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Article Title: Web 2.0 Projects at Warwick University Library

Year of publication: 2009

Link to published version:

http://issuu.com/cilipwestmidlands/docs/open_access_october_2009

Publisher statement: None

Web 2.0 Projects At Warwick University Library: A brief overview of just a few of them. . .

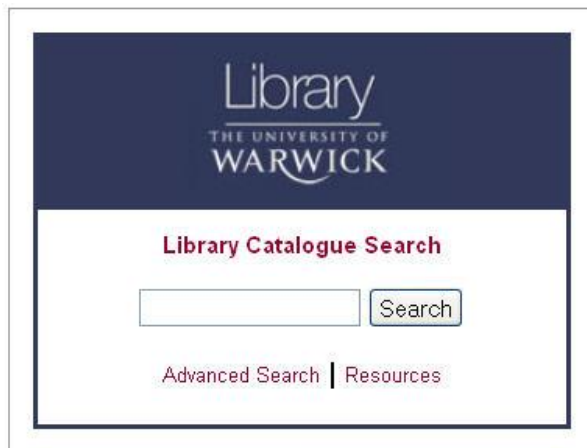
About 2 years ago at Warwick our senior managers encouraged Academic Support staff to really explore web 2.0 technologies and find out if anything particularly lent itself to supporting library work or marketing. We were given free reign to find out what worked and what suited the library, and what didn't. The following brief overviews cover only four of the projects that have been running since then. We have also investigated much more, including Twitter, Google Documents, wiki reading lists, You-Tube and more, but we couldn't possibly fit it all in here. The brief articles below are just to give a taste of the kind of projects we have worked on. There are many more members of staff involved and many more web 2.0 adventures underway. . .

Interactive Web Applications

Charlotte Brown: Assistant Subject Librarian for Psychology

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An OCLC report on social networking has reported that the use of social networking sites is going up while the use of library websites and catalogues is going down. Given the popularity of social networking sites and other online services such as Google and Wikipedia the question is posed: can we present our library content within this domain to assist these users in discovering valuable library resources? And can we offer this in a way that appeals to users of these popular services?



The Warwick Library iGoogle search application puts our library content within this domain. Functioning as an intermediary between iGoogle and the Library Catalogue, it allows access to our library resources from the interfaces that many students are using. The application can be found from the directory list of applications in iGoogle and added to an individual's iGoogle homepage. Continuing the theme of pushing out useful content to our users, applications containing RSS feeds can also be embedded into popular social networking sites and online services such as iGoogle. They can also be embedded into an appropriate section of an online information skills tutorial

containing links to useful blogs for example. Blogs are an increasingly popular reference resource for psychologists and so embedding an application containing RSS links to engaging blog articles in an online tutorial webpage can be a useful way to push out useful and relevant content to these users. Developing these applications is a constant iterative process that requires experimentation, trying new things and seeing in which direction we are taken!

Warwick Library In Your Face(book)

Katharine Widdows: Science Information Assistant

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In 2007 I set up a Facebook Page (now called a Public Profile) for Warwick University Library. It has been active since then and currently has 1282 fans (as of 21st August 2009). Approximately 60 new fans are attracted to the page every month, both in and out of term time.

The Wall has been set up (through the use of Yahoo Pipes to aggregate a collection of RSS feeds) to receive information from a range of Library blogs and news feeds, so we don't have to add a lot of content directly to it. This means

the time required to maintain it and keep the content fresh is minimal. Now that Facebook sends updated Page content direct to user accounts our fans get the information we post when they log in, they do not have to visit the Page itself to read our updates. But even so, our Pages is viewed between 25 and 50 times per day. As well as the Wall content, the Page also has photos and videos. We have also added applications to assist users in accessing some of our subscription databases via Facebook (for example a JSTOR search).



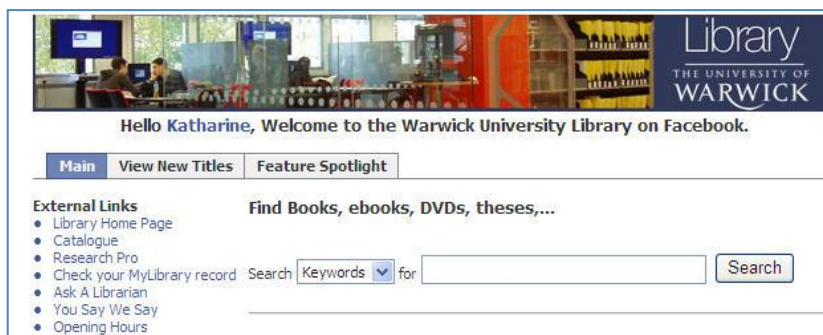
The screenshot shows the Facebook page for the University Of Warwick Library. The page header includes the name and navigation tabs for Wall, Info, Boxes, News, Notes, and Photos. The main content area displays several posts:

- A post titled "New Science Books Received" dated 17 August at 08:25, mentioning that new books are listed in the catalogue and can be bookmarked.
- A post titled "Message from IEEE" dated 12 August at 06:04, mentioning an information flyer about subject areas.
- A post titled "New Library Titles July 2009" dated 11 August at 04:12, mentioning a list of new titles for July accessible through the catalogue.

On the left side, there is an "Information" section with the following details:

- Location: University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom, CV4 7AL
- Phone: +44 (0)24 7652 2026
- Mon - Sun: 08:30 - 00:00

Below the information is a "Fans" section.



The screenshot shows the Warwick University Library website interface. At the top, there is a banner with the text "Hello Katharine, Welcome to the Warwick University Library on Facebook." Below the banner are navigation tabs for "Main", "View New Titles", and "Feature Spotlight".

