ISSUES IN THE APPLICATION OF WEB 2.0 IN FESTUS AGHAGBO NWAKO LIBRARY

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Abstract

This paper sought to investigate the application of Web 2.0 in Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library. Core Web 2.0 tools discussed were Wiki, Blog, Instant messaging, Podcast and Rss. Mainly Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library apply Web 2.0 tools in the digital Section of the library for biometric verification and capturing of new students, accessing of digital collections in any location within the University, conducting and monitoring of General Studies examinations and post UME. Problems militating against Web 2.0 application include shortage of professional manpower, lack of IT infrastructure, energy crisis and lack of skills needed for Web 2.0 application. Strategies for improvement include recruiting of professional librarians, provision of adequate infrastructure, provision of standby generator and training of librarians in basic and technological skills.

Keywords: Web2.0 Tools, Digital Library, Manpower Developement, I T Infrastructure, Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library.

Introduction

The revolution of information distribution brought about by the Internet and World Wide Web(www) over the decade, has created a new and exciting opportunities in the field of information. This advancement according to Ram (2010) has triggered a wave of change and optimism in the entire ecosystem and spurred enormous change in libraries and information science especially in academic libraries which Dora and Maharana (2008) refer to as libraries driven by Internet age users.

Librarians have engaged with these new opportunities raised by current technologies by embracing Web 2.0 tools in the services of the library. Before the advent of Web 2.0, the state of the Web has been that of search. Content creation in web 1.0 era was limited as the vast majority of users simply act as consumers of content. Web 1.0 focused relatively on small number of companies and advertisers, providing content for users to access which people call the brochure web. This limits the user in access and creation of information as publication of online information is limited (Zanin Yost and Nessia, 2010). According to Anunobi and Ogbonna (2012), web 1.0 is static Web that requires Java and Hp competences to use.

The need for active interaction of common users led to the birth of Web 2.0. Web 2.0 is an interactive Web in which the moving force behind its development is the user. Today the Web evolution is moving beyond just user interaction with others to focus on users themselves. The new Web according to the Big Think blogger Daniel Burrus is the 3D Web, Semantic Web or Web 3.0. This Web according to him is data driven. This by implication means that data comes from the user and the Web essentially adjusts to meet the need of the user. The ability to access data from anywhere is the motive behind Web 3.0. Equally a Web that is expected to bridge all communication barriers of a person in every walk of life is

coming in the name of Web 4.0. and Web 5.0 respectively. The Web 4.0 is about "the ultra intelligent electronic agent". The Web 4.0 is expected to communicate with the user as users communicate with themselves. Here, the avatars are exchanged for holograms to represent humans. It is an environment where one can sense holograms using one's sense. Web 5.0 is then an environment where every aspect is holographic, including senses. It is expected that interaction can be made here using special suits holograms meeting with other holograms in a virtual but real world. Although these new Webs are seriously evolving, the very fact that they all depend on Web 2.0 technologies cannot be over emphasized.

Web 2.0 was according to O'Reilly (2007) originally formulated as a way of understanding how the most successful Internet companies differ from their peers. These companies as O'Reilly maintained were able to survive the 1991 technological crash because of several characteristics they had in common which was believed to have set them apart. In a bid to find out these characteristics, a brainstorming session was held between O'Reilly and Media Live International in 2004. It was in the conference that the concepts, methods and technologies that distinguished them was drawn up and designed as web 2.0 (Habbib, 2006). Maness (2006) defined Web 2.0 as an assortment of technologies that offer distinct level of interaction with the user. This entails that the companies that survived were able to do so because of the interaction they do have with the users of their product, therefore, able to meet their demand. To O'Reilly (2009) Web 2.0 is the collection and management of massive amounts of information facilitated by users across powerful media platform and working sites that creates opportunities for community participation and collaboration

Adoption of Web 2.0 within the library community in both technology driven and non technology based services is what Casey (2006) refers to as Library 2.0. According to Maness (2006) Library 2.0 is an application of interactive, collaborative and multimedia technologies to library web services and collections. As such the knowledge of Web 2.0 among Librarians in a developing nation like Nigeria will surely go a long way in determining its adoption in the university library.

