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Foreword

Searching 2.0 by Michael Sauers came to me for review just when I was trying to make sense of all of the white knowledge¹ concerning Web 2.0 that I've been collecting for the past couple of years. The Web 2.0 concept is fascinating, entertaining, and time-consuming. What I needed to decide is why it should be important to me and other librarians.

Truly, this is one of the most useful books I've read this year. The discussion of Web 2.0 communication and organization tools is accessible for Web 2.0 beginners. For those of us who have been swimming in Web 2.0 for awhile, the depth and scope of the discussions provide the patterns and key pieces of information needed for more experienced users to become more efficient and proficient. In addition, throughout the text, Sauers uses "mental exercises" to demonstrate what he is trying to explain. These are both very effective and enjoyable. I will be stealing this idea for my own teaching in the future.

The first chapter is clear discussion of Web 2.0 knowledge management basics. Sauers's discussion of folksonomies versus taxonomies clarifies the issues in a way that readers can use in their own teaching and research. The Web 2.0 information snarl is neatly managed in Sauers's identification of the interrelated information convergence, remixability, and participation aspects of Web 2.0 knowledge management. These concepts, taken together, are convincing justifications for using Web 2.0 tools in providing library services. Most other justifications I've encountered emphasize only participation. Although participation in Web 2.0 communications is a good way to mar-

ket library services and to network with colleagues and library users, participation alone is not enough to justify the extensive professional time and labor spent on these tools.

Convergence alludes to the fact that print (ink and paper and electronic), audio, video, and other sources of information have been brought together on the Web. Multiple forms of information are made accessible via technical mechanisms, such as RSS (really simple syndication), central databases such as Google (Books, Scholar, etc.), and Amazon.com's book search, and are globally searchable. This gives us a central knowledge base that allows us to take advantage of the "remixability" of the data. We can pull the information from the converged sources and organize it into usable forms, such as e-libraries, knowledge bases, research guides, etc. Participation in Web 2.0 communications tools lets us share this content—this organized knowledge—with our colleagues and library users.

Organizing the information we acquire from the Web has been a challenge since the first days. Many solutions have come and gone. Creating Web sites with organized content—e-libraries, research guides, or knowledge bases—is a generally successful but labor-intensive solution. In the interim, since creating e-library pages is time-consuming, Sauers recommends using Web 2.0 knowledge management tools such as Delicious as a kind of first draft. His discussion and ideas for setting it up and integrating it into reference work convinced me to try using it again. The book discusses the different sources of

information, search tools, and databases available in Web 2.0 and when to use them. The book also offers advice on how to think critically about these resources. I will be quoting his overview of Wikipedia in my own work.

I wholeheartedly recommend this book for every librarian. It will be worth your time and energy to

read it, take many notes, and ultimately put into practice the many ideas for efficient and practical use of the Web 2.0 information sources in library services.

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NOTE

1. *White knowledge* can be defined as “information acquired without conscious effort.” *Double-Tongued Dictionary*, s.v. “white knowledge,” www.doubletongued.org/index.php/dictionary/white_knowledge/ (accessed October 7, 2008). Also, *The Official Dictionary of Unofficial English*, Grant Barrett (New York: McGraw-Hill Professional, 2006, p. 394), s.v. “white knowledge.”

Preface

Here's a simple list of technologies and resources that searchers, including reference librarians, should know today that did not even exist in the year 2000:

- Tagging and folksonomies
- Delicious
- Web 2.0
- Wikis
- Flickr
- Podcasting
- Video search
- Local search
- Online searching of print content
- Desktop search
- Visual search engines

Ask yourself how many of these terms and concepts you're familiar with. If the answer is few to none, then *Searching 2.0* is the book for you. If you're familiar with some to most of them, I'm sure you'll still pick up some pointers as you're reading this book. If you're familiar with all of these topics, I still encourage you to read the book and use it as a blueprint for passing your knowledge along to others.

While basic search strategies haven't changed much in those nine years, the sheer number of tools and online resources that exist today that weren't even dreamed of then mean searching skills and applications of basic search strategies need to be upgraded. I designed this book to provide this upgrade.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Searching 2.0 was written to be read in chapter order, but due to the nature of the material I'm covering here, this book's design allows flexibility. I do recommend that you read Chapters 1 and 2 first to give you the basis for what I discuss in the later chapters. The later chapters can be read in any order.

