Maximising Online Resource Effectiveness

Reports from the field – Experiences from those ‘at the coalface’, April 2011
Reports from the field

Experiences from those ‘at the coalface’

Purpose
This document has been produced following a successful series of workshops during 2010, commissioned by the Strategic Content Alliance (SCA) under the title Maximising Online Resource Effectiveness (MORE). The purpose of this document is to describe and show evidence on how attendees were able to make use of the knowledge they received at the workshops. In each brief that was received from an attendee, they: describe what they were able to achieve when they returned to their organisation; where possible, provide example(s) illustrating their work; and describe what they had hoped to initiate in the future.

Audience
Primarily the SCA member organisations, including all UK FE and HE institutions.

Release date
April 2011

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Summary

Background

Each workshop encouraged attendees to consider three main strategies relating to maintaining an online resource:

- content – to get the most of the way content is presented in relation to user behaviour and the importance of specifying metadata in relation to that content;
- promotion – to promote the resource with the use of social media;
- development – to take into consideration the emerging technologies and how they could be integrated into future plans.

With the knowledge attendees gained at the workshop, they were equipped to improve visibility and usability of their online resource when they returned to their organisation.

The attendees were very appreciative of the topics covered. They came from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines. In each workshop, there were webmasters, administrators, content providers and marketing staff. The workshops provided a forum for these people to meet and discuss issues which normally would not be possible within their organisations.

Observations

In gathering evidence for this report, 38 attendees were contacted, a number from each of the SCAMORE workshops held in 2010. Out of the 38, 15 of them were able to contribute – 10 provided a brief report and 5 who provided a comment. These are included in this document. The attendees who have contributed are from different types of organisations – Universities, institutes, colleges, charities, libraries, JISC services and a subject centre with a variety of responsibilities including: marketing, technical, administration and content provision.

The majority of the reports show how they have been able to introduce the use of social media (or build on what the institution had) to promote their resource online. This promotion has been successful in every field report.

Some attendees, who were unable to provide actual evidence of work and therefore could not contribute to this report, reported that they were unable to make or influence a significant change when they returned to their institution. Below are some of the reasons given:

- their workload had increased so that they had less time to concentrate on developing the web site and any related promotional activities;
- a number had problems with their organisation’s Content Management System (CMS), such as:
  - had insufficient privilege to make changes to the whole web site, only a certain section;
  - the system was managed centrally which made even the simplest change difficult;
  - the functionality of the CMS was limited in that it did not allow for the editing of metadata for each page;
  - there was a reluctance to alter anything within the CMS that was not well tested in case it would complicate the next CMS software upgrade;
- due to the restructuring process within their institution, they had been moved within their own department or moved departments, so that the web was no longer in their remit;
- success was limited as other content providers were reluctant to add metadata (over the normal set provided in the CMS).

This report has come at a time when there has been a major restructuring process happening throughout the academic community. The tensions that this has brought are reflected in some of the briefs and some have requested that they remain anonymous.

However, there is much enthusiasm from the attendees to achieve the goals each have set for themselves even when their time and resources have been limited.
1. ATG Training

Introduction

ATG Training (www.atg-training.co.uk) is a not-for-profit company and is a registered charity. It is governed by a Board of Trustees who are drawn from industry, commerce and education. Its courses cover a wide range of vocational training activities.

Stephen Smyth is the External Communications Manager for ATG Training. He is responsible for all forms of external communications for ATG Training, which includes the development of the ATG web site. He has been producing content for the ATG web site and ATG’s social media activities for a number of years. He has been actively:

- blogging using a Wordpress blog, http://blog.atg-training.co.uk/
- tweeting using the Twitter account, @futureteam
- using a Facebook account, www.facebook.com/ATGTraining?ref=ts
- displaying videos for the ATG courses on a YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/user/ATGtraining

Progress

In April 2010, the new ATG web site was launched. In the succeeding months, traffic to the site was consistent with how it was previously.

However, in October 2010, Stephen attended the SCAMORE workshop and, shortly afterwards made changes to the site that made a real difference to the amount of traffic that the site attracted. The changes were as follows:
a text version was added for each page on the site ensuring that the content could be indexed by the search engines;

relevant metadata (such as description and keywords) was added to the head of each page that was directly related to the page’s content and linked to Facebook via the Open Graph Protocol. For example, the related metadata for the home page (as in figure below) includes:

- verification code to verify that ATG are the owners of this site to use with Google’s webmaster tools;
- the use of geo tags giving location of ATG Training and longitude and latitude coordinates;
- relevant keywords and description of the page;
- the property ‘og’ (Facebook’s Open Graph Protocol) enabling the page to be integrated with Facebook. When a Facebook user clicks a ‘Like’ button on ATG’s Facebook page, a connection is made between the web site and the Facebook user. This enables ATG to publish updates to the user and target ads to people who like your content.

<meta name="google-site-verification" content="fvR8qA24ApGInoPs1AUa6vogiIkIX80ZOkr1015nN0"/>
<meta name="google-site-verification" content="7047elW66ro_H2KZJzTXzxO-VAF6GJ751F6rOAlLQBE"/>
<meta name="geo.region" content="GB-BKM"/>
<meta name="geo.placename" content="Aylesbury"/>
<meta name="geo.position" content="51.82102;-0.840147"/>
<meta name="ICBM" content="51.82102,-0.840147"/>
<meta name='description' content='ATG deliver training across a wide variety of industries ranging from vocational industrial training to social care and cycle training courses.'/>
<meta name='keywords' content='training, courses, vocational courses, industrial training, social care, social care training, cycle training, bike training'/>
<meta property="og:title" content="Vocational training in the UK"/>
<meta property="og:site_name" content="ATG Training"/>
<meta property="og:image" content="www.atg-training.co.uk/layout/facebook-atg.jpg"/>

**ITG home page metadata**

- the Google Analytics code was introduced to augment the Woopra code that ATG had already in place (Woopra provide real-time web statistics as visitors navigate a site, whereas Google Analytics displays usage after 24 hours)
- a sitemap.xml was added to the site informing search engines about the URLs on the web site that are available for indexing.

