Internet
Library 2.0 – more questions than answers
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Library 2.0 : various views of what it is, and how it can be used.

Library 2.0 – is it just a new buzzword or is there a new paradigm being created? The Library 2.0 discussion has arisen from Web 2.0 ideas. Perhaps you've read Phil Bradley's article about Web 2.0 over in Cilip Update[2]

Library 2.0 is an amorphous concept, seeming to embrace both the technological aspects of the integration of different digital resources, and the cultural/semantic aspects of its definition. In the light of an ever shifting landscape and a looming deadline, here are some resources you can use to follow and contribute to the debate.

There are a range of definitions of Library 2.0, Wikipedia[3] includes this in its definition "With Library 2.0 library services are constantly updated and re-evaluated to best serve library users. Library 2.0 also attempts to harness the library user in the design and implementation of library services by encouraging feedback and participation." Stephen Abram (SirsiDynix vice president of Innovation) suggests that "The beauty of Web 2.0 and Library 2.0 is the level of integration and interoperability that is designed into the interface through your portal or intranet.

That's where the real power to enhance the user experience is. In order to take advantage of the concepts inherent in Library 2.0 is the imperative to not shy away from adding advanced functionality and features directly into the content."[4] Paul Miller (technology evangelist at Talis) is another Library 2.0 proponent, he has suggested that "Library 2.0 is about encouraging and enabling a library's community of users to participate, contributing their own views on resources they have used and new ones to which they might wish access."[5]

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[2]   Bradley, P. (2006) 'Web 2.0 – a new generation of services. Part1'. *CILIP Update.* 5(5): 32-33. Available from: http://www.cilip.org.uk/publications/updatemagazine/archive/archive2006/may/web2bradleymay06.htm [Accessed 25 April 2006]

[3]   'Library 2.0' *Wikipedia* [Online]. Available from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Library_2.0 [Accessed 25 April 2006]

[4]   Abram, S. (2006) 'Web 2.0, Library 2.0, and Librarian 2.0: preparing for the 2.0 world'. *SirsiDynix OneSource* [Online] 2(1). Available from: http://www.imakenews.com/sirsi/e_article000505688.cfm [Accessed 25 April 2006]

[5]   Miller, P. (February 2006) *Library 2.0. The challenge of disruptive innovation.* [Online] Birmingham : Talis. Available from: http://www.talis.com/resources/documents/447_Library_2_prf1.pdf [Accessed 25 April 2006]

He has also described Library 2.0 as a disruptive technology. In a Talis White Paper[6] late 2005 he and Ken Chad (executive director, Talis), outlined four principles of Library 2.0:

- The library is everywhere
- The library has no barriers
- The library invites participation
- The library uses flexible, best-of-breed systems

Michael Stephens (Tame the Web blogger), is interested in the ways Library 2.0 themes could influence the creation of new vision library services. At a workshop for Metropolitan Library System, he explained that "The principles of Library 2.0 seek to break down barriers: barriers librarians have placed on services, barriers of place and time and barriers inherent in what we do. In this user-centered paradigm, libraries can get information/entertainment/knowledge into the hands of our users wherever they are by whatever means work best."[7] This approach is a development of a challenge he made to librarians earlier in 2005 when he asked, "How will you change or improve services to match this new model?[8]". Then he added three additional principles to those of Chad and Miller:

- The library encourages the heart
- The library is human
- The library recognizes that its users are human too

Michael Stephens is a course leader of the ALA/MPS Library Futures online course which is running this spring. The aim of the course is that "participants will utilize RSS feeds, podcasts, web based data, and weblogs to collaborate on creating content, planning projects and exploring material developed by experts. The main goal of the Library Futures course is to develop a plan for a Libraries 2.0 project. Participants will work in teams to define a project idea, develop a plan for implementing the project, and deliver that plan as a podcast and slide set."[9] One of the support materials for this course is a Library 2.0 reading list, which is presented via Squidoo[10]. It's worth taking a look at this just to see what Squidoo is. This includes sections such as, Web 2.0 – overviews;

6   Chad, K and Miller, P. (November 2005) *Do libraries matter? The rise of Library 2.0* [Online] Birmingham : Talis. Available from: http://www.talis.com/downloads/white_papers/DoLibrariesMatter.pdf [Accessed 25 April 2006]

7   Stephens, M (2006) 'On barriers in libraries (An L2 workshop)'. *Tame the Web* [Online]. Available from: http://tametheweb.com/2006/04/on_barriers_in_libraries_an_l2.html [Accessed 25 April 2006]

8   Stephens, M (2005) 'Do Libraries Matter: On Library & Librarian 2.0'. *ALA TechSource* [Online]. Available from: http://www.techsource.ala.org/blog/2005/11/do-libraries-matter-on-library-librarian-20.html [Accessed 25 April 2006]

9   Woods, J. 'Library Futures – Online Course Slated for Spring 2006'. *Library 2.0* [Online] Available from: http://www.library2.0.ottergroup.com/blog/_archives/2006/1/17/1681851.html [Accessed 25 April 2006]

definitions of L2; foundations of L2; discussions of the 2.0 meme and discussion of Library 2.0. It is a useful collection of resources on this topic.

If you're curious to see or follow what the course participants are doing, then visit http://library2.0.alablog.org/. Naturally, much of the information is password access only, but what is openly available is intriguing and well worth a look. For a glimpse of the wide range of sources informing their discussions, take a look at their del.icio.us tagset at http://del.icio.us/tag/ALAL2.

I wonder which library, or even which type of library will emerge as the trailblazer for Library 2.0? My own hunch, based on what I've seen whilst researching this column and attending the Internet Librarian International conference last year, is that it could be a well-funded public library service in the US, or could it be your library service?

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[10]   Levine, J and Stephens, M. (2006) 'Library 2.0 reading list'. [Online] Available from: http://www.squidoo.com/library20/ [Accessed 25 April 2006]