

13 **"Mentors and Mentees: Structuring a Professional Relationship"**

Mentors can be extremely valuable to people starting out in a new field, and becoming a mentor can be rewarding. Heather Carine explains how to set up a mentoring relationship.

19 **"Product Evaluation Report and Tool Kit: Maximising Trial Periods to Make and Support Purchase Decisions"**

A tool kit isn't worth much unless it gives you just what you need to do a job. Peggy Garvin looks at FreePint FUMSI's tools for product evaluations.

21 **"Development 2.0: A New Paradigm for the Non-Profit Sector?"**

When the dot-com bubble burst, did it also create a crisis in aid and governance? And has the non-profit sector followed in the footsteps of Web 2.0? Two World Bank insiders give their personal views.

Plus ...

Jobs,
Discussion,
Tips, Reviews
and Events



Contents

Editorial By Monique Cuvelier	3
My Favourite Tipples By Jane Inman	5
Jinfo :: Jobs in information	8
FreePint Bar	10
Tips Article "Mentors and Mentees: Structuring a Professional Relationship" By Heather Carine	13
Review "Product Evaluation Report and Tool Kit: Maximising Trial Periods to Make and Support Purchase Decisions" Published by: FreePint FUMSI Reviewed by: By Peggy Garvin	19
Feature Article "Development 2.0: A New Paradigm for the Non-Profit Sector?" By Giulio Quaggiotto and Pierre Wielezynski	21
Events	27
Gold	28
Contact Information	29

ONLINE FORMATTED HTML VERSION
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/240507.htm>

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FreePint is a global network of people who find, use, manage and share work-related information. Members receive this free twice-monthly newsletter, which is packed with tips, features and resources.

Joining FreePint is free at <<http://www.freepint.com/>> and connects information practitioners around the world with resources, events and answers to their tricky research and information questions at the FreePint Bar, our free online forum: <<http://www.freepint.com/bar/>>.

The FreePint Newsletter is available online in several formats and can be read, saved and forwarded at <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/>>.

Editorial



How many times have you told yourself that if only you had the time and money, you'd love to visit more sessions at more conferences? FreePint can't loan you money or extend the 24-hour day (if we could, putting together this newsletter would be much easier), but we can help you gain more from SLA - whether or not you're attending.

We've created a handy survey and calendar <<http://digbig.com/4stra>> that lets you vote for the sessions you would like to see most. I, along with my cohorts at DocuTicker, VIP and ResourceShelf, will make sure to attend what tops the list and report on what we see.

If you'll be at the event in Denver, Colorado, and have been wondering what we've been talking about with FUMSI, you'll have a chance to hear more at our session at SLA, Monday, 4 June at 1:30 p.m. This session is generously sponsored by LexisNexis.

While we're all busy looking forward to heading West, we've still put together a great issue for you:

- In "Development 2.0: A New Paradigm for the Non-Profit Sector?", Giulio Quaggiotto and Pierre Wielezynski, who both work at the World Bank, talk about how the Web 2.0 mentality is affecting the non-profit arena.
- Heather Carine, a researcher from Australia and frequent contributor to FreePint, talks about her experiences of becoming a mentor and being a mentee.
- Peggy Garvin provides a review of the new FreePint FUMSI report "Product Evaluation Report and Tool Kit". (You can also meet Peggy at SLA - read the review for details on how.)

Plus Tipples, news from the Bar and more.

Drop me a line if you'll be in Denver, and I'll let you know how you can meet me and the rest of our team. You can also use this online form:

<<http://www.freepint.com/events/sla-2007/>>. Hope to see you in June.

Sincerely,

Monique Cuvelier Editor, FreePint
e: monique.cuvelier@freepint.com
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Jane Inman chairs the Affiliation of Local Government Information Specialists <<http://www.algis.org.uk/>>, which provides support and networking opportunities for people working with local government information.

Submit your top five favourite web sites. See the guidelines at <<http://www.freepint.com/author/>>.

