

CALA 21st Century Librarian Seminar Project

Team Member Report

Seminar Location: National Taiwan Normal University; Taipei, Taiwan

Seminar Dates: November 10, 2007 to November 14, 2007

Your name: Win Shih

Your topics:

1. Managing Library Technologies in Web 2.0
2. Innovative Services of Academic Libraries

Your evaluation of the seminar in which you have participated:

During the five-day workshop, I conducted three half-day sessions. Accordingly, my presentation was divided into three segments: Innovative Library Services; Web 2.0 Technologies, Parts I and II. Content was developed based upon the premise of rendering services to patrons in an academic setting with the following mission:

In the current digital information ecosystem, libraries are facing enormous challenges and ever-increasingly intense, disparate competition from Google, Amazon, Wikipedia, and numerous other Web-based services. As library resources and services continue to evolve rapidly and ever-more-sophisticatedly across myriad Web 2.0 technological vectors, the mission of libraries is clear: Librarians must develop innovative, systemic methodologies for fathoming effectiveness in meeting the demands and necessities of our less-visible, yet omnipresent and "omni-diverse" patron base in the networked academy, while simultaneously promoting efficient resource management and capacity planning.

Librarians and educators have been closely involved in the evolution of Web 2.0, social networking technologies and phenomena. Web 2.0's popularity presents rich opportunities for educators to reach out to patrons in new, creative, interactive and personal ways. Social networking technologies and tools, with the advance of information middleware, software and hardware, including AJAX, PHP, deep web harvesting and mobile computing, have become the powerful media favored by the Millennials or "Generation Net" which will shape the way they express themselves, interact with, communicate with and entertain one another. By exploring and assimilating Web 2.0 technologies into our web sites and services, we build new opportunities to interact with our patrons, improve delivery of services, as well as facilitate learning.

During my presentation, I first discussed the impact of Web-centric technologies, as well as digital resources juxtaposed with traditional, print-based library services. Then I ventured into the new information ecology crowded with

Google, Amazon and similar Web 2.0 based services. I further discussed traits and expectations of “The Net Generation” of learners, and their cultural clashes with traditional library services.

Having “set the stage,” I focused on the application of a raft of Web 2.0 technologies in the library environment. First, I explained the difference between Web 1.0 and 2.0 technologies, with examples from the library world. Then, I talked about Library 2.0 as an extension of Web 2.0 – as a concept, a philosophy, a model and a cultural force for change. I further encouraged participants to develop a personal learning strategy to keep up with new technologies and diverse patron demands.

In the third segment of my presentation, I highlighted key Web 2.0 tools with plenty of examples of their usage in the library world. Such tools include virtual reference, Wiki, blogs, RSS feeds, mash-ups, bookmarking, tags, media sharing and social networking. I went on to review next generation library search tools (OPAC 2.0), both from vendors such as Ex Libris’ Primo, Ill’s Encore, and OCLC’s WorldCat Local, as well as the excitingly proactive Open Source Search Portals developed in-house by our colleagues at other libraries. I concluded my presentation with a review of the challenges and opportunities in this exhilarating historical time of change, as well as encouraged participants to continue to learn from and knowledge-share with each other.

During the periods when I was not presenting, I sat in on other two instructors’ sessions and learned as much as I could from them. During various Q&A sessions, the three instructors including myself complemented each other with our personal insights and experience. To interact more with students, we tried to mingle with as many of them as we could during breaks or at lunch time. From conversations with participants, I learned a great deal about issues and concerns of librarianship in Taiwan. Having been away from my country of origin for more than 20 years and having not maintained a regular connection with librarians there, I was pleased to learn firsthand that librarians in Taiwan has made important progress in recent years. In the area of library technology, Taiwan is moving at an equivalent or an even more advanced pace than some libraries within the United States.

Your suggestions:

1. Know your audience:
To learn more about the background of workshop participants, I developed an online survey (http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=zwt11nTY9ISOoR6xqWaaw_3d_3d), using the free online tool from SurveyMonkey.com. With 28 responses, the survey demonstrates that 54% of participants work at an academic library. 43% of them are library administration, and 44% of them are a part of the so-called “Generation Y” (people born between 1971 and 1980). 72% of respondents are bloggers, and all of them use the

Windows operating system in one form or another. The survey results were plotted into a tag cloud (<http://calatw.blogspot.com/2008/11/update.html>), using the free service at TagCrowd.com.

2. Interact with participants:

Since my presentation focused on the application of a slew of Web 2.0 technologies in a library environment, it was quite important not only to provide real-world examples but also offer hands-on opportunities for participants. To accomplish these goals, as well as to learn more about various Web 2.0 tools, I set up a workshop website at <http://sites.google.com/site/calatw/>, using the free "Google Sites" service. My PowerPoint presentation files were posted on the website for participants to download. Using widgets, I also mashed up several YouTube videos regarding various Web 2.0 tools onto the website (<http://sites.google.com/site/calatw/youtube-videos>), for participants to view. To take advantage of the interactive nature of Web 2.0 technology, I created a workshop blog (<http://calatw.blogspot.com/>), using the free "Google Blogger" service. Blog entries related to the contents of the workshop were posted and some of them did receive comments from workshop participants. Before the workshop, I requested workshop hosts to invite participants to visit these sites and contribute to the blog.

Finally and summarily, I am extremely grateful for this wonderful opportunity from CALA to participate in this important symposium, and to interface with my colleagues working on a daily basis directly within Taiwan. Through my involvement in this "global village gathering," I learned extensively about the latest advances in Web 2.0 technologies, and how to apply these technologies actionably, strategically and advantageously with and within an academic library's patron-centric learning-resources and information-intensive milieu. Above and beyond the aforementioned benefits garnered, I furthermore assimilated and inculcated within my own personal oeuvre of significant and useful IT leadership information, invaluable knowledge concerning the current status and up-to-the-moment advances within librarianship as it progresses forward successfully in Taiwan.

Reported by: Win Shih