

Libraries and weblogs: The Role of new phenomenon Blogs in library services, research and learning.

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Abstract

Weblogs, or blogs for short, are a cross between a diary, and an online community that are built using specially designed software that makes creating and updating a web site quick and easy. More recently there has been a surge in the number of professional blogs. How librarians can utilize weblogs for their profession? Potentially, blogs have applications in libraries: as a current awareness service; to highlight news or resources of interest; to post book reviews from students, faculty, and staff members; to list new acquisitions; to announce library news and events. Using of systems such as RSS technology is another blog application in libraries for selective dissemination of information. This is an XML tag for a page that allows the content or headlines of a weblog to be pulled automatically into other web pages. The best topic-oriented blogs contain useful posts that will help their readers to keep up to date on the issues. Some weblogs, particularly those created by subject experts, have emerged as authoritative sources of current information and opinion in their field. Not only are many information weblogs actually created by subject experts, but they also often attract the participation of other experts through a "comment" facility. The following weblogs are useful as sources of current professional information for librarians. This paper discusses different questions of weblogs in libraries. It is focusing on three questions: How can the weblog improve library services?, How can the weblogs support researches in libraries?, What are the

informational benefits of weblogs and their sections as RSS in libraries?

Keywords: Weblog, Blog, libraries

Introduction

Weblogs, or blogs for short, are a cross between a diary, and an online community that are built using specially designed software that makes creating and updating a web site quick and easy, the content is provided in an ongoing series of dated entries. These entries, or posts, are typically displayed in reverse chronological order, bringing the latest content to the top of the page and making new material easy to identify. In addition to requiring little or no knowledge of HTML coding to produce, weblogs are designed to facilitate easy usage and frequent updating by the author(s). Blogs were a user-friendly form of web publishing and many varieties came into being. (Schwartz, 2005) From the viewpoint of the user or visitor, a blog is a Web site with: Content arranged as entries of text and hyperlinks, posted in reverse chronological order, a timestamp for each entry so the reader knows when it was posted, and an archive of previously posted content that can be easily accessed by visitors. (Clyde, 2004)

Blogs have been emerging as an effective way to publish and communicate to a Web audience since 1996. Rebecca Blood in her book, *The Weblog Handbook, Practical Advice on Creating and Maintaining Your Blog*, reports that there were only 26

blogs in 1996; now there are millions of blogs. (Blood, 2002) But blogs aren't as new as you may think. They have actually been around since the early clays of the Internet, in 1999 there were dozens of blogs, now there are millions. Blogs, it seems, are everywhere; Like few media phenomena, and certainly like no media form since the emergence of the World Wide Web itself, blogs seem to have captured the public imagination. Indeed, the very term “blog” itself was chosen as Merriam-Webster’s word of the year 2004. Blogs have changed the way many people look at the Web. Using blogging software peoples can post content to a web site quickly and easily, making it very appealing to those who want to share information and keep current in their field.

New technologies are creating new opportunities for libraries. Even as the Internet creates new opportunities for the library, it may also become a rival to library systems. Libraries must follow new technologies very closely and the advantages of the newest innovations, such as Blogs and RSS feeds, must be reflected in library services. If this is not done voluntarily, this integration will be forced over time.

Despite the increasing popularity of blogs, few libraries have taken advantage of what they offer. Adding a blog to libraries is free and easy. Librarians can collect and make information accessible to patrons and researchers— and if they want, invite them in on the discussion. Blogs can be updated easily, frequently and continuously, making them an appealing alternative to static newsletters. But how the technology was balanced with the needs of the librarians and patrons?

Library weblogs: professional literature

Some articles are general-interest pieces that give basic information about blogs and advocate their use in libraries, though a few librarians have moved beyond this point to explore library applications or offer concrete examples of how libraries are using blogs. The potential of weblogs in libraries has been discussed by, Block (2001), Crawford, (2001), Embrey (2002), Clyde (2002, 2003), Balas (2003) and Gordon and Stephens, (2006). Doug Goans and Teri Vogel (2003) have described a weblog project in an academic library; to deliver information about library news, services and resources to the science faculty and students at Georgia State University, they developed a

blog. Carver (2003) lists several public libraries that are using blogs to publicize news and events, while Harder and Reichardt (2003) suggest that academic libraries can develop department or subject specific weblogs to reach faculty and graduate students with content customized to meet their information needs.

