

Chapter 1

Introduction: making the connections

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It's time to stop boring our users with conducted tours of our libraries, earnest library guides, and endless demonstrations of those arcane databases that we love so much. Something has happened. Our users have new mindsets and new expectations. Our information role has spread from buildings and collections to encompass the whole electronic world. Users are creating phenomenal amounts of content individually and collaboratively on the web. We have to recognize the importance of this new landscape in the content we teach. More fundamentally, we now have a new range of tools available to help us transform our teaching into something which is both more fun and more engaging for our users. This is the challenge of Web 2.0 to information literacy (IL). In this introductory chapter we shall investigate why we wrote a book on such a volatile subject, and consider:

- how this affects what we consider to be information literacy
- why we think there is such a phenomenon that can be called Web 2.0
- how this impacts on all sectors of the library world
- case studies which showcase the tools in use and look toward the future.

Why a book?

A book concerning such a movable target as the technologies known as Web 2.0 must be risky. As we enthuse about the exciting new open source

tools in perpetual beta available for sharing content on the web, surely it is ironic to do so in a fixed print format? Yet this year there have been a number of excellent guides to Web 2.0 appearing (e.g. Bradley, P. (2007), *How to use Web 2.0 in your Library*, Facet) all in print form. The sheer convenience of print for browsing, review and reference is therefore still demonstrable. We believe that there will be a place for an edited collection of papers to provide you with the background, the definitions, and case studies of those who have blazed the trail in the use of Web 2.0 in relation to information literacy. Our insurance will be a blog to give us the opportunity to add, comment and keep you up to date (*Information Literacy Meets Library 2.0*, at <http://infolitlib20.blogspot.com>).

Background: a new landscape?

We believe we are living at an exciting turning point in the world of information. It is in this context that we should set the discussions in this book. We shall begin by exploring the information explosion, before discussing the web generation, the Web 2.0 phenomenon and IL.

It is a commonplace to say that we are flooded with information. It was around 2000 that what Thomas Friedman in *The World is Flat* (Friedman, 2006) has called Globalisation 3.0 began and one of the major flatteners in this phenomenon was what he calls 'in-forming'; making knowledge easily available everywhere, to everyone, easily. He continues 'Never before in the history of the planet have so many people - on their own - had the ability to find so much information about so many things and about so many people' (Friedman, 2006, 178). Professors Lyman and Varian at the University of California, Berkeley, have estimated that the world creates as much information each year as the entire Library of Congress print collection 37,000 times over (Albanese, 2006). The assumption that what is required is somewhere on the web is all too familiar a tale to librarians. In the OCLC (2005) report on college students' perceptions of libraries and information resources, 89% went to search engines first for information and only 2% to library websites. The report also concluded that there was a problem about the visibility of library services and materials in the new mass information age. When George M. Needham said 'the librarian as high priest is as dead as Elvis' at the Washington 2007 ALA Conference (Jaschik, 2007), he was suggesting that academic librarians need to look critically at their reference desk practice. As Regalado (2007) says, the library is no

longer the prime access point to authoritative information in the age of Google and other search engines. This has caused both consternation and panic among some librarians. However, if we think this over logically, libraries would be totally unable to cope with the millions of questions asked of Google every day. Democratic search is a wonderful thing, and according to Eric Schmidt of Google (quoted in Friedman, 2006, 183), can be ‘empowering for humans like nothing else. It is the antithesis of being told or taught . . . about self-empowerment’. In this new world of empowered searchers, librarians need search engines, even though these seem to be answering the kind of questions we think we used to be answering years ago. In response some librarians and library management systems have sought to build federated search engines which can rival freely available search engines, but users habitually begin and end their searches with Google and the like. Massive programmes of digitization by Google and Microsoft may simply exacerbate the problem of information overload (Mann, 2007) without providing adequate means for organizing and mining content. For centuries our users have been information hunters. Now we all have to adapt to the realities of an information-saturated world, in which everyone has unprecedented access to vast quantities of content. It is the cultural response of the generation which has grown up with the web which is becoming so important in driving change.

The ‘web generation’

This ‘web generation’, ‘internet generation’ or ‘Google generation’, which dates from 1981, has aroused interest because of its apparent capacity not only to cope with, but also to deal successfully with, the challenges of the modern information environment. Librarians have realized that we have first to become familiar with the study behaviour of this new generation if we are to be relevant to them or engage them (Windham, 2006). The following snapshot seeks to capture the searching behaviour of this generation as experienced by librarians in the USA, and increasingly elsewhere in the world:

- Their use of online information and technology appears natural and effortless.
- They expect single search boxes like Amazon and Google, which give instant satisfaction.

