Technology, Competency 8

Competency

8. Adapt to changes in technology.

Portfolio Development Suggestions I created a variable of 8.2 as I explain in my submission.

8.2 Create a library-related FaceBook or LinkedIn social network account with profile and get connected to at least five individuals. Evaluate your experience and the usefulness of this tool personally and in a library environment.

Evidence

In 2009 the library I am employed at the Sacramento County Public Law Library decided to make a concentrated effort to establish a presence in the world of “social media”. Guiding this effort would be a four member social media team to create and maintain our online presence. Our mission statement is In the 2009-10 fiscal year, the librarians continued to “cultivate new technologies to best serve customers” by expanding our presence in online social media to raise public awareness of the Law Library and to leverage online services to share our content with the increasing number of potential patrons who use the Internet in general and social media/networking in particular, to meet their information needs. Anything that isn’t directly related to content on our website would fall to us.

We as a member of this team I have helped create the page and have been part of many long discussions about what we want to include on our page and what we want the “tone” of our page to be. As a Law Library we focused our early efforts on concentrating our efforts to reaching out to potential patrons on Facebook. Our patron base is about 30% attorneys and 70% members of the public trying to research their own legal issues and represent themselves in court. One comment we often hear is that the public doesn’t know we are here until they need us. It has been our goal with social media to use any chance we can to raise our profile. We have become active users of social media as well as involved in the local community. Our results were positive. Our next step was twitter, which we now post to on an almost daily basis. The pace has been slow, which is perfect for us as a team to grow our confidence as we increase our presence.

As a result of my role on the Social Media team I have had to also consider the idea of my professional presence on the internet. I have had profiles on different social media sights for several years and although I do not consider anything on them offensive or provocative it did raise some questions with me about adapting the ways I think about tools like this. Traditionally library work as been a strictly brick and mortar affair. But the internet has changed that. Anytime someone can view my profile I am in affect on the clock. I represent the library anytime
someone views it. Particularly on Facebook where as a library page moderator my profile is directly tied to the library page. In affect my page should match the “tone” we as a library have discussed. On the next page you can see the new business cards that have come out of our new team and discussions such as these. Ultimately for me the decision to created separate profiles on Facebook and Twitter as well as creating a complete linked in account came down to wanting a clean fresh online presence where I can present myself in a way I am happy with and control.

I tend to focus on library issues that interest me through these accounts and make connections with other libraries and library staff. It has been difficult for me to remember to keep these up as the Library Director suggests I do as they just do not quite feel like work to me. It was a new experience for me to consider my presence online in light of my workplace. As we developed the libraries Facebook and twitter uses I was able to develop my own pages at the same time. I use Hootsuite to manage all of my accounts (including the library page) from one location. It has been an exciting and new way to serve my library and get a feel for social media in the library context.