Subsequently Stephen has run some online advertising – these are:

- a Google Adwords campaign for 17th Edition City & Guilds training – during the period the ad ran, it attracted traffic to the site, and most recently,
- during the National Apprenticeship week, 7-11 February 2011, an ad was placed in Facebook for 5 days – it resulted in 1,107,521 impressions (i.e. the ad was viewed) and 279 clicks (i.e. the link in the ad was selected bringing visitors directly to the ATG web site) – during that campaign, it was the major contributor of traffic to the ATG Training web site.
Within 3 months from attending the workshop and making the changes to the web site, Stephen reported phenomenal growth in the amount traffic coming to the site. He explains:

"Even though I have been building websites since the mid 1990’s I learnt a great deal from the course. I put in place the learning’s overnight between the two days. And to prove the benefit my Google Analytics showed that we have achieved an increase of 179,800.00% in traffic with 75.63% of visitors being first timers and 24.37% returners. 61.23% of traffic is as a result of search engines, and 25.23% from referring sites. Only 13.42% is direct.

I would not have been able to achieve such fantastic results without the learning I took from the Netskills course".
## Introduction

Belfast Metropolitan College [www.belfastmet.ac.uk](http://www.belfastmet.ac.uk) has over 53,000 students enrolled on full-time and part-time courses, making it one of the largest colleges of Further and Higher Education in the UK. They have a comprehensive programme of full-time Further and Higher Education courses in a wide range of disciplines. In addition, the College provides a full range of adult education courses in its buildings across the city, including around 140 outcentres. The vast majority of their courses lead to nationally validated qualifications. They have well-established links with local and national universities as well as with employers, ranging from a wide variety of SMEs to large multi-national organisations.

Paul Keegan is the Development Services Manager at Belfast Metropolitan College. His main responsibility is for all technical issues relating to the web site. At present the College is being restructured. It is believed that this restructuring will bring more direction within the College in relation to IT/web, however, it is envisaged that subsequently the web team’s remit (which Paul is a part of) will increase in size and responsibility.

## Progress

A number of items were planned to be implemented following the workshop. They were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Subsequent action taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set up a Google Analytics account to monitor existing traffic to the site</td>
<td>This account was set up – the marketing team now have the ability to analyse the reports to see how initiatives attract traffic to the site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up a project team with the remit to produce appropriate policies for the use of the site and content media tools</td>
<td>The development of two policies are underway: social media policy to investigate how the college can/should use social media; creating an editorial content policy – the South Eastern Regional College policies are being consulted for relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restructure the content of the web site to improve readability and accessibility</td>
<td>Page layouts have changed to provide the ‘F-Shaped pattern’ for reading web content (summary of the content first, leading to detail later or linked to another page)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the current BMC web site for readability and accessibility on a typical mobile phone with internet capability</td>
<td>An audit was carried out and recommendations were listed on how improve the site going forward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Currently the college website is being re-developed with plans to go live in two phases: phase 1 will be in March 2011 which will concentrate on a re-design, whereas phase 2 will be a more extensive site that will probably be developed in Drupal – the planned completion for this development is August 2011.

With this second phase, the integration of the new student portal will be considered. This portal is based on Sharepoint and will allow online applications and, in the future, online payments. At present the web site and the student portal are separate.

Regarding the use of social media at the College, there already is a Facebook page with more than 680 ‘Likes’ and a number of twitter accounts – @BelfastMet for general news, @e3_belfastmet for an Economics development project and @BelfastMetLib for the Belfast Metropolitan Library.

Although the branding of the new BMC web site has not been included in the screenshot below, it shows an example of how the page layout will change by:

- moving links that were traditionally on the left to the right hand column, so the eye will be attracted to the actual content of the page;
- illustrating that pages will ‘heavy’ content will contain a summary and links to further information, if the user requires to know more.
Comments

Going forward, Paul explains:

“I would like to see a more co-ordinated, streamlined approach regarding all web activities, such as, social media, student portal, web site, marketing along with the monitoring of all web traffic. It would enable the College to project a more unified image to those visiting our site and make better use of the social media tools to attract appropriate traffic to our site.

We would have liked to use HTML5 and CSS3 during the development but were concerned how much browser support there was with the current browsers.”
3. Deafness Research

Introduction

Deafness Research (www.deafnessresearch.org.uk) was set up to:

- encourage and fund research to improve the quality of life for everyone living with deafness and related conditions today and help prevent and cure these conditions in the future;
- inform, educate, support and influence to ensure that people with deafness and related conditions receive the best possible health care and support wherever they live in the UK and that people know how to reduce their risk of deafness and related conditions.

Sarah Gentleman is the Information and Communications Manager for Deafness Research whose main responsibility is to ensure the smooth running of the charity’s information, marketing and communications strategy. This includes devising and delivering information to the charity’s wide range of audiences and stakeholders, from researchers, to supporters, donors and the deaf community. One of her main objectives is to raise the profile of the charity to support fundraising and awareness campaigns that will enable future deafness research.