- They need our databases to be in their Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) or wherever they want to work.
- They find our databases too difficult and have no interest in learning about Boolean logic.
- They like collaboration, team-working and social networking.
- They navigate the web by trial and error, ignoring manuals and helpsheets.
- Their research is self-directed, and likely to be non-linear, for they are hypertext thinkers. This is because they have grown up with PCs and video games.
- Multitasking is a way of life and people live in a state of ‘continuous partial attention’ (Madden, 2006).
- They think that what is written down and on the web must be correct.
- They work with microcontent: single songs, photos, and blog posts, and are either confused or ignorant about the ethical issues around the content they are using.
- They will cut and paste rather than read and digest what they find.

We must acknowledge that these attributes are stereotypes masking the reality of student bodies which are diverse – full of varying abilities and expectations. These web generation students are not a homogenous group (see Oblinger and Oblinger, 2005, and Kennedy et al., 2006). Some additional indications: the Demos Report (Green and Hannon, 2007) detects a gap between the digital pioneers and most others, and Mitchell (2007) quotes research by I. Hempel which detected significantly more 12- to 26-year-olds as creators, critics and joiners (i.e. Web 2.0 ‘freaks’) than older age groups. This has been described as a divide between ‘digital natives’ and ‘digital immigrants’. Digital natives like to learn using technology: in the EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research (ECAR) Study (Borreson, Caruso and Salaway, 2007), 72% via internet searches, 53.3% via programmes they can control (e.g. video games), 35.1% via text-based communication, and 32% via blogs, wikis, etc. Recently, a National School Boards Association Report (2007) in the USA demonstrated 96% of students with online access used social networking, and 60% of online students discussed educational topics outside school. This points to the potential for use of these tools in a more formal school situation. Nearly half had uploaded pictures and over 20% had uploaded video. However,

their technical knowledge may not be adequate in higher education, and they may lack proficiency in basic academic applications like spreadsheets and statistical packages (Lorenzo et al., 2007). The ECAR Study has been annual and allows longitudinal analysis. From this we learn that participation in social networking leapt from 72.3% in 2006 to 80.3% in 2007. Rating of students' skills using course management systems and presentation software was high and confidence with library online databases considerably lower. We can agree with Head (2007) who concludes: 'Though students clearly had an avid use of MySpace and YouTube, this does not mean college-aged students are natural born researchers.' The reality in 2007 is that their apparent time of search expertise has passed (Regalado, 2007). I have argued elsewhere (Godwin, 2006) that they need encouragement to see across the whole firmament from the Googles, through the gateways, to our hidden databases. The real question is to what extent 'we should move in the direction of the users and how much we should expect users to move in our direction' (McDonald and Thomas, 2006, 6).

Enter Web 2.0

The enthusiasm of the web generation for user content and collaboration compels us to investigate a phenomenon which has been dubbed Web 2.0. This has spawned a whole series of 2.0 subsets, such as Library 2.0, School 2.0, Business 2.0 and so on. But do Web 2.0 and Library 2.0 exist? They have been branded as mere hype (Deschamps, 2007), having reached their peak. By the time you read this, their popularity may even have waned. This does not mean that the activity associated with the Library 2.0 movement will have ended, merely that it may have become mainstream, and be called something else.

What are the characteristics? What makes something 2.0? It's about online applications, interactions and tools which allow individuals to interact, create, and share information using the web as a platform. This can mean that information flows in multiple directions, created and shared by anyone. 'Library 2.0 simply means making your library's space (virtual and physical) more interactive, collaborative, and driven by community needs' (Houghton-John, 2005). This has led to the criticism that this is nothing new, merely what good libraries have always been attempting. The 2.0 world, however, is more volatile in terms of format and function. As we shall see in the analysis by Brian Kelly, in Chapter 2, of the main Web 2.0 tools, there are participatory

content systems like blogs and wikis, social sharing services (e.g. del.icio.us, Slideshare), communication tools (social networking sites, such as Facebook), tagging, mashups (combination of two services) and RSS feeds that act as the glue binding the services together. Together with the Google offerings (Scholar and Book Search), they provide a rich new vein of content alongside Wikipedia and the blogosphere. Considerable excitement has been generated by the potential of these tools. But why? Because they offer us a bridge to the web generation and at the same time give us a whole set of new ways to reach our users, and tools with which to teach them.

How should information literacy librarians respond?