Clyde (2004) investigates library weblogs in the late 2003; the weblogs were studied using content analysis techniques. Findings show that Public and academic libraries were more likely to have a weblog than other types of libraries. The most common aim or purpose was to provide news, information and links to Internet resources for library users. Few provided interactive facilities, and when provided, there was little evidence that the facilities were used to any extent. Only one-fifth of the weblogs had been updated within the past day and only half within the previous week. Less than half provided an RSS feed. Finally, the article addresses the implications of the findings for library managers.

Cohen (2004) explores the new library Weblog writers and the reasons why so many have done so. He noted that newer Weblog writers have the opportunity to expand themselves personally and, more importantly; professionally by continuing their efforts as library Weblog pioneers.

Bar-Ilan (2004) examines the value of blogs as information dissemination a tool by a list of blogs written in English was compiled from several lists directories. The findings indicate that blogs have a high professional potential and are a novel information channel for transferring information both to fellow professionals and to other users of the Web. The main challenge at this point of time is to increase the readership of these blogs.

Finally Blair and Cranston (2006) statement the stages of creation a library weblog and compassion it with the baby's arrival. They say 'expectant parents do a lot of planning before baby's arrival; expectant bloggers should do the same; much like having a baby starting a blog is long-term commitment.' A clear scope, a well-defined audience, a professional look, and regular maintenance don't happen overnight. They recommend their experiments in 10 steps to creation a library blog.

Blogs with an emphasis on learning were discussed in several papers and presentations (e.g. Mortenson, and Walker, 2002; Efimova and Fiedler, 2003; Armstrong, Lamshed and Berry, 2004.) Armstrong, Lamshed and Berry (2004) have demonstrated the ability of blogs to integrate the personal aspect of a journal or diary that documents the student's journey through the learning with the immediate publishing capability of the web creating the ability to have a collaborative, public discourse on the reflections of learners. Efimova and Fiedler (2003) explore how professionally oriented weblog projects support the emergence of loosely coupled learning networks. They suggest that some weblog ecosystems can be conceptualized as learning webs. These learning webs appear to meet the specific needs of knowledge workers for flexible and dynamic learning environments. Mortenson, and Walker (2002) discussed about the use of weblogs in research.

Articles written in the library literature about blogs have reflected the general media to some extent, though geared for a more specialized audience. Some take a more technological slant to focus on issues like RSS and blogging options for intranets such as; Fichter (2003) has written an article titled 'why and how to use Blogs to promote your library's services', she believes that weblogs could be used on an intranet within an organization such as a library as one approach to knowledge management. The use of weblogs in knowledge management applications has been advocated by Martin Roell (2003) too; He has recommended application of weblogs as a tool for internal communication and knowledge management within a organization. In relation to knowledge management, he suggests that weblogs could be used for knowledge management within a project. Michelle Alcock (2003) suggested that weblog could also be used to market library services. And finally Ojala (2005) discussed about using weblogs, as vehicles for knowledge management initiatives. She says "Attitudes towards weblogs and uses of blogs are changing quickly, however. In a collaborative work environment, blogs bring significant benefits to enterprises willing to adopt the technology. Bloggers, can add to the sum total of knowledge for research projects, share industry and product knowledge, capture and disseminate news from outside the enterprise, and contribute valuable insights on specific subjects."

Another articles related to library blogs are about RSS and its use in libraries was discussed by the few authors such as Mattison (2003); Hammond, Hannay, and Lund, (2004); Wusteman (2004) looks at the current state of the RSS and Atom applications, discusses future developments and considers implications for the library. Winsh (2004) explain about Weblogs and RSS in information work. Miller (2004) explains information dissemination by RSS and noticed that with RSS, an XML specification for content syndication, he says:" you can subscribe to the information you want to see and get notified anytime new information is available. Instead of seeing a whole article, you view just a headline and a summary, which allows you to quickly scan the information and then click through to the source Web site to read the entire article of only specific items you want". Jacobs (2004) describes a companion technology behind the blog curtain: RSS. In library terms, RSS is like a bibliographic record written in XML that includes a description of a resource like a Web page, a link to the resource, and some other useful information often generated and archived automatically by blogging software and stored as a plain text file called a channel or feed. Celikbas (2004) in article titled "What is RSS and how can it serve libraries?" lists some advantages of RSS use and some reputable RSS feed sources and Offers suggestions on potential library uses of RSS including: general communications and marketing; library user education; current awareness services; and, augmenting of reference services.

