Social Media and Libraries

By

Stephen A. Akintunde, PhD
Deputy University Librarian (Admin. & Systems)
University of Jos
PMB 2084
Jos, Plateau State 930001
Email: sakintun@gmail.com
akins@unijos.edu.ng

Presented at LITT2010, University of Lagos,
Akoka, Lagos, Nigeria
What is social media?

Media that uses information & communications technology (ICT) to establish an on-going social interaction

- Synchronous & asynchronous communication
- The ICT could be text, audio, or multimedia

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Types of social media

- Twitter
- Facebook
- Foursquare
- YouTube
- MySpace
- Flickr
- etc

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Uses of social media

Social media can be used to great advantages in organizations.

Social media can use the platform of personal computers, personal digital assistants (PDAs), mobile phones, etc.

Check ‘50 Ways to use Social Media, listed by Objective:

Practical #1 - 20mins

- Break up into groups of 5 each
- Read through the ‘50 Ways . . .’ above
- List out what a library can do under each of the 5 strategic Objectives as grouped by Jeremiah Owyang

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Using social media in the library

- The main use of social media in libraries is engaging the library patron through
  - Synchronous & asynchronous feedback
  - Getting almost immediate feedback in the delivery of library services can enhance significantly, the profile of libraries

- Other uses include
  - Active dissemination of notifications
  - Librarian (Reference Services, Subject, User Services) interaction with patron

See also: ‘Bringing Social Media to Any Library’
http://s36.a2zinc.net/clients sla/sla2010/custom/handout/speaker0_session248_1.pdf

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Watch out for these

- Study the technological competencies of your patrons
- Choose the appropriate media for them
  - Multiple media can be used at the same time
- Provide links of your social media in your library website and online public access catalogue

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Watch out for these

- Privacy invasion
  - Avoid releasing critical personal data in your profile
- Spam messages
  - Use other icts to confirm origin
- Fake links
  - Use ‘official’ site of social media at all times
- Phishing emails
  - Avoid following links from your email to the web site of social media.
    - Go to the site directly
- Incredible claims
  - Eg of multiple followers

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Watch out for these

For some more details, see:


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Two examples

For Practical purposes, we look at:

- Twitter and
- Facebook

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Twitter

Just to refresh, because of its particular significance in rendering a dynamic library service
What is twitter?

Twitter can be described as: “a service for friends, family, and co–workers to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What are you doing?”

It is a new form of online communication. Makes it possible for a two-way communications between librarians and their patrons.

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What is twitter?

Text-based posts of up to 140 characters
What is twitter?

Email, instant messenger, and VoIP tools like Skype can be used for one-to-one or one-to-few online communication.

For one-to-many online communication, online publishers, blogs can be used to create and distribute content rapidly and reach anyone on the web through RSS feeds.
What is twitter?

Å A combination of the above forms of communication

Å “As a Twitter user you can post updates, follow and view updates from other users (this is akin to subscribing to a blog’s RSS feed), and send a public reply or private direct message to connect with another Twitterer”
Practical #2 – 20 mins

Each participant should use a system to:

- Follow the link below:

Choose #2: ‘Twitter Tutorial’, and interact
You can also benefit from the following guidebook:

http://mashable.com/guidebook/twitter/
Facebook

One of the most popular social media for one to many communication

Can be effectively deployed by librarians to enhance higher level and dynamic interaction between librarians and patrons
Facebook

 Å Launched in 2004
 Å Used by more than 500 million active users in July 2010

 ¡ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook
 ¡ http://mashable.com/social-media/

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Practical #3 – 20 mins

- Add the following address into your browser’s address bar (URL):
  - www.facebook.com

- Sign up by filling in the required fields
  - Remember not to submit critical data that can be used by hackers
  - Define the level of exposure you will want ‘friends’ to see your messages

- That is your profile which you can easily modify from time to time by logging on
Facebook

Â You will immediately notice suggestions of people you may know
Â See if you identify some of them
   ï Accept their friendship
      Â Provide a statement of ‘welcome’
Â Ask for colleagues attending LITT2010 who have facebook accounts and network with them

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Conclusion

Social media is the more dynamic social network for librarians to offer their services and receive instant feedback.

It augurs well for librarians because it motivates us with opportunities to be pro-active and innovative.

It engages patrons and librarians alike in a continuing interactive network for mutual satisfaction.

It is worth all the effort in purposefully engaging in.