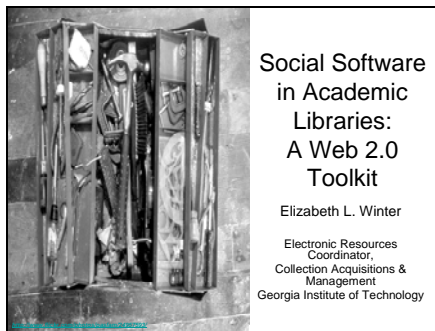


## Social Software in Academic Libraries: A Web 2.0 Toolkit

Elizabeth L. Winter

Electronic Resources Coordinator,  
Collection Acquisitions & Management  
Georgia Institute of Technology

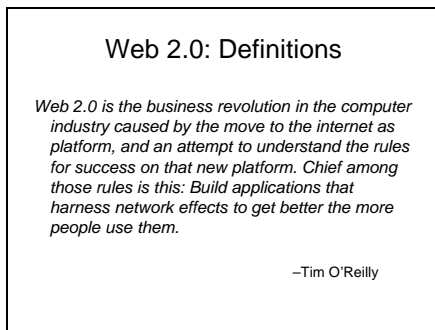
Slide 1



I would like to talk with you about Web 2.0, what it is, some examples of the technologies it encompasses, and how our users are already using these online tools. I will then discuss some ways libraries can use these tools externally for interacting with and presenting electronic resources to users. Finally, I will talk about the challenges of selecting, acquiring, and making available library resources in a large academic library and how social software may be used to solve some of the problems we face internally.

I use the concept of a toolkit because I think it reflects how our users are thinking about Web 2.0 and Library 2.0 technologies and how we as librarians might also benefit from thinking about them that way. Hopefully you will see what I mean as we discuss this further.

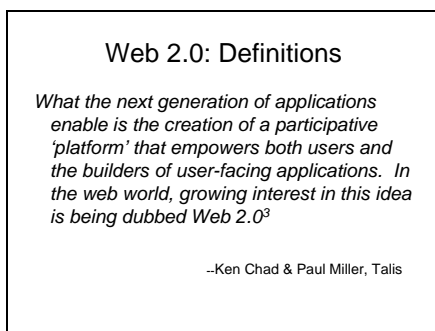
Slide 2



[http://radar.oreilly.com/archives/2006/12/web\\_20\\_compact.html](http://radar.oreilly.com/archives/2006/12/web_20_compact.html)

So what is Web 2.0? This quote is from Tim O'Reilly, President and CEO of O'Reilly Media, Inc, publisher of the "animal books" for software developers and organizer of several popular technology conferences. What he means by the web as platform may be further illustrated by another definition of Web 2.0, this one from Ken Chad & Paul Miller of Talis, the cutting-edge UK technology company that provides information management services and systems for libraries and other organizations.

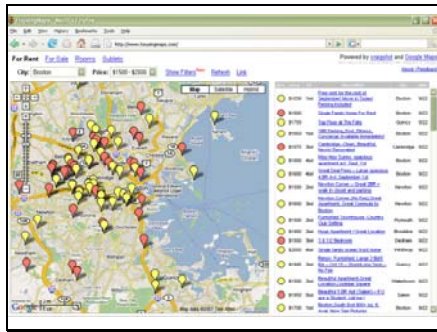
Slide 3



[http://www.talis.com/applications/downloads/white\\_papers/DoLibrariesMatter.pdf](http://www.talis.com/applications/downloads/white_papers/DoLibrariesMatter.pdf)

The web as platform means instead of needing to have special hardware, software, servers, and the like for your computer application to run, the application simply runs on top of the Internet and can be used on virtually any machine, anywhere. With the ability to run needed applications directly from the web, applications builders and in some cases, even regular web users with a bit of know-how, can now combine components in new and interesting ways through the use of application programming interfaces (APIs).

Slide 4

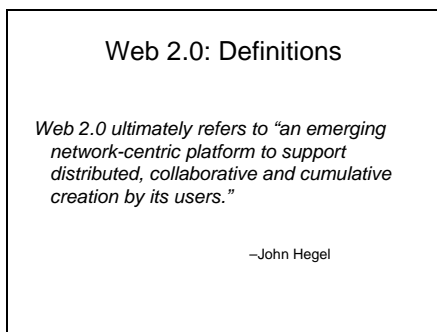


[www.housingmaps.com](http://www.housingmaps.com)

This is an example of a mashup of available housing ads from the classified listing website Craigslist and Google's Google Maps application. So if you want to know where all the homes listed on Craigslist for sale or rent in Boston are located, here you are.

With Web 2.0 users can now roam, take the applications they need for work and play with them, and mash them up in different ways to create new and useful web tools and sites that do what they want them to. You can see how the concept of the web as platform makes it possible for people to do more than ever on the web, from wherever they are, whenever they want.

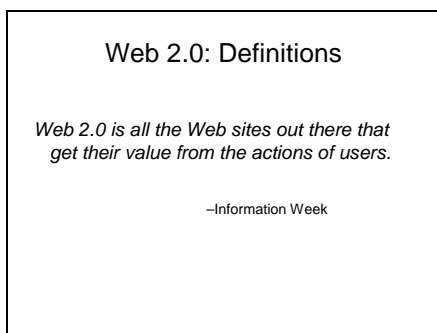
Slide 5



[http://edgeperspectives.typepad.com/edge\\_perspectives/2005/09/what\\_is\\_web\\_20.html](http://edgeperspectives.typepad.com/edge_perspectives/2005/09/what_is_web_20.html)

Another important characteristic of Web 2.0 is its collaborative nature. Being human means that we desire to share things we care about with other people, and Web 2.0 enables us to do that with an ease never experienced before in human history. The flexibility of web-based applications and services allows users to participate in the action going on online and to help shape the content of the Web. You no longer have to be a professional programmer or serious technology aficionado in order to create and share things with others online.