My Favourite Tipples

by Jane Inman

I work in a large local government department that has responsibility for strategic planning, transport, highways, economic development and waste management. The following are among my daily Tipples:

- Info4local <<http://www.info4local.gov.uk/>> alerts me twice a day to material issued by central government and relevant to local government. It includes reminders of consultations approaching their deadlines.
- The House of Commons Library Fact Sheets are invaluable for understanding how Parliament works <<http://digbig.com/4rsyr>>. The revamped Parliament site as a whole is essential reading.
- The new Statute Law Database <<http://www.statutelaw.gov.uk/>> provides free access to consolidated legislation currently updated to 2001 and will soon be available through <<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>>, which covers newly published legislation.
- For keeping up to date with Freedom of Information issues I use Steve Wood's excellent blog at <<http://foia.blogspot.com/>> which is moving to <<http://www.cfoi.org.uk/>>.
- So I have time for relaxation, Ocado <<http://www.ocado.com/>> deliver my shopping and provide recipe ideas with the option to add all the ingredients required with one click!



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- Hear about metrics for measuring the internal and external impact of social media
- Creating a culture for social media
- Tackling organisational change to make social media work
- Using social media to boost innovation and creativity in the organisation
- Expert speakers include: **Euan Semple**, Independent Consultant, **Simon Phipps**, Sun Microsystems, **Ben Edwards**, The Economist.com, **Adriana Lukas**, Big Blog Company, **Myles Runham**, General Manager - Europe, Ask.com

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<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j6904>>

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FreePint Bar

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Monique Cuvelier is Editor of the FreePint Newsletter. She has served as editor of several publications and her writing has appeared in Publish, USA Today, Bankrate and many others. Learn more about her at <http://www.onopoly.com/support/team/>.

Subscribe to the twice-weekly email digests at <http://www.freepint.com/subs/>

In a text-heavy world, several FreePint Bar members are looking for ways of looking at information in a graphical format. You can find out what sources they've discovered, as well as information on researching grants and how to start out as a freelancer at the Bar <http://www.freepint.com/bar>. Make sure to tell your colleagues to subscribe for free <http://www.freepint.com/subs/>.

- Sure, we're happy to have Google, but it isn't the only search engine out there. There is an ever-growing raft of visual search engines, which map the results in graphic form. Find out more: <http://www.freepint.com/go/b129218>.
- On a related note, someone with a crowded archival area is looking for suggestions to create a 'visual' inventory, a way other than a list of what is stored where, which has spurred some interesting ideas. Read more or lend yours <http://www.freepint.com/go/b134142>.
- Going solo is scary. There's the worry of finding enough money to pay the bills, but also the chance you don't know enough to launch your own freelance business. A Bar member

has been wondering if a workshop might address some of these concerns, which has sparked a lively discussion around possible venues and topics <http://www.freepint.com/go/b128984>. You can also learn about finding or becoming a mentor in this issue's feature by Heather Carine.

- One researcher is looking into the 'virtual gifts' market for the UK charity sector and not having much luck finding statistics. Give some ideas <http://www.freepint.com/go/b136906>, and then read this issue's feature on how Web 2.0 technologies are impacting the non-profit sector.
- If you were 27, short on cash but big on business ideas, how would you go about getting capital? An ambitious grant-seeker is looking for help on how to research money sources for young people starting out <http://www.freepint.com/go/b133323>. Have additional ideas?

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Monday, 1:30 p.m.: Hot Topic: Everybody FUMSI!

Presented by Free Pint Limited general manager, **Robin Neidorf**. This session is kindly supported by:



Tuesday, 2:30 p.m.: Web Tools for Legal Researchers

Presented by ResourceShelf editor, **Gary Price**

Receive updates on our schedule, including a list of Meet the Editor sessions, by completing our online form at:

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Influence our coverage of the conference by telling us which sessions are most interesting to you. Complete our online survey at:

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"Mentors and Mentees: Structuring a Professional Relationship"

By Heather Carine



Heather Carine is a Freelance Business Researcher with her own business, Carine Research, based in Adelaide, South Australia. She also serves as the Information Services Manager at Hunt & Hunt, a national law firm. Heather has over ten years experience as a researcher and knowledge management specialist in professional service firms in Australia and London. She holds a Masters Degree in Business (Information Technology) from RMIT University. Heather is a member of the Association of Independent Information Professionals, Australian Law Librarians' Association, Australasian Professional Services Marketing Association and the Australian Library and Information Association. She can be reached at <carineresearch@adam.com.au>..