Progress

The workshop discussions surrounding the use of social media to promote and connect with audiences was of most interest to Sarah. During the workshop she realised that having multiple twitter accounts for their many outreach projects would make it difficult to resource, split the charity’s message too much and be unproductive, so just one Twitter account should be used to advertise all their projects.

After the workshop she wrote a strategy document for implementing the use of Twitter to help raise the charity’s profile and gained approval internally to set up a Twitter account, @deafnessuk. To complement the Twitter service, she also wrote an internal document ‘Twitter, why it matters’, which was also spurred by the workshop, to persuade colleagues why they should be using Twitter and to get them involved. It explains what Twitter is, reasons for contributing and useful references on why it should be used for fundraising.

Measurements

The charity’s web statistics have been better than usual over last 6 months since they started using Twitter.

![Chart of Deafness Research web site visits](chart.png)
Twitter is certainly a contributing factor to the rise in web traffic. Although Twitter is not the only factor as a Facebook page, www.facebook.com/pages/Deafness-Research-UK/95822704167, was set up during February 2011. There has also been more promotion through the charity attending events with information leaflets being distributed.

Comments

Sarah requested that if anyone would like a copy of `Twitter, why it matters` to email her at sarah.gentleman@deafnessresearch.org.uk and she will send you a copy. She also has other plans that stem from attending the workshop, she explains:

"The workshop exercise that covered reviewing the types of audiences that may come to your site did help. In the next month, I am working on a plan and schedule for the re-development of a new site, planning for a launch in late autumn.

A big focus for the new site will be on ensuring the structure is organised to our audiences’ needs, rather than the structure the charity would like. This, I believe, will really help the user experience and increase our statistics. Some informal workshops with staff are planned to draw out what their specific audiences might want and this will feed into the main website structure. I will also use the guides available in the audience analysis toolkit, www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/themes/content/contentalliance/reports/audienceresearch.aspx, to assist with the redevelopment of the Deafness Research UK website."
4. EDINA

Introduction

EDINA (www.edina.ac.uk) is a UK national academic data centre, based at the University of Edinburgh, set up to support the activity of universities, colleges and research institutes in the UK, by delivering access to a range of online data services through a UK academic infrastructure, as well as supporting knowledge exchange and ICT capacity building, nationally and internationally.

The EDINA representative who attended the workshops is responsible for the maintenance of the online resource, its promotion and accessibility issues. It was the area of social media and how it should be implemented was of most interest.

Progress

After the workshop, a meeting was held with relevant staff within EDINA to discuss what they should implement and agree on how to progress and monitor their implementation. Below lists those priorities and comments on what they have been able to accomplish:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Subsequent action taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>set up a dedicated EDINA YouTube channel to deliver relevant learning material</td>
<td>Now available at: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/EDINADATACENTRE">www.youtube.com/EDINADATACENTRE</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rewrite the Wikipedia entry to ensure that the entry is informative and meaningful [and to remove market-speak]</td>
<td>Wikipedia page re-written: <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EDINA">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EDINA</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>review all top level EDINA pages to add appropriate metadata, such as description and keywords</td>
<td>CMS implementation scheduled for 2010 was delayed, although a review is now underway – it is hoped that the CMS will help with metadata creation and maintenance throughout the whole web site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ensure EDINA continue to export services to use mobile devices</td>
<td>Responsibility for this lies with Service Delivery teams – continues to be strong awareness of the importance of delivering services on mobile platforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>create an official Twitter account for EDINA to publicise events, publications and blogposts – a member of staff would be nominated to actively monitor what is said about EDINA on Twitter and respond</td>
<td>Many individual EDINA services and projects have Twitter accounts – need to identify a single authority to act for EDINA before an official EDINA Twitter account can be introduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provide guidelines on the use of social media in EDINA</td>
<td>Published on 31 January 2011, <a href="http://edina.ac.uk/about/social_media/social_media_guidelines.html">http://edina.ac.uk/about/social_media/social_media_guidelines.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>create an official EDINA SlideShare account – all presentations available from the EDINA web site would be included</td>
<td>This has been implemented: <a href="http://www.slideshare.net/edinadocumentationofficer">www.slideshare.net/edinadocumentationofficer</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>create an official blog for EDINA to provide information on presentations/publications, encourage comments, ultimately drive traffic to the website [currently there are blogs attached to EDINA projects and services]</td>
<td>As with Twitter, there are many EDINA blogs on individual, team, project and service levels, for example, the web teams’ blog <a href="http://webteam.blogs.edina.ac.uk/">http://webteam.blogs.edina.ac.uk/</a> but not for EDINA as a whole – need to identify a single authority to act for EDINA before an official EDINA blog can be introduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assess and improve the readability of EDINA web pages</td>
<td>Recommendations have been made for the redesign as it is now under consideration, such as: emphasis on headings; use of ‘inverted pyramid model’, broadest information first, leading to more detail later in the page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement a regime of sitemap refreshment to ensure the sitemap files are up to date and are submitted to search engines regularly</td>
<td>Successfully implemented – this has made a huge difference in the accuracy and currency of search results for the EDINA pages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At present, all social media activities are linked from the social media portal page on the EDINA website (see below screenshot).

