

Young People's Access (or not) to Social Media in School and College Libraries

Emma Hadfield

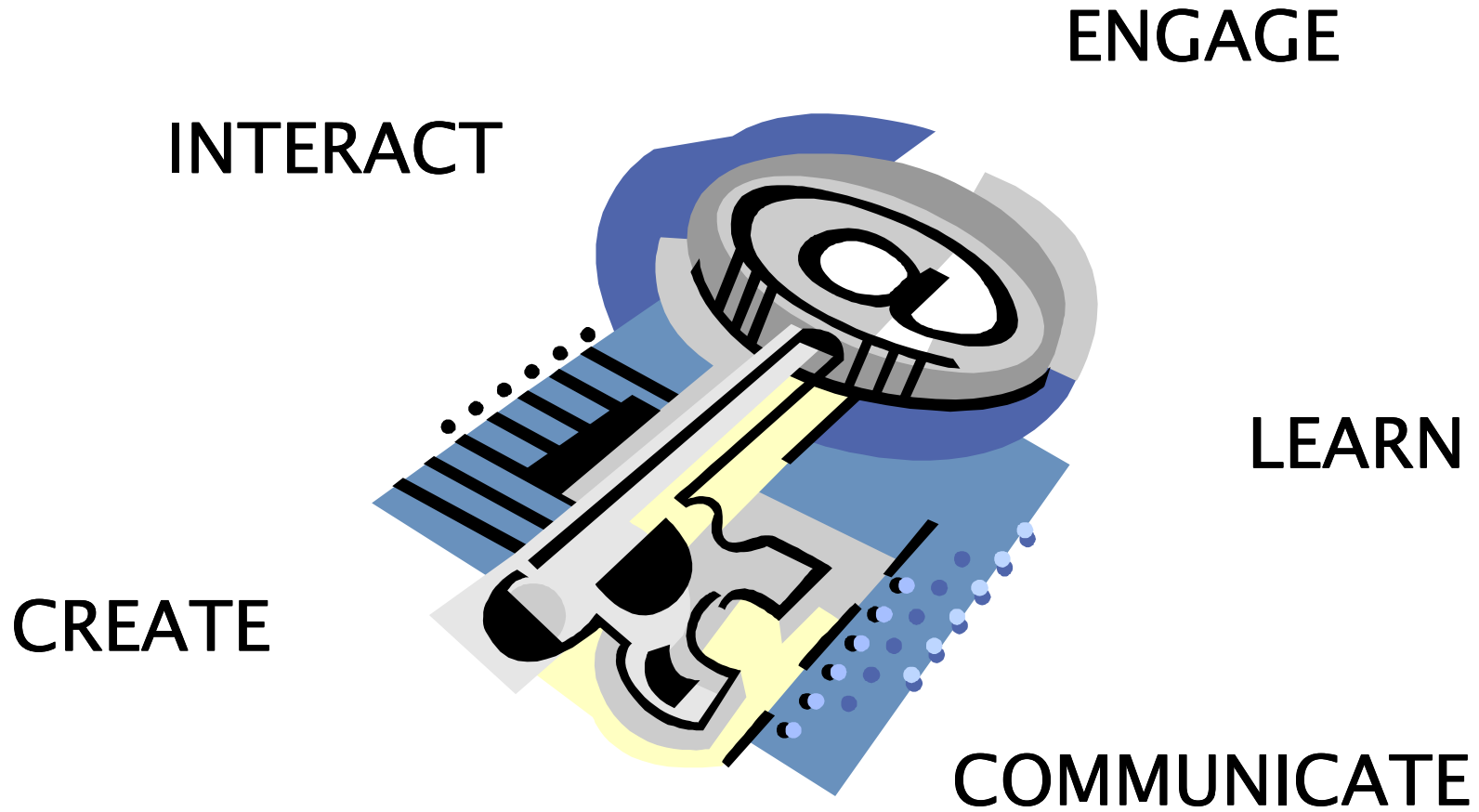
Learning Resources Manager: Thomas Rotherham College

Committee Member: CILIP Diversity Group

Overview

- Background
- My research
- Reasons for access restrictions
- What next?

