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## Enhancing the Impact of Libraries through Web 2.0 : Using Blog to Maximize Reach

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**Abstract:** *Libraries and information centers are experiencing a revolution in the way information is delivered, accessed, obtained and stored many libraries offering wireless Internet access tackled the issue of Wi-Fi for libraries. But how are libraries and librarians participating in the social Web? Some libraries are even at the cutting edge offering Web 2.0 services for their users. Libraries use blogs to create conversations. Trust many systems must be based on trust: trust between library staff and trust with library users for participation and collaboration. The library's services will change, focusing more on the facilitation of information transfer and information literacy. Web 2.0 and libraries are well suited for marriage, and many librarians have recognized.*

**Key words:** *Web 2.0, Blog, Social Web, Social Network*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Libraries and information centers are experiencing a revolution in the way information is obtained, stored, accessed and delivered. Web 2.0, social media, cloud computing, the mobile web influence managerial decisions about the most effective plan for staff skills, budgeting and marketing. With the emergence of new media tools such as Twitter, Facebook, blogs, wikis, Linked In, virtual worlds and RSS feeds, it is now necessary to offer a more customer-driven, socially rich and collaborative model of service and content delivery to library users in this online environment. In order to stay relevant and respond according to the changing needs of users, libraries and information centres need to choose right web 2.0 tools from a vast array of options available and seek practical methods to implement these processes within their libraries.

The Web 2.0 technologies include software such as Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, YouTube, blogs and wikis. Many of these applications pose a challenge to formal learning environments. They tend to be easy to use and have evolved in a more user centered way, often having a look, feel and functionality that directly address learners' needs. For example, they have an element of fun and informality, appealing to the emotional needs of learners. They have the ability to easily incorporate multimedia such as videos, which in themselves can draw on the power of narrative and face-to-face communication. In addition, some meet the cognitive needs of learners. For example, Quintura and WebBrain help users identify appropriate search terms, a cognitively complex task largely unsupported by traditional search tools such as academic online databases. Twitter, blogs and wikis provide a venue for self-publishing leading to individuals having

a sense of being producers of knowledge and information as well as consumers.

### 3. WEB 2.0 & LIBRARIES:

Equally fascinating is the work of Wade Roush. In *Technology Review*, he highlights the move to social interaction online via new technologies. Roush labels this movement "continuous computing." The three aspects of the definition include:

- The digital devices people carry, such as laptops, media players, and camera phones;
- The wireline and wireless networks that serve people's locations as they travel about;
- The Internet and its growing collection of Web-based tools for finding information and communicating and collaborating with other people.

Now it's time to focus on what continuous computing has brought to our users, our libraries, and our profession. Are we technologically and culturally ready for these users of iPods, laptops, and smart phones? Is, for instance, Wi-Fi ever-present within library buildings? Many librarians and library professionals have witnessed examples of iPods and other devices in use in libraries. Many libraries offer or are considering offering wireless Internet access tackled the issue of Wi-Fi for libraries. But how are libraries and librarians participating in the social Web?

Web 2.0 definitions and discussions focus on such concepts as openness, connectedness, participation, and ease of use. It makes sense, then, that discussions of Web 2.0 lead to the application of "2.0" thinking to library services. Some libraries are even at the cutting edge—offering Web 2.0 services for their users. How can we, as library professionals and promoters, make sense of it all? How can we incorporate new technologies into our own library services? What are the benefits? How do the principles of social software look when applied to libraries?

The whole 2.0 thing in general seems to be about using the hive mind and the affordances of technology to synthesize newer, better and more useful systems that then become available for everyone. Libraries have historically been places to receive information but with some rare exceptions, less places to contribute information. Blogs and wikis and tag clouds, all the stuff we prattle on about are good for reading or reading about, but they really shine through use.

### 4. BLOG AS A COMMUNICATION TOOL

Slugging is more interactive as readers have ability to interact with the writer and writer has the benefit to know their readers valuable thoughts on specific post. Also they can start discussion for any topic they reads, where writer, readers and quest post writer come together to share their opinion, this makes bloggir.g superior than any other networking channels. Peoples come online to learn new things, gather new information, or buying stuff they may need. When they are searching something, they probably look for top information on respective topic. Most of the bloggers today are the experts on their own niches, but even if they aren't, they would go further and do the research, gather all information and put it in their post for their readers, making post open for receiving comments and discussion makes them best in internet marketing. Blogging website is made for the purpose to serve more and more content with simple way.

