UKeiG
UK eInformation Group

eLucidate

Contents

Information Management

Martin White, Chair, UKeiG

Je ne comprends pas!

The language we use defines our national identity and culture. In the UK most of the people living in Wales can speak English but under the 1993 Welsh Language Act, all public-sector websites that contain information relevant to Wales have to be in English and Welsh. Certainly English is a very useful default language for multi-national organisations, and it is fairly easy to work with around 850 words. The other 1 million are just there to confuse everyone, including many native speakers. In the USA if you are asked to slate a meeting you know that you will need to set a date and perhaps the attendees and agenda. In the UK if you asked me to slate a meeting I'd ask you which meeting you wanted me to criticise. How can the same word have totally different meanings? The US usage is derived from a French word meaning 'to splinter', which is what slate does when it is mined. The UK social usage is derived from an Old Norse word 'sletta' meaning 'to slap'.

Working out the semantics of any language is far more complex than most realise. Take these two sentences:

John loads the van with packages.

John loads packages into the van.

In the first sentence, the inference is that the van is totally full of packages, whereas in the second sentence the van may only be loaded with two packages by John. Even when we are writing in English to people who speak English fluently do we look carefully at the email or meeting note to consider whether we are getting the message across in an unambiguous way?

Social language

Things get far more complicated with social language. A social intranet has been defined by Prescient Digital Media as "Offering multiple social media tools for most or all employees to use as collaboration vehicles for sharing knowledge with other employees. A social intranet may feature blogs, wikis, discussion forums, social networking, or a combination of these or any other social media tool with at least some or limited exposure on the main intranet or portal home page."

Most of the surveys I have seen about the use of social media assume that all the respondents speak good social English, and so will have no problems in sharing their knowledge. One survey that does indicate that there is a problem is the Digital Workplace Trends 2012 report, which indicates that 10% of organisations have culture and language issues in collaborative work. My guess is that the problems are understated because at a local/national level employees find ways around the problems caused by language.

I would go so far as to suggest that few managers are aware of the significance of the level of understanding of English in their organisations. In the USA there is a five-level categorisation of language skills (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ILR_scale) and a six-level categorisation in the European Union (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_European_Framework_of_Reference_for_Languages).

What these categories take account of is that the variation in skills and experience needed to read, write, speak and understand speech are different. In my own case I can read French language documents fairly fluently and can get by in French as I travel around. However I could not conduct a meeting in French and my written French is appalling. This variation in language skills might well be a significant problem with social media where the language can be highly conversational, and writing even something as short as a blog entry in English could be a substantial challenge to a non-native speaker.

Keyboard challenges

Another aspect that I suspect is overlooked is the challenge of using a non-English keyboard to contribute content in English. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keyboard_layout).
Every language has a unique letter frequency and often requires diacritic marks to be added to letters (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diacritic). Writing English on a non-English keyboard can be very time-consuming, because most of us touch-type to some extent and our fingers go fairly automatically to certain keys. As a result there could be a substantial barrier to the easy contribution of content assumed by the people in corporate headquarters who set up the social intranet and expect regular contributions to discussion lists.

Finding people to be sociable with

Another assumption that is explicit in discussions about the benefits of social media is that you can easily find the people that it would be useful to be sociable with. The problem is that most countries have well-established ways of present-ing given and family names. If you are looking for Karl van den Berg will they be listed under V or B? It will be different in the Netherlands compared to Belgium. "Have a word with Christian in the Stockholm office" but will you find him under C or K? Basis Technologies have a good paper on the challenges of listing Arabic names, where transliteration becomes a challenge (http://www.basistech.com/knowledge-center/arabic/behind-the-arabic-name.pdf).

Much depends on whether the country-level directories have been set up by local HR staff or

have been homogenised by a corporate HR group who are probably not familiar with the nuances of local naming conventions. I'm still getting a birthday email from a hotel in Kuwait that is addressed to Mr White Martin and wishes White a very happy birthday.

Enterprise mobility

Although staff in corporate and national head-quarters offices will have a reasonable command of English staff working outside the office in sales, purchasing and customer support roles will be using local language all the time, and it will be even more difficult for them to start sharing their knowledge on an English language corporate wiki.

Look beneath the surface

My experience from working on nearly 40 countries is that local employees find ways around the 'corporate English' mandate that are almost certainly not visible to headquarters. These employees have to work in their native language for anything that resembles a contract

or a compliance requirement. They may be able to converse on the telephone in English because the feedback they get enables ambiguities to be sorted out in real time. The last thing they want to do is look silly when they use written English, and moreover in many countries they would not feel comfortable responding at all without the permission of their manager.

I appreciate that most UKeiG members work for organisations that are based only in the UK, but there are many that do have a wider geographic coverage. As we move into the widespread adoption of social media it is well worth thinking carefully about whether the use of social media and social language creates more barriers than it removes. These are complex information management issues and need to be addressed with sensitivity.

