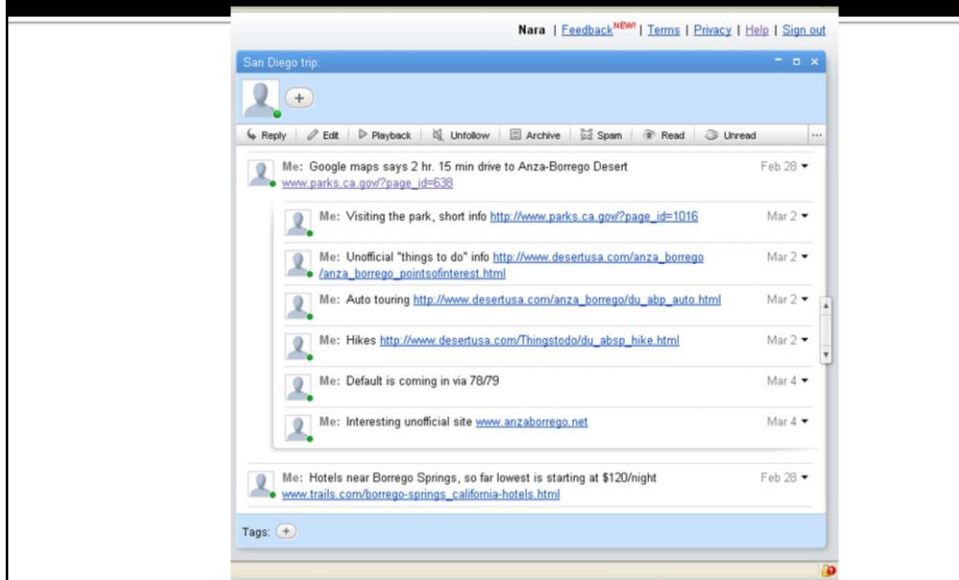
Except for this slide and the previous one, these examples came from a wave I've been on with a small task force (8 people) at the library, to evaluate a discovery tool. We used the wave as an alternative to email to communicate and share information we found. It worked pretty well to share links and 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.

Research Notes With Waves...



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.

Positives of Google Wave

- Sharing links, media, and text with others
- Keeping track of links, media, and text for yourself—everything is in one place
- Records changes made and can play back
- Easy collaboration
- Reduces email clutter

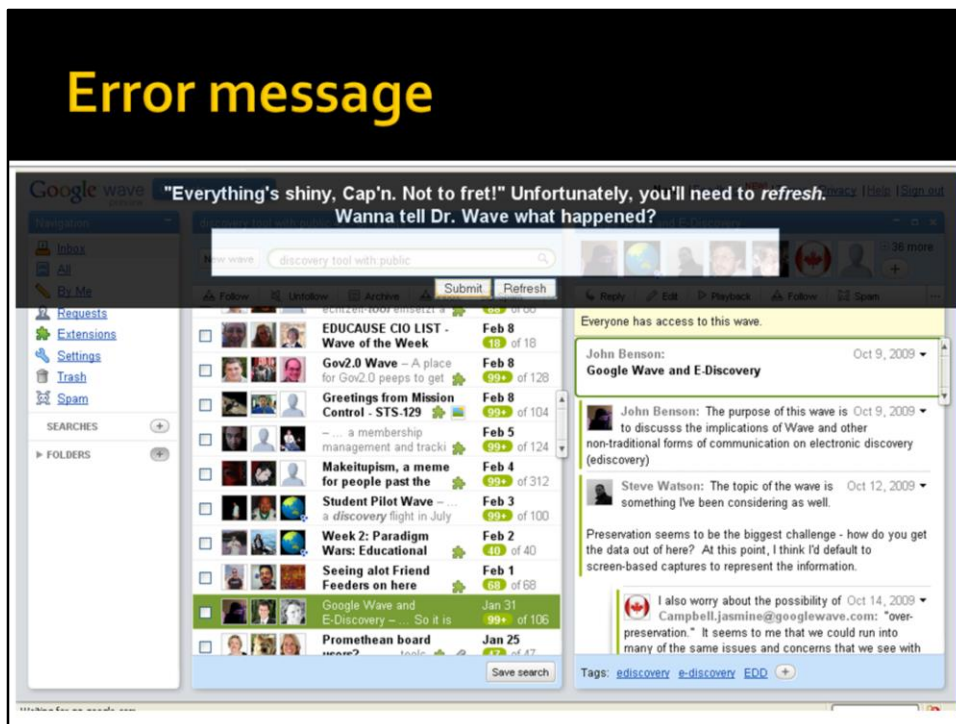
What are some of the best aspects of Google Wave?

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 reduces email clutter. This was one of the best parts of using it with a task force.

Drawbacks of Google Wave

- Large waves can become unwieldy and hard to read—no way to sort
- Can't print or export wave
- Public waves quickly become unfocused
- Still in limited release – invitation needed to get a Wave account
- Buggy—freezes up/error messages

Google Wave isn't without its drawbacks. Large waves can quickly 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.