

2.0 and all that jazz

As a TAFE library, St George College Library has always made a conscious effort to do more than just be there for the staff and students of the college. Library staff actively campaign to educate as many customers as possible in how to use the library effectively, finding relevant and reliable resources to meet their information needs. Traditional methods involved face-to-face 'library education' for groups and individuals supplemented with leaflets and brochures. Web 2.0 combined with other new and emerging technologies has given us a new way to present this information, simultaneously engaging with a new audience to whom traditional methods were unattractive.

One of the big challenges for us was in finding platforms that were accessible within the DET NSW network. Potentially useful Web 2.0 technologies are locked out for us (such as YouTube, FaceBook, any form of chat or messenger service and more).

Another challenge has been finding staff time to develop and maintain these new resources; in conjunction with current work load and without any additional staffing. This has challenged us to examine what we currently do and see what can be changed or discontinued to allow us the necessary resources to develop library 2.0 resources.

So what have we done? We started by developing a library blog (we choose Blogger) which we update every week during

term time (42 weeks a year). Topics include new resources, current displays, other activities in the library and any other topics we hope our readers will find interesting. We linked a couple of rudimentary podcasts to the blog as a first effort to see just what was possible and how it was done. We have started a wiki and currently use the wiki as a portal to our other online resources.

Our other big move has been to introduce eLearning resources allowing students (and college staff) to learn how to use the library. We are creating iLectures using Adobe Captivate and Adobe Presenter. Captivate allows us to capture screenshots of a PC or laptop performing a task (eg accessing a database, searching the catalogue, logging into eBooks etc.) which we find is highly adaptable and can incorporate voice overs.

We are hoping to start creating podcasts for those library patrons who want to learn more about using the library; finding and using information via audio only. If time and money permit we would like to produce at least the basic level podcasts in a variety of community languages to help our ethnically diverse cohort of students make the most of the library.

Besides the obvious benefit of providing information in ways that will appeal to a younger, IT savvy group of students, another huge benefit has been the increase in skill level of those members of library staff involved in the various projects. Some staff development was available to give us basic knowledge, but a lot of it has been trial and error. By publicising our projects across the College we are able to also raise awareness about the valuable source of technical know-how available in the library for college staff wishing to develop eLearning resources for their teaching.

What next? Over 2008 we plan to continue to release podcasts and iLectures on a fortnightly basis. As the bank of resources build we will be spending more time promoting our resources to staff and students of the college. We are also looking to develop a social book marking site with relevant links for courses taught at the college and hope to open this book marking site for students and teaching staff contributions.

You can find the St George College wiki at <http://stglibrary.sydneyinstitute.wikispaces.net> and the blog at <http://stgcollege.library.blogspot.com>

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