We need to be at the forefront of the 2.0 movement in our libraries, championing the content, and trialling the tools to exploit their teaching potential. How does this affect the curriculum for future librarians? Sheila Webber tackles this question in Chapter 3, explaining that Web 2.0's significance in the development of the web will persist and that familiarity with its tools is best achieved by incorporating them into the delivery of courses. Jo Parker also demonstrates this in her later chapter on TU120 Beyond Google, the latest Open University IL course, which both includes how to use Web 2.0 tools and uses them to deliver the IL message of the course. One of the most common outcomes of the clamour around 2.0 has been the growth of training initiatives to help librarians' continuing professional development. The well-known video on YouTube 'The Machine Is Us/ing Us!' (www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gmP4nk0EOE) emphasized the importance of beginning with *us*. We may ask now: has it ended with *us*? Certainly, in order for librarians to be able to champion the use of these new tools, we have to update and familiarize ourselves first: programmes like Helene Blowers' Learning 2.0: 23 Things, from Charlotte and Mecklenburg County (<http://plcmcl2-things.blogspot.com>) and Meredith Farkas' Five Weeks to a Social Library (www.sociallibraries.com/course) in the USA have become much re-used, adapted and adopted under Creative Commons licences. So the result may so far be a library workforce that is more 2.0 literate, better able to share and communicate. How has this translated into action? Is it solely up to public librarians or do all librarians need to take note?

Library 2.0 is for everyone

The new read/write web, as it is sometimes called, is affecting all sectors. Educators are debating the need to rethink (again) how they teach in schools at all levels; higher education anticipates a seismic change in student expectations; business is grasping the importance of the new culture for socializing, networking, finding links and marketing; and innovative public libraries are seizing the opportunity to reinvent themselves. This last development is being accelerated by the role of public libraries in providing a level playing field for all ages and backgrounds to access electronic information, prompted by increasingly habitual use of digital communication by commerce and officialdom. Public librarians can provide the facilities for people of all ages to both upskill themselves and become better citizens. In doing so public librarians are experimenting with the use of Web 2.0 tools, such as blogs, MySpace and YouTube. These developments are graphically shown in Michelle McLean's chapter, as she documents her own experience as a public librarian in Australia and in her study trip in the USA in April 2007.

Education in schools in Australia, North America and the UK is being shaken by proponents of the Web 2.0 revolution. Arguments over the pedagogical value of blogging and wikis will continue for a long time, but the enthusiasts grasp that their pupils are developing sophisticated communication and time management skills in their use of technological gadgets and services, which should be linked into educational channels. Sometimes teachers are frustrated by the blocking of sites, and tech-savvy students are frustrated by teachers who are ignorant or even afraid of the online landscape, so 'it's time to revisit, rethink, and revise how technology is implemented in the classroom' (Jones, 2007). Markless (2007) suggests that Web 2.0 has not changed the educational debate and that the same issues keep recurring: the emphasis on inquiry-based learning, active learning and peer collaboration. The new learning environment provides new opportunities to share and re-purpose content. School librarians are also now having to wrestle with these new methods of delivery, and how to support them. Judy O'Connell is our chosen expert to stimulate our interest in the potential for Web 2.0 to connect with pupils in 21st-century schools. The multitasking generation about to enter higher education may be demanding learning that is flexible and multimedia. It is in this sector that we have chosen to concentrate our case studies, which we shall detail later in this chapter.

Much has been written of the use of Web 2.0 in the education sector. But we should not overlook the interest now being shown by business. Special libraries may watch with interest how their employers are debating the merits of the new tools to further their corporate goals, whether internal communication or marketing. It is clear from the Economist Intelligence Unit report (2007) that business is beginning to take Web 2.0 technology seriously. As with academic institutions, progress is often hampered by non-co-operation from IT departments, sheltering behind firewalls, considering it no part of their role to provide support, either fearing or resenting the interference of staff from other departments. Web 2.0 is often about experimentation and losing control. MacManus (2007) refers to two recent Forrester Research reports which tend to show this. Blogwithoutalibrary's survey (Etches-Johnson, 2007), which included corporate, government and law libraries, revealed that 73% of these used RSS, 60% blogs, 46% wikis, 26% instant messaging and 33% social bookmarking. Recently there has been considerable controversy about social networking sites, particularly Facebook, with some firms even banning its use. Tredinnick (2006) sees the possibility of more democratic use of information in organizations, for example, through the use of wikis behind firewalls. This gives librarians here opportunities for experimentation and it suggests that business students need to become familiar with new tools in their studies, in preparation for application both at home and in the office.

