Social software and libraries

- Edward Corrado, TCNJ
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Endeavor User Group Annual Conference, Apr 20-22, 2006 (Session 43)
Social software and libraries

Abstract:

What is social software? What implications does it have for libraries? Clay Shirky, who is largely credited with creating the term, defines social software as “software that supports group interaction.”

Some examples include instant messaging, RSS, blogs, wikis, folksonomies (tagging), photo sharing, social bookmarking, and more.

The presentation will start with an overview of some of these social software technologies and their applications in libraries. The presenters will discuss current and future implications of social software for librarians, library systems, and library services.
Social software

  » www.shirky.com/writings/group_enemy.html
- Collaborative
- Leverages “wisdom of the crowds” or “hive mind”
- “People are in fact kind of a killer app” -- Tim O’Reilly
  » www.pcworld.com/news/article/0,aid,114855,00.asp
- Low-barrier to use and adoption
- “Open” (can be expanded, linked, mashed, etc.)
- Foster and support “community”
- Fun, social, entertainment, lifestyle …
Social software

• a tool (for augmenting human social and collaborative abilities)

• a medium (for facilitating social connection and information interchange)

• an ecology (for enabling a "system of people, practices, values and technologies in a particular local environment")

» http://www.educause.edu/er/erm05/erm0513.asp
Instant messaging and IRC

- IRC: Internet Relay Chat
- Low-barrier
- Interactive
- Can be instantaneous
- Local (and/or web-based clients)
- Usually relies on outside entities to host service (Yahoo!, AOL, Freenode, etc.)
- Can be logged
- Possible firewall issues (esp. with IRC)
Instant messaging and IRC
Instant messaging and IRC

Welcome to #LUG/IP. The next meeting is on April 12th @ 7 PM. See http://www.l
14:57 <ecorrado> so I have no idea what that means
14:57 <bkjones> right.
14:57 <bkjones> me too
14:57 <bkjones> ^^^^^
14:57 <bkjones> but the company name thing has a red star by it.
14:57 <bkjones> so presumably it's required.
14:57 <fialar> do I do athens log in or just log in?
14:58 <bkjones> for the record, I tried 'tcnj' as the company name
14:58 <bkjones> ;-)
14:58 <ecorrado> maybe try "The College of New Jersey"
14:58 <fialar> I can do Athens Log in.. and it goes to another login screen
14:58 <fialar> doesn't work, ecorrado
14:58 <ecorrado> oh well....
14:59 <ecorrado> thanks
14:59 <bkjones> yeah, I got to that page, too. No dice. :-/
14:59 <ecorrado> at least I can know that the prof. who complained about it is not doing something stupid on his end
15:00 <bkjones> either that or you just confirmed that we're all as stupid as you're average faculty ;-)
15:00 <ecorrado> :-)
15:00 <ecorrado> bkjones++
[08:55] [@edc(+i)] [2:#lug/ip(+nt)] [Act: 4]
[#lug/ip]
Instant messaging and IRC – library implications

- Instant Messaging often used for “Virtual Reference”
- IRC can be used for online meetings and planning. For example, the recent Code4lib conference was mostly planned over IRC
- IRC channels can be good place to go to ask for help from colleagues from other institutions (especially useful for lone systems librarians)
- “Under the radar” back-channel communications during conferences

» en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Backchannel
Instant messaging and IRC – library implications

» http://groups.sims.berkeley.edu/classchat/papers/SaritaYardi_ISLS2006.pdf
Blogs

- Weblogs = blogs
- Low-barrier
- Time-oriented (“diary”)
- Commentable
- Trackback / pingback features (weaves together the “blogosphere”)
- Syndicatable
- Subscribe-able
- Discrete and addressable “chunks” and threads of conversations (allows for “distributed conversation”)
- Freeware and commercial
- Locally installed and hosted
- Some more popular “commercial” blog host ads
Blogs – examples

IdM Takes Lessons From the Microformats Crowd
Thursday, March 30th, 2006

A tip from Ryan sent me looking at MicroID:
a new identity layer to the web and Microformats that allows anyone to simply claim
verifiable ownership of their own pages and content hosted anywhere.
The idea is to hash a user’s email address (or other identifier) with the name of the site it
will be published on, [...]

