Libraries as Motion Video: setting up an in-house studio, getting visual & extending skill-sets into new environments on the web and in virtual worlds

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Background and Motivation: 3.5 hour Pre-Conference Engage Workshop

"Libraries as Motion Video" delved into new ways for librarians as content creators to connect with students and faculty visually through video hosting sites such as YouTube and YouTubeEDU. Both have been growing in popularity for educational purposes as sites to find and share answers and instruction through videos. Increasingly, we encounter video and mixed visual media across our campuses: in the classrooms, on walk-by LCD displays, blogs, websites, iTunesU, our learning management systems, and virtual environments used for research and teaching such as Second Life®. With librarians at the production helm, we can explore opportunities to work with faculty and students, and address and support media and transliteracy efforts on campus. Attendees were encouraged to explore the literature on transliteracy in the accompanying bibliography (Thomas, 2007, Andretta, 2009, Transliteracies Research Project, 2010, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, 2009) addressing what it means to be literate in the 21st Century.

The hands-on activities focused on techniques for re-thinking and re-working text content into abbreviated formats for visual media, and explored some of the advanced features available to YouTube account holders, as well as the benefits and drawbacks of syncing YouTube with Facebook or Twitter accounts.

Learning Outcomes for Hands-on Activities:

1. Use online tools & techniques to produce abbreviated story content.
2. Gain familiarity with the settings and preferences in your YouTube account.
3. Produce playlists of other people's videos on YouTube.
4. Identify issues related to syncing your YouTube and Facebook accounts.

Engage Session Support Materials:

Generic "sandbox" accounts containing sample video footage were introduced for attendees to explore features, options and issues related to their use of popular sites such as YouTube and Facebook. Support materials for attendees of the session included:

1. A generically named YouTube account with username, password and sample video footage.
2. A generically named Facebook account with username and password.
3. Print copies of the PowerPoint Slides including instructions for the hands-on activities.
4. A proposal created for the Carlson Health Sciences Library entitled: *Generic YouTube*

Account for Instructional Videos.

5. Proposal entitled: *In-house Micro-content Video Production for the Health Sciences Libraries* (including two scenarios covering software and price ranges).

Following the hands-on activities, attendees agreed that the YouTube and Facebook "sandbox" provided a positive learning space to gain confidence and skills that could be transferred to new environments or settings.

Should we be in the Movie Business?

Definitely. Our goals are to create timely visual micro-content to meet the needs of faculty and students across a range of physical and virtual environments, as well as devices. Also, to explore and support transliteracy (Wikipedia, 2010) as we create, use, read, share and mashup content across the range of media. The challenge is to articulate librarians' expertise in the form of brief visual clips that fill in the gaps for users during their library research process. This challenge, that takes us outside the library to new environments and allows us to embed the media back into traditional and new physical and virtual spaces, was inspired by Chris Berry's (2010) provocative statement from *Electronic Elsewheres: Media, Technology and the Experience of Social Space*, "Media do not simply portray places that already exist: they actually produce them." (Berry, 2010, p.1).

Through our own exploration as content creators, and extending skill-sets to new environments, we can challenge ourselves, our colleagues and our administration to seek out new partnerships and aim to produce these *"electronic elsewheres"* for our own campuses.

Figure 1: Entering the realm of content creation and socially networked sharing

Time was spent introducing the idea of *'desktop as stage,'* and using some of the built-in features on your computer to simulate motion, that would be otherwise costly to produce in terms of time and money. So, with the computer desktop as a stage, we can seek creative ways to

capture the desktop while running simple actions such as a PowerPoint slideshow or a series of browser windows opening and closing.

