

Web 2.0 tools and some things they could be used for:

Community building



Twitter <http://twitter.com/> – won't suit everyone but is very good for little snippets, observations and off the cuff chats that the web has not really replicated until now. Could be used to build communities and for lightweight communication between projects. A useful feature is the use of hash (#) tags, placing the # at the beginning of an event or project tag to aggregate comments.

Blogs – persuading projects to blog regularly is great for the programme manager, for a community of projects and for anyone interested in the project.

A Project Manager's reflection on the issue of keeping a blog:

So is it worth it? Speaking personally and (for once) completely frankly, I've been quite enjoying writing, for several reasons. First, it has allowed me to do a bit of self-indulgent vanity publishing, something for which I criticise other bloggers but, hey, I'm a hypocrite! Second, the requirement to be reflective has made me think about various aspects of the project, which is no bad thing. Third, as it has turned out, I haven't had to trouble my conscience by using buckets of whitewash to tell a positive story; the project really has been going pretty well.

Ning <https://www.ning.com/> – easily build your own social network, a good place for people to get to know each other online communities can be closed or open and communication can be public or private. Ning is also a useful tool to run before a workshop for participants to start thinking, and during the workshop for getting delegates to write up discussions/findings, this is especially useful in, for example, plenary sessions where sometimes some delegates may have a tendency to dominate.

Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/> – *I am not your friend, I don't want to be poked, I can not be brought and sold as a pet, I am neither a werewolf hunter nor a vampire slayer, I don't want a virtual pizza, if I hadn't contacted you just after I left school what makes I think to talk to you 20 years later? FaceBook? Just say no!*

That being said, some project staff are using facebook to some effect, but we need to be aware of issues such as IPR.

Jiscmail <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/> – tried and trusted method of community building. Even with the plethora of web 2.0 tools available to projects, the most reliable way of reaching most of our academic community is through e-mail, the JISC Mail lists are simple and effective.

Current awareness

Delicious <http://delicious.com/> – the most popular social bookmarking tool. A little limited in some ways and with an unattractive interface but lots of people use it and persuading projects to share bookmarks is a very useful thing to do as it highlights overlaps of interest and promotes serendipitous discovery of information. An important element when using it to share is to encourage the use of 'notes' when bookmarking.

Diigo <http://www.diigo.com/> – a newer social bookmarking tool, allows you to be more specific about which part of a webpage is bookmarked, it also allows annotation of webpages. It supports creation of groups and preparation of web slideshows. However, not as many people use it already so barrier to participation may be higher.

Twine <http://www.twine.com/> – a new social bookmarking tool, which permits bookmarking of any document and analyses bookmarks for common people, places and organizations. Also allows for creation of private groups.

RSS readers (google reader, netvibes etc) <http://lifehacker.com/390619/best-rss-newsreaders> – like twitter, won't suit everyone's habits but if you can find a reader that suits you and can get into the habit of building rss feeds into daily routine then it is a fantastic way to keep up to date with a potentially massive amount of information

Dipity <http://www.dipity.com/> - a simple timeline builder. Could be useful in giving projects or a more general community an idea of the steps that led to now and a rough outline of programme timescales.

Crowdsourcing

Ideascale <http://www.ideascale.com/> - a tool to source ideas from the community and to have ideas voted for and commented on. Worked very well for the IE team to solicit discussion and ideas from the repository community (<http://jiscrepository.ideascale.com/>) but plenty to be aware of here, including waning of user interest and expectations attached to voting. Also

Dialogr <http://www.dialogr.com/>

Mechanical turk <https://www.mturk.com/mturk/welcome>- take advantage of a community that are willing to work for you on small tasks for micropayments. Here is a great description of a project that used mechanical turk http://waxy.org/2008/09/girl_turk/

Topcoder <http://www.topcoder.com/> - tap into a large community of developers. The IE team are talking to topcoder about using their services for the developer community strand of the new programme.

mysociety.org <http://www.mysociety.org/> - not really crowdsourcing but they build websites that utilise or support democracy and have worked for the government, bbc and google. Perhaps they could offer JISC something?

