

Innovations in academic libraries applying Web 2.0 tools and social networking sites

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ABSTRACT

The use of Web 2.0 tools has grown considerably in the education sector in the recent past. Web 2.0 tools are internet based services which include social networking sites, blogging sites, podcasting, wikis and RSS. Social network could be a group consisting of individuals having interactions with each other, bonded by sentiments having common goal. Social network allows professionals to exchange information, opportunities and ideas. Libraries have to integrate several technologies in their services in order to attract the user. Social media is becoming more and more a must for libraries and many libraries are finding that when used properly it can be a great tool to save money and promote library services and collections. Applications of Web 2.0 technologies in libraries will result in a meaningful and substantive change in libraries, its collection, services and methods of delivery of services. The library's services will change, focusing more on the facilitation of information transfer and information literacy rather than providing controlled access to it. This paper discusses the application of these tools in academic libraries.

Keywords: *Web2.0 tools, Academic Libraries, Social Networking Sites in Libraries, Innovation in Libraries, Facebook in Libraries*

INTRODUCTION

The trend of social networking on the web began with people wanting to reconnect with lost school friends. Then it expanded to sharing messages, music, and videos with people sharing their culture and life interests. Social network could be a group consisting of individuals having interactions with each other, bonded by sentiments having common goal. Social networking is the grouping of individuals into specific groups, like small rural communities or a neighborhood subdivision. Some social networks have additional features, such as the ability to create groups that share common interests or affiliations, upload or stream live videos and hold discussions in forums.

Social network allows professionals to exchange information, opportunities and ideas. Professionals are able to stay informed with new knowledge about their field. Social networking sites (SNS) could enable librarians and end users not only to interact, but to share and exchange resources dynamically in an electronic medium. Users can create accounts with the library network, see what other users have in common to their information needs, recommend resources to one another, and the network recommends

resources to users, based on similar profiles, demographics, previously-accessed sources, and a host of data that users provide.

Social networking service focuses on building online communities of people who are interested in exploring the interests and activities of others. Facebook is one of the most popular SNS with over 2 million members from every corner of the globe. The Oxford (2010) defines social networking as the use or establishment of social networks or connections; the use of websites which enable users to interact with one another, find and contact people with common interest, etc. Boyd and Ellison(2007) define social networking as web based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi public profile within a bounded system and articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection.

In the year 1955, "classmates.com" was founded. After which, in 1997 the "six degrees of separation" was founded. The next one to be found was "circle of friends" in the year 1999. Following which "Friendster.com" and "Myspace.com" was founded in the year 2002 and 2003 respectively. The very famous then, "Orkut.com" was found in 2004, and just a while after, in the same year, "Facebook.com" was found, followed by "yahoo! 360" in 2005. The varied social networking tools are increasingly used by individuals of all ages but are especially popular among young people and college students. Due to high use among these two groups, many academic libraries advocate using these new social platforms to reach out to student populations (Farkas, 2007; Mathews, 2007; Mathews, 2006; Milstein, 2009). Libraries, too, have to integrate several technologies in their services in order to attract the users.

Definition

According to Wikipedia, social media are primarily internet based tools for sharing and discussing information among. It is as a result of its concepts that have led to the development and evolution of web based communication, hosted services and applications such as SNS, Video sharing sites, blogs, wikis, Podcast, IM and RSS.

One of the primary uses of Facebook by libraries is to market the library to the library fan page. By linking to the library's website, the Facebook page acts as a portal to the library. Libraries advertise services, working hours, location and website information.

Social media is a shift in how people discover, read and share news, information and content. It's a fusion of sociology and technology transforming monologue into dialog and is the democratization of information, transformation people from content readers into publishers.

Web 2.0 has evolved because people want to use the internet with other people. In a Web 2.0 environment it is possible to put a document up onto the web and, using a web based word processor, all the colleagues can make changes to it (which can be seen and rolled back if necessary) there and then. So, not only is the actual document itself shared, but the application (the word processor) is shared on the web as well. It has evolved into a dynamic, interactive and collaborative platform that facilitates exchange of knowledge and information amongst its users. Sharing of ideas, communities, groups and pages are set up to invite like-minded people to join in. Ideas and opinions are shared with a global perspective, which otherwise would not have been possible. Social media is becoming

more and more a must for libraries and many libraries are finding that when used properly it can be a great tool to save money and promote library services and collections.

