IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA DRIVING SEAT

Do faculty staff need guidance in the use of social media? And if yes is there a gap of knowledge and experience that librarians are perfectly placed to fill? The Library at Cambridge Judge Business School wanted to find that out and the 'Social Media Driving Licence' was born.

ANDY PRIESTNER, AP547@CAM.AC.UK, INFORMATION & LIBRARY SERVICES MANAGER, CAMBRIDGE JUDGE BUSINESS SCHOOL

Over the summer of 2014, an eight-week blended learning course on best practice in social media, entitled the 'Social Media Driving Licence', was delivered to 30 staff from across the University of Cambridge's business school. Participants, who included senior personnel such as the School's HR Director and IT Manager, described the experience as 'eye-opening' and 'invigorating,' and its success is already translating into activities and initiatives that look set to ensure that the course will have a permanent impact on the life and day-to-day work of the institution going forwards. Rather than being taught by external consultants, or the School's Marketing or IT staff, the course was wholly created and delivered instead by myself and my colleagues in Information & Library Services.

The idea for the course was born out of my contention that there was an increasingly strong appetite and need for guidance in the use of social media among business school staff, and a gap of knowledge and experience that we librarians were perfectly placed to fill. Despite the fact that we had offered academics bespoke consultations on blogging, and students highly-rated teaching sessions on Twitter and LinkedIn for several years, I was concerned that a fully-fledged social media course for staff might be regarded as beyond our remit and, more generally, that we might not get sufficient sign-up for a 'library-delivered course'. My fears were allayed by securing solid buy-in for the course from senior management. A proposal document detailing the course objectives, workload for participants and potential impact was enthusiastically approved, as was my request that the course be launched, and

therefore endorsed, by the director of the business school himself, in an email which would express the view that social media was now a key priority for the institution: it being no longer a question of *whether* we engage with social media, but *how*. The next step was to record podcasts with key senior personnel, in which they shared their take on the value of, and their engagement with, social media. These interviews proved to be useful promotional tools, demonstrating as they did the School's commitment to, and existing use of, the medium. By the time of the course launch party these buy-in efforts had paid off as all 30 places on the course were filled.

I was convinced that in order to better communicate our passion for social media, and give participants sufficient hands-on exposure, we needed contact time in the classroom, and we eventually settled on delivering eight weeks of two-hour practical workshops. I was equally keen that the classroom component would be rich and challenging. Participants would not sit in traditional didactic teaching sessions being spoon-fed information by a 'sage on the stage'; instead they would be encouraged

LEGO Serious Play® methodology

to interact, to ask questions, and to fully engage with the topic at hand. I knew that for this to happen we would have to ensure the sessions were as interactive as possible. In the first session alone, we incorporated a quiz in teams, small group discussion, a visual 'traffic lights' exercise in which participants came forward to record their initial feelings about social media using Post-Its, and an activity in which all the participants got off their seats to plot their current engagement with the internet on a 'Visitors and Residents' scale across the classroom. Later weeks incorporated cognitive mapping of Google, image searching against the clock, and even origami!

Participant progress was assessed by their weekly engagement with, and evaluation of, social media channels and tools, as demonstrated by their crafting of blogposts and tweets. As the weeks passed, participants became more comfortable blogging and crucially they began to seriously consider how they could be employing social media more in their working lives.

Throughout the course we created content on a variety of social media channels in order to demonstrate to participants how they should be used and to ensure that we initiated conversations, comments and discussion beyond the business school walls, so that participants could see social media truly in action. As well as a Twitter account, a dedicated YouTube channel, our podcast collection on Audioboo and a SlideShare account to house our PowerPoint presentations, we produced a blog which formed a gateway to all of the above content.

In the final week of the course we used LEGO® Serious Play® methodology as a means of evaluating overall progress. Virtually all of the LEGO® models built illustrated how participants' engagement and confidence with social media had changed enormously and that their negative connotations and fears had largely been abandoned. Another more quantitative metric was a 'confidence with social media' score that had been taken on a weekly basis from the start. Starting at a rather low 6.5 out of 10, over time this figure gradually rose by 0.2 or 0.3 every week, ending on a high of 8.3.

In July 2014, a total of 24 participants completed the course, heralded by a glittering Oscars-esque awards ceremony. Although the high pass rate was very pleasing, far more rewarding was observing the emergence of a community at our institution that was willing to more actively engage with and utilise the many social media tools and channels at our disposal. As for us librarians, the course had showed many people who had never seen us teach before that this was also part-and-parcel of our role, and it affirmed to us that we are pretty darn good at it too! More importantly, the Social Media Driving Licence positioned us as social media gurus within the organisation, and our department as highly relevant, cutting-edge even, with a key role to play in the life of the business school. ●