

SCONUL Focus is the journal of SCONUL, the Society of College, National and University Libraries.

SCONUL Focus aims to bring together articles, reports and news stories from practitioners in order to generate debate and promote good practice in the national libraries and the university and college sector. As well as the paper copy, the current issue of *SCONUL Focus* is also available electronically via the SCONUL website (<http://www.sconul.ac.uk>). Contributions are welcomed from colleagues in all fields and at all levels: we merely request that the items contributed are concise, informative, practical and (above all!) worth reading.

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Web 2.0, Library Brand 3.0

I have recently been putting together a new workshop on branding and library services. Such activities are always a combination of pleasure and pain: the pain of spending sunny Sundays locked indoors reading marketing textbooks whilst the rest of the world is enjoying themselves; the pleasure of actually learning new things and finding time to think.

Two things really jumped out from my research.

One was the concept of the customer journey map. One of the things I always stress with branding/marketing is that responsibility for it remains with everyone in the organisation ...not just a 'Marketing Group'. The customer journey map (as the name suggests) maps every step of the customer's journey, from realisation of demand to (hopefully) us fulfilling that demand. This can be used to show how we all interact with the customer (front of house staff, web designer, planner) and are hence all responsible for the brand.

After using this tool myself to come up with teaching examples for a variety of scenarios, I was struck just how that journey had changed over the years. In my model from the 1960s (and apologies for the stereotypes ahead!) Janet uses the library to find books on knitting. Throughout the journey everything is done by the librarians (search catalogue, take Janet to the shelves, issue book, return book, administer fine/warnings...). The end user is passive. Zoom to 2008 and everything has changed. When Amy goes to the library to find

resources on sports psychology she has already checked out the catalogue online and downloaded a few chapters from e-books before she herself finds books in the library (she has attended information skills sessions in the past and consults the floor walkers during her visit), which she issues on the self issue machine and renews online (no fines or nagging library staff for Amy!). The end user is very much in control.

Concept Number 2 that really struck home was concerned with the history of branding (stick with me ..it *will* be worth it). Branding has really gone through three 'waves':

Wave 1: Brands as a guarantee of physical quality (principally, Industrial Revolution to the present)

Wave 2: Brands as statements to express personality/'community' (1960s onwards)

Wave 3: Brands as partners with consumers, with consumers influencing design, playing a more active role in the brand community (2000s)

As librarians we did well with Wave 1 (quality stock selection, cataloguing and all that). The trouble is, we got stuck there. We missed Wave 2 – well who wants to be in the librarians' club? But we could get back on board with Wave 3. Despite my facetious comments, we actually have a pretty good relationship with our customers/clients/users, something facilitated by the huge number of contact points/interactions they have with us. We are in a very good position to work with our communities to develop our offering and hence develop the brand and ensure its on-going relevance.

Marvellous, Ant. But what has this got to do with this issue of *SCONUL Focus*?

Well, both these branding points can be facilitated by Web 2.0 technologies, which provide the main focus of this issue. Why have a standard interface when you can be in control and customise it? Why put up with the library product you have been offered all these years if you can blog your library and get them to improve it for you?

This issue of *Focus* provides an overview of the state of blogging in the UK Higher Education library sector with a personal view from Paul Williams and Peter Williams' excellent 'state of the nation' report. Jane Secker continues this Web 2.0 theme with a review of the LASSIE project, whilst Alison Williams and Mary Hudson report on life in Second Life. Video gaming to improve information skills is also covered and even our book reviews include a review of Tara Brabazon's 'University of Google'.

So if you are already on Wave 3 and want to make the brand more responsive to customer demand - or if you are new to the possibilities that Web 2.0 developments have to offer - read on. There's a whole new world of opportunity out there ...for our users and for us.

Antony Brewerton
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