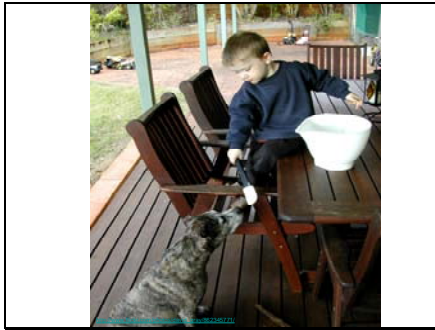
Slide 6



<http://www.informationweek.com/internet/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=193001026&subSection=Web+Development>

Perhaps Information Week's definition describes Web 2.0 most succinctly of all.

Slide 7



Web 2.0 is really all about sharing with others. It's people drawing on collective wisdom and ideas to create their own web-based spaces, projects, and objects.

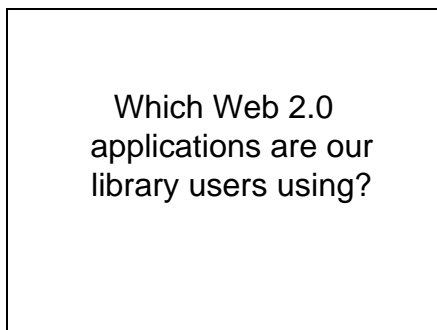
Slide 8

**Web 2.0: Applications  
(Social Software)**

- Blogs
- Wikis
- RSS
- Tagging
- Personalization
- Podcasting
- Commenting
- Instant messaging
- Photo sharing
- Social bookmarking
- Social networking

These are some of the kinds of applications that have emerged to form Web 2.0. They all involve high levels of user participation, collaboration, and social interaction. They're highly flexible and adaptable to the needs of the individual or organization making use of them. They make the user more important than ever before. For example, blogs, where one can post entries of text, photos, sound, or video, which will display in reverse chronological order for other users to read, view, or hear. Wikis, where groups of people can collaboratively edit a web site in service of sharing knowledge or working on a project. RSS (Really Simple Syndication), a "pull" technology which allows one to use an RSS reader or aggregator to receive updates to favorite frequently-updated web sites on a regular basis, as opposed to having to go to the web site periodically to check for new content. Tagging, which allows users to attach their own keywords or metadata to online objects such as photos, blog postings, or web pages, for ease of retrieval by grouping like items together for oneself and others to find. Personalization features of web sites that allow users to log in and save preferences or favorite items, or take advantage of recommender services tailored to their needs or tastes. Podcasting, where individuals or groups can record and publish audio recordings of anything they like, for all the web to hear. Instant messaging, where one can chat in realtime with others online, no matter where they are located. Photo sharing, where users can upload, edit, and display their digital photographs for friends, family, or the entire world to see. Social bookmarking sites, which allow one to use the web to save favorite web sites or pages, access those favorites from any computer anywhere, and share those favorites with others. Social networking sites, which aggregate many Web 2.0 tools and allow one to post personal information, blogs, photos, video, etc. and make friends online based on shared interests or experiences.

Slide 9



Slide 10



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/stabilo-boss/93136022/>

Slide 11



<http://flickr.com/photos/stabilo-boss/101793493/>

It is safe to say that the digital natives that now inhabit our universities know many of these, and if we as libraries are interested in maintaining relevance to our current and future generations of users, we should be aware of at least some of these and should spend time considering how we can become comfortable with them, using them to reach users externally and perhaps even help us solve some of the challenges we face in our own work within libraries.

Slide 12



So, if we take it as a given that our users are already quite comfortable in this technological environment, then what kinds of things can we do to reach out to them as libraries and as librarians? Enter Library 2.0.

Slide 13

**Library 2.0: Definitions**

*Library 2.0 describes a subset of library services designed to meet user needs caused by the direct and peripheral effects of Web 2.0.*

--Michael Habib

<http://hdl.handle.net/1901/356>

Here Michael Habib succinctly describes the relationship of Web 2.0 to library work, introducing for us the concept of Library 2.0. There has been much written on the topic of Library 2.0 and whether, as a concept, it is really something new or whether it is a fancy new label for something librarians have always tried to do—to innovate along with their users in order to better meet user needs. I firmly believe that for the most part, librarians have always been service-oriented and driven by the needs of their users. I have also come to believe, however, that the term Library 2.0 is a convenient way of describing services libraries might be able to offer related to the kinds of applications and online activities related to Web 2.0.

Slide 14

**Library 2.0: Definitions**

*Library 2.0 simply means making your library's space (virtual and physical) more interactive, collaborative, and driven by community needs. Examples of where to start include blogs, gaming nights for teens, and collaborative photo sites. The basic drive is to get people back into the library by making the library relevant to what they want and need in their daily lives...to make the library a destination and not an afterthought.*

--Sarah Houghton, Librarian in Black

[http://librarianinblack.typepad.com/librarianinblack/2005/12/library\\_20\\_disc.html](http://librarianinblack.typepad.com/librarianinblack/2005/12/library_20_disc.html)

As Ms. Houghton points out, there is a participatory nature to Library 2.0, drawn from Web 2.0. We can no longer expect users to come into libraries out of necessity as they did in the days when libraries were the only sources of reliable information for research. And we cannot expect users to sit passively and absorb the information and instruction and we can give them. They are used to finding information on their own, and they now have the ability to search through both paid and freely available online indexes. Much of the work of assisting them in finding information, for better or worse, is being done by search engines instead of librarians trained in information classification and searching strategies. If we hope to inject the valuable knowledge librarians have for selecting, vetting, organizing, and distributing information into the Web 2.0 environment, we need to create tools and services that fit within users' online worlds at the point of need, effectively meeting them where they are.

