SEMLOL
Annual Fall Meeting Minutes
"Extending the Library's Reach: Mobile Apps & Effective Online Tutorials"
November 18, 2011
Oakland Community College, Auburn Hills

Introduction:

In the absence of the SEMLOL Chair Colleen Streeter, Elizabeth Lindley, the SEMLOL Chair-elect, welcomed the SEMLOL members to the Annual Fall Meeting. She then introduced the first of the speakers, Jeff Zachwieja from Oakland Community College.

Fall Program Presentations – Online Tutorials:

Jeff Zachwieja, Coordinator of Library Electronic Resources, Oakland Community College, "Online Tutorials."

Jeff Zachwieja presented on the practical aspects of creating an effective online tutorial. He provided a great deal of insight into the process of developing an online tutorial. Some tips he provided for getting ready to screencast include:

1. Choose your application.
2. Plan – start small, keep focused, keep it simple, aim for 3 minutes.
3. Write a script.
4. Practice – do a trial run and time yourself.
5. Find a quiet place to work.
6. Prepare to record – have everything setup, size the screen the way you want it, etc.
7. Give yourself some time to record, re-record, edit and learn the software.
8. Don't be afraid, it's just a screencast!

Other considerations include:

➢ Choose a microphone – worry about sound quality.
➢ If necessary, use audio editing software to edit the sound, if you have selected a cheaper microphone. (Audacity is a freeware audio software.)
➢ Decide if you will use a video camera.
➢ Explore sharing options (i.e. YouTube, Vimeo, DIY options, etc.)
➢ Decide if you want to add quizzes to the tutorial to assess learning.
➢ Decide if you want to use analytics to see how the tutorial is used (i.e. Google Analytics).
➢ If you would like to test your tutorial out before releasing it to the world, do some user testing to assess the effectiveness of the tutorial.
➢ Make it accessible – code the tutorial to play in multiple browsers or media types (i.e. smart phones, etc.)

Jeff showed some examples of tutorials that he had created and then provided some URLS to screencasting wikis and blogs, including the following:

Online tutorials – Library Success
http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Online_Tutorials

Screencasting and Online Tutorials Resource Page – Lib 2.0 Wiki
http://lib20.pbworks.com/w/page/16753986/resources-screencasting

After his presentation, Jeff answered a few questions. Then Elizabeth introduced the next presenter, Rebeca Befus.

Rebeca Befus, Wayne State University, "Building Effective Online Tutorials."

Rebeca Befus presented on how to create an effective online tutorial. She spoke to the design of tutorials and started her presentation with a table discussion amongst the participants, asking "What makes a tutorial effective?" Participants discussed the question amongst their tablemates and then ideas were brought forth into the larger audience. Rebeca then addressed many of the suggestions that were raised.

In regard to content of the tutorial, she noted the following:

  ➢ Write objectives for teaching - If you have too many objectives, you will need to make several smaller tutorials to cover the content.
  ➢ Consider your audience – There may be many levels of education and knowledge.

Rebeca noted that simplicity is the key for an effective online tutoral design. It is important to keep the design simple and not to overload it with graphics or visual stimuli. Ask yourself if the content makes sense to your audience and if there is too much content. Do you need to split the material up into smaller tutorials?

Make sure that the tutorial has some element of interactivity. Ask yourself how you are engaging your learner. Present an idea and then ask a reflective question. Examples of activities that provide for interactivity include:

  ➢ Discuss the difference between popular vs. scholarly journals and then provide a display of a journal with bibliographic information and ask the student to determine if the journal is popular or scholarly. Have them delineate the criteria they would use from your tutorial to support that choice. Then provide the answer for follow-up.
  ➢ Do a tutorial on citation format and create a citation builder which would allow the students to drag portions of the citation into the correct position to see how the citation format is supposed to be done.

There are many other ways to provide interactivity in a tutorial and this will engage the learner. Explore ideas for your own tutorials.

In regard to feedback, Rebeca noted that there should be a method built into the tutorial which allows students to doublecheck their own learning from the tutorial. Apps that allow for feedback include Quizlet and Hot Potatoes. Hot Potatoes allows you to create multiple choice quizzes, matching questions, etc.

Rebeca remarked that it is important to make the tutorial visually pleasing. Tutorials should look up-to-date. Millennials will discount tutorials that look obsolete or as if they are designed from old technology and they won't use them. They will assume that the tutorial has no value to them. ExtraNormal is a program that allows you to make a cartoon avatar of yourself as an online instructor. This can help you make your tutorial seem friendlier and up-to-date.