**EDINA and Social Media**

Listed below are some of social media tools that we use for communicating work on various EDINA projects, services and events. Click on an icon to go to our presence on the social media site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geo-Data</th>
<th>Bibliographic</th>
<th>Multimedia &amp; Education</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digimap</td>
<td>SUNCAT</td>
<td>Jorum</td>
<td>EDINA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go-Geol</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mediahub (working title)</td>
<td>Social Media Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlock</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EDINA Web Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AddressingHaoyl</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Repository Plinge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHALICE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>WSTIERIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GeoMobile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key to Icons**

- Wordpress blog
- Blogger blog
- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube channel

**EDINA Social Media Guidelines**

EDINA is a JISC National Data Centre based at the University of Edinburgh | Accessibility | Acknowledgements

**EDINA social media portal page**, http://edina.ac.uk/news/news_socialmedia.html

**Comments**

The delay in the redesign of the website and introduction of the content management system has slowed progress in developing areas that were learnt from the workshop. However, there is knowledge within the organisation to ensure that the right software will be chosen and appropriate implementation can take place.

It is essential that a website is built so that it is fully optimised for search engines as well as incorporating and attracting traffic from the organisation’s social media activities.
5. Go-Geo

Introduction

Go-Geo (www.gogeo.ac.uk) is a JISC funded service run by EDINA. It provides a central resource for geospatial information and services for those in education and research. Go-Geo has 3 distinct functions:

1. Web resources – to aid the discovery of geographic information [GI] resources such as news, events, software, courses, research clusters, metadata and books;
2. Metadata discovery – to aid the discovery of spatial data through a metadata catalogue search engine that allows users [by typing in keywords, dates or location] to search several catalogues at one time, or to focus on just one;
3. Geodoc – to allow users to create standards compliant metadata, which can be published either publicly through Go-Geo; restricted so that only other members of an institution can discover it; or kept completely private.

The dominant user group is UK academic users and access to geodoc is restricted to this sector. However, the rest of the site is open to the public. They have a significant number of users from international academic institutes and from both the public and private sectors. They have received positive comments on the content they host as it provides reviews and summaries of resources made by GIS experts.

The site content is held in a number of databases. Pages are built ‘on the fly’ and the url of the resulting page reflects the request made by the user. This presents a number of challenges when trying to make Go-Geo’s content discoverable by search engines such as Google and Yahoo. To aid search engine indexing a site map has been made for Go-Geo, this creates search engine friendly urls. A separate list has been created for the metadata records that are harvested by Go-Geo. This list is regenerated weekly as many of the metadata records are harvested from external organizations and Go-Geo has no control over them.

Addy Pope works as the content officer for Go-Geo at EDINA, University of Edinburgh. Before the workshop a Twitter account (@go_geo) had been set up but was only used to report at events attended by the Go-Geo team.

Progress

After the workshop, priorities were listed, primarily to take a more active role in using social media tools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Subsequent action taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>twitter account [@go_geo] to be used more extensively</td>
<td>now highlights new content, functionality and resources on Go-Geo providing an effective way of reaching a wider audience, helping to engage more with users in the UK GIS community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provide a blog to post less formal content and detailed reviews that do not fit into the current structure of the web resources channels</td>
<td>blog was created allowing a discursive commentary to sit alongside the formal web resources – users can add comments to posts and will hopefully create a community, <a href="http://gogeo.blogs.edina.ac.uk">http://gogeo.blogs.edina.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>set up an RSS feed for the web site</td>
<td>RSS feed has been created for the news section enabling users to receive content through snippets without having to visit the site itself – selecting a link for more information if the item is of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>set up a Facebook page</td>
<td>the Go-Geo page [notes] has been set up (<a href="http://www.facebook.com/pages/GoGeo/146127175491118">www.facebook.com/pages/GoGeo/146127175491118</a>) and lists feed from the Go-Geo blog and @go_geo twitter account</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These actions give users a number of different ways that they can monitor new content on Go–Geo without them having to visit the site itself. This seems to be in-line with thoughts on how users now navigate the internet by only visiting a number of key sites on a regular basis. Exposing the Go–Geo content in a format that is able to feed into these key sites seems to have been achieved. RSS feeds can be viewed in readers, such as iGoogle, or email client. Important notices and blogs are distributed through twitter and Facebook.

**Measurements**

Regarding the measurements of success, they have seen:

- overall usage statistics of Go–Geo continue to increase when months are compared between years;
- an increase in the number of followers of the Twitter account;
- the twitter account is also listed on a number of lists – this is encouraging as it shows that the statements made are considered to be worth reading and disseminating further. The approach to tweeting has very much been “less is more” that ensures a good signal to noise ratio;
- a good uptake of the RSS feed with 2700 accessing the service;
- the blog is continuing to expand its readership and we have had positive feedback, such as pingbacks and comments, on a number of articles. The blog moderator has been adding constructive comments and cross-references on other blogs which should help advertise the Go–Geo blog.

Go-Geo’s current web site – blog page

What seems to have been particularly successful with the blog has been finding topical subjects to write about. This is tricky and the blogger sometimes has to react quickly to capture the interest, but when it works it can greatly increase the exposure the blog receives. Two blog pieces that worked well were the extended write up of an international conference and a topical piece about some remote sensing data showing just how cold December around the North Atlantic. With the latter,
twitter was used to push out the title of the blog, this generated re–tweets and eventually ping–backs from the data creators at NASA. This approach will be used again, but it is time consuming and topical items must be posted quickly to gain maximum impact.

Other development ideas for the blog include the use of guest bloggers who could use the Go–Geo blog to highlight their own research or experiences. This approach would widen the scope of the blog but also relieve the pressure on the Go–Geo blog team, which is predominantly just the content officer. In general, new resources on Go–Geo that we have publicised through our new social media channels have received far more attention than those that have just simple been added to the main site. This is to be expected but can help quantify the impact that cross–referencing on social media can have.

