DrugScope Information Service Blog and Newsfeed Workshop

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19 April 2006
What we will cover

• Introductions and welcome
• Website strategy and blogs
• Introduction to blogs
• The DrugScope Experience
• How to get started
• Hands on session.
Website aims and strategy

• To be a provider and disseminator of information and resources on drugs and related issues
• To promote DrugScope’s work, services and activities
• To act as portal for those interested in drug issues
• To utilise relevant new technologies and software which enable the above.
Creating a Blog and Newsfeed

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Blogs: what are they?

• (We)blogs have been gaining in popularity since the 1990s
• Originally online journals, displayed in reverse chronological order
• Once the preserve of techies, self-publishing diarists and cat-lovers
• Companies have begun to realise the advantages of blogging
Why Blog?

• Put simply, blogging is a way to:
  – Publish information quickly and easily
  – Create a newsfeed for that information
  – Without:
    • HTML or other IT skills
    • Buying or downloading software
    • Storing on your webserver (unless you want to)
    • Incurring expenditure (just time)
    • “Pestering” users / customers / clients
      – Blogs are ‘pull-technology’
What to Blog

• Blogging is an ideal format for:
  – Online / email newsletters
  – Current awareness lists
  – Media mentions
  – FAQs
  – Highlighting aspects of the library collection and ILS work

• If you do any of these things, you may wish to consider blogging
The DrugScope Experience

• Started blogging simply to create a newsfeed of new catalogue additions
  – We knew certain users wanted this
• Decided to write short focus articles to highlight aspects of our collection and work that our users may not know
  – Capitalise on existing market
  – Attract a new market
• Even more popular than predicted
DrugData Update Timeline

- 09/2005 DrugData Update begins
- 10/2005 onwards Positive feedback from users
- 11/2005 Asked to promote on NeLH
- 11/2005 Promoted at ELISAD Conference
- 01/2006 Article in ELISAD Journal
- 01/2006 Article in Knowledge Flow
- 03/2006 Promoted at CHILL
- 03/2006 Promoted on Daily Dose
- 03/2006 Promoted in Addiction
Positive Outcomes

• Traffic
  – At least 2000 weekly downloads of articles
  – Links to other web products and services

• Increased presence
  – Something “out there” every week

• Highlighting popularity of bibliographic info
  – Has been picked up on by Publishing

• Networking
  – Internally e.g. Publishing, Press Office
  – Related organisations e.g. Home Office
  – Others e.g. International Women’s Month
Other Opportunities

• Displays skills of information professionals
  – IT – creating blog and RSS
  – Contribution of database (e.g. catalogue)
  – Knowledge of user group (market) needs
  – Writing
  – Shows we have our “finger on the pulse”
  – Brings the information service’s “backroom” into the limelight
Getting Started: Questions to ask

• Does our user group have a regular need for current, up-to-date information?
• If so, what sort of information?
• Are we meeting this need through our website? Could we do so? Pros / Cons
• If not, could we meet it through blogging?
• If so, how would it relate to our website?
• Can we extend our market (user group)?
• Can we attract a new market?
• How much staff time is needed?
Bibliographic Blogs

• Current awareness for the 21\textsuperscript{st} century
• If you can write reports on your cataloguing software, you can automate (or semi-automate) this process
• New catalogue entries provide ample ready-made content for your blog
• Can add traffic to existing current awareness bulletins