A blog is a type of internet website, usually maintained by an individual or a small company with frequent entries to descriptions of their interest, events, news, game, movies or to any person sharing his/her views. Material such as text, graphics, audio and video can also be shared using blog. Blog is normally a

way of communication, where user gives his ideas or comments on that blog site. There are various types of blogs like science blog, social blog, movie blog, political blog, news channel blogs, etc.

Blog as a "first of the social software" as well as "chronological social web site". Blogs have become a very popular, easy and social platform to exchange information, and gradually are becoming a more acceptable reference sources even in peer reviewed publications. Contrary to the earlier situation where citing the blogs did not add value to the research work, of late they have gained their due value. For instance some of the recent documents available through PubMed and Google Scholar contain references of blogs. A citation analysis in the references of an article about "Web 2.0" gives a right image of trend. In addition, proliferation of blogs is considerable. A search for blogs in specific field shows that there are many blogs on the Web offering news and trends in the specific fields of human knowledge. Blogs are not created by group of people as wikis are created. But it is a collaborative source because readers can comment and publish their own ideas about the topic, or ask more information.

## **5. USE OF BLOG IN LIBRARY/ INFORMATION SERVICES**

Blogs can be considered a very useful and good source of information to find information about the trends and debates in specific field, although the evaluation of source should not be ignored. Therefore, neo-conventional library services like current awareness service, Library Updates, Blog for internal communication, Personal comments on professional Issue can be provide effectively through the blogs. in this connection, specialization of the blogs plays a crucial role in timeliness, excellence, and accuracy of blogs. Specialization saves the time of the users while searching through massive amount of uncontrolled information if every field is mixed up. Specialization is a best way to optimize the potential use of blogs if they are provided through non-conventional library services and information delivery.

### **5.1. Why Blog:**

Blog is a Pan of the topology of the Web and its rapid growth. However, as blogs frequently contain discussion about content elsewhere on the Web, commentary on linked objects that no longer exist or that are no longer identifiable creates a kind of 'link rot'. This hampers the integrity of the Web in general, but as links are an integral part of blogs, link rot can be expected to have an especially severe impact on blog archives.

The blog provides its own internal archive system through the blog software which should allow an accurate and full harvest by some form of crawl although in reality there are issues with permanence guarantees and user agreements. Different hosting services provide different functionality blogs tend to be individual rather than organizational. Some of the important factors of why use blog listed in below:

- Inexpensive, non-techie, easy/quick to launch
- easy to publish content online to publish content online - "quick and easy" "quick and easy"
- brief entries arranged in reverse chronological order entries arranged in reverse chronological order
- Content is searchable, browsable, archived
- Alternative to e-mails, listservs.

### **5.2. Information and digital literacy:**

User education or information and digital literacy are perhaps one of the most important areas of library

services where blogs can be effectively deployed. Blogs are the means of communication for younger generation and libraries can find it easy to reach out users through blogs. Blogs provide a free medium to publish awareness material to the patrons. Alerts, announcements, surveys, etc can be initiated through blog.

### 5.3. Subject / Liaison librarians:

The development of modern information technology effectively promotes libraries marching towards automation? digitization and networking. The study on subject librarian has become a research hotspot in library science meanwhile it makes libraries experience a great change. Liaison Librarians emerge as the requirement. The system of liaison librarians embodies the mode of user service of contemporary libraries initiative information. This paper describes the reason that liaison librarians come into being? The affection to promote library resource utilization and build and patron opinion to this service mode.

### 5.4. Library Updates:

Library Updates are the most common alert service pushed out by all libraries in various formats. Things like change in library timings, library service updates, new additions, article alerts can be effectively communicated through blogs.

### 5.5. Blog for internal communication:

Blogs can make an effective internal communication tool. By having a secured blog, large university libraries can use blogs to work on projects, where several people will be contributing simultaneously. Library policies keep changing with regards to library collection and services, and the teams can easily keep them updated by blogs.

### 5.8. Personal comments on professional Issue:

Blogs are an easy communication tool when a team member wants to communicate his project or a new idea to his team mates or fellow professionals. Several Commonwealth Professional Fellows from India have created a blog to communicate their learning process and training during Commonwealth Fellowship.