The implementation of social media as a method of promoting new and interesting content seems to have been a success, however, the use of such social media has not been integral to core function of Go–Geo itself. For example, the Twitter feed is separated from the site and tweets do not appear on the Go–Geo site. This is a function of the current site design which does not consider the inclusion of live content feeds from social media.

The solution to this is to integrate social media properly during the next Go–Geo site redesign. This is underway. Our aim is to incorporate the content from social media channels, such as Twitter and Facebook on the home page, while also exposing content from deep in the site. The new design pulls the site together making it easier to navigate between the site zones [Resources, Learning, Discovery, Sharing and Describing], while also offering users a variety of ways of keep in touch with new content. Quick links will take users directly from the home page to content deep within the site. It is hoped that the new-look site will go live in summer 2011.

The Content Management System (CMS) used on a site will affect the ability of the content officer to manage and develop the social media on the site. Most large CMS’s such as Drupal and Wordpress, streamline the management of content from social media. Go–Geo does not currently use a mainstream CMS, instead it uses a custom CMS design. This works very well but limits the ability to react to new ideas and applications in social media as code has to be developed and tested by
software engineers. Changing the Go–Geo CMS is not considered a priority at this time but this may be reviewed in the future based on the success of the new site design.

The Go–Geo team have worked hard to increase the use of social media to publicise content on Go–Geo and this investment has resulted in an increase in site usage. Site visitors can now choose the most convenient way to keep up to date with developments and contents on Go–Geo. RSS feeds on the main site, and the blog coupled with an active Twitter feed should allow them to monitor the site without having to physically visit it. This may seem an odd way to increase traffic on a site but it appears that many of our users prefer to skim a digest and choose what content to explore further.

Comments

Addy adds:

“One thing that has become clear from our progress so far is that to engage with and develop a community in social media takes a huge investment in time. Once established, the community aspects continue to require attention if they are to be sustained and expanded.

Another area that was highlighted at the workshop was the use of RDFa. In the future, we hope to investigate the use of RDFa to enhance descriptions of site content, especially in the Web Resources section of Go–Geo. This would compliment other projects at EDINA that are investigating linked data.”
6. Institute of Technology Tallaght

Introduction

The Institute of Technology based in Tallaght, South Dublin (www.ittdublin.ie), offers a range of relevant and flexible learning opportunities within a professional and supportive learning environment that are career focused. It provides lifelong learning opportunities that correspond with the career requirements of those living in the region and with the developmental needs of business and industry. It also serves as a centre for the advancement of research, commercial innovation and enterprise development within the region.

Paul Butler works in the IT services department in the Institute of Technology Tallaght. His main role is in Web Services and is the only person looking after the web site and the Institute’s intranet. His original training is in technical photography. This enables him to assist people within the Institute with illustrator design and image preparation to make ready their documents for publication etc.

The main actions returning from the workshop was to:

- encourage the use of two main social media accounts for Twitter and Facebook to ensure there is greater communication with the students;
- to present the detailed content in an easy accessible format for users to find what they are looking for.

Progress

Both Facebook and Twitter facilities have become a major source of student communication and are becoming our first point of contact for students along with the news section on the Institute website. They became extremely essential during the recent bad weather as the Institute was shut periodically. The Institute now has over 1890 users on Facebook and over 200 users on Twitter. Twitter is set up so that when a ‘tweet’ is posted, it automatically posts to Facebook as well. It has been observed that the use of Twitter seems to be more popular with part-time students.

There is also a facility which automatically sends out a text message to all students. A new extreme weather policy for communication has now been developed which specifies the use of Twitter (@ittallaght) and Facebook (available at: www.facebook.com/people/Itt-Dublin/10000017173426).

Upon returning from the workshop, attention was focussed on a new web Content Management System (CMS). They are also implementing a new course module system. This is a very detailed, standalone system connecting directly to an Institute-wide database system with the content coming directly from the lecturing staff. It allows students to drill down to the specifics on any course. The system enables a customised banner to be assigned for the particular college. Cork Institute of Technology has implemented the system available at: http://courses.cit.ie/index.cfm.

In March 2011, the designs for the new website will be designed off (see screenshots below) and the new CMS. They are currently at the beginning stage of learning how to use the CMS and understanding its capabilities.

One of the important things Paul took from the workshop was the necessity to offer the user “easy accessibility to a detailed range of information”. Hopefully this will be reflected in the new site. There may be some slight changes to the overall design, but the screenshots are an accurate reflection.
ITT new web site – opening home page
Comment

Paul adds:

“It would have been great if we could have implemented some of the intelligent search criteria and the use of HTML5. However, time and budget are against us at the moment. Hopefully this will change with time.”
7. Kings College London, HSaP Subject Centre

Introduction

The Health Sciences and Practice (HSaP) Subject Centre (www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/) provides discipline based support to departments and individual academics to provide the best possible higher education learning experience for all students, both in academic and practice contexts. HSaP also work with the wider health professions community to contribute to policy development and implementation, which covers the many, rapidly changing, agendas that are relevant to health professions education.

Two staff members attended the workshop: Sabah Boulebbad, the Centre’s Senior Administrator and Charles Kasule who is the Communications and Resources Officer. They are responsible for much of the online content that is produced for the Centre’s web site covering over 40 subjects (equating to 20% of the student population). Aspects of their work include: producing content for the Higher Education Academy (HEA) website that hosts the HSaP events booking system; updating content with resources from past events; event and site promotion via relevant mailing lists and social media tools; data management for mailing list software and data analysis for reports. Their team is also the first point of contact for web enquiries.