Web 2.0 in Academic Libraries

Academic library is in a unique position to apply Web 2.0 because they are serving the "net natives" that grew up with the Internet and therefore most likely to participate in creating Web content. To a large extent, the quality of any academic institution is measured by the services provided by its library, teaching, learning and research activities revolve around the library. To achieve this, university libraries use variety of information resources to meet the needs of their user. Library 2.0 is one of such tools which gives the library user a participatory role in the services library offers and the way they are used (Solomon, 2011).

Web 2.0 is all about doing more with the same or fewer resources. It is geared towards efficiency without sacrificing quality and aimed at reaching out to new users without losing the ones the library already have.(Casey & Savastinuk, 2007). Considering the economy of Nigeria and its resultant effect on university libraries as regards its human and material resources it is

almost becoming mandatory for the university library to embrace the new
technology. This include using modern technologies of Web 2.0 in the services of the library but the concept of Library 2.0 as Atulomah (2010) pointed out is still a hard nut to crack in developing countries like Nigeria. This he attributed to non familiarization of Nigerians with the operation of modern university libraries and small percentage of the population's use of the Internet and computers. Rain (2011) agree with Atulomah on the newness of the concept which has resulted in low level usage of library 2.0. The question that begs for an answer is are librarians familiar with Web 2.0 concept especially librarians in Festus Aghagbo Nwako library? Librarians knowledge of the concept will determine its adoption and usage in the library.

A look at the academic environment shows that the university community is encumbered with a lot of problems that make coming physically to the library almost impossible. The university teacher combines teaching, writing, researching and supervision with family life and this leaves him with little or no time to visit the library. Students on their part, combine lectures with economic and social activities and have little or no time to visit the library. Closure of the university library as early as 6.00pm, makes it impossible for those who would have visited the library after lectures not to do so thereby leaving them at the mercy of class or lecture room. Librarians on their own part contend with the problem of increased student population, reduced staff, strength, poor funding and many competitors. They are therefore in a dilemma on how to provide services that will not only meet the need of users but also rekindle the interest of library users, hence, Casey and Savastinuk (2007) suggestion of adopting of Library 2.0

Web 2.0 tools used in the Library

Librarians have a crucial role to play in the application and use of Library 2.0 in Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library; both their awareness and knowledge is a major determinant in the use of the new technology. This is because they can only give what they have. It is only when they know how to rightly apply the technology that they can teach others and package the library resources. Anunobi & Nwabueze (2010) rightly observed that internal and external environment of the library services is changing at an ultra high speed and there is no possibility that the LIS professionals are aware of the change and its implication is a critical aspect that should be seriously looked into. Some librarians fail to understand that the library of today is no longer what it used to be and needed to equip themselves in a way that will enable them to meet up with the new environment. The use of Library 2.0 tools in the services of the library is increasing day by day and its high rate of adoption according to Schneckenberg (2009) can be attributed to the easy use of Library 2.0 and its enabling power to direct and mediate online publication and distribution of user content. It therefore becomes necessary that the awareness of Library 2.0 and its enormous benefits be created among librarians of Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library.

Web 2.0 tools

Web 2.0 means different things to different people. There seem to be disparity in what each scholar include as library 2.0 tools. According to Tripathi and Kumar (2010) Web 2.0 tools include: Blogs, Instant Messaging (IM), Really Simply Syndicate (RSS), Podcast and Wikis. Hauson and Cervone (2007) identified Wikis, Blogs, RSS, IM and

Podcast as prominent Library 2.0 tools for academic libraries. To Gross and Leshile (2007), library 2.0 tools are Blogs, Wikis, RSS, IM and Podcast while Grosseck (2009), listed the following as library 2.0 tools- Blogs, Wikis, RSS, Social bookmarking, Social Networking, IM, and Delicious. There are however core library 2,0 tools and they include Blogs, Wikis, IM, RSS and Podcast. These five tools are hereby briefly discussed.

Blogs

Blog is short name for weblog. It is a type of website in which entries are written in a chronological order and commonly displayed in reversed chronological order. King and Porter (2007) suggested the use of blogs in academic libraries for internal communication to facilitate academic debate and communication with patrons; promote networks, provide guide, current awareness and customized catalogue searches. Macaskill and Owen (2006) emphasized the popularity of blogs on internal and external communication.

