

Meeting Report: Practicalities of Web 2.0

The Practicalities of Web 2.0: essential information for information professionals

Presented by Phil Bradley, at King's College London, Guys Campus, Wednesday 19 March 2008

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Phil made it clear from the start that the focus of this course was aspects of Web 2.0 we might find useful. The seminar started with a quick overview of some definitions and concepts of Web 2.0, and he gave some examples of it in practice:

- A platform serving Web applications to end users, which could take over desktop computing applications.
- A way of harnessing collective intelligence.
- Facilitating the use and reuse of data in many ways.
- Involving users directly in development.
- Not limiting to a single device (storage on a website rather than a PC or individual network).

Or maybe Web 2.0 is actually a state of mind!

He emphasised that definitions were much less important than what you can do with it.

As you might expect, Phil makes use of innovative resources himself. He has loaded some of his presentations on to his 'SlideShare' site. It's an example of a typical Web 2.0 resource, as it allows the creation, storage and sharing of resources that are not based on one PC. It can be used by others without needing particular software or to download large files. It includes a presentation from a *similar* course at <http://www.slideshare.net/Philbradley/cilipbuilding/>, which is worth a look. The site includes a transcript of the all the slides (near the bottom of the page). Some of the links click through (vertical hand icon).

More URLs are listed below, or at the end of this report.

The seminar included practical exercises where we learned about the developing range of Web 2.0 activities, with examples of relevant specific sites, and how to use them.

- **Pageflakes** <http://www.pageflakes.com/> allows you to set up a start page compiled with 'flakes' of your choice, in a range of media. These could include elements such as; a 'to do' list, RSS feeds, weather reports, or favourite images.
- **Newsreader**

We covered how to register and select feeds, and how to organise them, using Bloglines <http://www.bloglines.com/>

- **Set up a search engine**

There are a range of sites where you can do this. They do a similar job in a similar way. We focused on using Rollyo <http://www.rollyo.com>, as the easiest to use. Other sites include

Yahoo Search Builder <http://builder.search.yahoo.com/m/promo>,

Eurekster at <http://www.eurekster.com/>

Google Custom Search Builder at <http://google.com/coop/cse/>

- **Start a blog**

Blogger <http://www.blogger.com> provides an easy way to set up a blog. Having created a blog, there are further steps in formatting and publishing it.

- **Set up a website** without having to store anything on your own PC

Zimbio (<http://www.zimbio.com/>) allows the creation of content on the Web which can be shared with other people. This can either be public or private.

- **Bookmark services**

There are several of these, but what they have in common is that the information is stored on their site, not the user's PC. There are added facilities, such as indexing and related searching.

- **Favorites/bookmarks**

del.icio.us <http://www.delicious.com> is the well-known example.

- **Webpages**

FURL <http://www.furl.net> saves an entire webpage, fully indexed, rather than just a URL.

- **Create a wiki**

The site we looked at was Peanut Butter wiki <http://pbwiki.com/>.

Some of the other links covered in the seminar:

<http://www.netvibes.com>

<http://rawsugar.com/>

http://liswiki.org/wiki/Main_Page

http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Main_Page

<http://www.wikipedia.org/>

<http://www.plugoo.com>

<http://www.gabbly.com>

<http://www.meebo.com>

Phil's extensive website is at <http://www.philb.com/>.

I found this to be a very practical, relevant course about this rapidly evolving concept. The overview was a refreshingly expert, objective and hype-free briefing, complemented by learning about specific functions, and how to use relevant sites, sometimes with the help of step-by-step instructions. It has given me the knowledge and motivation to investigate more Web 2.0 resources, while having a balanced view on whether they are really ground-breaking super innovations or not!