Slide 15

**Library 2.0: Definitions**

*The concept of Library 2.0 builds upon all that has been best about libraries to date, harnesses technological potential and community capability in order to deliver valuable, valued and world-class services directly to those who stand to benefit from them, whether they (ever) physically enter a library building or not...*

--Ken Chad & Paul Miller, Talis

[http://www.talis.com/applications/downloads/white\\_papers/DoLibrariesMatter.pdf](http://www.talis.com/applications/downloads/white_papers/DoLibrariesMatter.pdf)

The staff at Talis have much good to say about Library 2.0 and Library 2.0 tools and systems.

Slide 16

**Library 2.0: Definitions**

*...Library 2.0 plugs the library back into the heart of the information business; delivering timely and authoritative content and services at the point of need, whenever, wherever and however that might be. To back it up, Library 2.0 systems provide access to a skilled, dedicated and valuable work force, able to assist users new and old in realising their full potential.*

--Ken Chad & Paul Miller, Talis

Slide 17

**Core Competencies of Web 2.0 Companies**

- *Control over unique, hard-to-recreate data sources that get richer as more people use them*
- *Trusting users as co-developers*
- *Harnessing collective intelligence*
- *Lightweight user interfaces, development models, AND business models*

--Tim O'Reilly, from "What is Web 2.0?"

<http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/a/oreilly/tim/news/2005/09/30/what-is-web-20.html>

Libraries aren't companies, but I think these principles can help us find better ways of thinking about and doing the work we do with public services and technical services, especially with respect to electronic resources. I hope to demonstrate some specifics of how Georgia Tech and other libraries are employing some different Web 2.0 technologies that might also benefit you, your library, and your users.

Slide 18

**Using 2.0 Tools to Reach Library Users (External)**

- What do we need to understand in order to provide users with 2.0 tools suitable to the academic environment?
- According to Lorcan Dempsey:
  - Remixing
  - User Workflows
    - Demand-side
    - Supply-side

<http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue46/dempsey/>

What do we need to understand in order to provide users with 2.0 tools suitable to the academic environment?

One of the documents used for framing the topic of this seminar was Lorcan Dempsey's 2006 article from Ariadne, "The (Digital) Library Environment: Ten Years After" In this article Dempsey discusses how the digital library environment has changed over the years from 1996 to 2006. Dempsey raises two issues related to user behavior that are useful for helping us think about how to inject library services into Library 2.0 tools and thereby into our users' lives.

The first of these is the idea of remixing. People are gathering content from disparate online sources and pulling it together in new and interesting ways to suit their own purposes. In some ways, remixing isn't especially new—scholars have been doing it for years—citing portions of the work of other scholars in their publications to build knowledge and advance research. But the Web 2.0 mindset now has *everyone* pulling bits and pieces of the web together in different ways for different purposes, a never-ending series of collages. Dempsey points out that things like RSS for gathering one's favorite resources together and persistent links, which can be pulled from their native environment and inserted into the user's online work environment are examples of important facilities for users as they go about the business of remixing.

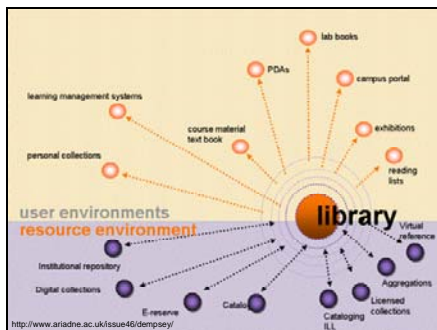
The next of Dempsey's ideas is user workflows. He mentions both demand-side and supply-side user workflows. Demand-side represents users themselves providing the structures and

Elizabeth Winter. Presented at E.S. Burioni Seminar "Academic Library 2.0? Il futuro della biblioteca accademica." Milan, Italy. October, 2007.

pulling tools together into a workflow to accomplish tasks; for example, using an RSS feed aggregator, where users determine what to pull in and create a customized reading list of all of their favorite blogs or news sites. Supply-side user workflows represent sets of tools being put together by a vendor or an organization external to users, then pushed out to users, to aid them in accomplishing tasks. One example of a supply side tool is a course management system. Dempsey speculates, I believe correctly, that there seems to be more going on on the demand-side of user workflows because it's more valuable as a user to be able to create one's own structure than to have to fit one's preferred tools and content into someone else's framework.

If it's the case that users want to gather things into their own preferred online environments and structures, then what does that mean for libraries?

Slide 19



<http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue46/dempsey/>

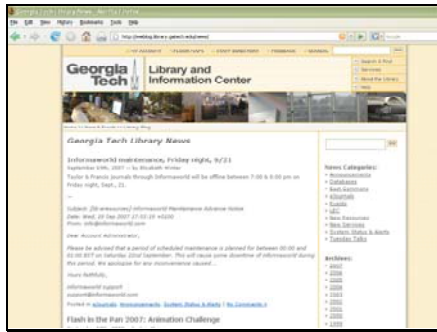
Dempsey suggests a model I really like for the idea of the library in the user environment—enabling users to pull library resources into the online spaces they inhabit. In this diagram you can see the library advantageously positioned between the user's environment and the resource environment, over which we as librarians have always held mastery. In the past, we didn't need to concern ourselves much with the user's environment because the user was forced to come into our resource environment for the things she needed. Now, however, with the ubiquity of Internet access and the facility of online information-seeking and aggregating tools, we must find ways to insert library resources into the users' everyday workspaces and provide value and ease of access for the user. How do we push valuable offerings such as reference service and digital collections into users' workspaces?

Slide 20

Using Web 2.0 tools at Georgia Tech and Other Academic Libraries

What does the toolkit for external uses (related to reaching library users) contain?