Progress

In returning from the workshop, their immediate goal was to optimise the content-rich site for both search engines and users. Below lists the main tasks that were carried out to improve the site’s accessibility and visibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Subsequent action taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review the documents and web objects (such as a pdf, presentation or Word file) within the web site</td>
<td>Improving all material so they are properly tagged, example of a presentation at: <a href="http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/news-events/eventsbox/events2011/tis170211/">www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/news-events/eventsbox/events2011/tis170211/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review content to display important content at top with detailed information below</td>
<td>Improving all content to use the ‘pyramid format to attract the attention of users, see example: <a href="http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/news-events/eventsbox/events2011/ipesig180142011">www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/news-events/eventsbox/events2011/ipesig180142011</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore how page content can be modified to improve how search engines index each page</td>
<td>Improved ’breadcrumb’ navigation at the top of each page using the main keywords that relate to content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create composite pages to allow for the dynamic content of the site</td>
<td>As an example, see: ‘Areas of focus’ pages at: <a href="http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/focus">www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/focus</a> – it enhances user’s experience, avoid “dead” content, and optimize the use of content already present on the website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include Creative Commons Licenses information</td>
<td>All resources are published on the website and endeavour to make them all openly accessible to help cross-fertilization over the 40 subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make better use of Twitter account [@hsapsc]</td>
<td>Procedure for using twitter agreed, that is, what to tweet about news, events, workshop sessions and what format to use when tweeting to make them consistent easing user experience Started to use ‘bit.ly’ to shorten URLs and monitor traffic to the web references and an appropriate hashtag will be used in the next eLearning in Health conference sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Wikipedia entry</td>
<td>Wikipedia entry amended at <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Health_Sciences_and_Practice_Subject_Centre">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Health_Sciences_and_Practice_Subject_Centre</a> and an updated list of publications has been added.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Below example illustrates how:

- breadcrumbs are used (under the main navigation) to let the user know where they are on the site and enabling them to be indexed by search engines;
- ‘at a glance’ information displayed in the table for users to see immediately the main workshop details;
- links to further information available on the page.

Web page publishing one of HSaPSC’s events

Comments

Recently the Centre upgraded the CMS to the new version of Plone, an open source content management system, to maintain the online content. This has made work much easier, such as:

- we can now identify which pages are linked to a file – broken links were not previously identifiable;
- the frequency use of keywords can be identified which was not previously possible (for example, we found the term ‘Interprofessional Education’ is also searched as ‘IPE’ but identifying which pages/items had only the keywords ‘Interprofessional Education’ was rather difficult) – being able to update keyword to the current use has proved to be invaluable in enhancing the user experience.

One thing we were not able to do yet was set up the sitemap for the new website. The website structure has changed quite a lot from our previous website and have not yet had the time to update it. Sabah concludes:

“The workshop has totally changed the way I look at my work and given me a much better understanding of how items are linked and how much we can better serve our community by using the tools at our disposition. Thank you all so much for such an enlightening workshop.”
8. Kingston University, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Introduction

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences [http://fass.kingston.ac.uk] comprises of five Schools, each of which providing a wide range of undergraduate, postgraduate and research degrees in which to specialise. They are:

- School of Economics – well-established centre of excellence for the teaching of Economics
- School of Education – consistently rated among the top education departments in the country
- School of Humanities – an intellectually challenging environment in a wide range of disciplines
- School of Performance and Screen Studies – brings together the fields of Dance, Drama, Film Studies, Music and TV Studies
- School of Social Science – dynamic centre for teaching and research across the social sciences.

The Faculty representative who attended the workshop is responsible for maintaining the wealth of content for the Schools. Although there were many areas that needed to be considered, it was the area of improving the content structure that was of most importance.

Progress

Whilst the site had an appropriate ‘top level’ structure in place, the rest of the site required reviewing to separate the content from the design, emphasising headings correctly and optimising the site for search engines. This included breaking down large bodies of text by such means as using lists, creating sub menus with images on key pages etc.

One of the Faculty pages illustrating revised content structure
There are other areas which need addressing especially continuing to optimise the web site for search engines, but due to time restraints has not been possible up to now. They include:

- improving the metadata – at present, all Faculty pages have the similar description [see below]

```html
<meta name="description" content="The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is a part of Kingston University London." />
```

and keywords [as below]:

```html
<meta name="keywords" content="Kingston University, K84, Kingston, University, London, KU, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, FASS, courses, postgraduate, undergraduate, research, faculty, schools, activities" />
```

however, each page would need to be reviewed to ensure that the metadata is unique for each page and fully reflects the page content – this would make it more likely for search engines to display the correct page relating to the relevant description and keywords than it would at present;

- enhancing the metadata by using RDFa and standard metadata vocabularies.
9. Leeds College of Music Library

Introduction

Leeds College of Music [www.lcm.ac.uk], with over 1,000 full-time and 1,500 part-time students, is the only specialist music college to offer both Higher and Further Education courses. The College provides a unique opportunity for students to progress from BTEC courses through to Undergraduate and Postgraduate degrees.

The Library service brings together a wealth of online web based services and an extensive collection of print and visual materials. To supplement lectures and seminars, students have access to web based support via the College’s virtual learning environment, ‘Space’. This includes electronic journals, books, online forums and other interactive content. Space is the student’s central point of information about the College and their courses with module handbooks, assignment briefs, details of all College performances and many other events and services.

Phil Bailey is the Information and Learning Technology Librarian at the College and is responsible for maintaining the Library and E-Resource pages within the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) that provides students with a wealth of resources including access to E-Resources such as Rocks Backs pages, Oxford music online, Desktop DJ, Naxos, JSTOR. The subject of most interest was using and evaluating the potential of the social web.