Figure 2: Combining images & screen capture: the former Library Studios Island, Second Life®

Video Examples

A few video examples were shown during the session, including the promotional piece, I am Aggie. I am Avatar, that was filmed entirely in Second Life® (tinyurl.com/df8mp6). Other examples used both video and screen capture, along with YouTube's annotations and audioswap features. The parade of library resources, captured in the flying pre-sized browser windows, exposes the rich assortment of resources available from off campus via the VPN login: www.youtube.com/libraryvideochannel (Carlson Health Sciences Library, 2010). The short demonstration clip of the lone silver laptop against a stark white backdrop, provided a glimpse into time-saving techniques, with strategically positioned and resized windows parading through a series of CARL Conference related web pages (tinyurl.com/23k3j27).

Figure 3: "Desktop as Stage": the fine art of screen capture

Partnerships Beyond Video Editing: A Look at Media Commons & Library Labs

We are seeing a growing number of partnerships between libraries and campus departments (University of Maine, 2010), as well as a variety of new services and media literacy instruction. The services are being delivered through the same pages where students find access to the campus' online video editing tools. Further examples include environments such as Penn State's *Envision, Create, Publish* site (Penn State University, 2010) and a *Video Fellows Program* at Duke University (Riddle, 2010).

Figure 4: Screen Capture + Video (video footage in editable formats)

Hands-on Activities:

The Fine Art of Brevity: from Flickr Poet to Hemmingway's Six Word Story:

The hands-on portion of the Engage session included eight separate activities that were detailed in the Powerpoint slides and accompanying handouts (tinyurl.com/34po897).

1. *'Flickr Poet'* (Sturm, 2010). The site provides an input box for the user to toss in a few words or copy and paste a sentence or two. Flickr Poet then retrieves images from Flickr Commons site (Yahoo, 2010) tagged with the words entered by the user. For attendees, this imaginative site was a first-step in trying to visualize some of the terms or concepts we use to describe our libraries, our work and or services.

2. We moved onto 'Six Word Stories' (Six Word Stories, 2010) and the fine art of brevity by trying our hand at writing abbreviated stories, such as the memorable six words by Ernest Hemmingway: *For Sale. Baby Shoes. Never worn.* We used this highly abbreviated story format to generate our own six word library stories, e.g.: *Wikipedia. Google. Found everything. Used Nothing.*

Using our Sandbox Pre-made YouTube and Facebook Accounts:

Attendees followed along with their own laptops and newly minted accounts. The activities included:

3. Connecting Facebook & YouTube using the activity sharing feature (with demo and discussion of how Facebook friends/subscribers receive notice of Facebook updates through the friends' feed feature).
4. Customizing your YouTube Channel (settings, themes & colors, modules, videos and playlists).
5. Getting to know 'My Account.'

Of greatest interest was the example of YouTube's copyright infringement notification that appears in the 'Overview' section when copyrighted video or audio is identified by YouTube. As we saw during the session, commercials are often added to video content that has been identified as infringed copyrighted material. In the case of infringed music, the channel holder is sent a copyright infringement notice identifying the copyright holder, and in some cases, the user will see a commercial linking to a location where the viewer can purchase the music.

When copyrighted audio tracks are selected from YouTube's free AudioSwap database, the selected audio track replaces the existing audio track or tracks. In the case of a video that has been uploaded without an audio track, YouTube adds the selected track to the video. In exchange, YouTube also adds commercials both to the YouTube channel and, in some cases, as a small overlay at the bottom of the video player. Fortunately, the bothersome commercial, powered by YouTube's *DoubleClick* partnership with in-stream video advertising, can be temporarily disabled while viewing the video.

The supporting PowerPoint slides provided attendees with examples of how some academic libraries are bundling media literacy concepts within their websites and/or video development environments (Swanson, 2010). YouTube provides a well-needed detailed help section introducing copyright and providing tips to YouTube users (YouTube, 2010).

6. Save to your Playlists (making playlists of your own or other people's videos and subscribing to your university or college's YouTube EDU channel).

Playlists proved to be one of the most interesting features for attendees, since it allows even the newest of users to start creating something, namely playlists (a term often heard when referring to Apple's iTunes and playlists on iPods and iPhones).
With a registered YouTube account, attendees were able to add a few more selections, rate videos, leave comments or video responses, subscribe to other people's channels, and even add people as friends.