Slide 21

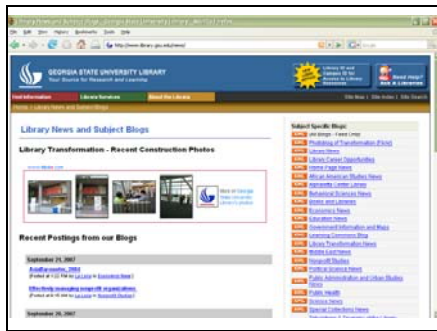


<http://weblog.library.gatech.edu/news/>

This is a screen shot of the Library News blog we've created at Georgia Tech. It's built on WordPress and incorporated into the library's home page, to provide users with news about upcoming library events and alerts for electronic product outages.

I think a blog is a good start, but one of its drawbacks is that, in itself, a blog doesn't necessarily reach directly into the user's environment—they still have to come to our library web site to view it.

Slide 22

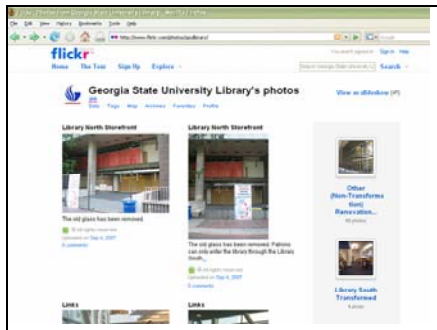


<http://www.library.gsu.edu/news/>

The library I worked at before coming to Georgia Tech has taken blogs a step further. In addition to having subject-related blogs for the different faculties and student communities at Georgia State University, the GSU library has included RSS feeds so that users can subscribe to the content of the GSU Library blogs without having to start with a visit to the library's web site (well, more than once at least).

You'll also notice at the top of the screen that the Georgia State University library has inserted itself into the social networking environment by posting digital photographs of a recent library renovation project on Flickr, so that all those who are interested can track the library's building project through its transformation process.

Slide 23



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/gsulibrary/>

Here you see GSU's Flickr page, including numerous photographs of the various stages of a major library renovation project. By tagging the photos with "GSU" or "Georgia State University," GSU librarians may spark the interest of GSU students and faculty members who are part of the Flickr community but may not have visited the library in some time; however, after a search for GSU-community-related photos, say a student sees these photos and thinks, "Wow—the Library is really making some big improvements to their building. They even have a coffee shop now. I've just found a new favorite place to study!" And once inside the library, the student will be exposed to a world of other library services and resources.

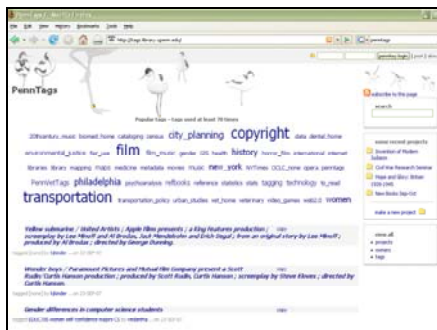
Slide 24



<http://www.library.gatech.edu/services/help.php#>

This is a slide from Georgia Tech's web site, advertising the various ways to get in touch with the Reference staff for assistance. Again, a user may not always be on the library's web site, but if she visits once, sees that we have chat reference service available via her favorite instant messaging protocol (AOL, MSN, or Yahoo), she may add the Library to her buddy list. Then, no matter where she's logged in from, or what she's working on, she can chat with the library and take advantage of our reference services in a way that fits within her own personal workflow.

Slide 25



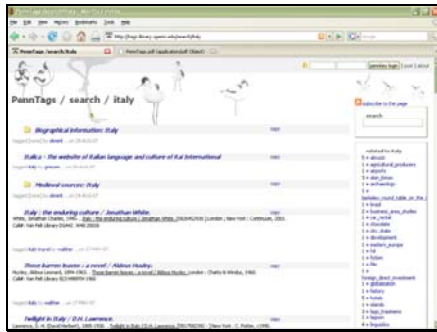
<http://tags.library.upenn.edu/>

This example is the University of Pennsylvania's PennTags program. The University of Pennsylvania's web site explains PennTags in this way:

*PennTags is a social bookmarking tool for locating, organizing, and sharing your favorite online resources. Members of the Penn Community can collect and maintain URLs, links to journal articles, and records in Franklin, our online catalog and VCat, our online video catalog. Once these resources are compiled, you can organize them by assigning tags (free-text keywords) and/or by grouping them into projects, according to your specific preferences. PennTags can also be used collaboratively, because it acts as a repository of the varied interests and academic pursuits of the Penn community, and can help you find topics and users related to your own favorite online resources. PennTags was developed by librarians at the University of Pennsylvania.*

With PennTags, users can create accounts and tag library-provided resources (catalog records, article citations, search engines) by clicking the "Add to PennTags" icon from within the resource itself. Tagging web pages on the open web requires a downloadable bookmarklet. Users add the bookmarklet browser's Bookmarks section/toolbar. Clicking on it lets them post items to PennTags.

Slide 26



<http://tags.library.upenn.edu/search/italy>

So users can search PennTags to see what they and others have tagged with particular keyword term tags. In this case, I've searched for Italy and have come up with all of the things users have tagged with this term.

Slide 27



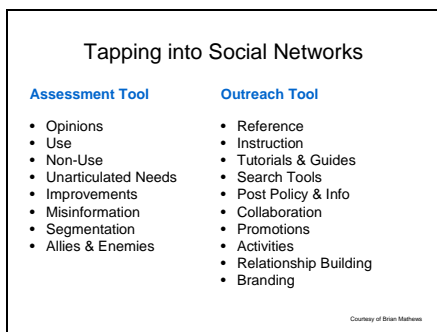
<http://www.libx.org/>

LibX is an open-source browser plugin for the Mozilla Firefox and Internet Explorer browsers, that provides direct access to library resources. As you may be able to see from this screen shot, LibX includes several tools in one—a sort of Swiss Army knife browser plug-in. Librarians at Virginia Tech University developed this as a way of meeting users in their own web environments.

If your library has a LibX edition, which can now be created by individual libraries online, LibX places a little icon that matches your institution's logo on web pages such as Amazon.com, the New York Times Book Review, or even Google, enabling you to check from the page you are on to see what the library has related to what you are looking for.