[The following article is based on a presentation given by Heather Carine to the Australian Law Librarians' Association (South Australian Branch) on 5 March 2007.]

In the past year, I have been both a mentee and have become a mentor. My long-distance mentor helped me to make the change from being a full-time information services manager to becoming a freelance researcher. In turn, I am using my corporate library experience to help a colleague from a public library work towards some of her professional goals.

The opportunity to learn from my mentor and to share my knowledge with my mentee has been an enriching experience. It's a pleasure to share with the FreePint community some insights into what to expect if you are considering becoming involved in a mentoring arrangement. For confidentiality, many of my examples will be generic, rather than drawn from specific discussions with my mentee.

Why seek out a mentor?

Mentoring brings together an experienced practitioner, and importantly, a mentee who is ready and willing to benefit from this exchange to enrich their professional journey, according to the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) Mentoring Programme in South Australia <<http://www.alia.org.au/groups/mentoringsa/mentor.html>>.

Being mentored is a very personal experience - you may not list your mentoring arrangement on your CV,

and it's unlikely that someone would recommend you to a mentor.

Occasionally, you may see a mentoring programme being offered, and if you feel that you are ready and willing to learn from an experienced mentor from your profession, you will know it's time.

In my case, I had been contemplating setting up as a freelance researcher for a few years, but there were too many perceived hurdles to make the switch. A freelance career seemed too risky, too isolating and too far from my current research skills base.

In September 2005, I read in FreePint "Mentoring Independent Information Professionals: A Case Study", by Amelia Kassel <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/290905.htm>>, outlining her mentoring programme for people wanting to develop their skills as independent information professionals (or freelance researchers). The opportunity to be mentored was perfect for me, and I was certainly ready and willing to be guided by a researcher as experienced and well-regarded as Amelia. Her mentoring programme opened up for me not only an avenue to move into a freelance research career, but also, a greater understanding of mentoring. In turn, my experience as a mentee led me to becoming a mentor in the Australian Library and Information Association's (ALIA) mentoring programme.

Mentee benefits

The programme suggests that mentees may gain the following benefits from mentoring:

- Expanding your knowledge and understanding of library skills and practice. A mentor can help with going back to basics and discussing the foundations that underpin your profession.

For example, a few years into their career, a mentee can be focused on, or frustrated with, their current role and unsure of where it is leading. A mentor can share their experience on how they have been able to build on their library and professional skills to develop their career and their role in their profession.

- Support with change and difficulties. A mentor, who is likely to be from a different specialty in the library field, can assist with some tips for managing change by sharing their experience on how they have steered through their challenging work environment.

My law librarian colleagues are dealing with the changing expectations of the community, clients and lawyers that can make working in the legal environment challenging. A mentor from a different field, such as an academic library environment, will be able to share what they have learned from working in an equally challenging and rapidly changing environment.

- Building professional contacts for wider networking and for reducing isolation. Whilst it's unlikely that a mentee will seek a mentor as a means of building a network of contacts, the mentoring programme is a means of bringing librarians together from different environments.

For example, law librarians have many opportunities to seek support or advice from their law colleagues. However, for some confidential issues, such as career guidance, they may seek the support from a wider pool, which is what a programme such as the ALIA mentorship programme is ideal for.

- Honest and constructive feedback. Your feedback will be from someone who doesn't know your work situation personally, but can offer some guidance and suggestions on the issues that the mentee is facing.
- Increased self-confidence. Hopefully, with your new skills and perspective, greater self-confidence will be an outcome from your mentoring experience.



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Structuring an arrangement

The mentoring arrangement can take all sorts of shapes and sizes. The ALIA mentoring programme I mentor in is the more typical arrangement organised by a professional association. Experienced practitioners and potential mentees are linked up based on their skills and expectations. Whilst the mentors and mentees may come from various areas in the library and information world, we are all based in South Australia. Most of the mentoring will be face to face, and the mentoring is voluntary.

By contrast, my mentoring arrangement with Amelia Kassel was a private arrangement. Amelia is a freelance researcher with over 20 years experience with her own business, MarketingBase. Part of Amelia's business is mentoring fee-paying mentees, who are based around the world. In our case, Amelia is based in California, I am based in Adelaide, South Australia, and we communicated regularly via email.