Martin White is Chair of UKeiG and Managing Director of Intranet Focus Ltd

Intranets

Dion Lindsay

Opportunities in the Electronic Workplace

The current trend

As I speculated in passing in my column this time last year, the significant talk in knowledge management circles has been moving from the intranet towards the 'electronic workplace'. This electronic workplace is a place where distinctions between intranets, collaboration and communication applications and electronic ways of working become porous. I now wonder whether it will be long before the name "intranet" becomes more a part of transitional vocabulary, or a part of technical vocabulary rather than one much saluted by the non IT staff.

As evidence for this further speculation, I remember a large meeting six months ago in which employees from the same organisation disagreed with each other on whether they had an intranet. They did, and those who had said no had been using it, but had not been aware that behind the internal brand name was the reality of an intranet. In the same way, I have known an organisation become tied up in discussions about whether what they wanted was an intranet or a portal – a distinction which can be a useful one to make at a certain point in design, but not one that should be delaying the development of the pre-design needs analysis!

Intranets, clearly, are computer networks which use internet protocol technology within an organisation, and may consist solely of the organisation's internal website, though more often now they contain team websites and one or more portals giving access to the enterprise's electronic file system, etc. Equally clearly, the electronic workplace already exists: from the user's experience it consists of at least some of the following elements:

- Intranets – news, corporate information, news, internal directories
- Portals – links to business processes, HR systems, internal and external social networks, external databases
- Electronic workplace – all the above + emails, twitter feeds, instant message MS Office suite, mobile technologies, accounting systems, time logging systems...

Positioning the information professional

The consequences for readers of *eLucidate* need urgent attention.

No sacred cows

As ruthless attention to return on investment for every resource is applied in the public and the commercial domains, and in those many knowledge based workplaces in between, there are precious few sacred cows left. Processes that no longer answer the call for efficiency or competitive advantage are being removed with almost unprecedented haste. Knowledge Management functions are being dissolved or diluted across the workplace, and even those professionals who have operated effectively behind real or conceptual walls are finding their functions and value examined with a clarity that was perhaps missing in the 1990s and the first six years of the new century.

There are signs of future opportunities for those professionals prepared to move beyond their current job titles. Directorates in finance and human resources are faced with the costs of redundancies as posts "not needed on voyage" are offered up for longer-term savings. Many of them would rather move staff with specialist skills into functions where a modest return can be expected than to find this year's budgets depleted with expensive severance packages.

As we have observed in the Intranets Forum, and among participants in UKeiG's workshops, many intranet managers have other responsibilities in their over-crowded jobs. Up to now this has meant that intranet managing has been a Cinderella profession, and those internal communication experts with intranets on their portfolios have experienced the twin pressures of increased expectation and closer examination of relevance. But now it may be easier for those in the multi-focus jobs to move into the broader perspective of the electronic workplace.

Tactics

Opposition to this extended view of the working environment ought to be more welcomed than feared. The airing of polarised views is much less of a threat than the benevolent neglect that is more common in less anxious times.

But beware: indecision is among the keenest dangers to good governance in all organisations, and the lack of a clear view of the alternatives

- the fire-fighting and the piecemeal reaction to the opportunities of electronic development, versus
- the principled development of strategies in the context of the new realities of the marketplace.

and the visible proof that is likely to result in the deterioration of employee commitment and organisational performance.

In this environment, there is surely a strong role for intranet managers to play in leading the movement towards this more holistic view of the electronic environment.

Intranet news and notes

Three newsworthy items about intranets this time:

1. The UK did well again in the prestigious Step Two Designs' 2011 Intranets Innovation Awards, which were announced last October. The full list of awards winners is published at http://www.steptwo.com.au/iia.

 In particular:

- The UK Parliament won a gold award 'for cleverly mobilising its intranet in a way perfectly suited to the working styles of the members of Parliament who are often on the go', and

- Arup won a gold award for its Amazing Race microsite on its intranet, which 'records the progress of teams in an internal charity and fitness event called the Amazing Race, which benefits the firm's chosen charity SportsAid'.

- Framestore won for a visual effects programme management tool.

2. Watch the UkeiG website for upcoming Intranets Forum meetings:

- At TUC's Congress House on 21 March
- At BDO's central London offices on 17 July

3. Prescient Digital Media organise some very good free webinars on intranets and social media subjects, usually on the first Wednesday or Thursday of each month. They last an hour, and start at 5pm UK time. More details to be found at http://www.prescientdigital.com/events.

Public Sector News

Dave Jennings (davejennings@warwickshire.gov.uk)

Superfast Broadband

In the 2010 Spending Review the Government announced £530million for 'superfast broadband' across the UK. 90% of homes and businesses should be able to receive a speed greater than 24Mbps, and everyone should be able to connect with a speed of at least 2Mbps.

Local Authorities have only to the end of February 2012 to apply for a share of the £530 million, but, at a time when they are making cuts to staff and services, they have also been challenged to match any funding they receive.

The Government will invest another £100 million to create up to ten 'super-connected cities' across the UK, with 80-100 megabits per second broadband and city-wide high-speed mobile connectivity. There will be a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and strategic employment zones to support economic growth. Edinburgh, Belfast, Cardiff and London will all receive support from this fund, and a UK-wide competition will decide up to six further cities that will also receive funding.