When installed, LibX also allows users to highlight bibliographic identifiers such as ISBN or ISSN wherever they are found, right-click and display a link to search your local library's catalog to see if the item is available.

Slide 28



This slide is from my colleague Brian Mathews, User Experience Librarian at Georgia Tech, who studies and works with our patrons to find out what is important to them, where they spend their time, and what kinds of tools and technologies they use, in an effort to help develop library resources, tools, and services that will be most relevant for our users. Brian has done a lot of work over the past few years, observing students and their online communities, trying to figure out how they are using 2.0 tools and what role the library might play in some of the less traditional, less formal online spaces that students tend to inhabit.

Mathews suggests that we can tap into the social networks already in place and being used by our patrons for two important purposes: assessment and outreach. As more and more high quality information becomes available for free or minimal cost online, libraries will increasingly need to compete for the attention of users, to demonstrate why we are valuable and to convince users that not everything that could help them in their research can be found freely through, for example, Google. In order to be better prepared to compete with free information sources, the library needs to be more in touch with its user community than we ever needed to in the past.

Elizabeth Winter. Presented at E.S. Burioni Seminar "Academic Library 2.0? Il futuro della biblioteca accademica." Milan, Italy. October, 2007.

By plugging into the online spaces our students are spending their time, such as Facebook, Myspace, and individual blogs, we can observe student's use of online communities, more or less formally, to determine whether the library is meeting their needs. With regard to assessment, we can determine things like where they like to spend their time (Do they use the library as a study space, or do they prefer a local coffee shop?); what they think of the services our institution provides, specifically in relation to the library (did someone post something good or bad about Georgia Tech or the library on their blog, for instance?); do students have a lack of information or misinformation about the resources available on our campus to meet their research needs?

In many cases students don't post directly about the library, but we can take advantage of the other kinds of things they are telling us about themselves, that may be used more or less for market research. What kinds of market segmentation do we find among our user population? Who are the influencers? Which groups on campus have needs that may be different from others but could be met by the library? These are the kinds of things that Mathews and others in our library are attempting to find out.

With regard to outreach, we can use social networking tools to push our services and resources out into the virtual spaces our users spend a lot of their time in, promoting reference, instruction, tutorials, policies, and events. We can look for opportunities to relate to members of our campus community, build relationships with them, and even form collaborative partnerships for research and service to the institution.

Slide 29



<http://secondlife.com/whatis/>

This is another screen shot courtesy of Brian Mathews, of a virtual space in Second Life, a 3-D virtual world that opened to the public in 2003. Do any of you have any experience with Second Life? In this screen shot, his avatar is visiting the Georgia Tech Library, which is located in a Second Life space also "inhabited" by a number of other universities. There is even a reference desk that is staffed virtually by librarians, who volunteer their time in case Second Life residents stop by with a reference question. Now, I'm not convinced that we will best serve our user population by spending most of our time in Second Life, but with 10 million residents, Second Life may at least be worth a look. This is just one example of the way 2.0 tools are changing the way we think about the way we reach users.

Slide 30



<http://www.facebook.com/>

Facebook is another 2.0 tool that is gaining in popularity with our users. According to the Facebook web site, "Facebook is a social utility that connects people with friends and others who work, study and live around them. People use Facebook to keep up with friends, upload an unlimited number of photos, share links and videos, and learn more about the people they meet." This Web 2.0 application is popular worldwide, though I believe you have another, similar application here in Italy just for people who are affiliated with universities—Unilife? In this shot, you can see that there are over 24,000 users affiliated with the Georgia Tech group in Facebook. Not all of these, of course, are current students or faculty at our institution, but to be sure, a large number are. You will also note in this screen shot, that the first event listed is taking place in the Library East Commons. Our physical spaces and our virtual spaces are working together to facilitate interaction among members of our institutional community.

Slide 31



This is another screen shot of events related to our campus, one of which is taking place in the Library. Many of our librarians now have profiles on Facebook and are adding themselves to communities related to Georgia Tech, specific faculties and departments on campus.

I have to admit that as someone who values a certain amount of privacy and whose work does not necessitate direct, daily interaction with students, I have been a bit less quick to begin using social networking tools such as Facebook, but as people become more and more comfortable blending the personal, academic, professional, and leisure aspects of their lives, I do see how they may have value for reaching out to our users to find out what their lives are like and what kinds of things the library might be able to do to assist them with their course work and research.

And speaking of working in a more behind-the-scenes capacity, I'd like to talk a bit now about how we can use 2.0 tools within libraries to assist with the internal work that we do.

Using 2.0 Tools Within Libraries  
(Internal)

- How can we use 2.0 tools in our own work within the academic library environment?
- According to Lorcan Dempsey:
  - Workflow and process standardization
  - Flat applications & liquid data
  - Social networking services

Going back to Dempsey's 2006 article, "The (Digital) Library Environment: Ten Years After," I would like to point out a few key concepts he discusses that can affect the way we go about doing our work in libraries, particularly in our work with electronic resources, with respect to 2.0 tools.

The first of these is workflow and process standardization, whereby organizations are doing more outsourcing and focusing on the specialized, unique value they can bring to the work they do. I definitely think this has some application for us, but I won't spend much time on it here.

The second idea is that of flat applications and liquid content.

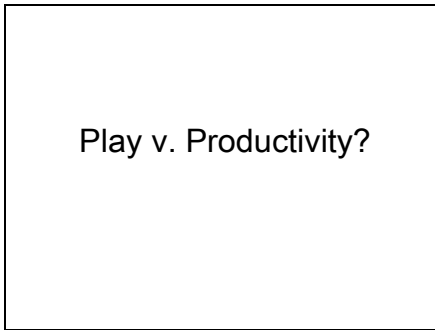
Flat applications are those that are not separate from the web but use the web as a platform. Think of the difference between an online content management system and an integrated library system client. You can access a CMS and write to its database from anywhere without having to have special software installed on your machine; in many cases with a bit of knowledge you can tweak the functionality of a CMS relatively easily. On the other hand, an ILS client has to be installed on your machine, specially configured, upgraded, etc. and cannot be easily reconfigured to suit the needs of its users.