On the left side, there is a section titled "External Links" with a list of links:

- Library Home Page
- Catalogue
- Research Pro
- Check your MyLibrary record
- Ask A Librarian
- You Say We Say
- Opening Hours

In the center, there is a search bar with the text "Find Books, ebooks, DVDs, theses,..." and a "Search" button. The search bar includes a dropdown menu for "Keywords" and a text input field.

In addition to the Page we also offer a Catalogue Search application which Facebook users can add to their personal profiles, but so far it has only attracted 65 fans and 6 monthly active users, however it requires no maintenance so the low uptake is not a problem. There are various entries about our Facebook developments

on my blog at: <http://kwiddows.blogspot.com> which will give further information if you are interested.

A “delicious” subject resource!

Jess Duffield: Assistant Subject Librarian for Arts

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Some time ago I set up a Delicious.com subject resource for the Centre of Translation and Comparative Cultural Studies postgraduate students. The idea was to enable users to both search for useful websites using tags, and to promote collaboration between students. Potentially useful web pages relating to Translation and Comparative Cultural Studies were saved in <http://delicious.com/CTCCS> and using simple html code, a tag cloud was generated on the Library subject web page. This project was designed to replace the traditional linear list of useful website links with a more interactive searchable web page. In addition users are able recommend and add additional resources to the delicious account at any time.



The resource was promoted in the 2008 induction sessions, and a training guide and session was put together earlier this year to show how the resource could be used. So far informal feedback has been positive, students like the idea of delicious as a resource to bookmark web pages and access resources from anywhere and at anytime. The collaborative aspect still needs a little work, but the resource is being used, and in several instances suggestions have been made to add websites to the

collection. A new subject resource for French Studies has been put together for next year, and it will be interesting to see how these results compare.

Useful Links:

CTCCS Trial Subject Resource -

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/main/tealea/arts/transcompcultstudies/trialresource>

CTCCS Delicious Account - <http://delicious.com/CTCCS>

French Studies Subject Resource -

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/main/tealea/arts/french/usefulwebsites/>

French_Studies Delicious Account - http://delicious.com/French_Studies

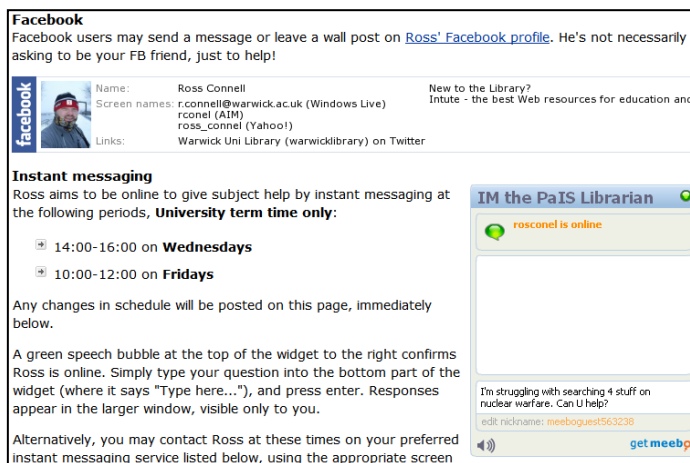
Instant Messaging: putting the “me” into Meebo

Ross Connell –Assistant Subject Librarian for Politics and International Studies

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Surveys in recent years by OCLC [1] and JISC [2] have reported high levels of instant messaging (IM) usage by current and prospective higher education students. As part of an initiative to raise my profile as Assistant Subject Librarian for Politics and International Studies and improve subject enquiry support, I used the free service Meebo [3] to trial IM communication with students.

Meebo allows accounts on different IM services to be monitored through a single web-based interface, so accommodating enquirer preference. My Meebo account was linked to personal accounts on the popular Microsoft, AOL and Yahoo! messenger services, with my usernames on these services advertised on the Library subject webpage. A Meebo chat widget was also embedded on this page, facilitating one-to-one communication without students requiring their own IM account.



The image shows two screenshots side-by-side. The left screenshot is a Facebook profile for Ross Connell, showing his name, screen names (r.connell@warwick.ac.uk, rconnel (AIM), ross_connell (Yahoo!)), and a link to the Warwick Uni Library on Twitter. The right screenshot is a Meebo chat widget titled "IM the PaIS Librarian" showing "rosconnel is online" and a text input field with a "Type here..." placeholder. Below the widget is a "get meebo" button.

While IM chat may sound an easy, even childish option, from my experience and evaluation it is a challenging medium for enquiry support. Staffing is a key issue, even at the micro-level of the pilot. Initially specifying four hours during each week when I would be available, practice has shown it is difficult to isolate these times from other work engagements. Furthermore, this works against the synchronous, instant nature of IM, with immediate student needs not fitting well into preset slots. By comparison, a parallel initiative, piloting my pre-existing Facebook [4] Profile as a means of subject contact, has proved considerably more popular.

My best advice is not to view such services as replacements for face-to-face, telephone or email enquiry support, but as additional, complementary options for students to obtain support in the way most convenient for them. Indeed, direct email notification of Facebook enquiries has been a key factor in the effectiveness of this initiative, avoiding the imperative to be online intrinsic to IM.

[1] De Rosa, C., et al. *College students' perceptions of libraries and information resources: a report to the OCLC membership*. [Online]. (URL <http://www.oclc.org/reports/pdfs/studentperceptions.pdf>). Dublin, Ohio: OCLC, 2006. (Accessed 28 July 2009).

[2] Ipsos MORI. *Student expectations study: key findings from online research and discussion evenings held in June 2007 for the Joint Information Systems Committee*. [Online]. (URL <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/publications/studentexpectations.pdf>). London: JISC, 2007. (Accessed 28 July 2009).

[3] <http://www.meebo.com/>

[4] <http://www.facebook.com/>