Learning from a mentor is quite a different experience to anything that I had encountered, particularly in comparison to the academic environment. Group learning has a set curriculum, but mentoring is tailored to fit the needs of the mentee. The mentor and mentee are paired together to fit the mentee's aims. The focus of discussion and frequency of contact is then tailored to the mentee's objectives, interests and availability. Each meeting is a conversation, based less on teaching concepts and more on sharing of experiences that help to guide the mentee.

Maximising the experience

ALIA suggest that mentees gain the most from the mentoring relationship by:

- Defining their aspirations and goals, and expressing them clearly to your mentor
- Being willing to confront challenges and accept feedback
- Communicating regularly and openly with their mentor.

Without a clear idea of what the mentee expects from the mentoring arrangement, and keeping in regular contact, the momentum can wax and wane.

Whilst I was clear in what I was seeking from my mentor, I will admit that there were times during the year when I felt that I wanted Amelia to set some deadlines, and to push me along. It was through reflecting on the mentoring year that I came to appreciate that imposed deadlines were less important than learning self-discipline.

It's a telling difference between mentoring and teaching (or coaching). The mentee determines what they want to learn or gain from the mentoring arrangement. They take responsibility for keeping the momentum going by actively following up on points that are discussed and regularly communicating with their mentor.

After all, as librarians we are more than capable of tracking down career guidance and/or change-management resources and reading them at our leisure. A mentor isn't a substitute for doing your own professional reading; it's an opportunity to build and discuss your ideas with an experienced practitioner, whose judgment and opinion you trust and respect.

My experience as a mentee has been invaluable, and has certainly been an enormous help in preparing me for the next stage of my career. I couldn't have asked for more from a mentoring experience

Why become a mentor?

As mentioned, it was my positive experience as a mentee that led me to put myself forward as a mentor in the ALIA mentoring programme. I also wanted to give back to my profession and library community by sharing some of the insights that I have gained from my 20 years of professional work experience.

Being a mentor can be as beneficial for the mentor as it is for the mentee. For a mentor, the benefits can include:

- * Personal satisfaction in sharing their experience, knowledge and skills
- Being exposed to new ideas and interests
- The new opportunities for challenge
- The opportunity to reflect on their own practices.

It's worth being mindful of the fact that there are many people trained in career counselling who could assist your mentee, but they may not have the skills and experience in the library profession that the mentee seeks. Given that mentors aren't trained career counsellors, the ALIA programme offers some helpful tips for the mentor to assist their mentee develop their skills or career changes, such as:

- Reinforcing the strengths of the mentee
- Discussing mistakes and lessons learnt - these can relate to both the mentor and the mentee



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- Sharing your skills and knowledge about professional activities
- Assisting in solving work-related problems by listening and providing support, rather than by imposing your own solutions
- Being open to new ideas.

Setting the structure

In practice, the ALIA programme suggests structuring the mentoring arrangement along the lines of these milestones:

First meeting. Meet to discuss respective roles to start to understand what the mentee is seeking from the mentoring arrangements, and to establish where, when and for how long you will meet in future.

Second meeting. Start to focus on what your mentee is aiming for - what she is hoping to achieve over the next 12 months. For example, look at two to three key goals and work with ways to achieve those goals. A formal mentoring agreement can be used to outline how the mentoring arrangement will work, frequency of meetings and desired outcomes.

Further meetings. Review the progress the mentee is making towards meeting her goals, and discuss any issues that come up.

It's important to remember that mentoring isn't coaching and that the mentee sets the agenda and their degree of involvement.

Either side of mentoring can be a rewarding and rich learning experience. It was an honour to be personally guided through significant changes in my career; and it's an equally rewarding experience to assist a fellow librarian to develop their role in our profession.