7. Annotating your own video or sharing the group annotations URL with a group.
8. Adding or swapping an audio track using YouTube's AudioSwap database of copyrighted music. Note: Using AudioSwap adds a commercial to your video.

These are some of the most useful and also the most time-consuming of the advanced features available to YouTube users with uploaded video content. The group annotations feature can be used with a large group by sharing the group URL which is provided when in the annotations editor. The UC Davis Libraries' sandbox account: http://www.youtube.com/user/libraryvideochannel

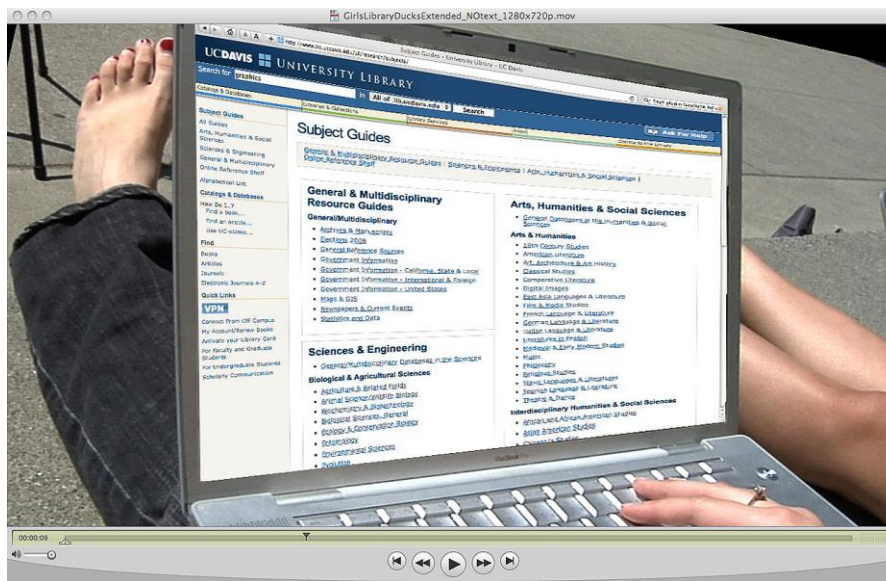*Video footage uploaded into attendee's YouTube accounts:*

Figure 5: Screenshot from video footage: tinyurl.com/2ekdze7

Sandbox: Time, Casual Learning & Digital Sunshine

In times of budget and staffing constraints as we find ourselves today, academic librarians, here at the CARL Conference and across our campuses, continue to explore ways to remain visible and share our knowledge and expertise on campus, as well as with remote library users. These challenges are compounded with the ever-moving new technology bar: communications software and peripherals, the array of content development software and the growing arsenal of media devices.

In addition, we lack the luxury of time and the "sandbox" or casual learning space, ongoing training and resources. But, it is in these very times that we need to creatively ramp up project initiatives even without budgets; whether they are activity-based and small-scale using free online software and environments, or more intellectually oriented providing the so-often-overlooked time needed for thinking and reflection about ways to repackage and/or articulate our knowledge and subject expertise for new environments.

We ended the "Libraries as Motion Video" Engage Session with the question to attendees: How can we work with students & faculty [early in the process] at the story and production stages? The responses will be different for each library. Imagine yourself leading a casting call, working with students and colleagues on a collaborative library or research story or script… or a series of short clips to meet a particular need on your campus. We encouraged attendees to begin working on something, if they weren't already doing so. Become a content creator; write, take pictures,

capture video, share ideas and gain confidence in new or revamped physical or virtual environments. Lastly, abbreviate content and articulate our subject and research expertise that is often unseen or invisible to many library users. Remember, *" media do not simply portray places that already exist: they actually produce them."* (Berry, 2010, p.1).

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