Putting a Face to a Name: Using Technology to Reach Out to Overseas Distance Learners

Leanne Young
Distance Services Librarian
University of Sunderland
leanne.young@sunderland.ac.uk
Distance Learning at Sunderland

- 41% students at Sunderland study off campus (2010/11)
  - 6,155 overseas or independent students registered with library
  - 2,149 students studying at a partner centre in the UK

- Different Models of Distance Learning
  - Independent Learning
  - Students studying at partner centres (not local partners)
Challenges

We want to reach out & offer support to all these students but we’ve faced a number of challenges:

- Many distance learning programmes are not run through VLE
- Students tend to contact staff at their partner college if they have a problem/question
- Staff at partner centres are like many other academic staff – they don’t always have best grasp of library themselves
- Sunderland has offered a distance learning library service since 1997 – when the technologies of today were not available
- We don’t have a lot of money!
Updating Our Service Offer

Our Quality Promises

"No matter where you are, when or how you reach us, we will strive to deliver an equivalent library service."

"You will have the opportunity to develop information literacy skills that will help you to use library services to your best advantage, support your academic progress and your future development."

Student Familiarity with Technology

Availability of Technology

Ubiquitous Access to the Internet
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Workshop

**Individually:**

- take a few minutes to think about how you deliver support / information skills,
  - have you incorporated any technologies into your teaching?
  - Write down one or two experiences that come to mind. What technology did you use?
  - How did you use it?

**In small Groups:**

Share your experience with other members of your group and think about following question:

- Did you run into any problems using technology in your sessions and how did they impact your use of technology in future sessions?
Skills for Learning

if we are committed to providing the “very best possible learning experience for students” this must include both access to high quality learning resources and the skills to use these effectively

University Library Services Skills for Learning Strategy, 2011

Distance Learning Service then...

In the early years of our distance learning service it was difficult to provide an equitable service - especially in terms of Information Skills

- technology was not as widely available
- we had (& still have) a limited budget
- some students had little/no access to the internet
- if they did it wasn’t very fast

Videos on CDs that Faculties would make available

Help guides

Distance Learning Service now...

It’s a lot easier to provide an equitable service...

- many new technologies - many of which are free
- we still have a limited budget
- pretty much all of our students have internet access
- Still some problems with internet speed in some areas

Captivate/Camtasia Video & Tutorials
Synchronous support via LiveChat, Skype & AnyMeeting
Help guides & blog posts
What do you do when

- You don't subscribe to Elluminate (or similar software)?
- You haven't got money to spend on subscribing to them?
Synchronous Support

- 6 sessions
- A lot of preparation
- 165 students in total signed up - not all attended
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"It would have been really useful to have this session in late September/October last year... I have struggled to use the journal articles part of the library and been frustrated by this."

"I wish these kind of sessions would have been made earlier as I just learnt about using the library services during the last term and this is my senior year."
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Integrating Social Media
Facebook & Twitter

Duong Duyen
Hi, how can I access e-books in Library? Even I log in to My Athens, go to Sunderland University Library but I don't receive the book I want at all. Thank you.

Like · Comment · 21 December 2011 at 13:27

University of Sunderland Library Services
Hi - you need to go to our Library Catalogue (see the link to the left here or on our webpages) and search for the books you want. If it is available as an e-book you will see a 'link in the record. If you only want to access e-books you can choose the More Search Options option and then search the E-Book Collection only. On clicking on the link you will be prompted to log in with your Athens Account. I hope that helps.

21 December 2011 at 15:25 · Like · Remove preview

Cwmiss Rekha
School of Business and Computer Science (SBSC) students in Trinidad are having problems trying to get their Athens account. Our cases for exams are to come tomorrow according to you all. See you all an email moments ago with my user id etc. Any help appreciated. We need this to access e-books and journals. Please help...

Like · Comment · 14 November 2011 at 14:49

University of Sunderland Library Services
Hi. We have just checked our email account and unfortunately I cannot see your message. Please could you email library@sunderland.ac.uk as soon as possible and let us know your University User ID and we will try our best to help. Thanks Kay
14 November 2011 at 16:27 · Like

Cwmiss Rekha
Hi - we have located your message now and have just replied to your email. We have contacted the Faculty of Business and they have updated your registration details. You should be able to log into your University Email Account tomorrow with...

See more
14 November 2011 at 17:10 · Like

Cwmiss Rekha
Thanks sooooo much for your quick reply. Got it, tried it, it works. Felt like the 13th hour. We were running out of time depending on SBSC getting it for us before exams and cases. So had decided email and send an FB message to you all directly.
15 November 2011 at 13:44 · Like

Write a comment...
The Future

Elluminate/Class Live

Offer Online induction & skills support all year round.
- Sessions for specific Faculties/Centres e.g. Applied Sciences & TESOL students
- General sessions at key times eg. before assignment times

Short videos
- Personalised
- In response to common questions
- iPad
- Captivate/Camtasia

Facebook & Twitter