

Instant Messaging @ Your Library

Option 1: Bronze

Bronze: IM aggregator software without all the widget mumbo-jumbo.

Step 1: Register accounts with AOL, Hotmail, Yahoo, Gmail, and other IM services of your choice.

Step 2: Choose the aggregator that best fits your library's needs.

The upside	The downside
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It's free!• Minimum technical expertise required• Allows patrons to add you to their buddy lists• Incorporates SMS (text messaging)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Patrons are required to download IM software if they don't have it• Low visibility of the services necessitates more aggressive promotion• Each aggregator has a different learning curve• Little to no tech support from the software manufacturers• Some aggregators are not Web 2.0 compatible, such as Trillian, which doesn't have a Gmail option

Instant Messengers:

- AIM - America Online's Instant Messenger
<http://www.aim.com>
- Windows Live - Microsoft's Instant Messenger
<http://download.live.com/?sku=messenger>
- Yahoo Messenger
<http://messenger.yahoo.com/>
- GTalk - Google's Instant Messenger
<http://www.google.com/talk/>

Aggregators:

- **Trillian**-<http://www.ceruleanstudios.com>
- **Pidgin**-<http://www.pidgin.com/im>
- **Meebo**-<http://www.meebo.com>
- **Digsby**-<http://wiki.digsby.com/doku.php?id=gettingstarted>

Karen Long
kblong@infoway.org