

Libguides: In Workflow, Discovery Behaviours and Space

By Karin Gilbert

We need to prepare for systemic changes by better understanding how organisations and behaviours are being reshaped by the network.

Lorcan Dempsey. Vice president and Chief Strategist for OCLC (Online Computer Library Centre)

Libraries are constantly challenged to renew their expertise, facilities, services, programs and operational practices – to be proactive in recognising new points of connection and accessibility for their audience. Note particularly Dempsey's choice of word around 'change' – that it be *systemic*. The cycle of ongoing change assists libraries in being relevant, enterprising and serendipitous in the knowledge exchange. Preparing for systemic change requires considered analysis of the impact upon libraries of the network. Asking questions guides us in answering what it is that should be part of our collection and how are we facilitating our spaces to be essential to the discovery behaviour of the user.

Lorcan Dempsey says "think of the library in the life of the user and not the user in the life of the library", in a nutshell challenging us to move out of the safe realm of being the organisation that is indispensable to learning. This is a very powerful perspective and most valuable in broadening the vision we have about who we are and what we do. I would like to suggest that the framework for our resourcing of the learning 'environment', the space, people and the interaction that occurs, requires a disruptive approach to leverage the best results.

The concept of disruptive innovation is powerful because it forces us into new cognitive frameworks. We often need that jolt from the traditional thinking that we might have about our libraries' programs, purpose and expectations. We all of us are subject to what Daniel Kahneman (2011) calls "System 1 thinking". That is, fast thinking where we have made automatic assumptions and created mental shortcuts or cognitive biases which can hijack the more productive slow thinking that happens from reflection and more close inspection of the situation.

". . . think of the library in the life of the user and not the user in the life of the library . . ."

Whitney Johnson (2015) says in *Disrupt Yourself: Putting the Power of Disruptive Innovation to Work*:

The strategy of disruptive innovation assists us in breaking those patterns, however it does bring some risks and anxieties. This can energise and inspire. When you disrupt yourself, you are looking for growth . . . you have to push and pull against objects and barriers that would constrain and constrict you. That is how you get stronger.

The reimagining of the library happens within this reshaping experience. It could mean we need to come in from the cold, from previous practices that are grounded in past contexts that do not adequately meet our new learning environments and our user needs. And as Johnson says "Before we can disrupt others we need to disrupt ourselves – innovation comes from the inside" (2015).

It is an essential part of the conversation we must be having and requires us to ask:

What are the questions? What does our usage tell us? What is happening in our learning exchanges? How are we regarded in the fabric of education? Where are we in the knowledge transfers of our organisations? How are users constructing the learning exchange and experience? What observations have we made? What data have we kept? What documentation processes do we have to explicitly observe the behaviours and practices of our users?

Dempsey proposes three elements to consider when evaluating and understanding the library in the life of the user which are part of an essential framework: Workflow, Discovery and Space.

On workflow

In a print environment, students and researchers had to build their workflow around the library if they wanted to interact with information resources. However, information activities are often now rebundled with a variety of digital and network workflows. (Dempsey, 2015)

This means that now we are looking to build our services around supporting individual workflows and hence the necessity to see the library in the life of the user . . .

On discovery

Dempsey says that traditionally it has focused on the catalogue and discovery layers but these are now only part of the such activity. Now:

Discovery often happens elsewhere, and apart from anecdotal or local investigation we do not have a general sense of the pattern of discovery activity within learning and research workflows. (2015)

So it is important that we consider how our previously centralised practices can become diffused to enable multiple and diverse discovery points for our users. We must challenge not only our practices but the processes we use, the management systems we use whatever they are, how they are able to be built into a distributed collaborative platform across our organisations that optimises the collections we have and respond to the individual workflow.

On space

Dempsey says:

Library space used to be configured around library collections, and access to them. Now it is being configured around experiences – group working, access to specialist expertise or facilities, exhibitions, and so on . . . the use of collections has changed in a network environment . . . (2015).

Consider how the network plays a part in the space that your users inhabit. Dempsey says "technology is part of the fabric; thinking about it as an additive external factor is misleading".

This is a crucial perspective to maintain in our library spaces and should underpin our strategic directions.

Moving from this framework where workflow, discovery and space are elements situated by the "library in the life of the user", we can begin to revolutionise our thinking around these elements in our organisations.

An example of this can be found in the use of a platform on which to facilitate the many digital resources and spaces that a library can make available. At Lowther Hall it has been ably facilitated by the use of Libguides. Consideration of workflow, discovery and space are very useful in considering how we can use a tool such as Libguides. It can: be positioned in the individual workflow; provide multiple access points to discover; and extend the space that is the library commons.

Understanding Libguides from these multiple perspectives is an important part of the process in planning the steps for its implementation within your library environment. Disruption can be a vehicle for implementing change but it is important to remember that you want to exert the "power of pull" to ensure that the disruption is purposeful and intentional in the change it seeks to facilitate.