Progress

On returning to work, he was able to implement some of the ideas immediately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Subsequent action taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set up of the Twitter account</td>
<td>Now using twitter account <a href="https://twitter.com/LeedsMusicLib">@LeedsMusicLib</a> to keep in contact with students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Publicise the links to the social media sites | Twitter widgets are on pages within the VLE to provide the students with up to date information  
The Library’s facebook, twitter, youtube and delicious icons are displayed on the VLE pages as well as the screensavers on the library computers  
Youtube library video advertisement via the VLE news, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7ipZEk97Yk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7ipZEk97Yk)  
On Facebook page, the link to the OPAC library catalogue (OLIB) is available for students to access their library account to: renew, reserve or order items; check the new stock list; get access to Ebooks |
Library’s facebook integrating their tweets with news of interest

The Leeds College of Music Library’s twitter page
Phil concludes:

“I found the workshop very interesting and being able implement some of the things as soon as I got back to work was a bonus.”
10. UKOLN’s 2010 IWMW event

Introduction

UKOLN (www.ukoln.ac.uk) is an applied research organisation based at the University of Bath. Through its funding from the JISC UKOLN aims to inform practice and influence policy in the areas of: digital libraries, metadata and resource discovery, distributed library and information systems, bibliographic management, and web technologies. UKOLN provides network information services, including the Ariadne magazine, and runs workshops and conferences.

Brian Kelly is the UK Web Focus which is a national Web coordination and advisory post. In this role, he influences policy makers to help them make informed decisions, provides a channel of communication between existing expertise and development work in the UK HE and FE community, and maintains a structured monitoring of the activities of various groups, organisations and information services. In this report, Brian provides a summary of the use of social media to support UKOLN’s Institutional Web Management Workshop (IWMW) events.

Background

UKOLN’s IWMW was launched in 1997 to support members of institutional Web management teams in making effective use of the Web to support institutional objectives. The event has proved popular across this sector. However, in light of recent cuts in funding across the higher education sector, UKOLN have identified a need to take pro-active action in order to ensure that the events continue to provide a cost-effective means of ensuring that institutions are well-positioned to continue to exploit the potential of the Web. In addition the event has always sought to make use of innovative web technologies at the event itself and on the event web site in order to raise awareness of emerging new technologies, investigate how should technologies can be used and, if appropriate, encourage wider take-up and adoption.

The use of communications technologies during the IWMW event first took place in 2005 when a small number of users exploited the WiFi network at the venue in order to use IRC to facilitate discussions during the event. Since then event organisers have chosen to provide similar and progressive communication technologies at all subsequent IWMW events.

Enhancements

An event blog was set up for IWMW 2009 and this was continued at IWMW 2010, http://iwmw.ukoln.ac.uk/blog/2010/. The blog provided an opportunity for the event organisers to highlight various aspects of the event, such as key plenary talks and workshop sessions as well as the various accompanying social events. Speakers and workshop facilitators were invited to write blog posts about their sessions, which ensured there was a variety of content and style. The contributors also made others aware of their posts, thus helping to raise the profile of the event especially for those who may have not attended previous events. Previous work in this area included a remotely-hosted blog and Ning site. For 2010 event, a local WordPress blog was deployed and a BuddyPress social network was set up. The plugin ‘Akismet’ was used to identify and block comment and trackback spam on the WordPress blog.

After the IWMW 2010 event was held, the Lanyrd social conference directory was released. This was felt to provide an additional way of helping to raise the profile of the event by allowing speakers, facilitators and participants to register, typically using their Twitter account, so that Twitter followers can easily see who is attending. Information on the speakers and facilitators was retrospectively provided on a Lanyrd page for the IWMW 2010 event, http://lanyrd.com/2010/iwmw10/.

Live video streams of the plenary talks have been provided for recent IWMW events. This has enabled remote participants to listen to the talks, thus helping to maximise the impact of the talks and help to ensure that members of the sector who are not able to attend the event are in a position to enhance their skills and knowledge. Where possible, we provided access to the videos after the event.
has finished. At the IWMW 2010 event the iTitle software has been used to provide captioning of the video based on Twitter posts published during the talks.

The Slideshare service has been used, www.slideshare.net/event/iwmw2010, to provide access to the talks given by the plenary speakers and, where possible, slides used in the parallel workshop sessions. The availability of the slide on Slideshare has been particularly useful for the remote audience who can view the slides whilst watching the video stream of the speaker. In addition the slides can be easily embedded in blog posts and Web pages which can be useful for those writing trip reports or who wish to share their thoughts on the talks with a wider audience.

The event web site provided access to information on the talks and workshop sessions and biographical information for the speakers and workshop facilitators. In addition to the web pages which are written in HTML the information is also available in RSS, http://iwmw.ukoln.ac.uk/about/rss/, thus allowing the content to be easily syndicated, used on mobile devices and reused by other tools and services which process RSS feeds.

The ‘event amplification’ made use of a variety of communication, collaboration and resource sharing tools and services in order to enhance access to the event and help to encourage discussion and debate across, not only those attending the event, but also the remote participants. Although the personal interaction with participants is missing, for those viewing remotely, it was very beneficial for those who are unable to attend (possibly due to lack of funding) and informed them of the topics covered and the issues being discussed. There was a live video stream for all the talks, live blog (using Coveritlive software) and twitter feed. Also for 2010 the first online BarCamp was held – this session attracted 21 viewers, including 7 active and talkative participants.

Measurements

As with other IWMW events, an evaluation of use of the networked technologies was carried out which confirmed that users found the social media enhancements had been useful and should continue to be used.

