

## Web 2.0 Round-up

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Web 2.0 Round-up is a compilation of recent postings and comments to the UKeIG Web 2.0 blog at <http://ukeig.wordpress.com/>. The primary purpose of this blog is to link to support materials for UKeIG's Web 2.0 workshops and seminars, and to provide news and updates on Web 2.0 applications. The RSS feed for the blog is <http://ukeig.wordpress.com/feed> and the comments feed is at <http://ukeig.wordpress.com/comments/feed>

You can also view the feeds on Twitter. UKeIG is now on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/ukeig>. It is mainly a Twitterfeed of the Yahoo! Pipes combined UKeIG RSS feeds supplemented by comments and updates. Some of you may prefer to view the feeds via this route. Comments and chit-chat are welcome.

## Web 2.0 in general

### Web 2.0 applications: yes, maybe, no?

I ran a Web 2.0 workshop for North West Academic Libraries (NOWAL) on 2nd May 2008 at Salford University. The aim of the event was to give people a taste of what Web 2.0 is all about, and an opportunity to test drive some of the applications. Inevitably, we were limited by what we were allowed to use on the computers in the training suite, and the absence of loudspeakers on the PCs meant that I had to do the commentary for a couple of videos including Common Craft's YouTube video 'RSS in Plain English'. I suppose one could regard that as a mashup of real/first life and the electronic world!

At the end of the day, I asked the participants to think about which applications they would definitely use, those that are worth considering (the 'maybe' category) and those that would get the definite thumbs down. As they had varying experiences of the technologies, and were looking at them from different perspectives, it is not surprising that some 'stuff' ended up in more than one category. We even invented a new award (see And finally...)

### Yes (would definitely use)

**Pageflakes** (<http://www.pageflakes.com/>) for pulling together frequently accessed information of all types. It can be kept private but also made public as a Pagecast, for example **Dublin City Public Libraries** (<http://www.pageflakes.com/dublincitypubliclibraries/>), **East Lothian Libraries** (<http://www.pageflakes.com/libraries0/17137920/>), and **ActiveIT** (<http://www.pageflakes.com/activeit/21822620/>).

**Flickr** (<http://www.flickr.com/>) to publicise your events, launches/relaunches of services, new library facilities

**RSS** – great for personal current awareness, but also a way of adding content to your website, blog, Face-book etc. and generally facilitating the sharing of content.

**iGoogle** (<http://www.google.com/ig>) – Your very own personalised Google start page for frequently accessed information of all types, and 'tabs' can be shared with colleagues.

**YouTube** (<http://www.youtube.com/>) – Link to 'how to' videos, create your own virtual tours of your library, or make videos of your key events.

**Wikis** – a great way to collaborate on documents, for example a glossary of acronyms and abbreviations (under development by one of the workshop participants).

**Blogs** – can be used as sources of information and as a quick and easy way to provide news of services, events and ‘What’s New’ to users. Several of the workshop participants were already active bloggers.

### Maybe (might use)

**Social Bookmarking** for example [FURL](http://www.furl.net/) (<http://www.furl.net/>), [Del.icio.us](http://del.icio.us/) (<http://del.icio.us/>), [Connotea](http://www.connotea.org/) (<http://www.connotea.org/>), [2Collab](http://www.2collab.com/) (<http://www.2collab.com/>) – could be a good way to provide access to evaluated subject and reading lists. Connotea (owned by the Nature Publishing Group) and 2Collab (owned by Elsevier) are aimed at researchers and scientists. “If only we could persuade our academics to use them” exclaimed one workshop participant.

**Face-book** (<http://www.facebook.com/>) – worth a try but, because of its structure and minimal import/export options, beware of possible extra work in having to re-enter content held on websites, blogs and start pages.

**Google Docs** (<http://docs.google.com/>) – several people thought that they might use Google Docs as a way of collaborating on documents but only for personal use and for applications where it would not matter if the document was inadvertently made public.

**Presentation sharing services**, for example [Slideshare](http://www.slideshare.net/) (<http://www.slideshare.net/>), [authorSTREAM](http://www.authorstream.com/) (<http://www.authorstream.com/>) – good way to share lectures and presentations.

Nominated for both the ‘Yes’ and ‘Maybe’ categories were: YouTube, RSS and iGoogle.