Related FreePint links:

- "Mentoring Independent Information Professionals: A Case Study" By Amelia Kassel
<<http://www.freepint.com/issues/290905.htm>>
- "Information industry mentoring?" Bar discussion
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/b33018>>

Related links:

- ALIA Mentoring Program (SA)
<<http://www.alia.org.au/groups/mentoring/sa/>>

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"Product Evaluation Report and Tool Kit: Maximising Trial Periods to Make and Support Purchase Decisions"

Published by: FreePint FUMSI

Reviewed by: By Peggy Garvin



Peggy Garvin, Garvin Information Consulting, is an independent information consultant in Washington, DC. She conducted product trials large and small while an electronic resource specialist at the Library of Congress, and she continues to evaluate information products in her consultancy. She also specialises in writing and training to help professionals effectively find and use US government information on the Internet. Peggy is the author of The United States Government Internet Manual (Bernan Press) and Real World Research Skills (The Capitol.Net), and is a contributing author to Congressional Deskbook (The Capitol.Net). Peggy can be contacted via <<http://www.garvinc.com/contact.php>>.

The perfect kit is an organised collection of all the tools needed to get a job done. Each new job may not require every tool in the kit, but the right tool is always at hand. FreePint's "Product Evaluation Report and Tool Kit" meets the same standard. When you need to evaluate an information product, the tools are all here: insight on organisational issues, checklists, templates, time-saving tips and a case study to show you how it all fits together. The kit can be used over and over; you select the tools you need each time.

The "Product Evaluation Report" begins with a reminder that free trials truly are not free:

'If you've ever signed up for a trial and barely touched the product during the trial period because you did not have the time, you know that trials cost time. An effective product trial is an investment, and it benefits from the same planning, implementation and outcome measurement as any other project.'

Techniques for success at each step of the way are outlined in the report section. Concise and practical guidance covers how to:

- Define evaluation criteria that matter
- Assess the real needs of your user and your organisation * Design a valid methodology to produce valid, measurable results * Gather data on a scale relative to the importance of the product to your organisation* Report results clearly to support sound decision-making.

Despite the metaphor of a kit and the emphasis on measurable results, the authors of the "Product Evaluation Report" are wise to the fact that in the real world organisations are made up of real people - not everything can be reduced to an equation. For example, the section on evaluation criteria reminds us that there is no single standard: 'Each organisation - and sometimes different users within the organisation - will have a different basis for determining appropriate baselines for such criteria.' The report's case study - about a corporate library's test of three major news alert services - shows how the tools can be applied in real life.

resource shelf

Resource of the Week:
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The report's advice about needs assessment reveals one of the hidden benefits of a product trial: it is an opportunity to discover other information needs and learn more about user research habits and preferences. Such knowledge can bolster your efforts to develop and market your services beyond this specific exercise.

The actual tool kit section of the report is Appendix I. It supplies the templates and checklists. Appendix II provides samples of needs assessment tools: a survey, a focus group outline, and tips for workplace observation (a more time-consuming method that goes beyond user self-reporting). Appendix III is the full text of the case study report. The sections - the report, the tool kit, the case study - are nicely integrated. Relevant sections of the case study are excerpted in each chapter of the report, and the 'tools' are referenced throughout the text.

Most information professionals must invest time in product evaluation. FreePint's "Product Evaluation Report and Tool Kit" will help you spend that time efficiently and effectively.
<<http://www.freepint.com/bookshelf/realworld.htm>>

Related FreePint links:

- Product Evaluation Report and Tool Kit: Maximising Trial Periods to Make and Support Purchase Decisions, by Free Pint Limited, 2007, 46 pages
<<http://web.freepint.com/go/shop/report/product-evaluation/>>
- "Product Evaluations: Completing a Needs Assessment" By FreePint FUMSI Editorial Staff
<<http://www.freepint.com/issues/190407.htm#tips>>
- "Real World Research Skills: An Introduction to Factual, International, Judicial, Legislative, and Regulatory Research" Written by Peggy Garvin Reviewed by Deborah A. Liptak
<<http://www.freepint.com/bookshelf/realworld.htm>>

Related links:

- "Under-the-Hood Evaluation of Electronic Information Products" SLA presentation by Peggy Garvin and Rita Vine
<<http://www.sla.org/content/Events/conference/ac2007/>>

Propose an information-related book or resource for review today. Send details to Monique Cuvelier, editor of FreePint <editor@freepint.com>.

"Development 2.0: A New Paradigm for the Non-Profit Sector?"

By Giulio Quaggiotto and Pierre Wielezynski

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Disclaimer: the views
expressed in this
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World Bank.