Background



Background

Recent Statistics

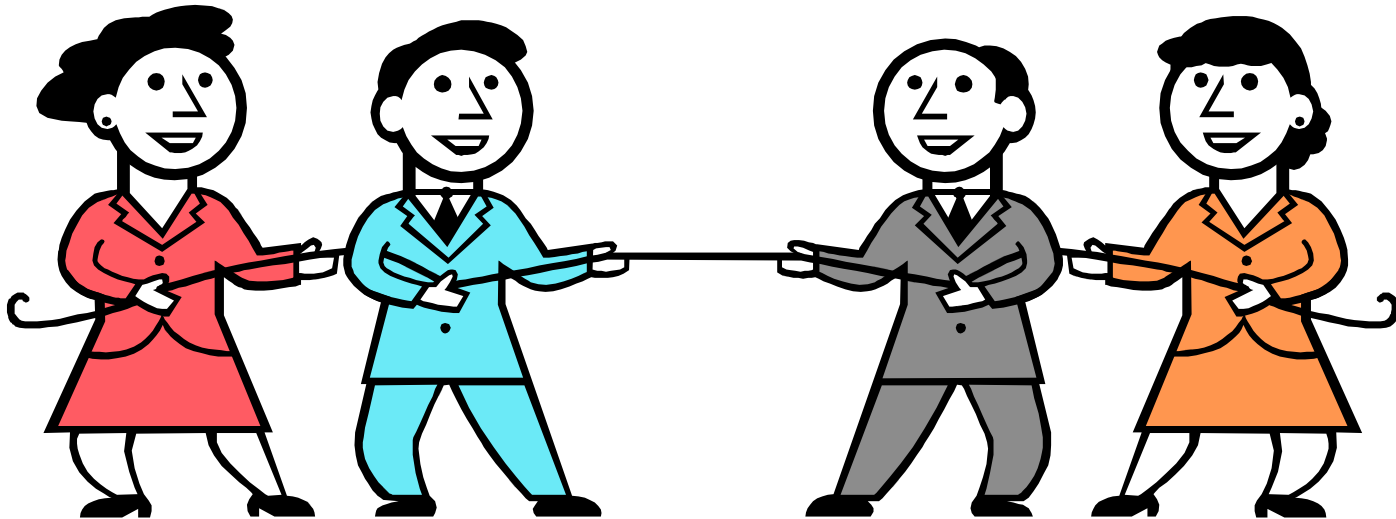
- 99% of young people in the UK aged 4-18 access the internet (Ofsted 2010: 7)
- 80% of UK internet users spend time on social media sites (Facebook most popular) (Nielson Online in The Independent 2010)
- 77% of 13-16 year olds and 38% of 9-12 year olds in the European Union have a profile on a social networking site (Europa 2011)

