

Adding Google Gadgets To IBM Connections 3 Is Easy!

By [Chuck Connell](#)

Recently I looked into adding a Google gadget as a widget within IBM Connections. I found a fair number of articles and blog posts on the topic, but many of them made the process seem frighteningly complicated. The recommendations included the use of Eclipse IDE for Java EE; the creation of a WAR (web archive) file; layers of XML, Javascript and JSP; details of the IBM iWidget specification; and deploying the widget as a Websphere application, with no instructions for how to do this.

I understand that complex software, by nature, has complex solutions. But when something ought to be simple, it bothers me to find complicated answers. All I wanted to do was take a known, working Google gadget and make it available within Connections 3. It seemed to me there ought to be a simple way to do this.

It turns out this *is* simple. Here's how:

1. Make a copy of a short XML template.
2. Get the URL of the gadget from Google's gadget library.
3. Edit the XML file to include the gadget URL.
4. Copy the XML file to a folder on the Connections server where users can see it.

Here is the XML template, which meets the IBM iWidget specification required by Connections:

```
<iw:iwidget name="Example"
  xmlns:iw="http://www.ibm.com/xmlns/prod/iWidget">
  <iw:content mode="view">
    <![CDATA[
      <iframe scrolling="auto" width="100%" height="NNN" frameborder="0"
        src="url-of-google-gadget">
      </iframe>
    ]]>
  </iw:content>
</iw:iwidget>
```

To get the URL of a Google gadget:

1. Go to www.google.com/ig/directory?synd=open.
2. Press the button “Add to your webpage” below the gadget you want.
3. Set no title and no border – this will look better in Connections. Set the height and width as you want.
4. Press the button “Get the code”. The URL will appear below.

Here is a finished iWidget XML file for the Google weather gadget. I copied the XML template and named it GoogleWeather.xml. I edited the widget name on the first line and the frame height on the fifth line (to match the gadget height), then inserted the gadget URL on the sixth line.

```
<iw:iwidget name="GoogleWeather"
  xmlns:iw="http://www.ibm.com/xmlns/prod/iWidget">
  <iw:content mode="view">
    <![CDATA[
      <iframe scrolling="auto" width="100%" height="330" frameborder="0"
src="http://www.gmodules.com/ig/ifr?url=http://hosting.gmodules.com/ig/gadget
s/file/109162539679639397174/weather.xml&amp;up_location=Chicago&amp;up_scale
=F&amp;up_icons=Google&amp;up_title=Chicago&amp;synd=open&amp;w=250&amp;h=330
&amp;title=&amp;border=%23ffffff%7C3px%2C1px+solid+%23999999">
      </iframe>
    ]]>
  </iw:content>
</iw:iwidget>
```

(You need to be a little careful about inserting the gadget URL. You want the string that starts with the first “**http**” and ends with last argument to the gadget. The code you get from the gadget library may include “<**script**>” at the start and “**;output=js**</**script**>” at the end, but do not use these.)

To install the widget where Connections users can see it:

1. Go to the “home” directory for the HTTP software of your Connections server, typically c:\IBM\HTTPServer\htdocs\.
2. Create a subfolder named “widgets”.
3. Put the XML file in the widgets subfolder.

The URL for the widget is now http://your-connections-server/widgets/widget-name.xml. For my test on my server, this is http://connections.chc-3.local/widgets/GoogleWeather.xml.

To enable the widget for the Connections home page:

1. Log on to the Connections home page using an administrator account.
2. Click on the Administration tab.
3. Press the button “Add another widget” below the list of disabled widgets.
4. Enter a title and the URL for the widget (such as the example above), and check the box “display on the widgets tab”.
5. Press the “Save” button at the bottom.
6. Select the new widget from the list of disabled widgets, and then press the “Enable” button.

Users can now add the widget to their home page by going to the Widgets tab and pressing the “Customize” button.

For more information, see the links below.

A blog by Sunil Patil that was helpful:

http://wpcertification.blogspot.com/2011_05_01_archive.html

iWidget developers guide:

<http://www-10.lotus.com/ldd/lcwiki.nsf/dx/development-guide>

iWidget primer:

<http://public.dhe.ibm.com/software/dw/lotus/mashups/developer/iwidget-primer-v1.0.pdf>

iWidget programming guide:

http://public.dhe.ibm.com/software/dw/lotus/mashups/developer/iWidgetProgrammingGuide_20081020.pdf

Full iWidget 1.0 spec:

<http://public.dhe.ibm.com/software/dw/lotus/mashups/developer/iwidget-spec-v1.0.pdf>

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