Weblogs in libraries

Paula J. Hane (2001) says "Blogs are a natural for librarians" she describes the benefits of reading blogs written by librarian. She also identifies directories of blogs, including those specially limited to library blogs. Certainly librarians have created a number of useful and well-regarded professional weblogs. Blinda weaver (2003) suggested that a weblog could be used as a tool for communication with library users; in fact, she notes that 'it is surprising that more libraries don't use them to keep customers informed as the format is prefer for that job'. She is supported by Michelle Alcock (2003), who says 'this tool can be used to inform clients of changes, additions and news'; further, it can enable the library's clients to comment on the library's service. Greg Schwartz says libraries can use weblogs to provide up-to-date information on local

events, to provide library news and to announce new books and other materials in the library collection.

How libraries can utilize weblogs for their profession? Potentially, blogs have applications in libraries: as a current awareness service; to highlight news or resources of interest; to post book reviews from students, faculty, and staff members; to list new acquisitions; to announce library news and events. Using of systems such as RSS technology is another blog application in libraries for selective dissemination of information. Blogs are a place to talk, but they are also a place to listen to what our users are telling us. Librarians and information professionals, including those working in libraries and information centers, have begun using blogs to share ideas with colleagues and solicit feedback through the comments function. blogs reflect a personal viewpoint, they allow readers to respond and comment. These gives-and take fleshes out blog content and results in a sense of community among the participants.

During last several years library weblogs have noticeable growth. In 2003 there were only 57 library weblogs, while in 2004 the numbers increased to 198 weblogs (Clyde, 2004). Authors of this article at the end of 2005 retrieved 328 library weblog from internet directories. These library weblogs retrieved from the three special library blog directories include *library weblogs* (at: <http://www.libdex.com/weblogs.html>), *Blogwithoutlibrary.net* (at: <http://www.blogwithoutlibrary.net>) and *The Open Directory* (at: <http://www.dmoz.org/Reference/Libraries/Library-and-Information-Science/Weblogs/>), but the list by no means comprehensive. This increase in Academic and Public libraries was more reasonable. The following table shows library weblogs between 2003- 2005 on the basis of Clyde's and authors of this article studies.

Type of library	Clyde,2003	Clyde,2004	Authors,2005
Public library / public library system	25	82	138
Academic library (university or college)	23	83	156
Special / research library	5	17	55
Multi-type library network/consortium	2	6	19
National/state library	1	3	4
School library	1	7	20
TOTAL	57	198	392

Table: Number of library weblogs between 2003-2005

Web-based forms are used to build and update content in blogs. The librarian uses form to create a new entry consisting of a few sentences of text and maybe a hyperlink. That entry is immediately posted for everyone to see. One also uses forms to edit previously posted entries and save these changes just as quickly. If a person can fill in a Web-based form, he or she can run a basic blog and add new entries as often and as frequently as needed. A librarian does not need to know HTML to construct or maintain a blog, because most are ready to run “out of the box.” Some basic HTML knowledge, however, would enable one to customize the layout, as well as format entries with lists, paragraphs and hyperlinks.

Cooperation in library Blog

Blogging does not have to be tied to a single writer or editor. Responsibility for managing it can be divided among multiple contributors (e.g. librarians) who have the authorization to post and update entries. A library can have one blog that many librarians across multiple departments use to publicize general library information, and the library can have a series of blogs run by smaller groups of librarians who want to deliver information to more specific audiences. Business librarians can manage one to deliver information for business faculty and students, for example. A library blog, however, is managed by one or more librarians within the organization. It has some kind of presence on the library Web site (or is at least linked to it), and the librarians use it to deliver news and information relevant to patrons at that library

instead of a larger community of librarians and information professionals.

How Libraries Are Using Blogs

Libraries are in the position to be leaders in utilizing weblogs for communication purposes. The possibilities are infinite and the projects are easy to set up. A few ways in which libraries can use weblog technology to enhance services and communicate with each other are described below. This list is by no means comprehensive. The power of weblog technology can be implanted into almost any aspect of a library-web page. Here are some recommendations:

1. Blog as a library newsletter

The necessity of keeping library patrons aware of services and resources has not diminished. In fact it is even more urgent as the explosion of online content and services has made it more difficult for patrons to keep up with new resources and changes to those. Many libraries have "What's New" sections on their Web sites to publicize new resources, services, or events; but Blogs can serve as an alternative to static print newsletters for keeping patrons informed about library services and resources. A librarian can post information quickly, easily and immediately. Implementing library blog instead of a print format newsletter has shifted the focus from time-consuming layout and production issues to rapid dissemination of relevant, quality news and information. Library blog can be updated quickly, easily, and as frequently as needed, while patrons can read it whenever they choose. blogs can support the goals of the library while simultaneously meeting the specific objectives of librarians. At the same time librarians can use blogs along with other tools like e-mail to keep patrons continually aware of the services and resources available to assist them in meeting their own research and educational objectives.

