NCC 3-D Conference: Topical Discussion Summary, Best Practices # 2
Social Networking, Website Expansion, and Web 2.0 Recommendations

This summary reports on discussions related to using online technologies to connect, create and disseminate resources to benefit the field of Japanese studies. The summary begins by reporting on Best Practices Session #2 The Well Connected Librarian, Managing the Tools for Optimal Engagement organized by Maureen Donovan. This summary synthesizes recommendations from that session and those received throughout the 3-D Conference focused on future expansion of NCC's Website, and additional Web 2.0 projects that are beyond the scope of NCC programs but were strongly recommended to the field.

I: Mastering the art of connecting in today's global information society. Knowing why, when and how best to "connect." (Maureen Donovan, Japanese Studies Librarian, Ohio State University)

How has our notion of time changed?

- Time is a social construct, which is changing radically especially because of the intervention or mediation of information technologies.
- It is important to keep in mind that cyber-time (time in cyber space) is different from clock time (time set by a clock).
- Technological innovation has changed our relationships with time throughout the modern period; from the standardization of time dictated by industrialized work schedules, to the implementation of regional time imposed by the departure and arrival of trains, to the age of jet-travel, and most recently by cyber-time or network-time.
- As technologies advance, expectations about cyber space and distance change, forming new relationships between space and time.
- New communication technologies change especially how we interact with distant information and distant people.
- The recent construct of "network time" has placed us in a condition of connected asynchronicity changing our relationship with the clock and with our very notion of time.
- Time has become more fragmented, task-oriented, and context-dependent.
- We must re-establish our experience of time and temporality to focus on how new technologies enable us to connect more efficiently and at great distance.
- We must re-assert control over time, space, and speed by prioritize our uses of time, and by taking "time" to think, reflect, organize, connect, and act.
- Our new relationship with time presents opportunities to enhance our value by connecting with others, to play more valuable liaison roles in working with distant colleagues, to expand scholarly information practices, and to create dynamic services that give new life to our collections.

The use of Twitter and Blogging are two examples of social networking technologies that can be harnessed to help us be more effective in building such long-distance collaborations and in sharing our resources more effectively.

Twitter is a tool that can efficiently be used for both monitoring and communicating (Tweeting):
- Twitter is a stream of record that is not permanent, a constantly changing waterfall of information.
- Twitter is a tool for discovering information in real-time and sharing it instantly.

- By monitoring (watching) the Tweets, one can engage in an interesting series of exchanges and "Re-Tweet" comments, both expanding the discussion and re-inserting the subject at the top of the waterfall to travel down through a different stream of conversation.

Tips for "clear blogging:"
- The best way to start blogging is to make a comment on the blogs of others
- Pick a small number of topics to "track" (perhaps five)
- Develop a "media diet" approach
- Use images to make your blogging more interesting

II: Recent Trends from Japan for Mastering the Art of Connecting in Today's Global Society
(Makoto Okamoto, President/Producer, Academic Resource Guide, Inc.) Slides uploaded on the presenter's blog site (http://www.ne.jp/asahi/coffee/house/ARG/index.html).

The Rise of Social Media in Japan:
- The number of Twitter users in Japan increased rapidly in the last year
- Japanese is now the second most widely spoken language on Twitter (English: 50%, Japanese: 14%, Portuguese: 9%, Malay: 6%, and Spanish: 4%)

Twitter and USTREAM are communications tools used in the academic field for meetings and conferences. This conference was reported on both Twitter and USTREAM
- USTREAM has become the #1 broadcast website
- USTREAM and Twitter have a strong connection: You can Tweet from the USTREAM site
- Twitter can be used to visualize what is happening in real-time, by commenting or providing annotation to what is broadcast on USTREAM
- Buzztter is another tool for following trends on Twitter, to keep up on a hot topic
- Hashtagsjp is a tool for analyzing hashtags, but one must be aware of the different use of hashtags in English and Japanese (for example: the use of Library versus Toshokan).

The next Stage of Social Networking Services:
- In Japan Mixi is the #1 social networking website (SNS) and is much more popular than Facebook or MySpace. Mixi began with an invitation-only policy, meaning that one can only join via an invitation from a current member. Mixi has recently changed its membership policy and a registration system has been introduced, because the invitation-only policy lacked openness.
- Lang-8 is a SNS for language exchange based in Japan. There are 9,000 users in 90 countries, and 70% of the users are foreign language users.
- Researchmap is another SNS in Japan, which now has an English version, but is still available only by invitation.

III: Open Access, the Deep Web, and Online Collaborations in East Asian Studies; The FOREAST Experience (Tao Yang, East Asian Studies Librarian, Rutgers University)

FOREAST is a Web 2.0 project to promote open access to East Asian Studies using a blog platform and Google as a collaboration tool. FOREAST provides links to 300 databases and journals currently receiving 1,000 to 2,000 hits monthly from 40 countries.

There is tremendous growth in free and open access to scholarly resources on the web including open access journals, electronic theses, government information and mass digitization. But despite

the proliferation of web-based resources, often freely available information is difficult for users to locate because:
- Library websites, LibGuides, and OPAC's provide only selective coverage
- Web 2.0 material is often designed for specialized access (metadata)
- File formats prevent most search engines from reaching information on the Deep Web.
- FOREAST (www.foreast.org) facilitates the discovery and use of open access resources with web 2.0 technologies - blogging, tagging, and social bookmarking

Session Recommendations for Expansion of the NCC Website

A major recommendation of this session focused on needs for the expansion of the NCC Website to make it a true Japanese information portal aimed broadly at users outside Japan. Faculty and student participants especially emphasized the importance of making the website more user-focused, easily accessible and navigated, and with more introductory background materials on existing NCC services for users and non-EA librarians. Key website recommendations made in discussions were:

- Make it a single integrated, multi-media site/portal with a Wiki
- Make it the central link for commonly known and collaboratively developed materials with links to useful library sites and links
- Use it to "brand" and emphasizing NCC strengths, and integrate current website components into the new portal
- Make users the principal focus (including independent scholars and non-Japanese speakers)
- Internationally coproduce e-content (work with CEAL, EARJS, JSAA, etc)
- Extensively use Eastlib and other lists for promo of updates and additions

Timeline: Begin as soon as possible with existing staff and volunteers. Plan expansions contingent on additional funding and personnel.

Specific component suggested:
- More English language materials for users who do not speak Japanese
- More "basic" materials created by and for non-specialists librarians
- Current awareness, full-text materials, courseware, RSS feeds (newspapers, journals, TOC)
- Needs Japanese language pages and links
- Create an international "Whose Who" in the Japan-related library and information field
- Include directory of information and templates for using Japanese libraries

Other Recommendations Made to the Field:

A number of conferees stressed the need to develop Web 2.0 projects that better connect users to the Deep Web on Japan, however it was recognized that such a project is beyond the scope of NCC programs.

Notes for the Best Practices 2 session were taken by Chiaki Aita, Graduate Student, University of Maryland, and by Makiko Ishizawa, Graduate Student, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.