After her presentation, Rebeca answered a few questions.

Refreshment Break and Business Meeting:
After the first presentations, the group adjourned for the refreshment break. At 2:40pm, the business meeting was called to order. The member libraries gave reports on their institutions. The meeting adjourned at 3:10pm and Elizabeth introduced the final presenter, Paul Gallagher.

Fall Program Presentation – Mobile Apps:

Paul Gallagher, Interim Associate Director, Discovery Services, Wayne State University, "Mobile Apps: The Reality of Library Mobile Apps."

Paul Gallagher presented on mobile apps providing first an overview of mobile apps and Wayne State University. He answered the question of "Why mobile?", citing that the daily usage of mobile devices on-campus is exploding. He noted that 56% of WSU students owned an Internet-capable mobile device in 2009. At that time, according to a survey conducted, 14.4% of students who didn't own such a device, were planning on purchasing one in the next 12 months. Paul noted that mobile device usage at WSU was higher than at other comparable 4-year institutions. In addition, laptop and desktop ownership was dropping. It was deemed easier to get a smart phone.

In the light of this information, the WSU Library looked at what was being done on smart phones and noted that people were using email, playing music, accessing the Internet, tweeting and accessing Facebook, but no one was using the Library. Since Ipads and other tablet PCs were also becoming prevalent, it was deemed time for the Library to start programming toward mobile devices. And this meant mobile apps. The Library needed a presence in the mobile environment.

Paul then defined mobile app – "Something you can download from an app store." He noted that there are basically two categories of mobile apps that are important to libraries:

1. Apps developed to support a specific Library (i.e. provide information such as hours, staff contacts, etc.)
2. Apps that are not necessarily Library-related but that still might have library content (Such as GoogleBooks).

He noted that there aren't many apps available that could be used by all libraries. Many that exist are designed to support a specific library. Many library apps aren't developed or designed by or for the benefit of libraries and librarians.

Paul then answered the question of "Why aren't there a lot of great library apps?":

> ➢ They are expensive to make – You need to make three versions of your app (Iphone, Android and universal).
> ➢ You have to write a program to run on a mobile device which requires a lot of technical skill.
> ➢ You need to determine what patrons want. Some things libraries aren't capable of doing yet, such as allowing for downloading of e-books. Licensing, copyright, etc. interfere with this. Authentication of users is also an issue.
> ➢ Vendors could cut the Library out of the app process. If the vendors create the interface, the Library could be cut out. Vendors would sell directly to the student and the Library would have no say in what the app does or how it works.
> ➢ Apps can't provide the same access experience as the website.

Paul told the participants of two tools that can create library apps: Boopsie for Libraries, which is a tool that creates library-specific apps for hours, information, etc. and Library Anywhere, which is a mobile catalog app. He also mentioned OverDrive Media Console which allows the Library to license e-books and allows users to download the e-books for use on a mobile device. Ebrary will be moving into this format.

Paul remarked that several database vendors have mobile apps for database access. Amongst these are ScienceDirect, Scopus Alerts, APA Journals and EBSCOhost. He noted that this is an issue of cutting out the Library, because the user has to agree to the licensing of the resource which should be the Library's responsibility. This is again an issue of authentication. He also noted that these database apps are for single databases and users want to be able to pull up content from multiple sources.

Paul then highlighted some of the things that WSU has done including:

> ➢ Made a mobile interface for the library website which works on all platforms currently available. MIT Mobile Web provided the template/format.
> ➢ Created an hours app which shows the current hours for the Library. An open system from West Virginia was modified.
> ➢ Created apps for catalog, Ask a Librarian, live chat, staff directory, computer availability, news, etc.

Future projects include a law-specific app, a browseable staff directory and a meeting

app. The Library was the first to use and launch a mobile website on-campus. This created a buzz on-campus and started other departments following.

Paul indicated some things that librarians can do to start themselves off into the world of mobile apps:

1. Have a smartphone/tablet PC – learn to use it and try out your library website on it.
2. Be sure you are supporting all users.
3. Be aware of privacy issues.
4. Create a mobile interface for your library website.
5. Compel vendors to make mobile web versions of their content, not just apps.
6. Give your users what they really want, not just the newest technology. Give them the functionality they want.

After Paul's presentation, there was some questions and answers and then the membership completed their evaluation forms. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm

Submitted by: Margaret L. Danowski
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