2. Blog as a Reference Desk

Some reference desks have a notebook that keeps the librarians current with what has been happening in the library. Some examples of this current awareness include new homework assignments, FARQs (Frequently Asked Reference Questions). A weblog could enhance this service with not only pertinent information, but links to web sites for assistance in the homework assignments (that more than one librarian

can contribute), quick answers to the FARQs. If the entire reference staff had access to the weblog, they could communicate with each other rather easily. Weblogs can also be used for discussion among the library staff. In large buildings where it is impossible to communicate with everyone at the same time, the minutes of meetings, handouts from training sessions, or even links to articles for professional development purposes. The library should consider putting these types of weblogs behind an Intranet if they do not want it published on the Internet for anyone to gain access.

3. Blog and New Acquisitions

The library might consider utilizing weblog technology to announce new acquisitions to the collection. There can be multiple weblogs for different types of media or, one weblog can be used for the entire collection and each post could be routed to specific categories and the user could choose which ones to read.

Syndication will be mentioned later, can use to display new acquisitions. As soon as a book or movie is entered as available, it could query the weblog (categories included), and the new material could be posted to the weblog within minutes.

4. Blog and libraries consortia

Libraries that belong to consortia can utilize weblogs to communicate between libraries, set up meetings, post new resources added to shared documents; discuss problems with these same resources, report downtime, and discuss possible acquisitions. This of course, doesn't have to be done on the county level. Statewide library systems can easily communicate information to each other using weblog technology. If management notices a lack of communication and network among any set of libraries, weblogs may be the key to jumpstart these relationships. By having all librarians participating in the weblog experience, morale may be boosted, thus improving work product.

5. Blog as a Book Clubs

Librarians can use weblogs to not only instantly publish their information to a weblog, but encourage members of a library book-club weblog group to post comments or questions about the reading material. New books for discussion can be posted or readers, who have busy schedules, can participate virtually on

their own time by posting to the weblog. Librarians who lead book discussion groups can be the administrator for these weblogs and can have complete control over.

6. Blog as a marketing tools in libraries

Librarians have had to learn how to do a lot with just a little in order to promote awareness of their programs and services. They have seized the opportunities to market libraries in the real world via traditional media: newspapers, corporate newsletters, radio, and TV. Many libraries produce brochures, pathfinders, and their own newsletters. So it is no surprise to see librarians stepping up to the plate and spreading the word online with blogs. Savvy librarians have identified blogs as another means to market libraries and their services. Regardless of the type of blogging option a library selects, marketing it is essential. The real challenges in making library blogs will involve marketing and maintenance: getting patrons to visit, and offering the valuable content that will bring them back.

The relevance of blogging to libraries

weblogs are an excellent way to stay current. News travels down the blogging pipelines long before it appears in print and, in many cases, online magazines and journals. Librarians are great filters of information and relying on a select group to provide your daily information can be a great time-saver.

What is the relevance of blogs to librarians and to information professionals? The ASIST Professional Guidelines state that information professionals should seek “to extend public awareness and appreciation of information availability.” As such, librarians and information professional should not only provide information on demand and act as intermediaries between the users and the information, but should alert to the existence of novel “relevant” information, and provide access and facilitate users and fellow professionals to efficiently utilize resources, technologies and information retrieval tools. An additional responsibility of the information professional is to “uphold each user’s, provider’s, or employer’s right to privacy and confidentiality and to respect whatever proprietary rights belong to them” (ASIST Professional Guidelines, 1992). With the increased complexity of the application of the principles of fair use, copyright, privacy and

intellectual property in the electronic world, the information professional must be constantly aware of the developments in these areas. Weblogs are ideal for disseminating all types of information chosen by the blogger, for commenting, expressing opinions and for discussing implications. They can also be utilized to provide local information; e.g. changes in opening hours, special lectures and new acquisitions. (Bar-Ilan, 2004)

Greg Schwartz mentions some reasons to consider in writing or contributing to a collaborative effort in blogging such as:

Writing a blog keeps you current. Posting regularly to a blog encourages you to actively engage the process of information seeking and current awareness.