The Conflict

LEISURE

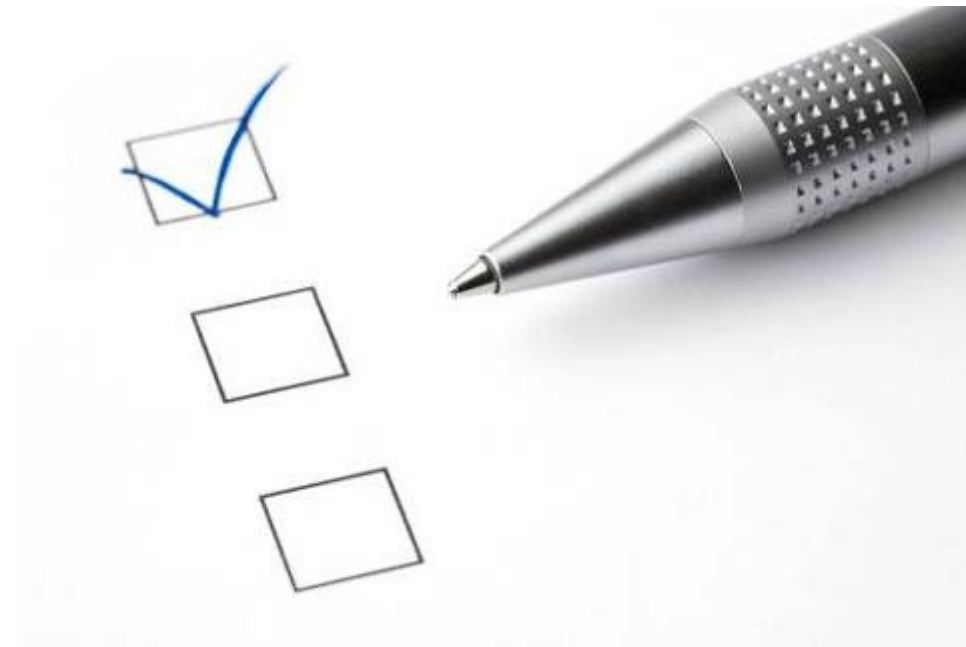
LEARNING

VS



My Research

- **2 surveys** (using SurveyMonkey and various mailing lists)
 - i) College/School Libraries throughout the UK
 - ii) Students aged 16-19 in a sixth form college



Survey One: School/College Libraries

- 100 responses:-
 - 71: Further Education Colleges
 - 15: Sixth Form College
 - 3: Private Schools with Sixth Form
 - 6: Comprehensive Schools with Sixth Form
 - 5: Comprehensive Schools without Sixth Form
- Institutions based throughout UK:-
 - 3: North East
 - 9: North West
 - 23: Yorkshire and Humberside
 - 13: East Midlands
 - 4: West Midlands
 - 10: East Anglia
 - 12: London
 - 7: South East
 - 10: South West
 - 4: Scotland
 - 5: Wales

Survey One: School/College Libraries

- Which social media tools have restricted access:-
 - Social Networking (Facebook/Twitter): 82
 - Online Video (YouTube): 40
 - Photosharing (Flickr): 24
 - Social Bookmarking (Delicious): 21
 - Blogs: 23
 - Wikis: 12
 - Other: Second Life, Dropbox...Survey Monkey!
 - Only 9 respondents did not restrict social media

Survey One: School/College Libraries

- Reasons for restrictions:-

- Safety reasons: 54

- Material non educational: 49

- Causes disruption: 71

- Bandwith: 17

“IT don't like them for some reason”

“Cyberbullying is a concern”

“PCs are for college purposes only...restrictions prevent constant playing”

“Students requested Facebook to be blocked due to disruptive influence”

Survey One: School/College Libraries

What social media tools are being used in education by librarians and teachers?

- Librarians: Lots of evidence including:-
 - YouTube, Delicious, Blogs, NetVibes, Animoto, Diigo, Wikis
- Teachers: Limited evidence but some use of:-
 - Blogs, YouTube, Facebook

Survey One: School/College Libraries

- Do institutions have e-safety policies?
 - Yes: 63.3%
 - No: 11.4%
 - Not sure: 25.3%
- Is e-safety training provided to students?
 - Not officially embedded into curriculum
 - Ad-hoc basis, mostly during IT or PHSE classes
 - Teacher's responsibility
- Who creates e-safety policies?
 - Senior Managers: 70.9%
 - Computing Managers: 58.2%
 - Library Managers: 25.3%
 - Governors: 11.4%
 - Local Government Bodies: 6.3%
 - External Bodies: 2.5%

Survey One: School/College Libraries

- Summary:-
 - High proportion restrict access, particularly to social networking
 - Main reason that it is seen as disruptive, followed by having no educational value
 - E-safety not fully integrated into education – poses potential risk

Survey Two: Students

- Sixth form college students aged 16-19
- Approximately 1,500 students enrolled
- Survey completed by 92 students (6.1% of student population)