Involvement, Inclusion, Collaboration
Monday, March 27th, 2006

Peter Caputa dropped a comment on Jeff Nolan’s post about how online event/lottery aggregators did business:
rather thinly distributed. Part of the problem is how people can contribute content — post their events — to a site that has

Door of Mystery
Saturday, March 25th, 2006

Lorcan Dempsey’s weblog
On librarians, services and networks
October 30, 2005
The reader and OpenWorldCat

Well, it hasn’t arrived. Popularity has gone live in OpenWorldCat which allows us to incorporate user reviews of materials. Check out the details and remember the tags, for example.

We do not know how this will develop, we think it is really important to provide a central presence on the web where libraries and readers can engage in a conversation about books and other materials. We hope this engages readers and librarians, and that we can collaboratively create something that would be impossible for parties to create individually. Try it.

On a side note, I especially like this initiative because it is another example of a collaboration between my research and production colleagues.

[Note: I originally used the Wiki style in the title of this post, because the underlying technology is Wiki-based — supporting Wiki-like functionality over structured data and we use Wiki-like markup. However, we use these to support a different type of application. In more technical speaking, I should have remembered Wiki! Thanks to comments!]

Update: there is a direct link to a review:
http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/159420037?profile=views

12 comments so far

Posted by Lorcan on October 5, 2005

Maybe it’s me, but I didn’t see it Wiki functionality is where?

Too much like ebooks more than like the things you can do on an Amazon.com, and I’ve never heard there eating it wild.

Well, having to fill out a registration form with 10+ fields on it doesn’t make it really appealing to join in...
Blogs - examples

Quick and easy to add content. No need to know HTML.
Blogs – library implications

- Librarian to librarian communication
- News / “newletters”
- Feedback
- Community of your users
- Virtual book clubs (“blog this book”)
- Conference interaction
- Collection development implications
- Preservation implications
Nature blogs
Nature blogs

How is the Blog indicated in our Serials Solutions A-Z list?

How is the Blog indicated in catalog?

How is the Blog referred to in our metasearch interface or our OpenURL link resolver?

(NJIT is experimenting with putting RSS feeds for tables of contents into its catalog)
Wikis

- Wiki: Hawaiian for quick
- Low-barrier
- Commentable
- Editable
- Versioning capabilities
- Collaborative
- Syndicatable / subscribe-able
- Backlinks – shows which web pages refer to the page you are viewing
- Community “policed”

- Con: the John Seigenthaler case (USA Today, Nov 29, 2005)
- Wikipedia vs. Britannica
  » www.nature.com/nature/journal/v438/n7070/full/438900a.html
Wikis -- examples
Discussion on the “to delete or not to delete” decision
Wikis vs. The Blog

• A wiki can be a blog, but a blog does not have to be a wiki (indeed, very few blogs are wikis)

• Wikis promote content over form

• Blogs promote form over content (form is chronological)

• They share a lot, however: trackback, syndication, etc.
In the future, will scholarly communication happen within wiki spaces?
Wikis – library implications

• Faculty teaching
• Group projects
• Ongoing research

Where is the librarian? Where are the library resources?

• Uses inside the library include: documentation, procedures, answers to repeated reference questions, and more!
Folksonomies (tagging)

- User-supplied “cataloging” and “collection building”
- Folk taxonomy = Folksonomy
- Collection sharing
- Ground-up, not top-down
- More responsive to current trends, terms, jargon, etc.
- Aggregates many individual decisions so that useful patterns emerge

- Tagging applied to:
  - Bookmarks
  - Photos
  - Book collections
  - etc
Social bookmarking

- Shared internet bookmarks
- Often accessible to anyone (although some bookmarks can be password protected)
- Social bookmarks are often assigned informal user-defined *keywords* or tags (e.g. folksonomies)
- Bookmarker can sometimes comment or provide an abstract of bookmarked site
- “Cloud tags” show popularity of tag terms; “the marketplace” decides which are “adopted” in practice
- Examples: Unalog, del.icio.us, Technorati
Social bookmarking – del.icio.us
Social bookmarking – del.icio.us
Social bookmarking – del.icio.us
Social bookmarking – del.icio.us

Sort and display options; each tag term is a hotlink.
All about CiteULike

CiteULike is a free service to help academics to share, store, and organise the academic papers they are reading. When you see a paper on the web that interests you, you can click one button and have it added to your personal library. CiteULike automatically extracts the citation details, so there's no need to type them in yourself. It all works from within your web browser. There's no need to install any special software.

