

Internet

Learning 2.0 – take on a challenge!

Susan Miles (s.miles@kingston.ac.uk)

More about Web 2.0, and a Library 2.0 self-directed learning program..

A couple of new developments have drawn my interest back to Web 2.0 themes once again and I would like to encourage you to take on a Learning 2.0 challenge.

ALA TechSource has recently published a Library Technology Report, “Web 2.0 & Libraries: best practices for social software”, by Michael Stephens¹. I have a copy on order, but until it arrives, here’s a summary of the contents page. There are seven chapters, exploring Web 2.0 and libraries; blogs; RSS; instant messaging; wikis; Flickr; and putting your library “out there”. The chapters are divided into several parts: describing the technology, implementing the technology in a library, and discussing best practices for that technology. The author, Michael Stephens, contributes to several blogs, including Tame The Web and ALA TechSource. His style is non-formal and engaging – I’m looking forward to reading the report.

Via an ALA TechSource blog post² I came across the Library 2.0 self-directed learning program created by Helene Blowers, Director of Public Services Technology at the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, in North Carolina, USA. She took her inspiration from a combination of a desire to enable staff in a large library system to quickly get to grips with Web 2.0 technologies, and from remembering Stephan Abram’s article “43 Things you (or I) might want to do this year”³, which encouraged readers to try

¹ Web 2.0 & Libraries: best practices for social software. Michael Stephens. *Library Technology Reports*, vol. 42, no. 4. July/August 2006. Purchase details available from: <http://www.techsource.ala.org/ltr/web-20-and-libraries-best-practices-for-social-software.html> [Accessed 1 September 2006]

² Stephens, M. (15 August 2006) “Steal this idea: Learning 2.0 at PLCMC”. *ALA TechSource* [online] Available at: <<http://www.techsource.ala.org/blog/2006/08/steal-this-idea-learning-20-at-plcmc.html>> [Accessed 1 September 2006]

³ 43 Things you (or I) might want to do this year. Stephan Abram. *Information Outlook*. vol. 10, no. 2, Feb 2006. PDF available from:

out various Web 2.0 type activities. The broader aim of the Learning 2.0 online learning program is that it “encourages staff to learn more about emerging technologies on the Web that are changing the way people, society and libraries access information and communicate with each other.”

The resulting Web-based program⁴ started on August 7th, and each week new task lists are activated. It is built around 23 self-discovery exercises, involving blogs, photo sharing, RSS feeds, with topics such as tagging, folksonomies and Technorati, wikis, and downloadable audio/visual to come in the remaining weeks. A brief tour of some of the staff participants' blogs shows people creating blogs, adding pictures, reconfiguring the default appearance of blogs, struggling with aspects of handling RSS feeds, and, best of all, engaging with the technologies.

This is where the challenge to eLucidate readers comes in – anyone can follow this learning program too. The TechSource blog post included an interview with Helene Blowers, asking her “Can other libraries use this model? Steal this idea so to speak? :-)”. Her reply is encouraging, “By all means—I hope they will. The interesting thing about this program is it's entirely built upon the very same tools that participants are learning about: blogs, wikis, podcast, image- and video-hosting sites; the entire online learning program was built upon Web 2.0 tools and sites freely available on the Internet.” You can see the “23 Learning 2.0 Things” here – <http://plcmcl2-things.blogspot.com/>.

I am taking up the challenge and you can follow my progress via my blog, Smilin' Librarian at <http://smilinlibrarian.blogspot.com>. So far I have completed tasks associated with weeks one and two, and am presently working through those from week three – photos and images. I am impressed by the use of audio tracks to introduce each week's topic and the tutorial on 7½ Habits of highly successful lifelong learners promotes self-reflection how to approach the program. It is evident that there has been a great deal of thought and effort given to the creation of this online learning program.

I would be very interested to hear from those of you who also decide to follow along.

http://www.sirsi.com/Pdfs/Company/Abram/InfoTech_Feb2006.pdf [Accessed 1 September 2006]

⁴ 'About the Learning 2.0 Project' [online] Available at <<http://plcmcl2-about.blogspot.com/>> [Accessed 1 September 2006]