Blogs are an advocacy tool. Blogs are a great forum, not only for exposing the world to the issues facing both libraries and librarians, but also for thinking through the ideas and cultivating means of expressing them effectively.

Blogs build community. Some of you are probably thinking that no one will read what you have to say. you already have a built-in community of people interested in you and your perspective. You can, and probably will, meet people that you may not have met otherwise, becoming part of a very progressive segment of the LIS community.

You are unique. One of the problems with librarianship is image. Publishing a blog is an opportunity to demonstrate your individuality and thereby work to dispel some of those pervasive myths.

Do it for you. Never discount the power of writing as catharsis.

Lastly, **it's easy**, there are many, many tools that help make it painless to write and publish your own content.

Library purposes blogs

A review of the professional literature suggests that weblogs are generally regarded as a ‘Good Thing’ for libraries, whether it is the library providing a weblog for its clients or its staff, or the library using weblogs as sources of information. Libraries and information organizations could be using weblogs for a range of purposes; **but** it is important to assess needs first and ensure that a blog is the appropriate form of communication in library. Possibilities here can be to: (by winsh, 2004)

- Direct users to useful, new or interesting resources;
- Comment on local and national events and activities in the IT, book and library worlds;
- Provide news from the library/information service; and
- Request feedback or comments and generally help the library to engage with its users, especially those who rarely if ever visit a physical library.

So there are some purposes for library weblogs that have been mentioned in various articles, including:

- Provide up-to-date information on local events,
- Provide library news,
- Provide announcements of new library acquisitions, promoting the services Contact with users
- Information provision
- Marketing of services
- knowledge management applications
- Finally someone else do it funny

Also Clyde (2004a) mentioned the following purposes for library weblogs:

- Provide news or information for users
- Provide links to recommended internet resources
- Book reviews, information about new books
- Provide entertainment or amusement for users
- Provide news or information for librarians
- Book discussions
- Provide news or information for trustees
- Provide research tips
- Communication among librarians (in a library system)

She states the majority of the library blogs had been created to provide news and information for library users, and/or to provide links to recommended internet resources; this generally reflects the suggestions made in the professional literature. Most library weblogs were designed for one-way communication between library staff and users. Blogs are perfect for this kind of information dissemination as the system of dated entries makes it easy for viewers to identify new content.

What is RSS?

The RSS acronym has a number of meanings, but it has come to be aptly defined as Really Simple Syndication. RSS is a simple XML syntax for

describing a channel or feed of recent additions to a website. These additions may be news items, blog updates, library acquisitions or any other discrete information elements. The RSS feed, is made available on the web site; a site with one or more feeds is said to be syndicated. Users subscribe to the feed using an aggregator or newsreader that polls the site on a regular basis, maybe once a week, maybe once every an hour. The aggregator displays feeds and enables users to organize them and to access related Web pages when these are available.

There are two ways to manage RSS: one is to use a feedreader, which is fine to only one or two blogs; the next version of IE6 will enable RSS feeds on the desk top. This would enable the library to keep the databases up to date more easily. The other way is to use an aggregator to manage feeds such as:

RSSFeeds.com (at:<http://www.rssfeeds.com>), Syndic8 (at:<http://www.syndic8.com>), NewsIsFree(at:<http://www.newsisfree.com>), Lisfeeds.com(at:<http://www.lisfeeds.com>); the latest is relevant to libraries.

RSS is becoming the preferred way people receive and read the news Instead of seeing a whole article, you view just a headline and a summary, which allows you to quickly scan the information and then click through to the source Web site to read the entire article of only specific items you want. Expanding beyond the original idea of really simple syndication for Web sites, RSS is now a delivery method for fee-based information as well as free, is no longer restricted to a simple feed, and can be based on keywords.

RSS in Libraries

The potential of RSS feeds for the library environment is at least as great as its multiplicity of uses in other contexts presently suggest. Libraries publish announcements for their target audiences much as other web publishers might – notices, activity bulletins and the like – but libraries also want to present information on local and online (library) resources. While service announcements can be made by e-mail or on a library web page, we can use RSS feeds for such service announcements and, at the same time, offer live hyperlinks to online resources. It is not necessary to give up the old and familiar ways used until now; nor is it even necessary to make significant changes to the core of library web sites. Users utilizing RSS feeds will be very happy to be able to read their

library related news at/with their aggregators. Here are some RSS utilizations in libraries that have been introduced by Celikbas:

RSS Marketing Ideas

As has been noted above, RSS feeds can be used to publish any announcement from the library weblog on activities, exhibitions, promotions and new library resources, especially databases. Librarians could introduce new resources with a short blog note and users could share their experiences, creating an interchange of questions and answers about the resources. Libraries establish consortia to achieve better value in making large purchases. Similarly, library consortia could enable member libraries to work together to provide more detailed information about their 'products' and services to RSS aggregators. And, of course, library webmasters could aggregate this information to their respective library web sites for the benefit of their more immediate or local user group.