As well as launching the proposed 'superfast broadband', Defra has launched the Rural Community Broadband Fund (RCBF), with confirmed funding of £20m. The Fund enables the funding of superfast broadband projects in the most hard-to-reach areas in England, bringing superfast broadband to a greater number of communities than would otherwise be reached.

This will ensure that a greater proportion of businesses and consumers in those communities can take advantage of the benefits of superfast broadband. The expression-of-interest round expired 31 January 2012.

With the benefits of being able to deliver more services online, will we see an even greater shift away from more traditional information re-sources? Do you get in your car, sit in the traffic, hunt for that elusive parking space then fight your way along the busy High Street to get to your local library? Or, do you sit in the comfort of your own home and download that book, stream that film? I know which one I'd prefer.

More on Open Data

The Government has published a summary of the responses to the consultation *Making Open Data Real. (Making Open Data Real. A Government Summary of Responses* Cabinet Office 2012)

The responses showed widespread support for open data, but differing views on how this might be achieved. There was a consensus that data

should be free of charge but a recognition that this would be an added cost for the public sector. The Information Commissioner was seen as the most appropriate person to manage compliance, but opinions varied as to whether existing legislation could be used or whether new legislation is required.

Gov.uk

A beta version of the planned single government web domain is now available for testing at www.gov.uk. The site is being billed as a replacement for Directgov.

The new site definitely encourages using the search engine, as this dominates the page and there are very few categories in which to browse.

A useful inclusion on the www.gov.uk site is the ability to 'locate me automatically' when searching for your local authority, and there is no longer any need to enter your post code.

The new design is also a 'responsive design', making it easy to read on a variety of devices such as tablets, laptops, smartphones, desktop computers, TVs, gaming consoles and more. Though at the time of writing this article the responsive design wasn't very responsive.

With over a quarter of adults (27 per cent) and almost half of teenagers (47 per cent) now owning a smartphone, according to Ofcom's latest Communications Market Report any information made available over the internet needs to be delivered with mobiles in mind.

Remember this is a Beta version. Any comments on the test site can be made at http://getsatisfaction.com/govuk/. Registration is required, but this takes less than a minute.

Connected Histories

Launched in April, **Connected Histories** provides researchers, information professionals and the general public a single point of access to a wide range of digital resources relating to early modern and nineteenth-century British history.

Among the content included are Parliamentary papers, British Newspapers published between 1600 and 1900, British History online and printed Ephemera from the Bodleian library.

Tell Us Once

Every so often an initiative comes along that makes you think why it never existed before. **Tell Us Once** is one of those.

Led by DWP, it enables those registering a birth or a death with the local registrar to also notify the DVLA, Passport Service and the HM Revenue and Customs on one go.

At present this service is only available over the phone; an online version is planned sometime this year.

Dave Jennings is Information Assistant, Communities Group, Warwickshire County Council

Online

Joy Cadwallader, Aberystwyth University (Aberystwyth Online User Group)

Please send your submissions for the next edition to jrc@aber.ac.uk.

British Library

At the end of November 2012 the British Library launched their newspaper archive portal, developed in a ten-year partnership with Brightsolid, to make four million pages of news available online today. Meanwhile the British Library's Integrated Catalogue has been re-launched as Explore the British Library (using the Ex Libris Primo discovery platform) and the long-term re-development of the British Library website has been put out to tender (see this article in the Guardian).

Gale

The "all new" Times Digital Archive is now available with coverage from 1785 to 2006. Existing customers will need to upgrade their subscription to access the post-1985 content. An archive of the Sunday Times 1822-2006 will become available for subscription in Spring 2012, also via the Gale NewsVault platform.

Gale have also announced in detail the digitised content which will become available to Nine-teenth Century Collections Online subscribers in Spring/Summer 2012, comprising substantial collections sourced at the British Library, Oxford University, the National Archives at Kew and the US, and Castle Corvey in North Rhine-Westphalia. Their press release describes four archives: *British Politics and Society*; *Asia and the West*; *British Theatre, Music, and Literature*; *The Corvey Collection of European Literature*; and collections include *Rare Radical and Labour Periodicals of Great Britain, dispatches from US consuls in the far east and the Barry Ono Collection of Bloods and Penny Dreadfuls.*

Hampshire County Council Records Office

Visitors to the Hampshire County Council Records Office in Winchester can now view digitised content from the Jane Austen family archives that has been deposited there by the trustees of Jane Austen's House Museum. The digitised content includes letters, diaries, drawings, photos and volumes of poetry.

Irish Military Archives

In partnership with the National Archives of Ireland, a new Military Archives website has been launched to make records and other archive material available online from the archives of the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces. The Military Archives, located at Cathal Brugha Barracks in Dublin, have been the official deposit since 1990 for the records of the Department of Defence, the Defence Forces and the Army Pensions Board, including "personnel records of those who served in the military of the Irish Free State from 1922 to the late 1970s, as well as material pertaining to the Irish Volunteers and the Independence movement, 1913-1921", and important collections such as the Collins Papers.

