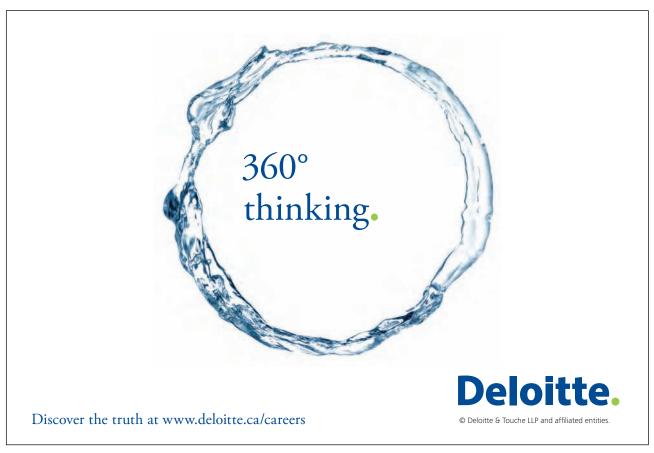# Section II: Moving on to the Cloud

8 iGoogle

In the first chapter we learned how to make the Google homepage more attractive by changing the background. It does not stop there. You can in fact, customize your Home page further, by using the Google product **iGoogle**. iGoogle allows you to personalize your homepage with the help of a lot of gadgets. The search bar remains on top of course, but the other gadgets on your home page tremendously improve access to information or activities about your favourite things. You can get your mail, news feed, weather forecast etc without leaving your homepage.

8.1 Setting Up iGoogle

On your Google homepage there is a setting icon in the shape of a gear from where you can choose **iGoogle** from the dropdown menu. This opens a new window titled '**Create your own homepage in under 30 seconds**' as shown in figure 8.1 below.
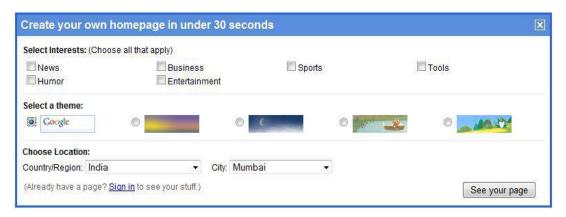
Figure 8.1 Setting up iGoogle Home Page

Choose some interests out of the options, select a theme and then enter your country and city. Your iGoogle page is created instantly and you can have a look at it using the '**See your page**' button. Before we go further, just know that you can switch to the plain vanilla version of Google called the "**classic view**" anytime by using the settings icon.

Figure 8.2 A Customised iGoogle Home Page

The customised iGoogle Home page looks something like that shown in figure 8.2 above. However you can customise it further by using the edit features available in iGoogle. The page extends well below what you see in the figure and has a lot more content. On the left hand side you can see the Home tab, which contains the navigation for all the gadgets on your page. You can edit this tab by clicking on the down arrow on the right side.

Figure 8.3 Drop Down Menu

The dropdown menu as seen in the figure 8.3 has the options to edit the Home tab, share the tab with a friend (you need to be signed in) or you can add a tab. The '**Edit this tab**', leads to the iGoogle settings page. Here you can delete all the gadgets that you do not want on your page, add more gadgets and also change the theme and layout of your iGoogle homepage.

Please note that the option to change the theme as well as the option to **Add gadgets** is also available on the right side of your iGoogle home page, so you do not have to go to settings every time you want to add a gadget.

When you first start out, all the gadgets appear under the **Home** tab. You can categorize and organize your gadgets by creating more tabs and putting the gadgets in those tabs.

8.2   Adding Gadgets

Adding Gadgets is simple and you can choose from a variety of gadgets available. As shown in figure 8.4, the available gadgets are organized into categories, which are displayed on the left side and the gadgets corresponding to the category selected are displayed on the right side of the page. By default, "**All categories"** are displayed and you can choose the category you want. You can thus search for the gadgets that you want on your iGoogle homepage. When you have found what you are interested in, click on the **Add it now** button under the gadget and it would be added to the **Home** tab. Thereafter move the gadget under the appropriate tab.

Remember that some gadgets like the *Gmail* gadget and the *C*hat gadget may require you to be logged in to function the way they are supposed to.
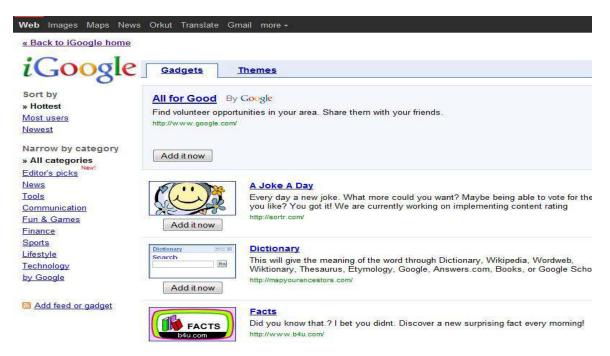
Figure 8.4 Adding Gadgets in iGoogle Home Page

8.3   Editing the Gadgets

All the gadgets have the provision to be edited independently and you have the options to *edit the gadget*, *delete the gadget, share the gadget, minimise the gadget. T*here is also an option *You might also like*, which will show you more gadgets similar to the one which you are on or ones which other people using the current gadget are also using. On the edit page you can also manage your tabs and personal information.

8.4 Adding Feeds

You can also add feeds from your favourite sites. The feed will look like any other Google gadget and will give you real time updates from the site. Adding a feed is similar to what has already been explained earlier in the Google Reader chapter and you just need to provide the feed URL.

Using iGoogle lets you have everything on the same page, right from the Google Search bar, Gmail, Calendar, news feeds, weather, time and anything else of interest to you and you don't have to keep opening and closing pages every now and then.