Original Research Article

Digital Libraries and Web 2.0

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

With the changing scenario in information generation, need, availability and dissemination the libraries' perspective is changing very rapidly. In pandemic situation the need and methods are also changed at large scale at ground level. The different meanings of the phrase "Library 2.0" as it is used in discussions on librarianship, and its relationship to Web 2.0; and the potential uses of social software (e.g. blogs, news feeds, social bookmarking) to enhance interaction with library users are discussed in this paper by the authors.

1. Introduction

We hear the term Library 2.0 used a lot nowadays, in the professional literature and in presentations and discussions. But the term is not used very precisely, and it is sometimes difficult to know exactly what is meant. Walt Crawford (http://citesandinsights.info/civ6i2.pdf) identifies 7 different definitions of Library 2.0, and over 60 different views as to what it means. Other terms with related meaning include: web 2.0; business 2.0; next generation library; enterprise 2.0; and participatory web. Although there are many different detailed viewpoints about the meaning of Library 2.0, the great majority of them say that it is to do with:

1. Continually and purposefully changing the way libraries do things;
2. Giving better services to existing customers, and attracting new users;
3. Improving communication between libraries and users;

4. Encouraging customer participation in the design and delivery of services; and
5. Making good use of new technology and digital information.

Library 2.0 can be defined as:

"Library 2.0 is a model of library service that includes constant, purposeful change and user participation in the creation and maintenance of services, while maintaining a primary goal of extending the library's reach to potential library users." (Michael Casey)

2. Library 2.0 and Web 2.0

Library 2.0 means a library service that: is continually evaluated; changes and adapts to new possibilities; offers users new kinds of services; encourages user participation; and improves communication between users and library staff. Many of these new things are based on the ideas behind Web 2.0. As Michael Casey, the originator of the term 'Library 2.0' says: "The concept of Library 2.0 borrows from that of Web 2.0, and follows some of the same philosophies." Web 2.0 tools will often be the means by which libraries interact with their users, to produce

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the continual user-led improvement which is the center of Library 2.0.

2.1. Social libraries, communicating with users

Web 2.0 is not a single technology, it is a phrase used to describe the multiple ways in which people are using and creating services to manage networked digital information.

The involve

1. Sharing information;
2. Two-way communication
3. Collaboration.

For this reason, Web 2.0 tools are also known as 'social software'. Web 2.0 tools facilitate activities which include:

1. Instant Messaging
2. Shared Authoring (wikis, Google Docs: http://docs.google.com/)
3. Blogging;
4. RSS feeds;
5. Resource Sharing.
6. Social bookmarking (e.g. Delicious: http://delicious.com/)
7. Picture sharing (e.g. Flickr: http://www.flickr.com/)
8. Bibliographic record sharing (e.g. cite-u-like: http://www.citeulike.org/);
9. Sharing catalogue records (e.g. librarything: http://www.librarything.com/); and
10. Video sharing (e.g. YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/).
11. Social Networking (e.g. Facebook - http://www.facebook.com/)

Web 2.0 tools are for communication, enabling groups of people to interact and share information. This can be very valuable for libraries; especially for digital libraries, when many of their users will access their collections through computer networks. This is one very important aspect of the idea of Library 2.0.

Libraries using social software to provide services are referred to as 'social libraries'.

2.2. Social software in libraries

We will now look at four kinds of social software, which are of particular importance to libraries:

1. Blogs
2. Wikis
3. Resource sharing (bookmarks, images, video, bibliographic and catalogue records); and
4. Newsreels.

2.3. What is a blog?

Also referred to as 'weblogs', blogs are journals or diaries, kept on the web, and usually accessible by anyone, although they can be restricted to selected readers. If the owner of the blog chooses, readers can post comments or opinions on what they have read. Blogs can be set up and maintained by anyone, with easy-to-use software, some of which is free. Examples of blog software are: Blogger: https://www.blogger.com; and Wordpress.org: http://www.wordpress.org Blogging software can be run either on the computers of the software company (Blogger is an example), or on your own computer (MovableType (http://www.movabletype.com, is an example).[1–4]

2.4. How blogs are used

There are over 70 million blogs in the world today. Most are kept by individuals to record their personal diaries and views, but many are intended for professional purposes. They can provide a framework for recording subject information, discussion and comment in any area. Blogs in any subject area of interest can be found using Google's blog search function (http://blogsearch.google.com/). Some blogs maintained by libraries and librarians on the platforms such as http://liswiki.org/wiki/Weblogs; http://www.libdex.com/weblogs.html; and http://www.libworm.com.