JISC

At the end of November 2011 JISC announced the release of the York Cause Papers online which record the proceedings of the ecclesiastical courts of York from 1300 to 1858. Records describe disputes over marriage, probate, reputation, church taxes, and "professional conduct of the clergy, schoolmasters, physicians and midwives". The archives are located at the Borthwick Institute for Archives at the University of York; project partners include the Humanities Research Institute at the University of Sheffield. Previous work had begun in 2007, also with funding from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation. Further JISC announcements include

- Locating London's Past: a collaboration between the universities of Sheffield, Hertfordshire and London producing wonderful interactive historical maps of London with data overlays for tax, population and archaeology.

- Living books about Life: humanities scholars worldwide have, "re-packaged and re-presented science-related research material to make it more accessible to a humanities audience", and Coventry University with partners have pioneered a high-quality, low-cost publishing model for sharing content.

- Newton's annotated works: 4000 pages of Isaac Newton's work with his own annotations and more to come; a collaboration between Cambridge and Sussex universities.

JSTOR

JSTOR is opening access to a portion of its journal archive through a service called Register and Read. Readers can register via MyJSTOR and can view articles labelled "Read Online". There are 70 journals from 30 publishers in the scheme. The content available via Register and Read is in addition to that available via Early Journal Content which can be recognised by "Free" labels on articles. JSTOR state that both projects are part of a larger strategy to find ways to extend access to JSTOR content to those not affiliated to subscribing institutions.

National Library of Wales

A book of "sestudes", pieces of writing 62 words long, has become a crowd-funded publication

project via publisher Unbound. This press release from the National Library of Wales (NLW) explains how 26 items each from the V&A, the Ulster Museum, the National Museum of Scotland and the NLW, including images, videos, sculptures and texts, were partnered with authors who were given six weeks to complete their sestude. Entries in the NLW selections include Hedd Wyn's poem (sestude written by Jerry Hunter and translated by Damian Walford Davies) and the Book of Aneirin (sestude by Gillian Clarke and translated by Twm Morys). The resulting anthology – 26 Treasures – becomes available to contributors via the Unbound website on receipt of sufficient funds. The minimum contribution is £10 which buys an ebook and the contributor's name in the book.

Research Works Act

The Guardian published an article on January 26th by Dr Mike Taylor, Department of Earth Sciences, Bristol University, warning of the implications of the Research Works Act (RWA), which was introduced to the US Congress on December 16th 2011. The RWA "would prohibit the NIH's public access policy and anything similar enacted by other federal agencies, locking publicly funded research behind paywalls" (the NIH being the USA's main funding agency for health-related research, with a $30bn annual budget). Dr Taylor cites the success of open-access publisher PLoS and calls for statements of protest against the RWA, calling it "an ethical disaster", out of which only big publishers like Elsevier would gain. Coming hot on the heels of the SOPA/PIPA protests, the unwieldy Digital Economy Act in the UK and disputes over the ownership of scanned orphan works, the RWA dispute is neither the first nor will it be the last of the battles over intellectual property being fought online.

Web 2.0

Phil Bradley

Pinterest – a new take on an old idea

We're all used to the idea of bookmarking services by now. People who use more than one machine (a desktop and laptop at home perhaps, or a machine at work and one at home) are going to want to share bookmarked pages back and forth, which is where the value of resources such as Diigo (http://www.diigo.com) or Delicious (http://www.delicious.com) have come into play. Simply bookmark the page or resource that you're interested to one of those services, move to your other machine and get access to them via your single bookmark account. Well, Pinterest does the same sort of thing; it lets you save, store, and mark stuff that you find online, which you can put into folders and share with friends. It's got the same focus that other bookmarking services have in that you can see what other people have done, you can comment on their saved material and they can comment on yours. No change there – the big difference is that Pinterest is primarily designed for images rather than webpages, and although you can also bookmark videos the vast majority of people use it for images of one sort or another.

However, while there are similarities between the services, Pinterest (which I pronounce as Pin-terest, rather than P-interest) has a much friendlier, more social feel to it. It's also, within a very short space of time, gathered a lot of users who it would be fair to say have previously shown little interest in bookmarking and sharing resources. There are a number of subject areas that have proved extraordinarily popular, such as crafting, recipes and fashion, but there are also a lot of librarians and other information professionals who are using the service and 'pinning' items that interest them.

So, before we look at how you can use the resource, let's consider why you would want to. Hopefully your appetite will have been wetted enough to then decide to get to grips with the service for yourself. Firstly, as with any bookmarking service, you will have access – via the search option – to resources that real live human beings think are useful, handy, interesting or amusing enough to actually spare a few moments of their time to bookmark. Consequently, you're much more likely to get access to good or high quality resources – much more so than you'll get if you use a more traditional image search engine embedded in something like Google. In fact, if I'm not going to use Flickr to find an image that I'm after, I'll probably now go straight to Pinterest as my second choice. Google search is slipping further and further down my list of

choices, currently languishing somewhere behind the Bing image option.

