

LFN Study Day Web 2.0 ~ what it can do for you?

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On a bright, clear November morning, at the RCN HQ in London, the 2009 LFN Study Day got off to a good start with an unexpectedly humorous look at the increasing up take of web 2.0 applications in the realm of information delivery, by Peter Godwin of University of Bedfordshire.

Peter Godwin: University of Bedfordshire

Web 2.0 – where next? An overview of the past 3 years, and a glimpse into the future.

“The walls of the library have gone, but the library hasn’t, it’s now where you want it to be”.

Using this statement as a starting point, Peter gave a contextual overview of the advent of web 2.0, its recent developments/challenges, and its impact on learning environments, and what it means to us, the librarians, before considering the potential of future developments.

With the increased use of tablets, iphones, laptops and mobile devices for accessing RSS feeds, wikis, blogs, mashups, podcasting, tagging, vodcasting, flickr, delicious, MySpace YouTube, instant messaging etc. the question of information literacy came to the fore.

The extent of the social media landscape that he presented was astonishing, considering we all use, or are at least aware of the extent of these platforms it was somewhat alarming to see them displayed thus.

We were asked to consider... "Is Google making us stupid? What the internet is doing to our brains" a quote from Nicholas Carr, and to see Anne Welsh's article on Twitter/blogs.

Every day there is new technological development to cope with existing technological innovations, e.g. TweetDeck for organising Twitter (<http://www.tweetdeck.com/>) and Medpedia, a health libraries wiki. (<http://www.medpedia.com/>) Skills are increasing with use, especially those of librarians who can not avoid this realm; even patients have a wiki. Also, Peter reminded us, we have to consider how web 2.0 is being used globally, e.g. in India they mainly use web 2.0 through mobile devices, only 23% use the internet, and this pattern is expected to increase globally over the next three years. Peter's talk was laced with many pertinent quotes, e.g. "this is fast becoming the revolution that no one noticed", and "Mobile Libraries are not what they used to be" (Alan Livingston see <http://tinyurl.com/l4ktup>)

For me though, the most vital element of this presentation was the following statement:

“We, the librarians, Information specialists etc. need to brand ourselves, and quick, to avoid anonymity”.

What needs to be considered is:

- Personal v professional: web 2.0 boundaries are easily blurred; it is important to be aware of where you are speaking from, and who you are speaking to and for
- Filtering needs are developing: the glut of information demands filtering platforms, for example TweetDeck
- Time management: even if you spent every moment of your life on these applications you would still not be able to grasp everything; therefore scanning takes the place of reading, and information literacy comes to the fore

The talk wound to a close by looking at the statement

“Librarians are the Pharmacists of knowledge”; leaving me wondering if that would be a suitable analogy?

Matt Hunt: Royal College of Nursing

“Wikis”

Matt started his talk by summing up Knowledge Management as “receiving, and getting the right information to the right people, at the right time”.

The main element of his talk was “wiki working, and collaborative work spaces”. Among the areas of discussion, he made a case for widgets, and suggested that “anyone can do it – programming is no longer needed; you just register and set up in half an hour, and with Google it’s free”.

We looked at Wikinomics, a word that has become synonymous with the book by Don Tapscott and Anthony Williams; or should that be the other way round?

- IKM wiki information sharing see <http://www.ikm.com/> and <http://sites.google.com>
- Wikis = collaboration, team pages, wiki patterns: see Clay Shirkey’s book, ‘Here Comes Everybody’

Many of us may have developed, or may be considering developing a wiki. Matt mentioned that the hundreds of wiki apps now available, for example see www.wikimatrix.org Wikimatrix provide weblinks and demos, as well as useful platforms such as ‘Atlassian’ for questionnaires/training surveys, and RSS feeds/alerts.

Matt highlighted the fact that “Librarians need to ensure the future is evenly/equally distributed; they need strategic plans”, he reminded us that users are producers as much as users, and that being gatekeepers is not enough.

Finally, we were asked to consider, is there a ‘knowing/doing’ gap? i.e. are learning environments following league tables? If

so, how does it resolve an issue, and are collaborative technologies the answer??

The slides from this presentation (which are available on the LFN website) include further information on this topic including a Knowledge Management model.

Professor Gilly Salmon: University of Leicester

“I Pod, therefore I am... Creating Pedagogical Podcasting”

Professor Salmon provided a valuable contribution to the Study Day from the academic sector, and in many ways pre-empted learning platforms of the future, for all sectors.

She opened her talk with “taking the university into the 21st century”, and a look at how pedagogy, generally, was changing with the advances in technology. (Professor Salmon’s tenure was to look at ways of applying new technologies to the learning environment, for which she co-created Media Zoo with Palitha Edirisingha). <http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/beyond-distance-research-alliance/mediazoo>

I first learnt of Professor Salmon via The IMPALA (Informal Mobile Podcasting And Learning Adaptation) project which started in 2006 as a collaborative project of the University of Leicester, University of Gloucestershire, University of Nottingham and Kingston University, to “investigate the impact of podcasting on student learning and how the beneficial effects can positively be enhanced”. IMPALA is funded by the Higher Education Academy under its eLearning research strand of the

student learning experience. For more information see

<http://www2.le.ac.uk/projects/impala>

Within the NHS e-learning is being developed at a phenomenal rate and is seen as the method of choice for continuing professional development. See also Electronic Virtual Patients <http://www.virtualpatients.eu/> and (CETL) Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning <http://www.cetl.org.uk/>

Professor Salmon stressed the power of audio - of the human voice - to change the mode of communication, and suggested that "behaviours have to change". The University of Leicester has introduced Sony e-book readers for its distance learning students; these are sent out with the entire course material to all distance learners, bridging many of the access problems typically experienced by this group. Podcasting was suggested as the easiest technology to use, and therefore the most successful, as it saves an immense amount of time. For more information Professor Salmon suggested looking at iTunesU, (www.itunesU.com) for an idea of how future NHS CPD modules might be delivered. It was acknowledged that "transition will never be seamless" and that it was all down to:

- Attitude and behaviour
- Peer Learning
- Confidence

Out of interest, most students listen to podcasts on average up to 12-30 times when revising. They are perfect for learning on the go, gym, travel etc. and are obviously a practical solution for 'distance learning'.