## 6. BLOG SOFTWARE:

- a) **WordPress** is web software you can use to create a beautiful website or blog. We like to say that WordPress is both free and priceless at the same time. The core software is built by hundreds of community volunteers, and when you're ready for more there are thousands of plugins and themes available to transform your site into almost anything you can imagine. Over 25 million people have chosen WordPress to power the place on the web. (<http://wordpress.org>)
- b) **TypePad**: gives you complete control over what, when and how you publish content to your blog. You can create blog posts in minutes. TypePad offers unlimited ways for you to customize the look and feel of your blog design. You can alter our design templates as much as you want - right down to the pixel! TypePad offers you more flexibility to design the blog you want than any other blogging platform. (<http://www.sixapart.com/typepad>) .
- c) **Blogger**: to give you an easy way to share your thoughts about current events, what's going on in your life, or anything else you'd care to discuss with the world. We have developed a host of

features to make blogging as simple and effective as possible, (<http://www.blogger.com/start>)

- d) Radio UserLand: is a unique and powerful web publishing and weblog tool with advanced features such as an integrated news aggregator. Every copy of Radio will support an unlimited number of categories and each category is, in essence, a separate weblog with its own URL address and its own independent RSS feed. Radio also permits multiple authors to contribute to a community weblog via the Multi-Author Weblog Tool. Radio comes loaded with features that are easy to use and designed to help you customize your online experience, harness the awesome power of the Internet, and accomplish more in less time, (<http://radio.userland.com>).
- e) Open Salon: Open Salon by Salon is an emerging community powered by capable blog software and users who are looking for an audience. It's a simple, plain service focused on great content rather than design and features. The cover page welcomes you in to the community with featured articles, tips (such as how you can build a blogging audience), most viewed articles and an activity feed. The blogging interface is clean and uncluttered.
- f) Xanga's: classic account offers a variety of blog software templates and you can easily change the appearance further with a little HTML knowledge. They offer simple templates as well as advanced options, which we always like to see. A setup wizard guides you through the sign up and creation of your blog. The free account is great to get you started but the features, storage and image options (which aren't many to begin with) are fairly limited unless you pay for a subscription.

## 7. ENHANCING LIBRARY BLOG: WIDGETS, COUNTRY TAGS

Web is rich with plenty of external resources which enhance the functionality and usability. Counters and feeds provide important data for evaluation. One such example is StatCounter ([www.statcounter.com](http://www.statcounter.com)). This is a free service that collects user data for web pages and blogs. Feedburner ([www.feedburner.com](http://www.feedburner.com)) provides a way for recording and analyzing the traffic at the blogs. This function is similar to Google analytics. Technorati ([technorati.com](http://technorati.com)) is a search engine that makes use of blogging. Library thing is in essence, an easy, library quality catalogue that connects you with people who read the same things.

Widget is a small piece of interactive content that can be dynamically embedded into a blog. Widgets are used to publish content within the sidebar of blogs.

## 8. IMPLEMENTING STRATEGY

### 8.1. Select Software:

Selecting suitable blog software can be a daunting task if one looks at the enormity of time and effort sustaining a professional blog is considered. There are various blogging software's available with varied proficiency with respect to services and tools. It is essential to consider the following points before Library begins the process of starting a blog for its operations,

- Thoroughly understands the need/purpose or objective of starting a Library Blog.
- Does the Blog needs to be significantly customized?
- Does Library has technical expertise to do do the customization?
- Will the Blog Content be written by multiple authors?

## 8.2. Identity staff :

Libraries have skilled staff with professional expertise that can be leveraged to rise to the challenge of Web 2.0, not only in collection and preservation, but also in user oriented services. They are also the guardians of a long tradition of a public service ethic which will increasingly be needed to deal with the privacy and legal issues raised by Web 2.0. Library staff should be encouraged to think and act pro-actively about how they can bring this to bear on the development of new, library and information service based technologies.

## 8.3. Market effectively :

Blogs would have to be marketed like any other new service from library which is being started. Good and useful content make a blog popular and library needs to popularize Blog by announcing it on group mails, advertisements on intranet, by providing links to it from wherever possible and then by posters and handouts in the library. Marketing by employee's participation and word of mouth is very much essential.

## 8.4. Content relevance :

The content of Library Blog has to be highly relevant, if it has to hold the attention of the users. Promoting content relevant to the immediate needs of target group, sensitive timing for publication of alert services, etc is highly desirable. Subject librarians can do a wonderful job here.

## 10. CONCLUSION

The use of these Web 2.0 technologies and applications will constitute a meaningful and substantive change in the history of libraries. 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. Library 2.0: it is user centered a multi-media experience; socially rich; and communally innovative. It also espouses a focused definition for the term: 'The application of interactive, collaborative, and multi-media web-based technologies to web-based library services and collections.'

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