Perhaps the best way to think about the concept of liquid is to think about all of the online tools that are available and all of the systems we currently use, for instance, in the management of electronic resources. Being able to pull raw data out of the applications you use and combine it in new and useful ways to create knowledge and solve problems is an illustration of liquid content.

The third idea is that of social networking services, which I've already touched on—those kinds of tools such as blogs, wikis, and instant messaging that form what Dempsey calls a kind of "connective tissue" and allow people to connect and communicate with each other in new ways that can facilitate cooperation in web-based environment.

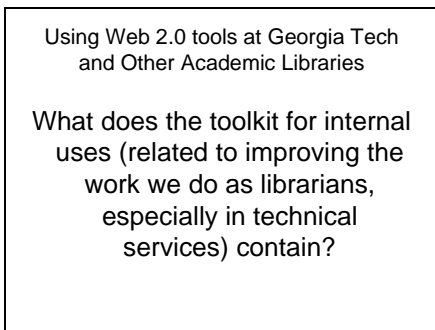
So how can we use the ideas of flat applications, liquid content, and social networking services to improve and facilitate the work we do in libraries, particularly with regard to managing the processes that are generally associated with technical services and electronic resource management?

Slide 33



We don't often think of work time as play time, but I'd like to raise the question of whether play and productivity are necessarily diametrically opposed. In the technical services areas of the library, we are very productivity-oriented...we love to count things (how many eJournals did we purchase last year? how many books did we catalog last month?) A librarian from Cornell University spoke about this at the Electronic Resources & Libraries 2007 conference. A number of staff in the Cornell Library's Technical Services departments apparently were afraid that spending time trying out new technologies would encourage people to play too much, to waste time, and not to get their work done. But what if playing with some of these new technologies IS getting your work done, or at least exploring ways of potentially improving the way you do your work?

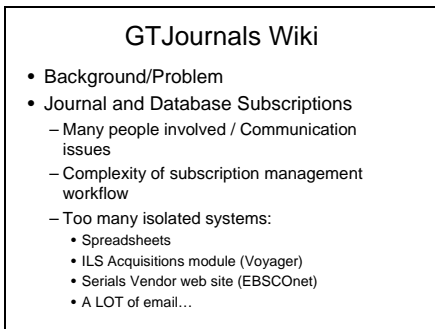
Slide 34



Using Web 2.0 tools at Georgia Tech and Other Academic Libraries

What does the toolkit for internal uses (related to improving the work we do as librarians, especially in technical services) contain?

Slide 35



### GTJournals Wiki

- Background/Problem
- Journal and Database Subscriptions
  - Many people involved / Communication issues
  - Complexity of subscription management workflow
  - Too many isolated systems:
    - Spreadsheets
    - ILS Acquisitions module (Voyager)
    - Serials Vendor web site (EBSCOnet)
    - A LOT of email...

One of the 2.0 tools in Georgia Tech's internal toolkit is the GTJournals wiki. A bit of background: There was no one in my job of electronic resources coordinator for two years before I was hired. Because so many resources, journals in particular, were already online and so many were moving from print to online, several people had to step in to try to do the work for my position as best they could.

We are a large academic library, there are many steps in the workflow for adding new subscriptions, switching journal formats from print to online, canceling titles, etc. The questions I faced when I first arrived at Georgia Tech were, how does one know where we are in the process with any given subscription? And who knows—who has that information?

What I found was that we had, and in some ways still have, too many tools that were not doing the job. There was no central location for subscription process data.

Slide 36

**GTJournals Wiki**

- Potential solution strategy:
- Identify journals, databases, packages requiring action (ordering, cancelling, switching formats)
- Post information and questions to wiki
- Take action
- Update wiki

Enter the GTJournals wiki. This is a tool I created using the PBWiki platform to help us identify journals or packages that we have questions about (in terms of switching formats, primarily) and need decisions on, we can post info. about them here. All of the librarians and staff involved in the subscription process can post items for decision, ask questions, and add notes all in one space. The hope for this tool was that we would be able to reduce email volume and enable all of us to track progress in a central space, using the steps you can see here.

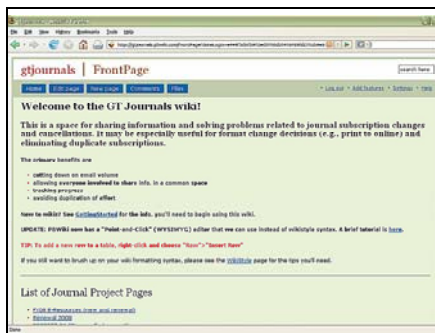
Slide 37

**"Selling" the Wiki**

- Reduce email volume
- Allow everyone involved to share administrative information in a common space
- Track progress
- Avoid duplication of effort

I had used a wiki in my previous work at Georgia State University, and I thought it might work for this, at least as an intermediate step towards an electronic resource management system (ERM). So I talked with Heads of the acquisitions and collection development departments, set up the wiki on PBWiki (a free online wiki tool) in early August 2006. As I am sure you all know, if you don't have buy-in for an idea or project, you don't have much, so this is how I sold the wiki to my colleagues (the periodicals librarian, electronic resources coordinator in collection development, a couple of other staff members). By talking with them about the potential of the wiki to reduce email volume, allow us to share information in a common space, track progress, and avoid duplication of effort, I convinced them to give the wiki a try.

Slide 38



<http://pbwiki.com/>

This is the front page of the GTJournals wiki. It contains instructions for using this tool and explains the benefits I just mentioned, intended to to "sell" the wiki. It was fairly simple to set this up. WikiSyntax required when we first started, which was a bit of a learning curve for some of us, but PBWiki introduced a WYSIWYG editor after just a few months, which has made working with the wiki much easier.