. . . to ensure that the disruption is purposeful and intentional . . .

The term "power of pull" described by Whitney Johnson in 'Disrupt Yourself' refers to the constraints you face when trying to change. It means you are forced to make choices. It in effect 'shrinks the space' of possibilities, which also allows for fast feedback which is what you need when making timely intervention with the user.

The power of pull can be identified by the constraints faced by the library in the life of the user. We know we are competing with multiple points of input to the user in their discovery. Hence the need to diffuse more widely the library access and connection points and to shrink the choices the user has to more pertinent options for their particular needs. What is the context and the motive of the user in their workflow? This is a conversation that needs to be constant in educational learning environments. Libguides is a tool that can provide such an avenue. However careful planning and preparation needs to be built around how this happens.

Mitchell Kapor said, "Getting information off the Internet is like taking a drink from a fire hydrant".

It is not just about consumption; in today's world the strawberries all look similar, to know where they were produced is a challenge. Today we are production librarians – we are creating and curating content, delivering via multiple access points, but we want our users to know we are out there doing this.

Moving from consumption to creation

In schools we have many opportunities to create spaces for learning: Google classroom, a LMS, products such as Evernote, Edmodo, WordPress etc. If we don't create it we can be sure users will find their own – unstructured but still theirs: Google, Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr. So the conclusion is we should be creating it!

We must make sure we connect to the key stakeholders – staff students and the wider education community – to provide very specific content that must be accessed. The 'must have' content that is fundamental to the learning experience is part of how we evaluate the context and motive of the user in their workflow and discovery.

Therefore, personalised service must be a strong focus for any library, what is often called the 'boutique' library.

Felicia A. Smith coins the term "helicopter librarians" based on the concept of helicopter parents. She describes helicopter librarianship as a "holistic approach to a human interaction based on individuality and genuine compassion" (Smith, 2012 as quoted in Silipigni Connaway).

Being proactive rather than reactive is crucial and planning and preparation are key. From this underpinning we can then focus on the tools and strategies we use to achieve our goals. In this discussion Libguides is a good example.

Be clear about what you want to achieve in the development of your website, for example:

1. Professional looking website
2. More up to date website
3. Easily navigated website.

Be clear about the ways you are going to measure these goals; e.g feedback from users, statistics on views.

There are many users of Libguides and the Springshare community is a great way to discover and learn about how libraries have used Libguides.

These are just some tips on using Libguides that we have found very useful, but having ongoing conversations with your fellow users of Libguides is essential:


1. It is good practice to archive and keep details of your major versions.
- 2.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Learning Resource Centre at Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School. The header includes the school's name and logo. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for Home, Subjects, All about reading, Research help, Referencing Help, Online Reference centre, and JLR. A search bar is located at the top right. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'Browse by subject' with a list of subjects and authors; 'Search your Lowther Hall WorldCat catalogue here' with a search box and 'Libraries Worldwide' dropdown; 'Britannica Online search here' with a Britannica logo and search box; 'Search for articles' with a 'Research databases' search box; 'For Teachers' with a list of resources including ClickView, Evernote, Dropbox, iPads, Twig, and Marzano is here!; 'Contact Us' with an email address (lrc@lowtherhall.vic.edu.au) and phone number ((03) 9325 5215); and 'Visit Us' with opening hours for Senior LRC (Monday to Friday, 7.30 - 5pm) and Junior LRC (Monday to Friday, 8.15 - 3.55pm). There is also a 'Latest Issues Books' section with a book cover for 'Asylum Seekers and Immigration Detention'.

Karin's present x Libguides at L x Libguides at L x My Drive - G x Planning You x my SCOTCH x LibGuides Ho x Home - Lowth x

libguides.lowtherhall.vic.edu.au/LRC

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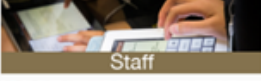
NEW BOOKS

We are always getting new books in at the LRC. Click here to see the latest!

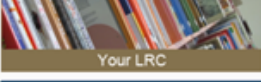
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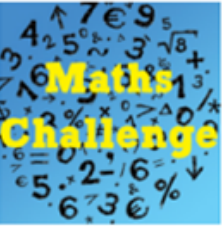
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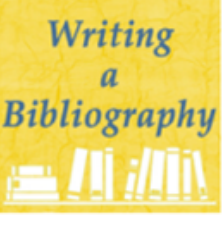
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Worldcat Discovery - search your LRC catalogue here

Search

Search your Lowther Hall WorldCat catalogue here

Search Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School Library and beyond

Everything Books eBooks Articles

Libraries Worldwide Go


Advanced Search

LRC databases

Why use a database instead of Google?