2.5. Using blogs in libraries

Many librarians use blogs to express professional opinions and to host professional discussions. The following are some examples of librarians' blogs:

1. Information wants to be free: A blog by Meredith Farkas, an American enthusiast for Web 2.0 in libraries (http://meredith.wolfwater.com/wordpress/index.php)
2. Filipino Librarian : A blog for news about libraries and librarians in the Philippines (http://filipinolibrarian.blogspot.com)
3. Karen Blakeman's blog: A blog by a British librarian, largely about library technology and business information (http://www.rba.co.uk/wordpress)
4. Lorcan Dempsey's Weblog: A blog from OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) on libraries, services and networks (http://orweblog.oclc.org)

Within a single library, blogs are often used for discussions between staff and users. This is typically: to give regular news of library services, such as new acquisitions; to promote new services and announce events; and to encourage users to make comments and suggestions.

2.6. What is a wiki?

A wiki is a shared authoring tool. Whereas a blog allows people to share ideas, in a kind of conversation, a wiki allows a group of people to create a collaborative website. Users can view, add and edit information freely, through a simple interface. Wikis encourage communication among groups of people.[5–9] In the case of a library, a wiki can be used for collaboration between the library staff, the library staff and users; and that library, and the staff and users of other libraries. The best known wiki is Wikipedia a very large public encyclopedia written by its users (http://www.wikipedia.org). Wikis are used in libraries for many purposes, including community information; user guides; reference advice; and annotated guides to collections and resources.

2.7. What is resource sharing?

Resource sharing, also called media sharing, allows you to keep collections of your resources on a web server, instead of on a local computer. This means that your collections can easily be accessed by your users. In turn, you can also access other people's resources, and see who has items or collections similar to your own. Resources which can be shared include bookmarks; images and videos; bibliographic records; and catalogue records. The best known social bookmarking site is Delicious (http://delicious.com)which allows you to easily store bookmarks and also index them with your own 'tags' (keywords).

2.8. Social bookmarking

Social bookmarking involves keeping all your web bookmarks or favourites, which you normally simply keep on your local computer, in one place on a web server. You can access your bookmarks from any computer via the Internet. They can also be accessed by other people, and, in turn, you can browse through other people's bookmarks.

2.9. Using social bookmarking in libraries

Because bookmarks can be shared, and accessed by anyone, libraries can use it as a means of providing easy access to selected web resources. The Thomas Ford Memorial Library (an American public library) bookmarks websites particularly for younger readers http://delicious.com/thomasford; allow users to tag records of items in the library collections, in order to give a simple and 'user focused' way of access. Through the site PennTags the library of the University of Pennsylvania allows users to tag catalogue records, as well as websites (http://tags.library.upenn.edu/help)

2.10. Photo sharing

Photo sharing sites are websites where you can upload, edit, tag, share and access digital photos and images. Tools such as Flickr (http://www.flickr.com) allow you to share collections of photographs. Users can access your photo collection, and comment on them, where appropriate. An example of how libraries use photo sharing can be seen at the Library of Congress' photostream on Flickr (http://www.flickr.com/photos/library_of_congress).

2.11. Sharing catalogue records

A simple catalogue of your book collection can be created using the social software Library Thing (http://www.librarything.com). The catalogue is kept on a web server, and can be accessed from any location, by your users. Users can also see social information about each item, including tags, comments and reviews; and who else has the same or similar items in their collections.

2.12. What is a newsfeed?

Newsfeeds allow you to see when websites have changed, or have added new content. They save you from having to repeatedly visit a site to see if it has been updated. This is useful when the site is one which you expect to be frequently updated, such as blog, a newspaper site, or a page for alerts or announcements of topics of interest to you. The most widely used newsfeed system is called RSS (that stands for Really Simple Syndicate or for Rich Site Summary).[10,11] A similar system is called Atom. To make use of this, the sites you want to keep a watch on must offer RSS or Atom feeds.

2.13. Newsfeeds' aggregators

The easiest way to make use of newfeeds is to get a free piece of software called an aggregator. This manages your newsfeeds, and alerts you when there is something new. Newfeeds can also deliver updates to your email address, or to your web page. Two widely used aggregators are Bloglines and Google Reader.

2.14. Using newsfeeds in libraries

A library could set up an aggregator to alert its users to new information on websites of particular interest to them. Such a system could be set up to monitor a range of websites dealing with agricultural research, or of development initiatives in a particular region, for example University of Minnesota Libraries (http://www.lib.umn.edu/about/rss); could use an aggregator to offer its users information provided by a group of libraries. For example ticTOCs Journal Tables of Contents Service allows you to manage newsfeeds from e-journal content (http://www.tictocs.ac.uk).

3. Summary

"A Library 2.0 service is any service, physical or virtual, that successfully reaches users, is evaluated frequently,

and makes user of customer input. Even older, traditional services can be Library 2.0 if criteria are met. Similarly, being new is not enough to make a service Library 2.0." (Michael Casey and Laura Savastinuk) Web 2.0 tools, also known as social software, are valuable in promoting this two-way exchange of information and view between library staff and library users.

4. Source of Funding

None.

5. Conflict of Interest

None.

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