Building a ThinkTank @ Your Library

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Overview

• An idea
• Recruitment
• Content
• Platform
• Promotion
• Tips
• Questions
The Idea

Space to talk and learn about emerging tech (monthly)

An engine for developing new services
Everyone must participate.

“We tried that before. It didn’t work”

2 rules of ThinkTank
Invitations

Hi, Everyone,

I have spoken with most of you about the "think tank" idea. I was hoping to meet on the 3rd Wednesday of every month over the lunch hour. Our focus will be emerging technologies and what new technology developments might mean for information distribution and consumption (usually looking within the library setting). A typical meeting will involve discussing some articles/essays, a compelling project, or an opinion to get the conversation started. The expectation is that everyone will have read or reviewed the pieces/projects and is ready to chat about it. Occasionally, we might look to create "beta" projects to see if our ideas have some gravity. (Most of this work will fall to the LAMS team, but there may be roles for people who are interested.) A list of current beta projects is available here: http://www.lil.libraries.montana.edu/beta/.

It's in the interest of generating ideas and learning about emerging technologies that I'm gathering our group together. It will be a mix of the provocative and the banal and I'm looking forward to our conversations about where libraries might be headed.

Best,
Jason
#toRead
What we learned from 5 million books

Have you played with Google Labs' Ngram Viewer? It's an addictive tool that lets you search for words and ideas in a database of 5 million books from across centuries. Erez Lieberman Aiden and Jean-Baptiste Michel show us how it works, and a few of the surprising things we can learn from 500 billion words.
Provide a Platform
Experience the Platform
BETA matters

Welcome to the Digital Labs at Montana State University Library. Below you'll find a sample list of our experiments and trials with digital media and applications. It's an example of our research and development initiatives. Please have a look and kick the tires.

Current Beta Projects

**MSU Library Mobile Web Site**
A mobile version of the MSU Library Web Site; a web app built with the jQuery mobile framework.

**Subject Map for Montana State University Library**
Browse the MSU collection using Library of Congress Subject Headings. This interactive map shows you the arrangement of our stacks on each floor. Uses Flash and HTML to make it go.

**Get your Terms, Master your Searches**
A mashup of the top related terms for a query according to the Yahoo Search Index. This is a proof of concept app. We are using it internally to build a loose, natural language search index for our article database search. It could be a candidate for a public app as a "Term Recommendation" engine.

**Mobile Apps Must Die [Blog] design mind**
Would like to build off concept to help students work out better terms for searching library resources. Need to find more sources for related terms from Google or Wikipedia search indices and work with public services staff to refine. Built with PHP, HTML and Javascript.

**Google Gadget for Montana State University Library**
A range of applications you can add to your personalized Google homepage, Blackboard, or any other Web page. Uses XML, Google gadgets API, javascript and HTML to make it go.

**mediaHub**
An experiment where library media on YouTube or blip.tv are "mashed up" to create a search/browse app. The goal is to create a central hub for all categories of library media - interviews, promotions, tutorials, events, classes, etc. Uses the YouTube API or blip.tv API, PHP, and xHTML to make it happen.

**Feed Me Some Worldcat**
Run a search on Worldcat - get an Opensearch feed for your feedreader. Sit back and get updates on Worldcat topics. What is a feed? Learn more about feeds from this video.

**MSU Digital Collections in Flickr**
Selected photographs and papers from the Montana State University Library Special Collections are now available on Montana State University Library's Photostream at Flickr.com.
MSU Library ThinkTank URLs

• MSU ThinkTank Archive
  • goo.gl/RDbBx

• MSU ThinkTank Beta
  • www.lib.montana.edu/beta/

• MSU ThinkTank Tag on pinboard.in
  • goo.gl/NzMT1
Tips

• Start Small
• Find a Champion
• Get Support
• Be Selective, but Recruit from All Levels of Org
• Set Scope & Theme
• Be Transparent & Document
Inspiration

- Harvard Library Lab
  - osc.hul.harvard.edu/liblab

- Scholars Lab, University of Virginia
  - www2.lib.virginia.edu/scholarslab/

- “A Skunk in the Library”
  - Bethany Nowviskie
  - nowviskie.org/2011/a-skunk-in-the-library/
Questions?

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