Wikis

A wiki is a type of website that allows users to easily create, edit and link web pages using a simplified markup language. *Encyclopedia Britannica* defined wiki as a software used in variety of context to facilitate interaction and co-operation in projects at various scales. It is also used to create collaborative websites (Winn, 2008). Anyone with a web browser can edit content of wikis, which are organized by wiki software. Payne (2008), suggest that libraries and academic institutions can use wikis for group learning, sharing knowledge, experience, open source products and also to provide subject guides, support a variety of collaborative activities among libraries, among library staff and between the librarians and users.

RSS

Really Simple Syndication is a family of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated content such as blog entries, new feeds, live audio and videos in the standard format. Wusteman (2004) noted that RSS feeds update users about the additions and changes which take place on websites of interest thereby providing updates from one source instead of accessing individual websites.

Instant messaging

Instant Messaging (IM) is an online communication between two or more people using text based short messages via the web in real time. Academic libraries use instant messaging to provide virtual reference services, improve access of other services and provide the latest information to users (Stephens, 2006). The use of instant messaging such as twitter according to Aharony (2006) has enhanced library services via hand phones. Twitter is an online micro blogging platform that contains both mass media functions and interpersonal communication options via sending tweets.

Podcast

Podcast is a digital media file or a related collection of such files that is distributed over the Internet using RSS feeds for play back on portable media players and personal computers. According to King and Brown (2009), libraries share pictures, events and instructions using podcast. In the same vein, Tripathi and Kumar (2010) informed that libraries use podcast to exchange and share audio programmes among patrons over the Internet.

Benefits of Web 2.0 Tools

Web 2.0 tools have enabled librarians to reach users in the virtual space which they could not do before. This according to Ata- ur – Rehmen (2011) is a segment of users in the academic world who for one reason or the other will never visit the library no matter how hard they try.

Web 2.0 tools has according to Hill (2009) enabled librarians create conversation with patrons over social media. This has enabled participation and similarly two way dialogue, between the library and the library users. When a user knows that his opinion matters in the decision making of the library such a user develops a sense of belonging as his views and opinions matter in the effective management of the library.

- Feedback from library users create content in the website. Library users have diverse interests ranging from favourite authors, titles to field of interest. By posting their views on the library website, librarians can get feedback on information needs of patrons.

Web 2.0. enables multiple use of online library resources by different users at the same time

.Web 2.0. makes evaluation and feedback possible; with information and ideas flowing in both directions from the library to the user and user to the library. With this evaluation and update of the library is made possible

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Application of Web 2.0 tools in Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library

Web 2.0 tools have been adopted in Festus Aghagbo Nwako digital library section. This has brought the library in the limelight of the university and enhances its services. A lot of activities now carried out in that department using the library 2.0 tools include:

- Biometric verification and capturing of new students
- Every student is now mandated to have a valid email address. The quest for such has promoted their visit to the digital library for the exercise
- The General Studies courses for year one students of the university now take place at the digital library because of the library 2.0 tools
- Use of information in digital media enabled by library 2.0 tools has taken over the print resources.
- Users can now access the digital collections from any location within the university.

Although Web 2.0 tools are now used in Festus Aghagbo Nwako digital department, the library which serve greater percentage of users still lack these tools in its services. A greater percentage of librarians are equally not conversant with Web 2.0 tools; what they are and how it operates. Absence of the use of Web 2.0 tools in the traditional library is creating a big problem in rendering library services to the university community. Many librarians lack the requisite orientation and training needed for Web 2.0 skills. The present University Librarian, Rev. Obiora Nwosu is making concerted effort to ensure that library services are automated in no distant time.

Problems Militating Against Web 2.0 Tools Usage in Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library

- Poor awareness among librarians
- Shortage of professional manpower
- Non automation of library operations and Information services
- Library curriculum is not ICT driven
- Lack of ICT Infrastructure
- Energy crises
- Poor funding
- Lack of requisite skills needed for Web 2.0

- operation
- Lack of training on web 2.0. skills
- Technophobia
- Traditional librarian's attitude
- Non recognition of the important role the library plays in teaching, learning and research by the university management.

Strategies for Enhanced Use of Web 2.0

- Provision of standby generator and inverter
- Training of librarians on web 2.0 skill
- Provision of robust Internet access.
- Awareness creation through university bulletin, library bulletin, and other media
- Awareness creation among librarian
- Provision of enabling IT environment
- Providing a forum for interaction among librarians
- Automation of library operation
- Recruiting more professional staff
- Self development of librarians
- Provision of adequate IT infrastructural facilities
- improved funding of the university Library.

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