The transition from Development 1.0 to Development 2.0

One interesting aspect - which is sometimes forgotten - behind O'Reilly Media's coining of the term 'Web 2.0' <<http://www.oreillynet.com/lpt/a/6228>> is that it stemmed from an analysis of the companies that survived the crash of the dot-com bubble. Not so much of a futuristic vision, then, but rather a reflection on tried and tested business models (as well as technologies) that weathered the storm to produce the likes of Google and Amazon.

What if one were to apply the same type of analysis to the development sector? One could argue that we are currently witnessing a crisis of the traditional aid and international governance models, which could have far-reaching consequences somewhat reminiscent of the dot-com crash. At the same time, the emergence of new approaches (such as microfinance and online campaigning) may herald the beginning of a whole brave new world - indeed, it would seem that the era of the wisdom of crowds and the Long Tail <<http://www.thelongtail.com/>>, as defined by O'Reilly, has caught on in the non-profit world. Out with Development 1.0, the era of the World Bank, the UN, the IMF (but also the traditional non-governmental organisations (NGOs)), and in with Development 2.0, whose ambassador could perhaps be Grameen Bank, funded by Noble Prize winner Muhammad Yunus, or Gapminder's founder Hans Rosling with his iconoclastic zeal to deconstruct established development myths <http://www.ted.com/tedtalks/tedtalks/player.cfm?key=hans_rosling>.

Intriguing as the prospect of identifying clear-cut boundaries might be, the reality is that it's probably too early to tell whether we are truly witnessing the emergence of a new development paradigm (see here <<http://digbig.com/4sybn>> for a similar conclusion). Rather, we are in a fluid, transition phase where traditional NGOs and development institutions are testing the waters of Web 2.0, while, on the more innovative end of the spectrum, new start-ups are emerging whose entire business model is based on Web 2.0 opportunities. Somewhere in the middle are 'hybrid' projects that span the two worlds. For instance, Oxfam's recent campaign to support Ethiopian farmers featured traditional campaigning tools such as faxes, postcards and demonstrations, but also shared pictures via Flickr and a YouTube duel with Starbucks <<http://digbig.com/4sybn>>.

Take a look at the interactive list <<http://www.squidoo.com/org20>> of the '59 Smartest Orgs Online', which ranks non-profits based on their 'Web 2.0 smarts' - the extent to which they integrated Web 2.0 in their business model. On any given day, it will feature established organisations such as Greenpeace or Amnesty International, alongside the likes of MobileActive.org ('cell phones for civic engagement') or microloans site Kiva. Indeed, the list is perhaps the best place to test the pulse of 'Development 2.0', together with Change.org's intriguing tag cloud <<http://change.org/>>.

If it's too early to talk about winners or losers, it's still interesting to apply O'Reilly's model of key Web 2.0 patterns and competencies to the development world. It may highlight emerging trends and identify areas that may be waiting for the birth of a Google equivalent for the development sector.

The Long Tail of development services

O'Reilly invites Web 2.0-savvy companies to 'reach out to the entire web, to the edges and not just the centre, to the Long Tail and not just the head'. The emblem here is eBay. This concept has interesting applications in the development context. Traditionally, managing micro-donations has proven to be challenging for non-profits, whose back end was not designed to guarantee to, say, a donor in the UK, that their money will go to fund a specific project in a given village in Rwanda. 'Adopt a school' type of projects have often incurred very high overheads. In come the likes of Kiva.org, which uses the Web to cut out intermediaries and allow for direct donations to small businesses in the developing world, or GlobalGiving <<http://www.globalgiving.com/>>, which guarantees that '85-90% of your donation gets to local project leaders within 60 days'. This way, even donors with niche interests can find a way to support the cause that is dear to their heart through the Web. The same desire to cater for niche interests lies behind Change.org, a social networking site that aims to foster 'a fundamental change in the way people engage in social issues' by allowing grassroots activists to network with others who share their interests. It will be

interesting to monitor how these new business models will fare and, on the other hand, how traditional NGOs will react to the challenge.

The race for development data

What do Amazon, eBay and MapQuest have in common? They are backed up by the largest specialised database in their respective markets (books, auctions, maps, etc), O'Reilly observes. For this reason, he adds, 'the race is on to own certain classes of core data'. The smartest companies are the ones who let users add value to their data through mashups or other types of interaction (e.g. book reviews on Amazon). Once again, there are intriguing parallels here with what is happening in the development world.