The blog was active from 18 May to 27 October 2010 and the statistics showed:

- Number of posts: 81 published posts, 13 of which were guest posts
- Number of comments: 75
Users: 5 Administrators, 2 editors, 2 contributors, 121 subscribers

The hashtag #iwmw10 was used on Twitter to engage with visitors and ‘bit.ly’ used to gather evidence of URLs followed. RSS feeds, feed://iwmw.ukoln.ac.uk/iwmw2010/news.xml, were also provided enabling content to be reused by others. This content was then migrated to Linked Data.

Analysis of use of Twitter at the IWMW 2010 event was carried out using the Summarizr service. This provided evidence of the popularity of Twitter at the event, with the evidence from geo-location developments to the service showing the geographical distribution of Twitter users who had enabled geo-location on their mobile devices.

Full blog post at: http://ukwebfocus.wordpress.com/2010/07/16/initial-reflections-on-iwmw-2010/
11. Comments from other attendees

Bristol University

Gilles Couzin, who is Senior web trainer and consultant in the Department of Information Systems and Computing, has been able to integrate the content of the presentations into the department’s own training modules on how to create and maintain content and how to promote a website using social media tools. He has also been able to influence others who are managing content within other departments, such as, the Public Relations Office, www.bristol.ac.uk/public-relations/.

National STEM Centre

Edward Mather, web site editor for the Centre, found that the workshop provided a really good opportunity to meet with others from a similar educational background, and to explore some of the options that were available, in terms of social media. Following a look at the potential it could bring to the organisation, they have been inspired to investigate it more thoroughly, even hosting an exploratory social media Continuing Professional Development (CPD) session for partner organisations, to see how they can work together more effectively. One concrete step they have taken is setting up a Twitter account (@NtSTEMCentre) which has allowed them to access a wider base than they would otherwise have reached. It has also ensured that they keep the website’s news items frequently updated to create relevant, engaging Twitter content, which in turn has made the Centre’s website a more current and useful resource for their audience.

Tartans Authority

Brian Wilton is the director of Tartans Authority, a charity whose main objective is to promote a deeper knowledge of Scottish Tartans, their origins, manufacture, use, history and development.

Brian came to the workshop a real sceptic to the benefits of social networking for the charity. At the end of the two days, he was a complete convert. Subsequently, there are plans in mid 2011 when the website is being reviewed (www.tartansauthority.com), to establish a social media presence through the use of, such tools as Twitter and Facebook, to help the charity reach a wider audience.

University of Bedfordshire

Hilary Johnson is the Academic Liaison Librarian in the Faculty of Education, Sport & Tourism. After the workshop, she (with the help of the University’s web developer) has been able to add Google Analytics to the Library blogs, such as, Education Library Blog, http://uobeducationlibrary.blogspot.com/ and the Learning Resources blog, http://lrweb.beds.ac.uk/libraryservices/whoweare/blog.

She recognises the need to incorporate RDFa into the Library’s website, however, this work has been delayed because the purchase of a new Content Management System is imminent.

West Dunbartonshire Libraries

Joe Porter is the Community Information Officer for West Dunbartonshire Libraries, http://libraryonline.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/, responsible for developing community information that covers subjects, such as, economic development, lifelong learning, community engagement and tourism.

Joe was particularly interested in the development of a social media policy in relation to how staff and an organisation should use, such tools as Twitter, (@libr8). After the workshop, he was able to provide guidance on the issues that should be addressed in the Council’s social media policy. It will be published online when it has been completed.

He also read further reading material that was recommended in the workshop giving him a greater insight to how technology is continuing to change the way we work and how it should be applied.
# 12. A checklist for value from the internet

## Producing, promoting and developing content most effectively

1. Recognise advantages in having well prepared scalable content that can be utilised in “more is better” scenarios.

2. Understand the potential of audience engagement using the web.

3. Consider the longer term benefits of having computable content.

4. Search engine providers want their users to find exactly what they are looking for, so describe your content accurately using titles, description, keywords.

5. Use text for all important content.

6. Monitor and measure how your site is being used and define success.

7. Search engine optimisation cannot be ignored, but it is not everything.

8. Know your audience.

9. New standards enhance the value of content by enabling informative structure.

10. Many benefits of new standards can be realised with older browsers by referencing ready made non intrusive javascript.

11. RSS can extend the reach of suitable web site content.

12. Keep things simple on a web page to prevent creating barriers to accessibility.

13. Employ simple web based services to check the integrity of content and associated keywords.

14. Embedded metadata can open up new possibilities for the use of content.

15. Online social media can play a prominent role in attracting and engaging an audience.

16. The social web is not new, it’s what the web was always intended to become.

17. Audiences are already in the social web—it’s the best place to engage with them.

18. Decide on a purpose for adopting the social web and use the best service for that.

19. Be aware of valid organisational concerns over the use of the social web.

20. A mix of expertise is required to maximise effectiveness.

21. This expertise should be associated with different roles and responsibilities.

22. The coordination of these roles should be an essential part of the web strategy of an organisation.
23. A policy can allay concerns over the use of the social web by an organisation.

24. There is no magic formula for an organisation-wide social web policy—it depends on many organisation-specific factors.

25. The process of compiling a policy should involve a probing review that brings focus to benefits and workable processes.

26. RDF is a very basic scheme for describing things using unambiguous terms in brief statements known as triples.

27. RDFa is a way of including RDF in an ordinary web page to embed metadata.

28. RDF metadata in a web site can be used by software applications to detect semantics.

29. Web sites containing RDF can be linked when there is overlap in the triples.

30. There is a growing number of online resources using RDF and real semantics to create a more effective web of resources.