Because your library is stored on the server, you can access it from any computer. You can share your library with others, and find out who is reading the same papers as you. In turn, this can help you discover literature which is relevant to your field but you may not have known about.

You're currently looking at a list of the last few papers submitted by all the CiteULike users. Why not register for a free account today and start organising your collection and see just the articles you're interested in? All we need is your email address, a username, and a password. It should take less than fifteen seconds.

Alternatively, you can read more about CiteULike.

Everyone's library

Some recent papers posted to CiteULike - all mixed together.

- Teaching Mathematics for Understanding: Case Studies of Four Fifth-Grade Teachers
  by Drew, S. and J. P. Samson.
  posted by rita as new and Luther on 2006-04-12 20:19:59.
Social bookmarking – unalog.com

Group code4lib (you are a member) [tags]

Wednesday, 2006-04-12

14:38 by inkdroid - cliq.net
with tag tools in group code4lib

10:32 by inkdroid - Higher-Order JavaScript
with tag javascript in group code4lib

Tuesday, 2006-04-11

21:52 by inkdroid - Collaborative thesaurus tagging the Wikipedia way
with tags thesaurus folksonomy wikipedia in group code4lib

12:24 by inkdroid - GWEI - Google Will Eat Itself
with tags google business in group code4lib also by 1 other

09:11 by inkdroid - The 'info' URI Scheme (rfc 4452)
with tags web standards identifiers in group code4lib also by 3 others

Saturday, 2006-04-08

20:52 by inkdroid - Practical Microformats
with tags microformats html metadata wiki in group code4lib
Social bookmarking – PennTags in Voyager!

Author: Howes, Keith.
Title: Broadcasting it: an encyclopaedia of homosexuality in film, radio and TV. Howes; foreword by Alan Bennett.
Description: Book
960 p.; 24 cm.
Series: Cassell lesbian and gay studies
Other Series Title: Cassell lesbian and gay studies

Location: Annenberg Library Reference
Call Number: PN1995.9.H55 H7 1993
Status: Available, check location

Proxy | Add to PennTags | Logout

PennTags:
jarson tagged this as encyclopedias, film, homosexuality, radio, television on
Social bookmarking – Nature’s Connotea

Connotea is a free website to help researchers and clinicians manage and share information.
Watch a [short video](#) about Connotea.
Register to get started.

Cataloging vs. tagging
Searching vs. discovery
Photo sharing

- Community tagging of image collections for rapidly building metadata
- Community tagging of image collections using community-driven terms
- Local history and archives – community identification of people, places, events, etc.
- Local history and archives – building a community that evolves into action, funding, participation, critical mass, etc.
- PictureAustralitia – National Library of Australia, Flickr, and others
Flickr.com

Images tagged

Commented

Parts of images annotated
Photo sharing – library implications

- Collection development
- Archiving / preservation
RSS

- XML-format protocol (not software or website)
- RSS, Atom, etc. – means to syndicate content
- Computer to computer exchange
- Makes subscriptions (and auto-updates) possible
- Sharing of content
- Microcontent
- Portal ("channel") into another info-space
- User-customizable (control)
- Allows the weaving together of the blogosphere, as well as "mashups" of many of these social software applications
- "Result Set Syndication" – Walter Lewis @ code4lib 2006
RSS – uses in libraries

• Push content to users
• Re-purpose content within library/patron learning environments
• Current examples:
  – New books RSS feed
  – Journals tables-of-contents feeds
  – Events and programs
  – Library news
  – Current awareness (“SDI”)

• Collection development implications
RSS – new books @ TCNJ
RSS – new books @ TCNJ
Podcasting

- RSS + MP3’s = podcasting
- Audiofiles (mostly MP3s)
  - Napster, iTunes, Rhapsody, etc.
- Some videofiles
  - iTunes, Desperate Housewives $1.99/episode
- “Information space” to fine, located, download, buy, subscribe to updates
- XML metadata files
- Ground-up
- Low-barrier
- Less collaborative than other social software
- One-to-many, not many-to-many
Podcasting – library implications

There’s Something in the Air: Podcasting in Education
GARDNER CAMPBELL
Podcasting is taking its place among the dizzying variety of grassroots media now available to everyone. Those in higher education need to understand the potential uses and value of rich media authoring, bringing podcasting into courses so that students can lift their learning to a whole new level.