Chapter 1, "What Is Web 2.0?," takes a look at the underlying changes that have happened to the Web in the past several years. These changes are collectively referred to as "Web 2.0." Topics such as tagging, the "read/write Web," and social software are discussed here to lay a foundation for the rest of the book.

Chapter 2, "Getting Organized Using Delicious," is the most related to my previous book for reference librarians, *Using the Internet as a Reference Tool: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians* (Neal-Schuman, 2001). In this chapter I explicitly update some of the recommendations that I made previously to take into account newer services that will allow you, and your patrons, to have better access to your online resources. Importantly, and one of the reasons I recommend everyone read Chapters 1 and 2 first, this chapter also introduces the concepts of tagging and folksonomies, which are woven throughout the rest of the book.

Chapter 3, "Popular Search Engines," takes a look at the status of the major search engines today. Many of the popular search engines of 2000 (Alta-Vista, Excite, Lycos) are still around but are rarely used by librarians. Today just three dominate the Web-search arena: Google, Live Search, and Yahoo!

Search. Chapter 3 examines these three and describes their major features.

Chapter 4, “Wikipedia,” discusses, you guessed it, Wikipedia. In this chapter, I explain the basic concepts of wikis using this free, online, editable-by-anyone encyclopedia. I also discuss whether Wikipedia should be considered a resource reliable enough for reference desk use.

Chapter 5, “Searching for Media,” explores the world of finding multimedia content online. With the ever-increasing speed of connectivity, more and more information is being stored in graphical, video, and audio formats. This chapter shows you several resources to assist you in finding such information.

Chapter 6, “Local Search,” brings searching to the local level. Local searching allows you to find online not only phone numbers but also directions, reviews, maps, and, in some cases, satellite images of the building you’re looking for and bird’s-eye views of just how to get there.

Chapter 7, “Print Search,” blends the search capabilities of the Internet with the content of the print material in your library. Services such as Amazon.com’s Search Inside the Book and Google’s Book Search allow you, in ever-increasing cases, to search for keywords within the books on your shelves. I also look at the major points of both sides of the issues involved in print searching and copyright.

Chapter 8, “Google Cache, the Wayback Machine, and Wikipedia,” looks at the current tools for finding information that was available previously but may not be technically “available” now. For example, you may still be able to find an online newspaper article even though it is no longer officially available on the newspaper’s Web site. This chapter will also show you ways to look back into the Web’s past, to see what pages used to look like.

Chapter 9, “Searching There without Being There,” delves into the world of tools to assist you and your patrons with searching online resources without having to go to the resources first. Known as OpenSearch plug-ins, these allow you to embed the ability to search almost any resource directly into your browser.

Chapter 10, “Desktop Search,” looks at desktop search tools that give you the ability to search the content of your computer and, in some cases, integrate the results of searching your hard drive with your Web search results, thus blurring the line between online and offline resources.

The final chapter, Chapter 11, “Data Visualization,” discusses some of the cutting-edge search engines and the possible future of search. The key difference between these search engines and the others covered in this book lies not necessarily in how they’re searched but in how they present their results. In these cases the results are presented graphically, instead of as a text-based list, and they show the relationship between the results, rather than being purely based on relevance. This graphical method is known as data visualization.

THE COMPANION WEB SITE

Knowing that as you’re reading you’ll want to look at the sites I mention and try them out, I direct you to Delicious (which I cover extensively in Chapter 2) to find links to all of the resources referenced in this book. Those links can be found at <http://delicious.com/travelinlibrarian/searching2.0>. Additionally, any errata can be found on my Web site, www.travelinlibrarian.info/writing/searching2.0/.

A NOTE ON THE TITLE

Some of you may be wondering about the genesis of the title *Searching 2.0*. This title is the result of two factors: first, a lot of talk in the library world today concerns Web 2.0 and Library 2.0. Both of these topics have an impact on searching, which I address in this book. Second, as I discussed at the beginning of this preface, we’re now dealing with the second generation of search strategies, and this is my second book on Internet searching for librarians. Thus, the title just seemed to fall into place. I hope the skills and resources covered in this book will help you become a Searcher 2.0, able to dazzle your library’s users and your coworkers with your new skills.