Delicious (Del.icio.us) is a social bookmarking site founded in 2003. It allows its users to bookmark any content they find online, tag that content, and then share it with other users. Users can search for bookmarks or browse for them via tags. Delicious also allows users to view the most popular content among other users, as well as up-and-coming content, not unlike most social news sites. (Shivalingaiah and Naik, 2011)

Facebook started out as a Harvard-only social network back in 2004. It quickly expanded to other schools, then to high schools, businesses and eventually everyone (by 2006). In 2008, Facebook became the most popular social networking site, surpassing MySpace, and continues to grow. The likes of Facebook and Twitter are loaded with the information. Links are shared news spreads like wildfire and ideas are exchanged.

Friendster was the first modern, general social network. Founded in 2002, Friendster is still a very active social network, with over 90 million registered users and 60+ million unique visitors each month. Ninety percent of Friendster traffic comes from Asia (Friendster).

FriendFeed was launched in 2007 and recently purchased by Facebook. It allows the integration of online activities in one place (Twitter, RSS feeds, and Flickr, among others). Users can be an individual business or organization. It is also a social network in its own right, with the ability to create friends lists, post updates, and communication (Shivalingaiah and Naik, 2011).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In a case study by Seckor (2005) for the London School of Economics and Political Science, the use of Facebook amongst librarians was studied. Many librarians have joined Facebook for purely social reasons but the application can overlap into the professional world for promotion of library related events. Seckor also noted that Facebook has a number of related tools, such as search tools, UK and Irish Academic and National library catalogue (COPAC, 2008), US based online system for archiving academic journals (JSTOR, 2008) as well as various other tools that allow virtual bookshelves or resource lists to be shared with others (Seckor, 2005).

Libraries also create event invitations for programs as an additional forum to promote library activities (Chu and Meulemans, 2008). Facebook provides marketing tool for the services available to students at their library. Luo (2010) presents a survey study investigating how students in an online MLIS program use social networking websites to socialize with their peers and to develop a professional network. The article discusses the need to create a school-wide strategic and policies for social networking in higher education and the role of academic libraries (Gollan and Linda, 2011). Click and Petit (2010) discussed free online librarians for use with library information and information literacy training, with a focus on social media and web 2.0 technologies, including social networking websites Facebook and Twitter, blogs, RSS, wikis and video sharing. Many students already use these technologies and are readily engaged with the library when the technologies are incorporated into library websites and classes.

Jain, V.

Bradley (2007) has highlighted how web 2.0 tools can be used for enhancing library services. Libraries can now easily collaborate and create online communities, as well as explore new ways in which to communicate with, educate and attract new users and also to market themselves. Applications of Web 2.0 technologies in libraries will result in a meaningful and substantive change in libraries, its collection, services and methods of delivery of services. The library's services will change, focusing more on the facilitation of information transfer and information literacy rather than providing controlled access to it (Arora, 2009). Kulkarni, Ghosekar, and Katkar (2010) highlights various blogs available today for wide spread of information to cope with the ever changing information needs of stakeholders in the digital era. This paper posits how Web 2.0 is impacting on library to transform libraries to library 2.0 with the use of blogs. Blogs can be used as library information publicity and feedback tool.

Vasantha and Harinarayana (2008) made an attempt to evaluate the library websites of top science universities for their design features with special reference to 'usability'. The guidelines suggested by National Cancer Institute have been applied to measure the usability features of the selected websites. Kalra and Verma (2011) observed that the content and information available on the library websites are not up to the mark. The most serious and widespread objections against information found on the library websites are variations in terminology related to website quality and evaluation; lack of adopting multilevel approaches/methodologies for evaluating the library websites; and absence of established standard mechanism to have users' feedback of website design. Literature shows that the use of social networking and web 2.0 tools in the libraries is increasing in recent years. These tools may be used by the libraries for personalizing outreach services. The application of these tools may help libraries to offer their resources and services to the users in a proactive manner.

USE OF WEB 2.0 TOOLS IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Web 2.0 has created new ways of working, including opening up new opportunities in learning and teaching that have not been possible on a large scale before. With Web 2.0 data sharing the web also becomes a platform for social software that enables groups of users to socialize, collaborate, and work with each other. Applications of Web 2.0 technologies in libraries will result in a meaningful and substantive change in libraries, its collection, services and methods of delivery of services. The library's collection will change, becoming more interactive and fully accessible. The library's services will change, focusing more on the facilitation of information transfer and information literacy rather than providing controlled access to it.