While much of this academic approach to the changing ways of learning left me wondering what this has to do with health professionals, the analogies are becoming increasingly evident, and relevant to the changing possibilities of NHS CPD learning practice.

More information about the ongoing work and research in this area at the University of Leicester is available at:

[http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/beyond-distance-research-alliance:](http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/beyond-distance-research-alliance)

Jenny Evans, Lawrence Jones and Andrew Regan: Imperial College

“Learning 2.0 @ Imperial College”

This session reported on how Liaison Librarians at Imperial College London planned, devised and delivered a web 2.0 training programme for library staff. They called this training “Learning 2.0” and had high level support for the project from the University’s e-Strategy Director. The training was delivered using a mixture of self paced learning, drop in sessions and workshops.

Prior to the start of the programme attendees were asked to assess their skill level with a variety of web 2.0 applications, (virtual worlds, social networking, online media, online tools, social bookmarking, RSS, wikis, blogs and instant messaging). The same exercise was repeated at the end of the training programme and skills levels had increased in all but one area,

the most notable increases were in using online tools, wikis and blogs.

The speakers gave interesting feedback and what worked and what was less successful about Learning 2.0. To make the project work they suggest getting the timing right, getting management on board and having a dedicated and enthusiastic team delivering the training were important.

More information about Learning 2.0 including quotes from attendees at the programme, a detailed timeline and ideas about transferring Learning 2.0 from a higher education setting to the NHS are available in the speakers' slides which can be viewed on the LFN website: <http://www.cilip.org.uk/lfn>

Lyn Robinson: City University London

"Effective Communication – Getting Your Message Across"

The main thrust of Dr Lyn Robinson's talk centred on effective communication in the use of social media technologies, e.g. Twitter, and their increasing use within the professions and academia. We were reminded of how easy it can be to lose sight of what we are trying to achieve, or to communicate, by our increasing obsession and submersion in these developing technologies and their emerging platforms; in the process, the following considerations can easily be overlooked:

- Varied audience
- Compose clear message

- Understand where to find them (audience)
- Build a reputation
- Grow a network, to gain information as well as disseminate it.

Demonstrating her own experiences of using Twitter in a work-based setting, Lyn acknowledged that there is no one particular answer as to how to go about effective utilisation, as the context, and requirements frequently differ. However, it is helpful to keep in mind that "Lib 2.0 is in constant and purposeful change".

Some of the characteristics of Twitter's brevity:

- Timeline: Twitter will not wait for you, it is not email, it is in the here and now
- Public time: it is a database of real time communication and information, so remember to save

Utilisation:

- Split Twitter feeds to blogs, email, and other platforms
- Selective Twitter status: you can keep your tweets private
- Professional versus personal: it is vital to remember which hat you are wearing

Under the heading, 'What the hash tag?' the benefits of using hash tags, and their ability to harness users was addressed. The speed with which valuable, relevant information is made available through this medium makes it impossible to ignore. A

useful, topical application would be to create an RSS feeds e.g. for latest Swine Flu updates. There are other endless examples of relevance to practitioners, lecturers and librarians/knowledge managers.

The breadth of supporting material on these topics continues to grow, see:

"Understanding Health Care Information" by Lyn Robinson, published by Facet and released in January 2010.

"Twittering in Health Science Libraries" by Colleen Cuddy

UCSF Library http://twitter.com/ucsf_library (a library using Twitter with over 770 followers)

UCL government funded survey, (Potts, H) "Design Rules and web 2.0: Mismatched models of how people use the Internet for Healthcare" [Online] <http://eprints.ucl.ac.uk/16141/1/16141.pdf> (Accessed 28th February 2010).

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Conclusion

In choosing this subject for this year's study day, the LFN Committee were aware of its current popularity, indeed, we wondered if it needed further coverage, therefore, rather than a talk about what web 2.0 is, we placed the emphasis on where it is now, how it is developing and being used, and how it can be

harnessed for the benefit of the health information sector. All the talks addressed this amply, resulting in a study day that was from all accounts “both interesting and inspiring”.

Peter Godwin’s opening statement “**We, the librarians, information specialists etc. need to brand ourselves, and quick, to avoid anonymity**”, perhaps sums up the intrinsic necessity for engaging with this media, if we are to stay ahead of the game, and be valued as a vital part of the changing information society. In the words of Lyn Robinson, “Lib 2.0 is in constant and purposeful change”, hence we need to know, not only about it, but to use it, to our benefit.

Additional input from Phillip Barlow (Imperial College) and Sarah Kevill (University of Stirling)

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http://vig.pearsoned.com/store/product/1,1207,store-12521_isbn-0205673309,00.html and

<http://www.pearsonhighered.com/showcase/levinson1e/>

and sample chapter 8 – Twitter:

http://www.pearsonhighered.com/showcase/levinson1e/assets/levinson_ch8.pdf (All sites accessed 25th February 2010)

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