RSS Book Lists

Perhaps the most practical potential usage of RSS feeds in library settings is in the easy generation of various kinds of book lists. As patrons are always curious to know about what's new, a "New Items" list could be attempted. For large libraries, it would be impossible, of course: the hundreds or even thousands of books added every month. But for smaller libraries and perhaps for each branch or section of larger libraries a RSS feed showing new items available.

Another list could be created for the library's most wanted books. This list could even be named "Most Reserved Items" because new patrons would likely reach these items only through use of reservation services. That would serve to hype what the library has in terms of product (the desired items that everyone wants) and services (in this case, patron's ability to reserve desiderata). This kind of list could be produced and published using data from the library's integrated library system at daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly or other desired intervals.

RSS Table of Contents

Current awareness services such as Table of Contents compilation were traditionally manual and mainly slow. Web services have sped up the process and reduced library staff labor, improving efficiency. Will librarians and other service providers want to, or even

be able to, make use of additional metadata included within RSS feeds? We do not know, but still we are optimistic that third-party services can be built on top of rich data payloads. At NPG we are also experimenting with providing an Open URL interface into our growing RSS archive, which is essentially a repository of bibliographic metadata. (Hammond, Hannay, and Lund, 2004)

Research and library Blog

Weblogs, as a new phenomenon in the cyber world, are gaining universal impetus among scholars and educators. The internet has long been valued by teachers and librarians as a powerful research and communications tool, and in the last 10 years, it has brought about a sea change in the way students find, manage, and use information. But the promise of the Web as more than just a readable, searchable resource has been slow to be realized ... until now. Two new Internet technologies, Weblogs and RSS, are redefining the way students and teachers use the Internet, turning them from mere readers into writers to the Web as well, and making it easier to filter and track the ever-growing number of resources coming online each day. In fast-growing numbers, educators across the country and throughout the world are finding just how powerful this new interactive Internet can be.

The range of uses for Weblogs among other educators is wide. Hundreds of librarians have realized their power in communicating information about resources and in starting conversations about books and literacy. Students use Weblogs as digital portfolios or just digital filing cabinets, where they store their work. Teachers use blogs as classroom portals, where they archive handouts, post homework assignments, and field questions virtually. Clubs and activities, sports teams, and parent groups use Weblogs to post scores, meeting minutes, and links to relevant issues and topics. In other words, a Weblog is a dynamic, flexible tool that's easy to use whether you're creating with it or simply viewing the result. (Richardson, 2004)

In school libraries, blogs are an extension of what we already do: identify, organize, and make information accessible. Blogs let us do it in a timely fashion. It gives us an opportunity to be more responsive, to reach out to the faculty and students via our library blogs to highlight news, post student/faculty book

reviews and invite comments, announce events, list new acquisitions, etc. Weblogs are integrated with educational activity as resources both for students and teachers. Educators can use weblogs to encourage students to access the Internet for useful information; weblogs can also help students organize the resources they locate. Weblogs as a genre. Weblogs provide a format for critiques of other Web materials along with various personal touches.

Conclusion

Librarians became early adopters of blogging to support informing their clients and themselves of new Web and information technology resources, of changes to library services and collection development, and for various internal purposes such as distributing information and mounting team-based projects. Blogging works best in situations where information needs to be ordered in descending (newest to oldest) chronological order. Combined with the XML format RSS and internal and external search engines, blogs have become a powerful new medium for disseminating information and conducting collaborative ventures.

Blogging could be an efficient and effective alternative for information and knowledge transfer, resulting in a more productive workforce. The obvious use of weblogs in libraries is to set one up to deliver news to patrons. This can be in the form of a link to the weblog on the main web page or having the news displayed right on the front page. In fact, many libraries have a weblog on the main library page. In most cases there is only one person with access to the site to update it with news. With weblogs, more users can have access to the site and update it as needed. In all instances, there can be an administrator who has total control of who can post to the site.

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