Survey Two: Students

- How often do students use the internet:-
 - 87% several times a day
- Which social websites do they use:-
 - 94.4%: Facebook
 - 96.7%: YouTube
 - 35.6%: Twitter
 - 73.3%: Wikipedia
 - 26.7%: Blogs
 - 0%: none

Survey Two

Students

- The reasons for using social media:-
 - Facebook: communicating with friends; finding things out; sharing information; entertainment
 - YouTube: entertainment; finding things out; study help.
- How often do students use social media for study help:-
 - 22.2%: Regularly
 - 62.2%: Sometimes
 - 10%: Never
 - 5.6% Not sure

Survey Two: Students

- Do the internet restrictions in college interfere with their studies:-
 - Yes: 58.4%

“It restricts me from finding out information for research projects”

“YouTube...education videos are a LOT easier to follow and understand than reading a text book”

“It’s difficult to get feedback on media projects without Facebook”

Survey Two: Students

- Summary:-
 - Young people spend a high proportion of time on the internet
 - Social networking and online video are popular
 - Uses of social media include leisure, but also learning
 - The visual and collaborative element of social media appeals

Reasons for Restrictions

Safety

- “Pupils were more vulnerable overall when schools used locked down systems because they were not given enough opportunities to learn how to assess and manage risk for themselves (Ofsted 2010: 5).
- “Students need to learn to use these tools appropriately to harness the benefits and avoid the pitfalls” (Weaver 2010: 24)

Reasons for Restrictions

Non-Educational Use

- Chatting, messaging, posting, blogging, tagging, linking, bookmarking.....
- Organise events, debate, discuss, create, showcase content, gain feedback, discover, learn to judge/evaluate, adapt to new technologies, data protection, copyright, self-representation (Childnet International 2008)
- Communication, team working, collaboration, organisation, ICT, creativity, literacy, confidence, motivation, independent learning

LIFELONG LEARNING SKILLS

Reasons for Restrictions Disruption

- Creates noise and disrespect and reduces amount of available computers for study
- Multi-tasking – does this maintain concentration and motivation?



The Digital Divide



- Restricted access
 - could reduce skill sets and future career prospects
 - may not adequately prepare young people for Higher Education
 - could create digital exclusion for students with no access from home

“social networking sites in college would be useful for people who don’t have internet access at home and so are missing out”

What next?

- Staff training on social media: increase knowledge and interest
- Regular and embedded E-safety training for staff and students
- Internet restrictions relaxed

References

- Childnet International (2008) *Young People and Social Networking Services: A Childnet International Research Report* [Online] Available at http://www.digizen.org/socialnetworking/downloads/Young_People_and_Social_Networking_Services_full_report.pdf. [Accessed 5 May 2011].
- Europa (2011) *Digital Agenda: children using social networks at a younger age; many unaware of basic privacy risk, says survey* [Online] Available at <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/479&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>. [Accessed 1 June 2011].
- National Literacy Trust (2009) *Young People's Writing: Attitudes, Behaviour and the Role of Technology* [Online] Available at http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0000/0560/Writing_survey_2009_Executive.pdf [Accessed 5 May 2011].
- Ofsted (2010) *The Safe Use of New Technologies* [Online] Available at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/The-safe-use-of-new-technologies> [Accessed 5 May 2011].
- Selwyn, N. (2009) 'The Digital Native – Myth and Reality' *Aslib Proceedings: New Information Perspectives*. 61 (4) pp.364-379. [Online] Available from Emerald www.emeraldinsight.com [Accessed 22 February 2011].
- The Independent. (2010) 'Decoding Britain's Digital Divide' *The Independent*. February 3. [Online] Available at <http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/features/decoding-britains-digital-divide-1887395.html> [Accessed 6 May 2011].
- Weaver, A. (2010) 'Facebook and other Pandora's Boxes' *Access*. 24 (4) pp 24-32.

Contact Details

Emma Hadfield

Learning Resources Manager

Thomas Rotherham College

ehadfield@thomroth.ac.uk