View: PDF 347KB | HTML Format

Digital Technologies in Courses - Spring 2006

The following instructors have confirmed plans for using digital technologies during the Spring 2006 semester as part of the Duke Digital Initiative. Some instructors will have students use iPod devices in their courses, while other instructors will use iPod devices in instructional activities that do not involve student use of iPod devices. Additional courses may be added to this during the course of the semester. Course descriptions are listed below the table listing and are linked with the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Listing</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AALL 170</td>
<td>Indian Cinema</td>
<td>Satendra Khanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPSCI 1</td>
<td>Principles of Computer Science</td>
<td>Jeffrey Forbes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CULANTH 1965</td>
<td>Senior Distinction Seminar</td>
<td>Richard Collier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CULANTH 180.02</td>
<td>The Arts and Human Rights</td>
<td>Louise McIntjes and Catherine Admorey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOCS 155S</td>
<td>Intermediate Audio Documentary</td>
<td>John Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOCS 100S</td>
<td>Children and Illness</td>
<td>John Moses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUC 152S</td>
<td>Civic Engagement and the Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership</td>
<td>Jennifer Ahern-Lodson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EGR 165.02</td>
<td>Rebuilding From Ruins</td>
<td>David S. Shadrach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGLISH 117F5</td>
<td>Spiritual Autobiography</td>
<td>Christina Askounis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Podcasting – library implications

- Library tours
- Tutorials
- Implications for collection development
  - How to provide student access to faculty lectures?
  - How to point students toward quality podcast information?
- Uses in the classroom (physical and virtual)
- Distance Learning / e-Learning
- Audio reserves

- “Software Above the Level of a Single Device” – vertical interrogation — Web 2.0 design patterns — Tim O’Reilly
  - iTunes web site with huge database
  - Desktop MP3 file and metadata manager
  - Portable handheld player
MySpace.com

See who’s online while you are...
Other social spaces
Other social spaces
Creative Commons

- Not social software per say, but does allow for sharing of content
  - Articles
  - Presentations
  - Art (including photos)

- Different Creative Commons Licenses exist, some limit what people can do with content
  - No corporate use
  - Share and share alike

License + XML script for announcing the license and for remote “findability” + CC database of CC-registered content
Life caching

- Cell phones
- Blogs
- Digital cameras and photo sharing
- GPS indicators
- Friend networks
- Chat and text message

- “Screenagers”
- Pew survey shows “mounting evidence that teens are not passive consumers of media content ... they take content from media providers and transform it, reinterpret it, republish it, take ownership of it in ways that at least hold the potential for subverting it.”

  » Pew Internet and American Life Project, Nov 2005
What do all these have in common?

- Easy of use – “If I can’t figure it out in two minutes, it’s not worth my time.”
- Flexibility, re-usability
- Community
- “Less than a decade ago ... people described the act of going online as venturing into some foreign realm called cyberspace. But that metaphor no longer applies. MySpace, Flickr and all the other newcomers aren't places to go, but things to do, ways to express yourself, means to connect with others and extend your own horizons. Cyberspace was somewhere else. The Web is where we live.”

» www.msnbc.msn.com/id/12015774/site/newsweek/page/5/
Social software and Web 2.0

- **Participative:** Web 2.0 is participative ... Web 2.0 applications have been quick to spot the value of user-generated content.

- **Modular:** Web 2.0 applications are modular, with developers and users able to pick and choose from a set of interoperating components in order to build something that meets their needs.

- **Sharing:** Web 2.0 is about sharing ... content and ideas.

- **Communication:** Web 2.0 is about communication and facilitating community.

- **Smart:** Web 2.0 is smart; applications will use knowledge of us ... to deliver services that meet our needs.

- **Trust:** Web 2.0 is built upon trust ... placed in individuals ... or in the users and reuses of data.