A second really useful way of using Pinterest is to quickly shortcut your way to a website, weblog or other similar resource, without having to hack your way through countless results returned by websites. Each image that is pinned will link back to the original source in most cases, and a simple mouse click can take you straight there. Admittedly, there's a certainly amount of serendipity and luck involved – that marvellous picture of a Welsh castle could potentially take you to a blog page from an Australian who was over here on a visit and just liked the picture she took. However, if you're looking from a slightly more casual viewpoint and you just want to find a particular recipe, or browse through some possibilities, Pinterest is going to be a good resource to try.

The third reason why Pinterest is worth using is to find out who is working in a particular area, or who has at least got a considerable interest in something particular. They are the ones who will be finding images, bookmarking them and discussing them with other people. If you want to find some librarians who are doing interesting things, just run a quick search on Pinterest and you'll find them in large numbers!

Fourthly, it's a brilliant way to store images. I previously had to use a bookmarking service such as Delicious or Diigo, and try and remember to tag the bookmark with something like 'infograph' or 'image', but with Pinterest this isn't necessary. I can simply click on the folder that I've created, and all the images are laid out before me, allowing me to chose the one that I want to use very quickly.

Finally, it's a great insight into the things that your friends and colleagues like. I've discovered that some colleagues really enjoy watching science fiction because they've bookmarked images from particular shows for example.

The last reason that I'll give is that Pinterest is fun. I'm a firm believer in having fun when using resources, and this one gives you that in abundance. It's dangerously easy to while away an hour or so and the urge to say 'just five more minutes' is hard to resist.

There are disadvantages to the service of course – nothing is perfect. First of all, it's still in beta test, so while you can take a look through it, if you want to make proper use of it, you'll need to grab an invite from someone, but if anyone is in need, please email me at philipbradley@gmail.com and I'll happily send you an invite over! Secondly, you need to use either Facebook or Twitter in order to set up a validated account, which I find annoying and unnecessary. However, once the account is validated you can log in using email and password if you prefer. The images that you bookmark also cannot be marked as private – everything is very open, so if you have a secret crush on an actor or actress, think twice before pinning dozens of images of them! Finally, some images do go viral, and while this in itself isn't a bad thing, seeing the same image over and over again in your friends image streams can be a little irritating. One last point – you're bookmarking an image that's on the web, on a webpage that you don't have control over. If the owner decides to delete the image you're going to lose it. If it's an important image you would be best off contacting the owner to ask if you can take and keep a copy to use in the future.

Well, having gone through the pros and cons of Pinterest, let's take a look at it. You can take a look at my page at http://pinterest.com/philipbradley/ and you'll see that I have various folders for things such as Library propaganda posters, funny images, infographics, and so on. You can also search for subjects that interest you to see what other
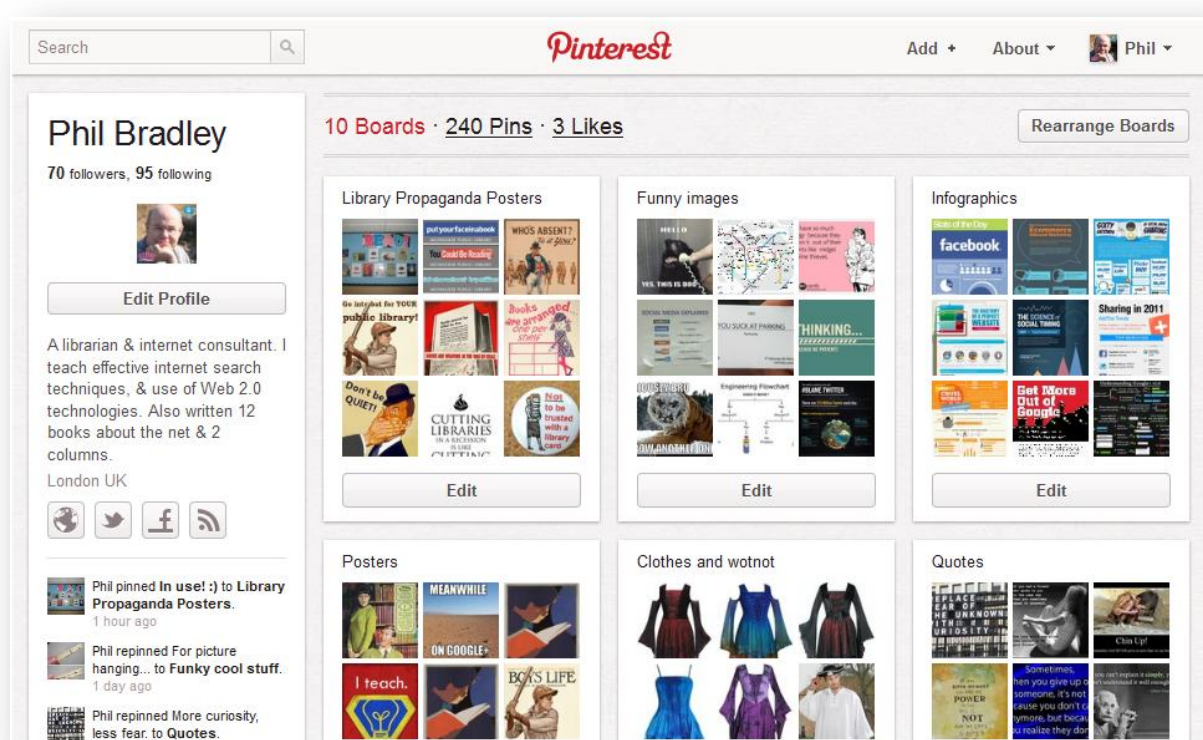

Figure 1 Phil Bradley's Pinterest page

people have pinned. You can see my page in figure 1.