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Take, for instance, conservation - an area traditionally plagued by the lack of data interoperability. A number of initiatives are emerging, such as IUCN-backed Conservation Commons <<http://www.conservationcommons.org/>> and UNEP-WCMC's Eco- ishare <<http://www.ecoishare.org>> that are trying to encourage open access to biodiversity data and build the biggest repositories in their category, to use O'Reilly's language. Others, such as the above mentioned Gapminder and Maplecroft <<http://maps.maplecroft.com>> are adding value to their sets of development data through visualisation software (Gapminder's so cool that Google had to get a piece of it <<http://tools.google.com/gapminder/>>). As for mashups, an example of an application with great potential that we've come across recently is a combination of Google Earth with meteorological data <<http://www.wepoco.com/maps/observations.php>>. Imagine for a moment the weather forecast being delivered to farmers in Ethiopia, specially trained for the purpose, via mobile phones, as in Wepoco's plans. But see also the combination of Google Maps and ethnicity data done by Healthcarethatworks <<http://www.healthcarethatworks.org/maps/nyc/>> to prove that disenfranchised communities have more difficulty accessing care.

Letting users interact and play around with the data, 'trusting them as co-developers', (O'Reilly) is still a cultural challenge, as Gapminder's Rosling found out, but the obvious next step. One could easily imagine, for example,

that WWF's recent partnership with Google, which allows virtual access to conservation projects on the ground <<http://digbig.com/4sybk>> may be followed by some interactive feature that allows scientists or volunteers on the ground to add or comment on the data. Ditto for the work Amnesty International has done with Google Earth, mapping out human rights abuses around the world (more here: <http://shr.aas.org/geotech/ge.shtml>).

Getting datasets out of their respective databases is certainly a challenge due to intellectual property issues and data interoperability, but if the various owners of these datasets were willing to do it, the very 2.0 site Swivel would be the ideal place to get some collaboration going. After barely 4 months of activity, the site (still in beta) already offers over 3,000 datasets contributed by over 4,000 members (including OECD) and has all the 2.0 features you can dream off: blog it, digg it, badge it, Google widgetise-it, etc.

Harnessing collective intelligence

The key principle behind the giants of the Web 2.0 era, points out O'Reilly, is that they have embraced the power of the Web to harness collective intelligence. What better example than Wikipedia? NGOs in this respect would seem to have a natural advantage over the private sector, given their traditional reliance on volunteers' passion and creativity. And Development 2.0 is creeping into perhaps unexpected areas of the development sector. It may come as no surprise to learn that the likes of

Greenpeace and Oneworld have their own blog. Perhaps not many people, though, may know that the World Bank Group is running three blogs (as well as online discussions) and has recently developed Buzzmonitor, a tool to gauge stakeholder's perceptions through social media. And what about UNICEF's sponsoring of The One Minutes Jr. site [<http://www.theoneminutesjr.org/>](http://www.theoneminutesjr.org/), the YouTube equivalent that gives a voice to marginalised young people?

Campaigns, as in the case of Oxfam above, are the obvious place to harness Web 2.0 to create connections and galvanise supporters (readers may be interested in an interesting think piece by the author of 'Momentum: Igniting Social Change in the Connected Age', http://www.comminit.com/drum_beat_385.html). Online campaigning is by now a well established advocacy tool in the armament of the smart NGO campaigner. See here <http://npotechbestpractices.pbwiki.com/Advocate> for a list of examples and here <http://www.ewg.org/issues/bottledwater/index.php> for an illustration of how EWG is using volunteer support to build an online database of labels for their water safety project.

But this natural affinity doesn't mean that all opportunities have been explored. Far from it, one can only imagine what would happen if the development sector were able to fully galvanise the 'wisdom of crowds' in support of its goals. One has to love the interactivity of Amnesty's Guantanamo campaign, which allows users to create a virtual alter ego and join an online

flotilla to the US base in Cuba <http://amnesty.textdriven.com/guantanamo/home>. But what if you were to take this one step further? What if, as in the case of WWF Russia's strategy game to save the leopard <http://www.download.com/3000-2119-10192470.html>, you create a full-scale simulation of a real conservation challenge, let users compete to come up with their best solution and then use it in the real world? Likewise, one likes to think that it is just a matter of time before an NGO (or development institution) will use a tool like Second Life or equivalent to interact with funds recipients to jointly create a virtual version of an ideal project scenario before funding it.