### No (would definitely not use)

There was only one nomination for this category. **Second Life** (SL) (<http://www.secondlife.com/>) did not seem to have any supporters on this workshop. As you have to download software to run SL and run it on serious, heavy duty network connections we were not able to experiment with it on the day. Some of the workshop participants had had bad experiences with it in the past and I did not help matters by recounting the tale of my disastrous attempt to attend an SL meeting the previous evening. Those of us who had tried it agreed that the technology is still getting in the way and it has a long way to go before it is promoted to the ‘maybe’ list. Nevertheless, it is being taken seriously by Manchester Business School who have commissioned design and new media agency Corporation Pop to develop a Second Life island for them (<http://www.how-do.co.uk/north-west-media-news/north-west-digital-media/corporation-pop-to-develop-second-life-presence-for-manchester-business-school-200803202187/>).

### And finally...

A new category created on the day. The winner of the John ‘you-cannot-be-serious’ McEnroe award goes to:

**Twitter** (<http://www.twitter.com/>)

I did try very hard to convince them of how wonderful Twitter is and was joined in my endeavours by some of my followers (thanks chaps and chappesses, your efforts were appreciated by me, at least). The presence of the BBC, Timesonline and even No 10 Downing Street on Twitter did not help. I suspect that the main problem is the Twitter associated jargon and nomenclature. The name ‘Twitter’ generated enough titters on its own,

but when quickly followed by tweets, twitterstream, TwitKit, Twitterfeed, Twitterment, Tweet Clouds etc ... well, I think you can see the problem.

## Blogs

### Blog on Library Refurbishment

Another application for using a blog: keep your users up to date on the progress of your library's refurbishment. The [University of Bolton Library Refurbishment](http://libraryrefurb.wordpress.com/) blog (<http://libraryrefurb.wordpress.com/>) does just that. The department has been praised for the approach they have taken in informing their users of the progress of the project.

## Wikis

### Google Sites now available to anyone

When [Google Sites](http://sites.google.com/) (<http://sites.google.com/>) was first launched in February 2008, it was part of the Google Apps group aimed at enterprises. Now, anyone can create a wiki website using Google Sites without the need to have their own domain name. You can keep it private, share it with a small group of people or make the whole thing public. You can also choose who is allowed to edit the pages on your wiki. The pages are hosted on Google at [http://sites.google.com/\[your-website\]](http://sites.google.com/[your-website]) and you can have as many pages as you like for free.

The WYSIWYG editor allows you to format the text; embed documents, calendars, photos, videos and gadgets directly into the page; and offer options for commenting. You can even customise it with your own logo. You can view previous versions of a page, roll back or revert to a previous version of the page, and receive e-mail alerts of changes to pages.

There is a [short tutorial](http://www.google.com/sites/help/intl/en/video/sites_overview_video.html) that takes you through the basics of setting up a Google Site ([http://www.google.com/sites/help/intl/en/video/sites\\_overview\\_video.html](http://www.google.com/sites/help/intl/en/video/sites_overview_video.html)).

## RSS

### Page2RSS Create and RSS feed for any web page

[Page2RSS](http://page2rss.com/) (<http://page2rss.com/>) monitors web pages for changes and notifies you of those changes by RSS. Simply type in the URL of the page you wish to monitor, and then add the feed URL to your favourite feed reader. Excellent tool for pages that do not offer their own RSS feeds. Hat tip to [Phil Bradley](http://philbradley.typepad.com/phil_bradleys_weblog/2008/05/page2rss---crea.html) for this:

([http://philbradley.typepad.com/phil\\_bradleys\\_weblog/2008/05/page2rss---crea.html](http://philbradley.typepad.com/phil_bradleys_weblog/2008/05/page2rss---crea.html)).

## Twitter

### Twitter for Librarians: the Ultimate Guide

[Twitter for Librarians: The Ultimate Guide](http://www.collegeathome.com/blog/2008/05/27/twitter-for-librarians-the-ultimate-guide/)

(<http://www.collegeathome.com/blog/2008/05/27/twitter-for-librarians-the-ultimate-guide/>) is

another gem I found via the [Internet Resources Newsletter](http://www.hw.ac.uk/libwww/irn/irn163/irn163.html)

(<http://www.hw.ac.uk/libwww/irn/irn163/irn163.html>). The first paragraph is a bit geekish but do not be deterred – just think of Twitter as a sort of SMS or Instant Messaging with optional bells and whistles. The rest of the article gives examples of how it can be used in a library context. It is US centric but the ideas are applicable anywhere in the world.