When you run a search you'll see the image(s), descriptions, names of people who have added images and the folders they have put them into. Figure 2 shows the results of a search on 'books'.
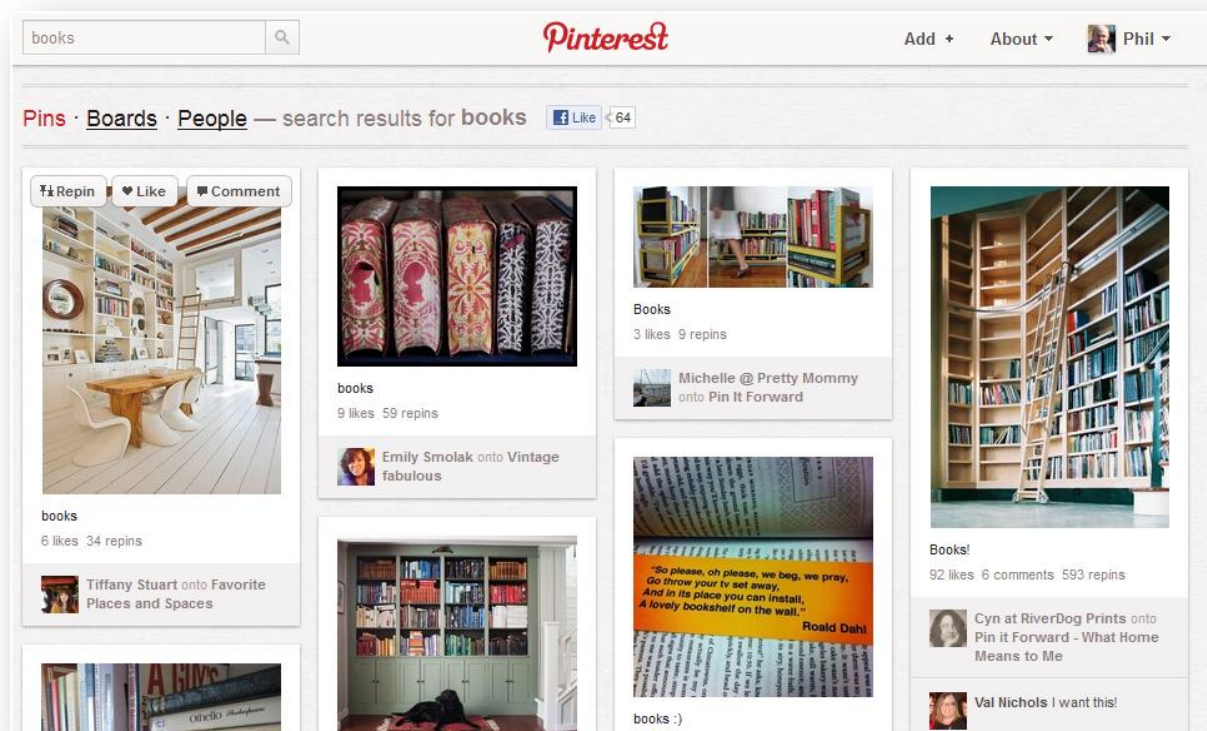
Figure 2 Search on "books"

Once you have an account you can repin an image, which means that you can copy it into one of your own folders, 'like' the image, or comment on it. You can also tweet out an image to your followers, embed it or email it. You can also report images, but Pinterest has taken a very firm stance on 'adult' images and it does not allow them at all – I've certainly never seen anything inappropriate, and I would be happy for the aged maiden aunt to look through the images without worrying, but that's obviously your own call, of course.

As you would expect from a bookmarking site, you can add a bookmarklet to your browser bar, so that you can simply click on it once you find an image that you like, and Pinterest will find every image on a page and you can pin the one that you want. Unfortunately, you cannot choose a number in one go, so it's a bit labour-intensive at the moment if you want to save several images! Another limitation is that it doesn't work with any images on Facebook – down to Facebook rather than Pinterest I'm sure. Pin the image into the folder of your choice, add a few words description and you're done. If you want to look through the collections of the people who you are following, just click on the Pinterest logo in the top middle of the screen, which will also give you the option of searching through several pre-existing subject folders.

In summary, it's one of those 'why didn't I think of it?' resources, which has really taken off very quickly. I also shudder to think how I tried to manage before it came along, and I thoroughly recommend it. Give it a go!