Joi Ito, a prominent venture capitalist, has written an interesting paper entitled "weblogs and emergent democracy"



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<<http://digbig.com/4sybh>> where he outlines how blogs and other 2.0 technologies will help shape democracy. Yochai Benkler has written a riveting book (available free online: <<http://digbig.com/4sybg>>) titled "The Wealth of Networks", in which he explains and documents how peer productions are changing markets and freedom. The arguments used by these two authors revolve around the network effect. How can an issue go from obscure to front page in a matter of five links and lead people to act and change things? A site like dotherightthing.com leverages the wisdom of the crowd to evaluate corporations and hold them accountable. By asking users to vote, tag or flag issues, these sites hope to become forces of change and get organisation to, well ... do the right thing. A similar issue aims at doing the same for the US government. GovTracks <<http://www.govtrack.us/>> mashes up various information sources to help regular citizens track their elected officials, key legislative issues, voting records etc.

If these initiatives do not yet have huge visibility, they are a model of the things to come.

Making a difference, in hard, cold cash: the Long Tail of micro-donations

And finally, what about fundraising? Raising awareness, having conversations around development issues and sharing photos could be labelled the first wave of 2.0 applied to development. But what if there was something much more tangible (money for example) coming?

Over 3 years ago, Fred Wilson, a popular blogger and venture capitalist out of New York City decided to sign up <http://avc.blogs.com/a_vc/2004/03/contextual_targ.html> for the AdSense program offered by Google and to contribute the revenue generated by his traffic to the Grameen Bank. Small step, yes. But scale that up and it could make for a significant amount of cash for various social causes.

See also GoodSearch <<http://www.goodsearch.com/>>, which helps monetise traffic much in the same way most site do, via advertising, except that, here again, a portion of the revenues are contributed back to social causes. Even Microsoft launched their own program, labeled I'M <<http://im.live.com/Messenger/IM/Home/>>. The idea is that a portion of the advertising revenue generated by users of the Live Messengers IM software would be allocated to social causes.

There is something more than just a gimmick here. As it becomes increasingly easier to put your money where your mouth is, why not think about fundraising through Linked In and other social networks where you put your money on causes that you, your friends and the rest of the crowd filtered and recommended for you?

The very secretive Project Agape seems to want to do something along those lines by 'applying virality to altruism'. No specific details are available at the time of writing but given that the founder was behind Napster and Facebook, a healthy dose of 'sociality' is to be expected.

More to come

We have seen that many of the initial uses of Web 2.0 were focused on raising awareness around issues by leveraging word of mouth. We also discussed a second wave where applications and sites are more focused on getting people to collaborate, and a third wave focused on monetising traffic and attention to support social causes. Given the short time frame in which these three phases have happened, and given the increasing pressure on governments, international organisations and large NGOs to be more transparent, there is little doubt that much is yet to come.

As our world increasingly looks like a village, as new information sources become available and as more people get connected (see "The Internationalisation of Web 2.0" at <<http://www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/internet/page6686.cfm>>), it is inevitable that new, revolutionary applications will spring up and take the development sector by storm. The challenge therefore for existing 1.0 players like the World Bank and the United Nations is not to decide whether they should 'comply' to Web 2.0 but to actually embrace the technology and principles and maintain (or redefine) their relevance. Medium to large size non-profits also need to ask themselves questions about their relevance in this highly competitive, highly fragmented environment. How can they invest in technology, people and applications, not to be cool but to leverage their competitive advantage (be it their donors, knowledge, data or assets)?

Smaller non-profits have proven the most innovative so far in their use of 2.0 and the question arises whether they will still be able to compete for attention once the entire sector has moved to this brave new world. The upcoming Web2fordev conference <<http://www.web2fordev.net>>, hosted by FAO, looks like an interesting place to get the discussion going.

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- Corp 2.0: getting interactive <<http://www.freepint.com/go/f49>>
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- "The Semantic Web is Your Friend" By Libby Miller and Simon Price <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/270504.htm#feature>>
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