Workshop summary: Blogs, Wikis ...

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Wether the Web 2.0 is real or hype, the truth is that some new tools are here to stay, two of the most important ones are: Blogs and Wikis.

A Blog is a cronologically ordered web bulletin board. It may be personal, for a group, for an enterprise or any interest group. A common feature of all blogs is that any user may add comments to a post, allowing some kind of discussion. Also, links and multimedia content (usually pictures) can be attached to any text. With a really easy set up (some hosted solutions are offered for free), the expansion of the number of blogs is huge, the biggest growing area of the Internet right now. It is said that every second a new blog is created. For some, this amount of information is too much: it is not filtered, not reviewed, just arbitrary personal stuff put on the net. For others its the only place to find some kind of information that, otherwise, would never be there.

A Wiki is a simplified HTML web site where, usually, everybody is able to change its content directly from the web with no other tools or programs rather than the browser. This converts the Wiki into a really easy collaborative tool. The wiki is been used in personal spaces, in group documentation projects or even in a large scale projects. Some critics alert about the chaotic growth of the wiki content: its open to anyone to create new content, new categories and even to delete other's information. The fact is that, with some work on organizing the structure, giving clear rules on how this wiki works and probably leading by example, huge wiki projects can be made, the most successful one, the Wikipedia.

With this and other helpful tools such as RSS, MySpace, Flickr, etc growing and being more and more popular, libraries have new opportunities to improve the service for their users or their staff. Libraries have little to loose if they embrace this new technology, but imaginative services and solutions need to be thought because Blogs and Wikis are far from the institution controlled workspace where the library used to play.

During this workshop we will:
- Examine the technology behind Blogs, Wikis and other tools.
- Look what are the current uses of this tool on the Internet.
- Look what are the current uses of this tool in the libraries.
- Identify how Blogs and Wikis could help the libraries to give/improve more services to their users and staff.

The participants are asked to be proactive during the sessions by:

- Showing the group what their libraries are using this tools for.

- Exploring and showing interesting uses of Blogs and Wikis found

outisde the library field.

- Tell the group about other interesting tools for the libraries.

- In general, brainstorming how we could use this tools to improve our library services.

Before coming to the meeting, and to help the workgroup to be useful,

you should:

- Be familiar with Blogs and Wikis

- Gather information on the use of this tools in your insitution.

- Look into the web for other interesting uses and other interesting programs.

Recommended reading and references:

* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki

* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog

* Miguel Ramos, Paul S. Piper. Reference Services Review Volume 34 Number 4 2006 pp. 570-

574 . Letting the grass grow: grassroots information on blogs and wikis.

http://emeraldinsight.com/Insight/ViewContentServlet?Filename=Published/EmeraldFullTextArti

cle/Articles/2400340412.html

* Michael Angeles, 2004. Using a Wiki for Documentation and Collaborative Authoring.

http://www.llrx.com/features/librarywikis.htm