Blog-Wiki-Doc-a-Palooza: Aligning Communications Objectives with the Right NSDL Semantic Digital Library Service

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NSDL is pleased to offer three ways for users to contribute their knowledge and expertise to the Library: Expert Voices, NSDL’s blogosphere; NSDL Wiki, a collaborative space for creating, annotating and organizing information; and On Ramp, NSDL’s institutional digital repository content management system for publications, research, and teaching materials. Using NCore semantic digital library services that are “plugged in” to the NSDL Data Repository, library users can engage in purposeful or serendipitous activities, ranging from teachers who need just-in-time resources aligned with standards along with suggestions for classroom use, to at-large science buffs conducting research around personal interests. This poster presents a roadmap for matching semantic services with communications objectives.

These services represent three distinct tiers of communications—from short news and information items, to mid-sized editable articles, to long, durable scholarly publications. This poster describes each tier, along with communications use cases for internal and external audiences that expose dynamic views of the Library through user-created semantic layers of meaning.

1. Expert Voices (http://expertvoices.nsdl.org/) is based on the Word-Press open source blogging system. Word-Press is a popular Web open source technology that supports a “website where entries are written in chronological order and commonly displayed in reverse chronological order.” Search engines are “tuned” to detect Word Press content because they are interested in presenting new content, and understand that this software is partly responsible for generating the more than 106 million blogs currently available on the Web.3

“A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs. Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on art (artblog), photographs (photoblog), sketchblog, videos (vlog), music (MP3 blog), audio (podcasting) and are part of a wider network of social media.”2

Example of a successful NSDL Expert Voices blog: Connecting News with National Science Standards (http://expertvoices.nsdl.org/connectingnews/) The NSDL Middle School Portal Pathway at Ohio State University posts a weekly annotated news item for science teachers that makes it easy to blend current events into the regular curriculum. Project staff link a current news article to related teaching resources that connect specific content standards to the event. Articles may be appropriate for students to read in the blog, or they may serve as background knowledge for teachers and inspiration for subsequent instructional activities. The articles aim at a grade 5-8 audience and include links to lessons, reference articles, and definitions. Currently this blog hosts the most visitors to NSDL’s blogosphere.

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