Slide 39

Resource	Publisher	Cost	Renewal Date	Entry/Notes	Fund	Date
EBSCO eBooks	EBSCO	3000	12/31/07	Renewal	DB-GEN	12/31/07
Academic Press	Academic Press	1000	12/31/07	Renewal	DB-GEN	12/31/07
EBSCO eBooks	EBSCO	3000	12/31/07	Renewal	DB-GEN	12/31/07
Academic Press	Academic Press	1000	12/31/07	Renewal	DB-GEN	12/31/07
EBSCO eBooks	EBSCO	3000	12/31/07	Renewal	DB-GEN	12/31/07
Academic Press	Academic Press	1000	12/31/07	Renewal	DB-GEN	12/31/07
EBSCO eBooks	EBSCO	3000	12/31/07	Renewal	DB-GEN	12/31/07
Academic Press	Academic Press	1000	12/31/07	Renewal	DB-GEN	12/31/07

So how, specifically, are we using this wiki? This page is for databases for the current fiscal year. I receive a renewal notice from a vendor, add a record for the resource to this page, include information about previous year's and upcoming year's costs, the renewal date, whether the resource is new or a renewal (all here are renewals, but if we added a new database or other online product to our collection, it would go here also), and how the resource is funded. Our collection development officer fills in notes, questions, and decisions. There is no cost information in this particular slide, as I'm not sure whether our vendors would be happy with me sharing widely how much we pay for various products.

This helps us keep a record of where we are in the process—PB Wiki provides alerts (mine are set to once a day) which allow you to see who changed what, when, on which page. These alerts tell me to go to the wiki and look for changes in case I need to take some action.

Slide 40

Date	Action	Status
10/14/07	Added to list of journals	Added
10/14/07	Renewed subscription	Renewed
10/14/07	Added to list of journals	Added
10/14/07	Renewed subscription	Renewed
10/14/07	Added to list of journals	Added
10/14/07	Renewed subscription	Renewed
10/14/07	Added to list of journals	Added
10/14/07	Renewed subscription	Renewed

This is just another example, a wiki page dedicated to one of the endowment accounts we use to fund resources; you can see that several of these are journals, though one is a database. There are also some troubleshooting issues listed here as well.

Slide 41

### How Is It Working?

- Cons:
  - Alerting is not user-specific
  - Sometimes difficult to tell exactly what changed since the last update
  - Remembering to update it (!)
- Pros:
  - Reducing email volume
  - Allowing everyone involved to share info. in a common space
  - Tracking progress
  - Avoiding duplication of effort
  - Building confidence with technology
- Over all...a success!

So how is the GTJournals working for us so far? Some of the negatives are that the alerting features of PBWiki could be better. For instance, I receive an update that tells me someone has updated the wiki, and perhaps one or two things that have changed since my last alert, but the alerts are not comprehensive, so I still have to look over the page very carefully to be sure I see everything that has changed since I last looked.

The biggest problem initially was remembering to update it, integrating it into workflow, though this has improved, since we've now been using the wiki for over a year.

Some of the positive aspects of the wiki, as you can see, recall the benefits I used to sell this idea to my colleagues. Indeed it is the case that all of these things are happening since we began using the wiki. It is to some degree reducing email volume related to subscriptions, allowing everyone involved to share information in a common space, track progress, and avoid duplication of effort.

Another important thing it is doing is building confidence with technology among the librarians and staff who are using it. Over all, I would say that our experimentation with this tool has been a success.

Slide 42

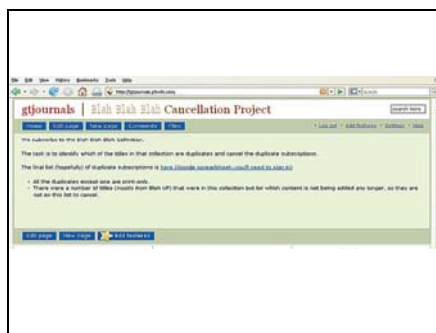
**Collaborative Spreadsheet Application (Google Spreadsheets)**

- Used in conjunction with GTJournals wiki
- A mash-up
- Background/Problem:
  - What to do with large title lists?
  - Versioning

Another 2.0 tool we have been using within the library at Georgia Tech is Google Spreadsheets. We have incorporated it into our use of the wiki, and some have said that this constitutes a mash-up, or a web application hybrid.

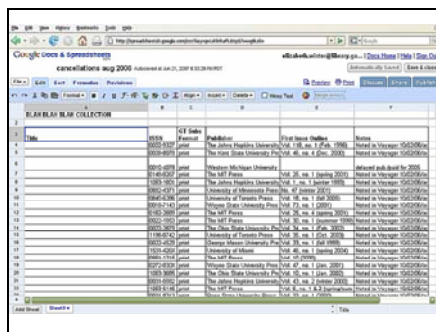
The reason we began using Google Spreadsheets is because we found it was the case that while posting individual titles for renewal on the wiki worked well, it was time-consuming and tedious to post large lists of titles to the wiki. Instead, we were inclined to email these lists of spreadsheets to one another. This took us back to the old problem of increased email volume related to subscription decisions. It also created a versioning problem. If collection development sent me a spreadsheet, and I re-sorted it and added a column or two based on the work I was going to do with the title list, now we would have two versions of the spreadsheet out there, one that was updated and one that wasn't. And if I passed my version along to someone else to do their work, then we'd have three versions, and only one person perhaps would have access to the most current version. By using Google Spreadsheets, we could work together, even simultaneously, on the same web-based document that could keep track of all of our changes.

Slide 43



This is one example of how we've used Google Spreadsheets in conjunction with the wiki. This is a cancellation project for one of our eJournal collections (I've removed the publisher name, again, to protect their identity). Since this particular online collection included archival rights, we determined that we could cancel the print, so we set up a page on the wiki that explains and provides context for the project, as well as a link to Google Spreadsheet containing the titles and other pertinent information, as you'll see on the next slide.