Collaborating

Google docs <https://docs.google.com> – can be used for collaboration on documents in a team or

in the community.

Confluence <https://wiki.jisc.ac.uk/dashboard.action> - wiki for collaboration and communication

Communicating

Skype <http://www.skype.com/intl/en-gb/> - instant messaging, internet phone and conferencing tool

Jing <http://www.jingproject.com/> - a screencasting tool. Could be used for projects to communicate developments to the community.

Flickr <http://www.flickr.com/> - picture sharing

Youtube <http://www.youtube.com/> - video sharing

BlipTV <http://blip.tv/> – video sharing

Flowgram <http://www.flowgram.com/> - a way to create tours through various websites and content (an alternative to powerpoint or an introduction to a certain area)

Jiscmail – essential for large and active communities

Annotate <http://a.nnotate.com/> - provide annotated documents e.g. templates

Slideshare <http://www.slideshare.net/> - great for sharing slideshows, provides nice widgets and embeddable flash players, not so great at being searched by google.

Bringing it all together

There is little point giving projects 6 different tools without some way of bringing them all together. Here are some suggestions for amalgamating content.

Netvibes <http://www.netvibes.com>, **iGoogle** <http://www.google.com/ig>, **Pageflakes** <http://www.pageflakes.com/> – can amalgamate content with flexible widget based approach. If it has an rss feed it can be displayed on these pages. However it is much more flexible than just rss (see repository widget work <http://www.netvibes.com/rwidgets#General>, or the exemplary widgets produced by tfl <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/widgets/>). I have put together an example page to show some of the things it can do. http://www.netvibes.com/amcgregor#Prog_management, obviously this page is shareable so can be used by projects as well as programme managers.

Ning <https://www.ning.com/> – widgets from outside content can be embedded in ning. This is likely to be more difficult but more flexible than the netvibes style approach.

Getting things done

Tools for managing personal information or workflow:

Zotero <http://www.zotero.org/> - a free bibliographic management tool. Only suitable for personal

use at the moment but social features coming soon.

Google calendar <https://www.google.com/calendar/> - a calendar application which is extremely easy to use and displays calendars of other users very nicely.

Remember the milk <http://www.rememberthemilk.com/> – a to do list application that can be shared and can be used in a number of different applications (twitter, google calendar, blackberries and mobile phones).

Evernote <http://evernote.com/> - a note taking application, includes ability to clip content from any application. Fully searchable. Can be easily used across computers and on mobile devices.

Outlook - task list, calendar all in one place and lots of people use it. Some useful plugins such as xobni <http://www.xobni.com/> which takes advantage hidden social network in your inbox.

RSS readers - a way to manage information overload (see above)

Location and travel

Dopplr - <http://www.dopplr.com/> - a social network for regular business travelers.

Have **fire eagle** <http://fireeagle.yahoo.net/> and related geo data tools and social networks got anything useful to offer us?

More complicated stuff

Yahoo pipes <http://pipes.yahoo.com/pipes/> – loads of cool tools including a way to set up persistent searches across a range of resources <http://pipes.yahoo.com/pipes/pipe.info?id=1b71cfefcc9933e084970aef476518ab> (a nice explanation of how to set up a persistent google search taking advantage of the new rss feature: http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/readwriteweb/~3/8HqjuPpekeY/how_to_use_the_new_google_web_feeds.php) and to amalgamate whole lists of blogs into one rss feed <http://infteam.jiscinvolve.org/2008/10/17/rsp-blog-directory-and-yahoo-pipes/>.

Roll your own newsroom <http://radar.oreilly.com/2008/10/rolling-your-own-newsroom.html> – a description of how an rss reader can be used to create a webpage of information relevant to colleagues. Could be used within JISC or within project community.

Notes

Tagging. It is important to think about tags at the start of programmes and projects so that searching across a range of applications is simple and effective.

It is very unlikely that simply advising projects to use a tool will work, the programme manager will need to devote some energy to promotion and provision of quality content to ensure that the resources are useful to projects. *The best way to promote the use of a tool is to effectively use the*

tool.