

Computers in Libraries 2009

*Lincoln Trail Libraries System
April 20, 2009*

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Computers in Libraries 2009 was held in Crystal City, Virginia with more than 2,000 people in attendance. The conference was broken down in five tracks that focused on different aspects of computer usage in libraries.

As with all conferences, some speakers are more exciting and dynamic than others. Here are some of the highlights from the sessions that I attended:

Searching Conversations: Twitter, Facebook & the Social Web

Have you ever wondered what your online profile looks like? How much can someone find out about you and the personalities that you project online? If you think that you are posting anonymously or promoting a business image (even though you also are posting, twittering, etc. personally), you should think again. Go to: <http://www.pipl.com> to find out more about your online persona.

Flickr Commons for Libraries & Museums

The Flickr Commons is a wonderful new addition on Flickr that allows large institutions such as the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian, Brooklyn Museum and the New York Public Library to share photo collections. Any Flickr member could provide tags or post comments and enrich the information that was provided by the institution. The consensus of the 4 test institutions was that user-input was a wonderful, wonderful way to enhance, “fill in the blanks” or augment information that librarians, historians, and archivists could not possibly know. Check it out at: <http://www.flickr.com/commons/>

Global Library Automation Scene

Marshall Breeding took his audience on a whirlwind tour of library automation and his expanded research on library automation. He shared leading examples from libraries around North America. Check out Marshall's website at: <http://www.librarytechnology.org/>. I heard Marshall speak several times and he emphasized the importance of consortia buying power as well as the value provided to the patron.

Library Automation Highlights

During this presentation, Stephen Abram from SirsiDynix, Phil Green, from Inmagic, and Neil Block, Innovative Interfaces highlighted their company's ILS system. Each presentation was very basic but hit the highlights of their different offerings.

Pecha Kucha: 2.0 Top Tips

If you have never seen a pecha kucha session, you have been missing out! “Pecha kucha” is a Japanese term for the sound of conversation and represents a fast-paced series of presentations. Each panelist was given 6 minutes to present a Web 2.0 concept such as blogs, wikis, Flickr, etc. Not only does this create a very fast-paced session, it usually makes for good comedy as well.

Unconferences

This was definitely my favorite presentation. The 4 speakers related their experiences with a new trend in workshops – the unconference. An unconference is more like a “camp” than a workshop. The attendees not the organizers determine the agenda. The theory is that the “sum of the expertise of the people in the audience is greater than the sum of expertise of the people on the stage”. By giving everyone the change to be the expert, you expose the attendees to a variety of experiences that might not otherwise have emerged. Of course, this relies heavily on the fact that the attendees must participate actively rather than passively waiting for information.