Slide 44



What we've done is to create a spreadsheet in Excel, import it Google Spreadsheets, and use the Share feature to invite others to view and edit the spreadsheet. This has been working well for us so far, to alleviate overloaded email and versioning problems.

Slide 45

**Instant messaging**

- Background:
  - Some library employees already using IM clients
  - “Collaborative Solutions” initiative of Systems Dept.
  - Pilot Spark IM client
  - Pilot successful; rolled out to entire library
- How we are using it:
  - Primarily communication between depts.
  - Quick questions/troubleshooting

One other tool I'd like to mention briefly is instant messaging. How many of you use instant messaging in your libraries? A few of us in our library had used instant messaging occasionally to communicate since our offices are spread out in different parts of the library. Then, earlier this year, our Systems department put together what they called the “Collaborative Solutions” working group to investigate new technologies and how they might be used in the library. Their first project was to investigate instant messaging clients for possible use in the library. They finally decided to undertake a pilot on a product called Spark with a select group of library staff. The pilot was successful, and Spark was then installed all staff computers in the library. Not everyone uses it, of course, but it is definitely useful for communication between people whose offices are in different parts of the library. We use it primarily for quick questions or troubleshooting issues, and it seems to be working rather well.

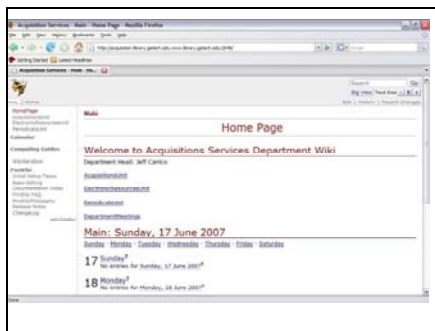
Slide 46

**Acquisitions Wiki**

- Background/Problem:
  - “Homeless” departmental info./procedures
  - Familiarizing everyone in our department with new technologies and the pace of change

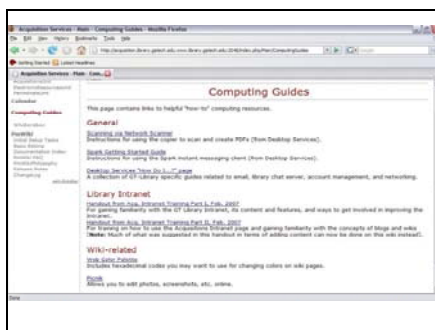
The final 2.0 tool I will mention is another wiki that we set up in the Acquisitions department earlier this year. It was created with the idea of providing a home for department information. Another of its goals was to familiarize the members of our department with new technologies and make some effort to help the become comfortable with the pace of technological change, which has a tendency for some to cause anxiety.

Slide 47



This is a screen shot of the main page of our departmental wiki. Our periodicals librarian worked with Systems to set this up using PMWiki, installed on a server within the Library. Idea is to post departmental info., policies, procedures, contact info., events, meeting minutes, etc. As you can see we have links for the various sub-units of the department, where policies and procedures can be posted.

Slide 48



This is another way we've used the wiki. I've started a Computing guides page in an attempt to aggregate some helpful computing information for the members of our department.

Slide 49

### How is it Working So Far?

- Cons:
  - Learning curve
  - Getting people accustomed to using it
- Pros:
  - Procedures now have a home
  - Higher level of confidence with technology
  - Confidence → Sense of ownership → Happier workers → More productive workers?

So, for a summary of how the Acquisitions wiki is working so far: It does take a bit of time to learn. The wiki didn't take off right away because people were not really sure how to use it or what to do with it; they were not empowered to begin using it.

We recently undertook some training from the Systems department, and use has increased since then. One benefit from the wiki is that we are building departmental memory and shared knowledge by having our procedures all in one place. Perhaps most importantly, staff are now more confident with the technology and more willing to use it. Consequently, they feel a greater sense of ownership over their work, which makes them happier. And we haven't measured this, but I would hypothesize that a more confident, happier worker is a more productive worker.

Slide 50

*The great thing about the Web is, you can bring a product up on your site and if people hit on it, you call it a product and if they don't, you call it market research.*

—Jim Barksdale,  
former CEO of Netscape

There are doubtless many other examples of how libraries are using 2.0 tools internally to assist with managing resources and improving workflows. But this is about all we have time for, and perhaps I have given you enough to think about for now. So I will conclude with a quote and a few final thoughts. This is a quote from ten years ago. Barksdale was talking about Web 1.0, but I think the basic principle applies just as readily, if not perhaps more so, to the work we may do in our organizations with the 2.0 tools in our toolkits. After all, how do you know if a tool will work until you try it out?

If there is one idea I'd like to impart to you, it is that it's okay to toss an idea or an online tool out into the world and see if people begin to take hold of it and use it; if they do, great. If it doesn't, there's no harm done. Put it aside and start over. You have probably learned something in the process that you can use later on.

Slide 51

### Conclusions

- 2.0 Tools = Opportunity
- Understand users
- Develop tools and services to facilitate access to electronic resources and scholarly communication
- Become comfortable with technological evolution (new tools in the toolkit)
- Do not be afraid to play!

- With the overwhelming number of 2.0 technologies available now, there is a huge opportunity for libraries to continue to explore and expand our role in the lives of our academic users.
- We need to understand which tools they are using, where they are going, and how they perceive their information needs
- Then we need to develop tools and services that allow them to access and use the electronic resources they need in their online environments for scholarly communication and publication
- Above all, need to become comfortable with the constant evolution of technologies, using them ourselves where appropriate and considering them carefully and creatively for use in the external and internal environment
- In order to do this, we must not be afraid to play with 2.0 tools and use them in our own work where appropriate.

Slide 52