» www.dlib.org/dlib/december05/kirriemuir/12kirriemuir.html
Social software and Web 2.0

Web 2.0 Meme Map

Flickr, del.icio.us: Tagging, not taxonomy
PageRank, eBay reputation, Amazon reviews: user as contributor
Blogs: Participation, Not publishing
BitTorrent: Radical Decentralization

Gmail, Google Maps and AJAX: Rich User Experiences
Google AdSense: customer self-service enabling the long tail
Wikipedia: Radical Trust

Strategic Positioning:
• The Web as Platform

User Positioning:
• You control your own data

Core Competencies:
• Services, not packaged software
• Architecture of Participation
• Cost-effective scalability
• Remixable data source and data transformations
• Software above the level of a single device
• Harnessing collective intelligence

“An attitude, not a technology”
The Long Tail
Data as the “Intel Inside”
The perpetual beta
Software that gets better the more people use it
Play
Rich User Experience
Granular Addressability of content

Hackability
The Right to Remix: “Some rights reserved”
Emergent: User behavior not predetermined
Trust your users
Small Pieces Loosely Joined (web as components)

Mashups: the programmable web

www.dlib.org/dlib/december05/kirriemuir/12kirriemuir.html
Mashups: the programmable web

» www.dlib.org/dlib/december05/kirriemuir/12kirriemuir.html
Why do we need to care?
“Already in common usage outside of the educational arena, social computing practices are cropping up on campuses with increasing frequency.” p. 8

“Collaboration is increasingly seen as critical across the range of educational activities, including intra- and inter-institutional activities of any size or scope ... knowledge is becoming a community property, and the construction of knowledge is becoming a community activity ...” p. 4

“Net Geners use technology extensively to network and socialize. In their personal lives, buddy lists, virtual communities, and social networks such as Flickr or Orkut are heavily used. “Then we poll users about what they actually do with their computers, some form of social interaction always tops the list -- conversation, collaboration, playing games, and so on. The practice of software design is shot through with computers-as-box assumptions, while our actual behavior is closer to computer-as-door, treating the device as an entrance to a social space.” p. 2.12
Millennials (these are our users!)

Millennials (or NextGens) are:

- Format agnostic
- Nomadic
- Multitasking
- Experiential
- Collaborative
- Integrated
- Principled
- Adaptive
- Direct

Why do we need to care?

It doesn’t matter whether we “accept” folksonomies, because we’re not going to be given that choice. The mass amateruization of publishing means the mass amateurization of cataloging is a forced move.

[we will not] get to choose whether folksonomies spread, but ... we might be able to affect how they spread, by identifying ways of improving them as we go.

... we are not driving a car, with gas, brakes, reverse and a lot of choice as to route. We are steering a kayak, pushed rapidly and monotonically down a route determined by the environment. We have a (very small) degree of control over our course in this particular stretch of river, and that control does not extend to being able to reverse, stop, or even significantly alter the direction we’re moving in.

» many.corante.com/archives/2005/01/22/ folksonomies_are_a_forced_move_a_response_to_liz.php
Why do we need to care?

... we can consider the functional areas of linking, reference management, and blogging to be service points on a single continuum of information gathering, study, and creation.

» www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue40/chudnov/

And sharing!

This is scholarship.
Why do we need to care?

“They're turning our old ideas of privacy on their head. The users of MySpace think nothing of putting pictures of themselves on the Internet, keeping a public journal of their days and nights, making their friends known to the world. Our old ideas about privacy no longer apply to a lot of Internet users. That's just a fact.”

» [www.msnbc.msn.com/id/12013797/site/newsweek/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/12013797/site/newsweek/)
Why do we need to care?

“A new vision: everybody is a librarian.
What’s my job? Help people build their own libraries.
What does a library do?
• Make our library work
• Help make their libraries work
• Make it all work together”

Dan Chudnov, Yale

» onebiglibrary.net/files/20060411-cwml-social-computing.pdf
What to we need from our vendors?

A new vision:

• Platforms, not software
• Capabilities, not features
• Openness and flexibility
• Expect the unexpected
• API’s, web services, loosely coupled systems
• Leverage the immediate user-base for innovation
• Appropriate from the larger user-base for innovation
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Thanks!

» www.library.njit.edu/staff-folders/robertson/presentations/