

Society has a sufficient need of research that our alternative to Googlezon has at least a chance of realisation. But let us credit Googlezon with displaying the boldness and vision to think about a level of provision that libraries have instinctively shied away from, believing it unattainable, ourselves too much the poor relations of the content world. If we continue to shy away, we may have to face the end of the road for libraries – or see the roof fire eventually consume the whole edifice.

A Joint Venture to provide an International Resource: ‘The Information Literacy Website’

Debbi Boden

The CILIP CSG Information Literacy Group has been in existence for just over a year and half. The aim of the group is to provide a forum across all sectors of the profession, which encourages debate and allows the exchange of knowledge in all aspects of Information Literacy (IL). Over the last year the group has been involved in projects such as the creation of the CILIP Information Literacy definition and the organisation of a three-day international conference on IL (LILAC 2005). The group also worked with the editor of UPDATE to provide content for a bumper themed IL edition of UPDATE in January, providing fifteen articles on IL.

Next years plans are already in motion with LILAC 2006 taking place at Leeds University on 27th – 29th March 2006; keynote speakers will include Phil Candy and Jonathan Douglas. A ‘horizon scanning’ conference is also being planned that will bring together representatives from organisations such as the MLA, Ofcom and the DfES. The aim is to create a strategic planning process that will progress the national IL agenda, in a co-ordinated fashion, with a joined-up methodology. A programme is also being planned that will provide IL training and staff development on a regional level to informational professionals from all sectors.

At the top of the agenda, however, is the creation of an information literacy website. In July 2002 the Big Blue Report made the following recommendation:

‘That a national forum should be established to promote information skills and to provide support and a consultancy service on all aspects of information skills to the library, academic and student communities. To assist this, the conversion of the Big Blue website, or the

establishment of an information skills portal will provide a national resource.¹

The group supports this recommendation but wants to widen its remit so that the website caters not only for the HE sector but for all sectors within the library community, for example: schools, NHS, public, government etc. At present there are many different groups who maintain websites which contain information on IL. These groups include Sconul, the HE Academy, and the Schools Library Group (SLG). Similarly, there are many individuals who also maintain websites devoted to IL, for example, Susie Andretta, Chris Powis and Sheila Webber.

CSG-IL propose to create an international resource, 'THE Information Literacy Website'. The website would have partners from all sectors and either host or point to quality information resources on IL. The recognition of the need for a national resource has already resulted in substantial collaboration. Groups and organisations that were approached were all in agreement that a UK website is core to future IL developments within the library community. An editorial board will soon be formed and will have representatives from groups and organisations such as Sconul, the HE Academy, the SLG, NIACE, the NHS, the Youth Libraries Group, the Government Libraries Group and others.

All content provided by the various partners will be branded and acknowledged to the group who provided it. However, it is important that the website is seen to be a resource that has equal partners and is not owned by any particular group or individual. Where the website was to be hosted was therefore an important consideration. Therefore, all initial partners were delighted when Eduserv offered to host the site.

'Eduserv are a not-for-profit IT services group, dedicated to providing quality support and solutions for business critical hosting, for e-learning, e-government and e-commerce, and for network identity management. With the contributions generated from these activities the Eduserv Foundation funds initiatives supporting the effective application of IT in education.'²

The IL website will be organic, It will grow and change depending on the needs of those who use it, based on the idea that feedback from users will

¹ The Big Blue Report, JISC, University of Leeds & Manchester Metropolitan University (2002)

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/bigblue/finalreportful.pdf> [accessed May 2005]

² Eduserv. <http://www.eduserv.org.uk/> [Accessed May 2005]

help inform the types of content provided. The target audience of the website is library and teaching staff who deliver information literacy teaching; therefore, we hope to provide the following types of information:

- IL definitions
- Glossary
- Staff development
- Tool kit / best practice
- Marketing / embedding IL into life long learning
- Current initiatives / research (funding opportunities, who is doing what, research techniques)
- News & announcements
- Discussion board
- Suggestion box for content that activates content management of website
- Subject / sector specific resources
- Links to existing resources, e.g. lesson plans, online tutorials, question banks, ACRL standards and resources

The site will be launched by the end of the year. If you would like to contribute to the site or want further information contact Debbi Boden at: d.boden@imperial.ac.uk