Anyone can create a website, whether they know what they are talking about or not! Databases provide access to **reliable** information from **credible** sources, which is only accessible through a paid subscription, so you won't be able to access it anywhere else on the web. Click on the icons below to start searching

What's new



WorldCat

ISSUES IN SOCIETY

3. Most important to map a selection of categories for your Libguides

4. Creating groups: this is an important way to enable different templates and sections in your provision of guides. So you can tailor particular template for a group; e.g. we have just created a group for our staff intranet so we will build a selection of guides for this around policy, procedures, Worldshare, acquisitions etc

5. Url can be defined to suit your page

6. Plan for reuse of your content: make copies of your boxes rather than mapping them, although if it needs to be a box that is regularly updated then mapping will be more useful

7. Password protecting a libguide can mean providing access to subscription databases e.g. Issues in Society off campus access has been placed on password protected libguide.

8. Keep archives; for old boxes, and widgets,

9. Photoshop: have someone learn to use it: great investment: where we create our buttons and specialist images, used for our new logos and for the design and creation of a new look banner

10. Being able to add more content with the + button. The code is : <div class="collapse" id="subject17">

Private Henry Thomas Tuck. 46th Battalion Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

11th of October 1896 to 11th August 1916

Written by Karin Gilbert, Head of LRC

My father had always been interested in researching his family history so I was fortunate to know a great deal about my early ancestors in Australia. My great great grandfather was Henry Tuck who settled in Flinders in 1844. He had nine children so there are many descendants! One of his grandsons was Henry Thomas Tuck who fought on the fields in France and tragically died there in 1916 at the age of 19 years. The 46th Battalion was part of the 12th Brigade of the 4th Australian Division.



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Private Henry Tuck died in the Battle of Pozieres in the Somme. I found out the information by doing a [Name Search](#) on the National Archives of Australia database. It was amazing to discover this as although I knew of this person in my family history I did not know that he fought and died in World War 1. There were over 30 images as well of documents associated with Henry's involvement in the War. He was the youngest of 7 children and had to have written permission from his father (also a Henry Tuck, my family were very keen on the name Henry...) to be able to enlist. His sister May wrote in a letter on the 11th November "to make inquiries about my brother who was killed in action...would it be possible to find some particulars about the manner in which he met his death and also if we could get any of his belongings we would be much obliged."

Such little information was given to families of those killed in these battles and there is no record of a grave for Henry only a name on the [Villers-Bretonneux Memorial](#).

Learn from the network of users in the Libguides community. As Steven Johnson (2010, p. 120) says:

If the commonplace book tradition tells us that the best way to nurture hunches is to write everything down, the serendipity engine of the Web suggests a parallel directive: look everything up.

Consideration of the elements of Discovery, Workflow and Space will be useful in building the direction and intentions of your Libguides pages. Review and reflect on the user and the library in their life. Focus in the beginning on what you do well then move from there, it will bring you confidence to move forward. Be prepared to be disruptive to facilitate the power of pull within the discovery, workflow and space that is the experience of the user.

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Useful links

<http://support.springshare.com/training/SL/bestpractices>
<http://support.springshare.com/subject/training>
<http://support.springshare.com/training/allsessions> (all V2 training)
<http://support.springshare.com/libguides/addingcontent/overview>
<http://support.springshare.com/libguides/addingcontent/assets/richtext>
<http://support.springshare.com/libapps/lti>

References

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Dempsey, Lorcan (2015) 'From Infrastructure to Engagement: Thinking About the Library in the Life of the User', Keynote presented at Minitex 24th Annual Interlibrary Loan Conference, 12 May, in St. Paul, Accessed at: http://www.slideshare.net/lisld/from-local-infrastructure-to-engagement-thinking-about-the-library-in-the-life-of-the-user?qid=426f8ba6-a0e3-4198-98aed179f61c38bf&v=&b=&from_search=1
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Silipigni Connaway, Lynn (2013) 'Meeting the Expectations of the Community: The Engagement Centred Library', OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc., Accessed at: <http://www.oclc.org/content/dam/research/publications/library/2013/connaway-library2020.pdf>

Silipigni Connaway, Lynn (2016) 'I Go to Google First, Integrating the Library into the Life of the User', Slideshare of presentation. Accessed at: <http://www.slideshare.net/LynnConnaway/i-go-to-google-first-integrating-the-library-into-the-life-of-the-user-60865888>

Silipigni Connaway, Lynn 'The Library in the Life of the User: Engaging with People Where They Live and Learn - compilation of user behaviour research', Accessed at: <http://www.oclc.org/research/publications/2015/oclcresearch-library-in-life-of-user.html> overview of user behaviour research- downloadable PDF

Karin Gilbert is the Head of the LRC at Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School in Essendon. Karin has been an educator across a wide range of ages in education and has for the last 13 years been a leader in libraries in schools. She is passionate about rethinking the spaces that we connect to for learning, aligning our core purpose with the drivers for change in the knowledge society. Karin believes in libraries as building environments that promote innovation and collaboration.



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