Increased collaboration between librarians at more than one institution as well as between faculty and librarians will occur due to social media tools that make this possible. Libraries in India are slowly catching up with the paradigm shifts that resulted by the impact of web 2.0 on web based library service in developed countries. Maharshi Dayanand College of Arts, Science and Commerce library (<http://library.mdcollege.in/>) has recently started the facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/mdclibrary>) to attract more readers to the library. The library also started blog (<http://mdcollegelibrary.blogspot.in/>) to give latest updates, current affairs, academic news , etc. to attract the young college students in academic environment. Blogs can also be used as a feedback tool to evaluate the effectiveness of the library service. The users are free to express their views with the

library staff through the blogs (<http://slfaisal.wordpress.com>) and that will help the library to improve their services. The library can carry this as an added service and increase its outreach among students and teachers.

Virtual reference is already offered at many libraries. New trends and offerings in the social media world make this more practical than before. Whether it is installing an Instant Chat application on a Facebook fan page using a live video site or other free applications available through social media, virtual reference is more doable and approachable in the coming years.

Table 1: Application of Web 2.0 tools in Library and Information Science

Web 2.0 Tools	Library Application
Wikis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social interaction and discussion among the librarians and users • Reference resources wiki can be built for FAQs
Blogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As discussion forum • Serve as a platform where the user can file their queries and suggestions regarding the services and activities of the library.
Podcasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It enables librarians to share information with anyone at any time. • Podcasting can be a publishing tool for marketing of library and library products.
Social Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For building network among the interested group in discussing the common interest. • User content can be added to the library catalogue, including users book review or other comments • Social networking could enable librarians and end users to interact, share and change resources dynamically in an electronic medium.
Tagging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tagging can be applied to the LIS for editing the subject headings from user point of view and thereby enhancing the indexing and relevancy of the searches, making the collection more dynamic.
RSS [Really Simple Syndication]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Librarians can subscribe to RSS from the sources for compiling their customized alerts. • Promotes events organized in the library for library users. • Integrating library services through RSS feeds. • Enhance library instruction for different web 2.0, library 2.0, blogs, wikis, RSS, tagging, podcasting, IM programs by integrating appropriate resources.
You Tube	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It can be used as publishing tool for marketing of library and library products.
IM [Instant Messaging]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online meetings • For providing virtual reference service • Librarian can send text, video, audio files such as library instruction files, ready reference etc. • Instant clarifications for the queries from end users

CONCLUSION

Social media provide a shift in how people discover, read and share news, information and content. It is a fusion of sociology and technology transforming monologue into dialog and is the democratization of information, transformation people from content readers into publishers. The use of Web 2.0 tools and applications will constitute a meaningful and

substantive change in the history of libraries. The library collection will become more interactive and fully accessible. We need to become Web 2.0 savvy ourselves, using new tools where appropriate, to promote library services. With Web 2.0 technologies the academic libraries can build their user communities on the net, so that the users can join the community and share knowledge overcoming all the limitations of communications that existed earlier. The Library should start short term course on Web 2.0 tools for the students and the faculty members.

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librarians in Malaysia: a preliminary study

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ABSTRACT

The present article is a preliminary study of a study aiming to explore the perceptions of academic librarians in Malaysia on the use of social networking sites and other Web 2.0 tools. The study is designed to investigate the use of social networking sites and other Web 2.0 tools among academic librarians in Malaysia. The study is part of a larger study titled "Social Networking Tools: Social Bookmarking and Social Tagging" conducted by the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology, Universiti Teknologi Kuala Lumpur. The study is designed to investigate the use of social networking sites and other Web 2.0 tools among academic librarians in Malaysia. The study is part of a larger study titled "Social Networking Tools: Social Bookmarking and Social Tagging" conducted by the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology, Universiti Teknologi Kuala Lumpur. The study is designed to investigate the use of social networking sites and other Web 2.0 tools among academic librarians in Malaysia.

Keywords: Academic librarians, social networking sites, information technology, Malaysia, library services, library networks

INTRODUCTION

The term social media and Web 2.0 technology is widely and interchangeably used and happens a range of other terms related. Korte and Harrison (2008) defined it as "the use of the internet to allow people to publish online content and to interact with other users of Web 2.0 technology". They defined social networking, bookmarking and tagging as media used to facilitate sharing and discovery of online resources. The terms social networking, bookmarking and tagging are used interchangeably to refer to social networking tools (e.g. Facebook, MySpace) and tagging tools (e.g. Del.icio.us, Delicious, Dribbble).