From hype to pedagogy

All new fashions are prone to criticism and the 2.0 activity is no exception. That there is nothing new in the central tenets of 2.0 may ring true for user-centred, trend-setting libraries. However it is the juxtaposition of so many of these trends which makes the case for *recognizing* a phenomenon which we can call Library 2.0 more compelling. Much 2.0 activity could be classed as promotional. It has been easy to confuse publicity/promotion with services and particularly instructional material. The need to be where our users are has prompted a lot of discussion and initiatives to push access to them. Should there be links to our databases and catalogue in MySpace or Facebook? Widgets that users can download to their own machine giving easier access to our services are becoming more common, since one of the major reasons that they do not use us can be our lack of visibility. But these are only steps to simpler navigation. As Other Librarian

notes, 'it is a fine line between library services and library promotions' (Deschamps, 2007). How many YouTube videos are purely promotional and how many have some element of pedagogy? The advent of TeacherTube may act as a catalyst to improve this. The education TV programme 'Web Literacy' (www.teachers.tv/video/5425), filmed at Wortley School, Leeds, is an excellent example of what can be produced for school use.

How has Web 2.0 affected information literacy?

As the nature of information is changing, so might what it means to be information literate. Kimmo Tuominen (2007) emphasizes the fluidity of the information landscape (blogs, wikis, etc.) and the erosion of context which can cause change in information practices. Certainly the importance of understanding the context of information found will escalate. Tuominen highlights the need to emphasize sociotechnical filtering systems. These can be positive: including automatic ranking by search engines, personal bookmarks and RSS aggregators, and social bookmarking, wikis and participatory news sites; and negative: including blocking software, e-mail blockers, and lists of spoof sites. I do not intend to get into a debate at this point about the overlapping literacies (e.g. ICT, media, electronic, digital). It is more important to acknowledge several obvious developments.

First, taking into account the extra content now available (wikis, blogs, YouTube, podcasts), some students are already questioning why they have to choose from a limited range in their academic work. Why can they not use video, podcasts, and social networks as sources of information? (Mitchell, 2007). We know that students are using Wikipedia and that some academics have difficulties with this, but we are no more able to prevent this than we are their use of Google. Instead we should be telling students using Wikipedia as a starting point how it is constructed. We should encourage their contributions, and view it as collective intelligence, involving judgement and negotiation.

Second, the need for users to be capable of using many of the Web 2.0 tools will become as important as navigating around the keyboard, word-processing or using the web. Surely such use should simply be seen as underpinning individual IL advancement?

Craig Gibson (2007) sees a convergence of prisms (IL, IT fluency and media education) which can assist learners to make connections from

information that may seem disparate and to call on a breadth of knowledge to inform decisions. Lorenzo and Dziuban (2006) in their conclusion speak of IL as the possible connector of knowledge which can be taught to young children and continue throughout formal education and life. Joyce Valenza (2007) sees 'two threads - information fluency and Web 2.0 - beautifully woven into rich 21st century cloth as teachers and librarians who value inquiry, thinking skills, ethical behaviour, and innovative work hone their craft on a funky and vibrant 21st century loom, with learners as collaborators'. The new thread of Web 2.0 is dynamic and information literacy is a sturdy fibre. If we accept this underpinning and interweaving, then this can be an exciting time for IL teachers.

I believe that this means that the structure of the major IL frameworks is still valid. This is important for library schools, and Sheila Webber demonstrates in her chapter that, for example, the SCONUL Seven Pillars model is quite capable of accommodating Web 2.0. The only likely effects will be in the detailed application of the models, as, for instance, greater emphasis on evaluation (Pillar 5) and wider application of synthesis leading to new knowledge (Pillar 7).

However, we should focus our attention on one rather ancient and several newer models of IL which may accord more closely with the way that students really search. These are all less linear, more flexible and interesting for the 2.0 world. Williams (2007) draws attention to the berry-picking method of information gathering espoused by Bates (1989), where the user gathers information, not necessarily understanding the exact nature of the subject, using various search methods, following links and gathering information like berries in a bucket. This sounds just like the way many users are using the Web, Google, Wikipedia in the 2.0 world. The Net Lenses model (Edwards, 2006a; 2006b), based on phenomenographic research, presents four approaches to searching (looking for a needle in a haystack; finding your way through a maze; using the tools as a filter; panning for gold) that accord well with web generation behaviours. Hilary Hughes' (2006) model of responses and influences in online information use for learning centres upon a plan-act-record-reflect cycle that users will go through once or several times. Users may jump around the phases, backtrack, or start or finish midway. Synergy here can be detected in the way web generation students operate. Blogging and wikis may be ideal to assist the reflective process that is so important to this model. Beeson (2006)

puts the emphasis on the need to inculcate in students ‘a critical and reflexive attitude to information, as they read and write it’, keeping their search object under review, knowing they ‘have to steer through vast seas of information and will have to change course several times on their journey, without losing sight of their overall purpose or interests’.