Press Releases

UK's leading consortia organise Consortia Conference

February 14, 2012 – Two of the UK's largest public library consortia, the London Libraries Consortium and LibrariesWest, announce a consortia conference to be held on Thursday 3 May in Bath. The day-long conference aims to equip delegates from local government and public libraries across the UK with the knowledge to set up their own consortium or to implement shared services or shared working on a smaller scale.

Five-member strong LibrariesWest serves a population of 1.6 million people in 109 libraries and is a partnership between Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, Somerset and South Gloucestershire library services. Jon Scown, on behalf of LibrariesWest, explains, "We set up our consortium 15 years ago and have gained a great deal of experience which we feel would benefit other authorities looking at joint working. With the current climate of cuts, consortia working is an ideal way to be able to 'do more with less'."

LibrariesWest has just issued its annual report (www.librarieswest.org.uk) where Cllr James Hunt, Executive Councillor: Communities, South Gloucestershire Council, says, "LibrariesWest is an essential part of the South Gloucestershire Library Delivery Plan; through working in partnership we are able to provide the best value for money to our residents and strive for the highest quality library service."

The London Libraries Consortium (LLC) consists of 15 London Boroughs and has grown dramatically since it was set up in 2004. It now caters for over 3.6 million Londoners who can use their library card at any of over 150 library branches. Madeline Barratt, on behalf of the LLC, adds, "The conference will demonstrate that there can be many flavours of shared working, all of which can be equally effective. We've learnt many lessons along the way and we'd like to share our experience with other library services."

Speakers from the two consortia will cover topics including:

- Consortium governance

- Integrated backroom services

- Online reference services

- Shared bibliographic services

- Shared enquiry services

- Value of consortium membership to individual authorities

Workshops will provide the opportunity for delegates to find out in greater detail the benefits of consortia working to staff and to library users.

The conference is priced at £75 per delegate plus VAT, which includes all refreshments and a two course lunch. The event takes place at Bath's Guildhall, which is conveniently located in central Bath and easily reached by train or car.

For more information and to book, visit www.consortiaconference2012.com.

OCLC WorldShare Platform

DUBLIN, Ohio, December 5, 2011—OCLC, together with OCLC Global Council and members, is taking the cooperative's ongoing strategy to help libraries operate and innovate at Web scale to a much broader level with the introduction of OCLC WorldShare, a new platform and a new brand that signals OCLC's commitment to greater collaboration in library service delivery.

OCLC is launching the OCLC WorldShare Platform, which will enable library developers, partners and other organizations to create, configure and share a wide range of applications that deliver new functionality and value for libraries and their users.

OCLC will also deploy data centers around the world in support of OCLC WorldShare and other services. The first data center outside the United States will be implemented this week in the United Kingdom. Additional data centers will be deployed in continental Europe, Australia and Canada in the coming year.

"OCLC's mission and public purpose are clearly aligned with the concept of Web scale," said Jay Jordan, OCLC President and CEO. "We have been providing infrastructure and services that have enabled members to build efficiencies in the management of libraries, and to increase the visibility and impact of their collections in compelling user environments on the Web. To date, this work has been significant. Now we see a need to provide more of those connective elements, the services and systems that will allow libraries to leverage even more of their activities and data together, at Web scale."

The OCLC WorldShare Platform facilitates collaboration and app-sharing across the library community, so that libraries can combine library-built applications, partner-built applications and OCLC-built applications. This enables the benefits of each single solution to be shared broadly throughout the library community.

In the coming weeks, participants from platform pilot libraries will work with members of the OCLC Developer Network to help create and build new applications to populate the OCLC World-Share App Gallery, where users will see available apps and can install them into current work environments. Developers can showcase their

creativity, partners can create add-on functionality and library staff can find practical, everyday solutions to streamline and enhance their workflows.

The first services built on this new technical infrastructure are Webscale Management Services, which have been rebranded as OCLC WorldShare Management Services, and include circulation, acquisitions and license management applications. Today, more than 30 libraries are already using OCLC WorldShare Management Services, and more than 150 libraries worldwide have committed to the new service since September 2010.

Over time, OCLC will bring together additional OCLC services and applications under the OCLC WorldShare name, including resource sharing, consortial borrowing, metadata management and additional applications. OCLC's currently deployed library management solutions will continue to be maintained and enhanced in line with libraries' ongoing requirements under their current brand names.

WorldCat will continue to serve as the name for shared data, including registries and the knowledge base, as well as discovery services such as WorldCat.org and WorldCat Local.

There are many examples of organizations contributing to the broader Webscale information environment. Some, like HathiTrust, JSTOR and Europeana, are most recognizable to libraries and library users. Others, such as Google and Amazon, are global services familiar to all Web users. These services, and many others, are all part of the information environment users navigate every day—a Webscale environment.

Visit the OCLC website for more details about OCLC WorldShare.

Launch of 'living' books breaks barriers between humanities and science

24.11.2011 – A series of 21 'living books' has been launched online as part of a pioneering initiative designed to provide a bridge between the humanities and the sciences.

The Living Books About Life series <http://bit.ly/uO81ro> is written and produced by humanities scholars from universities across the world – from the UK and America to Poland and Australia – and has re-packaged and re-presented science-related research material to make it more accessible to a humanities audience.