## Why use Twitter

Some interesting responses to David Lee King's question "[Why use Twitter?](http://www.davidleeking.com/2008/07/09/why-use-twitter/)" (<http://www.davidleeking.com/2008/07/09/why-use-twitter/>). For example:

- keeping informed on technology and library issues
- Twitter = Instant support, feedback, solutions, etc.
- if all you did was follow news channels the tweets are worth it
- Twitter is useful at conferences to learn about sessions that conflict with one's schedule, to find people to meet up with
- Quick and easy way to get marketing messages out to interested people

## Primary School on Twitter

Newbridge Primary School is on Twitter ([http://twitter.com/newbridge\\_pri](http://twitter.com/newbridge_pri)): "the plan is to use this feed to tweet out news and updates about the school on a regular basis... but we're not quite ready to start yet". If you try and "follow" them, you will see a message that says the updates are protected. This is a feature that enables the 'author' of the Twitterstream to vet people before allowing them access to it. Thanks to fellow twitterer andypowe11 for the information.

## TwitterSnooze

TwitterSnooze (<http://twittersnooze.com/>) is a way of temporarily 'unfollowing' someone. It is ideal for when your Twitter friends contract conference twitterrhoea. You just snooze them until they get back from the conference. The TwitterSnooze website also suggests:

- It's a nice way to get back at someone for saying something stupid ... give them the silent treatment
- It's a good way to ignore someone who just flooded your timeline for no good reason ... but it was just a one-time offence and doesn't merit permanent unfollowing.

## EasyTweets for managing multiple Twitter accounts

EasyTweets (<http://easytweets.com/>) is a set of tools that can help you post to and switch between multiple Twitter accounts, check replies, and track new followers.

## Using hashtags to follow conference tweets

Many conference twitterers use hashtags in their tweets. Hashtags help identify tweets on a subject or event and those who are twittering. Include a hash sign immediately before the 'official' tag of the conference in your tweet and services such as Hashtags (<http://www.hashtags.org/>) and Twemes (<http://twemes.org/>) will pick up the tweet. If you are a twitterer, you will first have to 'follow' hashtags on Twitter itself. Then hashtags will automatically follow you and monitor your tweets. If you want your hashtagged tweets to be picked up by Twemes you must have a photo or image in your Twitter profile. No image, no listing in Twemes (apparently it is an anti-spam measure). The hashtag can appear anywhere in your tweet, for example

"#interlend08 Public libraries losing USPs e.g. supplying out of print books. Lots of online competition e.g. ABE-books".

If you just want to see what has been twittered about a conference, simply go to <http://www.hashtags.org/> or <http://twemes.com/> and browse or search for the tag.



## LinkedIn

### LinkedIn in Plain English

Another excellent video from Common Craft's 'Plain English' series. This time it is on LinkedIn (<http://commoncraft.com/linkedin-video>). The video is also available on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzT3JVUGUzM&NR=10>). Other videos in the series include RSS (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0klqLsSxGsU>), Google Docs (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muVUA-sKcc4>), Twitter (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddO9idmax0o>), wikis (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dnL00TdmLY>), social bookmarking (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x66lV7GOcNU>) and blogs (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NN2I1pWXjXI>).

## Tag Clouds

### Tag clouds for analysing documents

CV not getting you those all important interviews? Nobody answering your job advert? Or perhaps your corporate publicity is not doing the biz? Processing your document through a tag cloud generator might give you a clue as to where you are going wrong. Sue Hill gave a presentation at the recent City Information Group open day on CPD and skills. In passing she mentioned that they sometimes run a CV or job description through a tag cloud generator to show people why their lovingly created prose is way off the mark. The tag cloud brings to the fore your most used terms, and it can be a shock to discover that you have placed the emphasis in totally the wrong area. It then struck me that you could do this with any form of literature – a Web page, training publicity, or membership recruitment forms.

There are dozens, if not hundreds, of tag cloud generators on the Web and most of them are free. For starters try Wordle (<http://www.wordle.net/>), Tagcrowd (<http://tagcrowd.com/>), or Tag Cloud Generator (<http://www.tag-cloud.de/>). The example below is a tag cloud of the UKeIG home page generated by Wordle.



## Second Life

### May 2008 snapshot of UK HE and FE developments in Second Life

I was alerted to this by the excellent Internet Resources Newsletter (<http://www.hw.ac.uk/libwww/irn/>). The May 2008 snapshot of UK HE and FE developments in SL (<http://www.eduserv.org.uk/foundation/sl/uksnapshot052008>) summarises an investigation into the use and uptake of Second Life (SL) by UK Higher and Further Education. The research, carried out in the period up until May 2008, had four main goals:

- to determine the “state of play” of SL developments within the Higher and Further Education sector.
- to discover how these developments are supported, in terms of time, funding and other resources.
- to explore the functionality of these developments, i.e. which types of media or interactive service they incorporate.
- to establish how “busy”, or well-used, the developments have been and discover any impacts resulting from their implementation and use.

Even if you do not work in higher or further education, this report is worth reading to get a feel for how it is being used, the pros and cons, and the positive and negative attitudes of people directly involved and of those on the sidelines.