Meeting Report: How to stay ahead of the game with Web 2.0

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Reviewed by Catherine Robertson

There were many useful tips given by Karen Blakeman during her session 'How to stay ahead of the game with Web 2.0', and lots which I will be putting into practice. One of the first things she mentioned was thinking about the content we create, and therefore own, and how we treat it. As librarians we are encouraged to share and collaborate, but Karen commented that we should also consider what it is that we are giving away, and to use the Creative Commons licence to protect it. Once material is in the public domain it cannot retrospectively be protected. This is something I had never thought about, but it's an interesting idea to keep in mind and to utilise where necessary.

The session also considered the customisation of services, such as iGoogle, where users are able to make a service look and feel the way they want. This is something the information community needs to bear in mind, as we need to be aware of user expectations in respect to our own online offerings. Scholarly resources are not yet this sophisticated, and since students are becoming accustomed to this kind of customisation in their online lives, we as librarians may well find ourselves liaising with publishers in future to bring online access to scholarly material in line with the iGoogle approach.

Reputation monitoring was also a hot topic. Once considered the domain of corporate institutions, reputation monitoring has become increasingly important on both a personal and academic institutional level. Institutions should now monitor their reputation via online services such as forums and Facebook, since it is here where patrons will often air their grievances – and where potential patrons may be discouraged from then using that institution. As professionals, it's worth us keeping an eye on how we are portrayed online and also making sure that we control what information is released about us. Individuals can also consider their own social media strategy – what do you want to share and where do you want it to go? It was interesting to hear how an individual can maintain an online presence within one tool and push this information out to other social media, rather than having to update each one individually (e.g. updating Twitter and pushing this information into your Facebook status at the same time.) as we need to have a presence where our potential audience (colleagues, prospective employers, etc) are. Many sites also allow you to monitor usage, as for example when a user arrives at your Institution's homepage. You can often tell how they

got there (e.g. from a link in Twitter, Facebook, etc) and so monitor usage and usefulness of these tools.

All in all the day was very useful, especially as there were some technologies discussed that I already use but without utilising to them to their full potential. The only downside of such an intensive session was that by the end I was feeling a bit overwhelmed, so this might be the sort of session which would benefit for being run in two parts. However, there was a great deal of useful information included that would benefit anyone in the information world.