Funded by JISC and published by the Open Humanities Press (OHP), the books address a number of scientific topics whose unifying theme is life, such as air, agriculture, bioethics, cosmetic surgery, energy, neurology and human cloning.

Alastair Dunning, programme manager at JISC, said: "By drawing only on Open Access material to create these 'Living Books about Life', the team is helping define a new era of scholarly communication – and thereby exploiting JISC's vision to make the results of publicly funded research available to all."

The books present recent research on these subjects in a palatable way using interactive

maps, podcasts and audio-visual materials. The result, which can be shared freely amongst both academic and non-academic individuals alike, is an engaging and diverse resource for researching and teaching relevant science issues across the humanities.

As well as bridging the divide between the humanities and sciences, the three partner institutions working on the project – led by Coventry University and including the University of Kent and Goldsmiths, University of London – have 'rethought' the conventional book by developing a new, low-cost and sustainable model for creating, publishing and sharing content.

By embracing the age of open information and the increasing prominence of crowdsourcing, the project leaders ensured each volume in the Living Books About Life series is a 'living' medium itself, able to be updated by readers through ongoing collaborative processes of writing, editing, remixing and commenting.

Gary Hall, Professor of Media and Performing Arts at Coventry University, said: "The 'Living Books About Life' series doesn't just represent a new, exciting and more easily digestible way for people

without a background in science to learn about important scientific issues – it also has the potential to refashion the process of book publishing itself. It's a pioneering example of a sustainable, low-cost, low-tech approach to publishing high-quality books that can be shared easily and freely on an open access basis with anyone who has an interest."

Nicholas Mirzoeff, Professor of Media, Culture and Communication at New York University, said: "This remarkable series transforms the humble reader into a living form, while breaking down the conceptual barrier between the humanities and the sciences in a time when scholars and activists of all kinds have taken the understanding of life to be central. Brilliant in its simplicity and concept, this series is a leap towards an exciting new future."

Read more about the initiative at http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/digitisation/econtent11/livibl.aspx.

About *eLucidate*

eLucidate is the journal of the UK Electronic Information Group. It is published four times each year, in February, April, September and November. It aim is to keep members up to date with developments in the digital information environment, as they affect professionals. The magazine is provided free to UKeiG members.

Notes for contributors

eLucidate welcomes articles or ideas for articles in the areas covered by the magazine. We are always on the lookout for feature writers, reviewers both for books and for meetings, as well as respondents to articles. Sadly, we don't pay contributors, but contributors retain copyright of their articles and can republish their articles elsewhere.

Brief for feature articles

If you are writing for *eLucidate*, please follow these simple guidelines:

About the members

Our membership comprises information professionals involved in the dissemination and/or delivery of digital content and services. Our membership base is two-thirds academic, one-third commercial, as well as some public libraries. A key benefit of the group is that meetings and forums provide "crossover" insight from one area to another: members see it as a way of keeping up to date in areas outside their core. Few other organisations provide this kind of cross-sectoral awareness. The focus of the group is the UK, in the sense that authentication concerns tend to be around JISC tools such as Athens and Shibboleth. But the issues of digital provision are of course global. The most popular training courses we run are on search tools – Google and others; e-books and how to deal with them. Other popular strands include Intranets, content management, bibliographic software, and e-books.

Technical level

Although members rate themselves highly for technical awareness, they are typically users rather than creators of technology. Articles should not assume understanding of technical terms without explanation.

Length of article

Feature articles should be in the region of 1500-2500 words. Each article should be prefaced by a short summary (around 50 words) that can be used when displaying on public search engines an outline of the article, and to display on the non-member section of the website.

What to write

A key aspect of UKeiG is that it provides insight from one area to another – members see it as a way of keeping up to date in areas outside their core expertise. Because the membership is quite disparate, ranging from pharmaceutical information professionals to public librarians, you should not assume readers are as familiar as you in the subject area.

The most valuable viewpoint you can give is that of an end user. UKeiG is not a place for theoretical debate, but a forum where peers can share their experiences and understanding. So, if it worked for you, tell others. If it didn't, tell others why not.

How to submit

Please e-mail your article to michael@consultmu.co.uk. Articles should be delivered in Word or in an ASCII format. Images are welcome – they may be in gif or jpeg formats.

Rights

By submitting an article to *eLucidate*, authors grant UKeiG the non-exclusive right to publish the material in any format in perpetuity. However, authors retain full rights in their content and remain the copyright owner.

About you

Please provide a 10-20-word biographical summary about yourself to appear at the end of the article.

Editorial process

Your article will be copy-edited for spelling and for sense. If there are major changes to the article we may return it to you for your comments and approval, but most articles require only light corrections before appearing in *eLucidate*, and do not need a further review by the author.

Brief for book reviews

Book reviews are typically 500-750 words. Because UKeiG is independent of any publisher, we are not obliged to have favourable reviews. If you think a book is poor, then by all means explain why. Members and non-members alike are welcome to suggest books for review or to submit reviews.