Networking in Sheffield: Social Media 2015

As a complement to our formal [training and workshops](#) programme, and in response to feedback from members, UKeiG runs informal networking events - sometimes jointly with other groups or regional networks - to chat and swap ideas. There may be guest speakers, facilitators or it could simply be a social meeting focused on some aspect of your work or interests. If you have an idea for a networking activity please let us know. We will contact you, discuss your requirements, flesh out your ideas and get something organised. Please contact UKeiG's Administrator, Val Skelton, in the first instance:

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In July 2015 UKeiG collaborated with the CILIP Yorkshire and Humberside Member Network (YHMN) to bring together like-minded people with an interest in using social media tools to support and deliver great information services. Delegates met in Sheffield to hear three great speakers and share afternoon tea and conversations. You can read more about this event on the [YHMN blog](#).

UKeiG Management Committee member and Training Advisory Group lead Liz Wright writes: "We were invited to the Nabarro's Sheffield office; a smart, welcoming and well equipped location. The afternoon involved three talks on social media with the opportunity for informal networking over refreshments. The presentations were provided by experienced social media practitioners Laura Woods, Penny Andrews and Karen Dolman, and Laura and Karen share their experiences with eLucidate readers in this issue. It was great to see the depth of knowledge we have in the Yorkshire and Humber region when it comes to using social media to promote library services. Social media is a popular way for information professionals to communicate with customers but it takes time and skill to do it well. The talks included lots of great practical advice about how to use social media effectively. The presentations set the tone for an informal and informative networking afternoon. The afternoon tea was an excellent icebreaker for networking. It is always good to meet other local information professionals. It was an enjoyable and informative afternoon for all."

Karen Dolman is an Information Adviser in Library & Student Support Services at Sheffield Hallam University and can be contacted at:

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She writes: "My presentation was about my own experience of using social media for learning and what I have found while trying to engage students to use SM for learning, particularly through library networking channels. I was a total technophobe until 2006, even after two degree courses. I felt confident using the library catalogues and looking for journal articles but didn't really engage any further. And, then, this thing called social media began to take off. Initially I joined Facebook to engage with other learners on my

MA course, and we would discuss issues around assignments, group projects and exchange ideas. But mainly it was to keep in touch and to provide a modicum of moral support, especially when we began our dissertations. Now, my use in learning is following the hashtag #chartership. I also have a blog, where I post information on how my CILIP Chartership is going (or not…).

Building on this interest, while I was working in a previous role, I got involved in working on the social media group for the library. This involvement fostered my interest in how we could use the platforms for learning. We began to monitor our interactions and found that students engaged with twitter, but used it for basic communication (library temperature levels, noise, IT issues, for example) rather than for learning, so it was mainly a monologue rather than a dialogue.

To try to combat this, we followed [Ned Potter's 10 top tips](#) - the most important being not to constantly tweet about the library! Although the tips are brilliant, our interactions were still very one-sided, although we did get retweeted when we posted things that were either a little bit risqué or left-of-centre. Or pictures of cats! From this, I concluded that having a gimmick/theme was a way of engaging students and also promoting our services at the same time.

So what's next for me? We recently had a development session on using technology enhanced learning in our teaching, from which I took away some useful ideas. I'd quite like to investigate using gamification/virtual reality for library tours and I'm in the early process of developing webinars for overseas students."

Karen's networks:

- [Twitter](#)
- [Blog](#)
- [Information & Knowledge Management Practitioners England](#)