

InfoTech Column

Due April 29, 2006

Information Outlook, June 2006 Issue

A Few Fun Things to Play With

Well, from my mail, many of you like the columns that cover interesting websites and tools that I am playing with. This month I am looking at Squidoo, Ziki, a 2.0 Blog, Wikis for Libraries and a new browser - Just a grab bag of stuff that I hope you find interesting too.

The Evolution of the Browser

The award-winning Maxthon browser is free. It models some of the look and feel of Firefox – especially the popular tabbed interface - with a few extra features. It is build on Microsoft Internet Explorer but offers an interesting on the standard MSIE experience. Some of the features I particularly appreciate are better privacy protection, skinning and RSS reader. You'll love the Ad Hunter feature which removes ads from websites while you surf! You can send the developers money if you'd like to encourage this development.

Maxthon also offers another free service that allows you to remotely access your home or office computer from any another internet-connected computer through their Browser. Anything that's on your home or office computer can be accessed and used. Anyway, as a browser, it's not perfect but it shows you different things you can expect from your browser. It's definitely a development to watch along with all the Firefox and Mozilla iterations and the growing library of plug-ins, mashups and bookmarklets there.

Squidoo: The Cats Pajamas!

One of my most favourite things that hit my consciousness lately is Squidoo. Squidoo takes a different approach to organizing content. It was started by Seth Godin, former Chief Marketing Yahoo and bestselling author. Squidoo offers a cooperative environment that allows people to “to build lenses on topics they are passionate about. These lenses help you find a unique, human perspective on things that interest you... fast. Not only can ‘Lensmasters’ spread their ideas, get recognized for their expertise, and send more traffic to their Web sites and blogs—they could also earn royalties” for themselves or charities. What's a lens? As described by Squidoo:

”A lens is one person's view on a topic that matters to her. It's an easy-to-build, single web page that can point to blogs, favorite links, RSS feeds, Flickr photos, Google maps, eBay auctions, CafePress designs, Amazon books or music, and thousands of products from hundreds of other trusted

merchants. You can pick whatever content you want to put in your lens to bring context to your topic. Then, when someone is looking for recommended information – fast - your lens gets his started and sends him off in the right direction. It's a place to start, not finish.

There are already an amazing number of lenses and lensmasters. It's a great concept that takes a few minutes to understand and see the value-add in it. It's worth heading in and playing around. Just to get you started, here are a few amazing lenses already developed and growing: *Library 2.0 Lens*, *Association Innovation Lens* and the *Library and Information Science Lens*. The Squidoo Library 2.0 lens was built to support the ALA unconference. It just reeks coolness. The site has a small search engine that lets you find more on your topic. So you now have the opportunity to add lensmaster to your list of skills along with your webmaster, blogger, and list-owner titles!

Specialized Blogs and Wikis

Related to this, and probably old news for most of you, but it is always worth returning to these blogs and Wikis often (or subscribing through RSS) to see the changes. The *Library 2.0 Blog* is a nice adjunct to the Library 2.0 Squidoo. When you play with the *Library 2.0 Wiki* and the esteemed *Library Success: Best Practices Wiki*, you're cooking with gas! The Library Success Wiki has categories for community, management and leadership, materials selection and collection maintenance, professional, programming, readers' advisory, references and information literacy, selling your library, services to specific groups, technology, staff training, and working together. It gets richer every day. These are great places to find ideas worth stealing for your library or enterprise.

Ziki is a new site that "connects people based on who they are, what they're interested in and what they're looking for." It's another social networking site with a difference. You can search for people based on the tags they've used to describe themselves and you can create your own Ziki now and congregate your blog entries, Flickr photos, delicious links etc. all in one place! Your Ziki is a place on the web to tell about you, piece together your online content, keep in touch with the people you know and make new connections. This is just the start for this site and it will be interesting to watch it develop. It's a place to review what is happening in the world of social networking and to see what feature and functions light be integrated into our KM toolkits for the intranet.

Anyway, there are four or five new things to play with this month. Enjoy.

Stephen Abram, MLS is Vice President, Innovation, for SirsiDynix and the incoming President-elect of SLA. He is an SLA Fellow and the past president of the Ontario Library Association and the immediate past president of the

Canadian Library Association. In June 2003 he was awarded SLA's John Cotton Dana Award. This column contains Stephen's personal perspectives and does not necessarily represent the opinions or positions of SirsiDynix. Stephen would love to hear from you at stephen.abram@sirsidynix.com.

Websites Mentioned Above:

Browser

Maxthon Browser

<http://www.maxthon.com>

Lens

Squidoo

<http://www.squidoo.com>

Library 2.0 Lens

<http://www.squidoo.com/library20>

Association Innovation Lens

<http://www.squidoo.com/associationinnovation/>

Library and Information Science Lens

<http://www.squidoo.com/libraryandinformationscience/>

Blog

Library 2.0 Blog

<http://library2.0.alablog.org/blog>

Wikis

Library 2.0 wiki

http://wiki.library2.net/index.php/Main_Page

Library Success: Best Practices Wiki

http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Main_Page

Ziki

Ziki

<http://ziki.com/>