Using Web 2.0 in the delivery of information literacy

It is in improved delivery of IL that 2.0 offers the greatest challenge. This book is about the early adopters/trend setters from whom other libraries may learn, getting the nuggets they require, ignoring that which doesn’t apply. We intend the case studies to showcase the application of the Web 2.0 tools in the teaching of IL. Stemming from higher education in the UK, US or Canada, they reveal a plethora of innovative approaches that demonstrate both engagement with the web generation and pedagogical value.

Blogs are often cited as powerful agents for reflecting on the individual learning experience (Windham, 2007). We have included a carefully organized experiment at the University of Northampton, ‘Enrage or engage: the blog as an assessment tool’ by Georgina Payne, in which a blog assessment is used with first-year business school students.

Wikis help users to understand how information, and hence perhaps knowledge, is formed, by using the content creation functions in Wikipedia. We learn from experiments at Oregon State University how Wikipedia can be used creatively to foster understanding of how to use material to form a researched argument, in Anne-Marie Deitering’s case study ‘Using Wikipedia to eavesdrop on the scholarly conversation’.

RSS (Really Simple Syndication) enables us to make full use of social software in libraries. Jane Secker and Christopher Fryer of the London School of Economics and Political Science tell us how they use RSS to enhance their training outreach in their case study ‘Information Literacy and RSS feeds at LSE’.

Podcasts seemed a logical development to follow existing web-based teaching methods at Kresge Business Administration Library, Michigan. Jennifer Zimmer and Sally Ziph in ‘Library instruction on the go: podcasting at the Kresge Library’ tell the story of their evolving podcasting and vodcasting services.

The potential of user tagging was spotted early at University of Pennsylvania,

and Laurie Allen and Marcella Barnhart describe how this was used in PennTags, their social bookmarking tool.

Flickr is one of the most popular photo-sharing services currently on the web. The tagging facility can be used to help students appreciate the value of subject searching and understand the differences between natural and controlled vocabularies. Sarah Polkinghorne, University of Alberta, and Cameron Hoffman, Concordia University Libraries, provide a stimulating case study ‘Sparking Flickrs of insight into controlled vocabularies and subject searching’.

YouTube can prove to be a useful resource for locating IL material and Susan Ariew, University of South Florida, explains how her library has employed it to host the instructional videos developed there in ‘Joining the YouTube conversation to teach information literacy’.

In 2006, when the Open University reviewed its first IL course, U120 MOSAIC, it decided that a rewrite was necessary which would introduce Web 2.0 tools to students and also employ them in the delivery of the course. Jo Parker guides us through the process by which this revamped course has become Web 2.0 compliant in ‘Going beyond Google at the Open University’.

Libraries that produce web-based instructional material are always looking at alternative ways to present it. The Assignment Survival Kit (ASK) at Staffordshire University is a good example of this. Alison Pope and colleagues run through the genesis and development of this guide in the case study ‘Using Web 2.0 to enhance the Staffordshire University Assignment Survival Kit’.

What else may be Web 2.0?

Is gaming Library 2.0? Its growing use in libraries has led it to be grouped alongside the usual 2.0 tools and we have decided to include a discussion of it here. There are obvious parallels in its promotion of active learning and usefulness for engaging the web generation. John Kirriemuir, in his chapter entitled ‘Teaching information literacy through digital games’, provides a concise introduction to the use of gaming in libraries and some major projects which involve IL delivery.

Second Life teased us at first: was it a game or something else? Despite being able to mash favourite Web 2.0 tools into Second Life (Cashmore, 2006) we did not see it as essentially Web 2.0 when we set out. We have therefore chosen to keep more in-depth discussion of it until the Conclusion.

What we are learning

Web 2.0 has struck a vital chord with librarians and the enthusiasm which has led to Library 2.0 has again shown how librarians are prepared to be forward looking and to help drive change both institutionally and within society. Both the sectoral chapters and case studies generate a feeling of great excitement and demonstrate a 'can-do' mentality. This may spring from the use of the web as a platform and open source software, which is not dependent on support from IT departments, thus setting librarians free to experiment and develop their good ideas. Costs are usually low, except for staff time, but sustainability of these open source applications carries the risk of replacement by new technologies as they arise. The Web 2.0 mantra allows users to be involved in the continuous process of change, providing feedback and critical evaluation. These bottom-up approaches could inspire and encourage library staff everywhere, but are we ready for them?

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