

Engaging Our Digital Natives: Technologies to Inspire Information Literacy Teaching was hosted by the **Yorkshire Universities Information Skills Group** at the **University of Bradford** and attended by **Lex Rigby, Brenda Steel and Emily Stock**.

Using technology to be more inclusive and effective - Dr Simon Ball (JISC TechDis)

Simon's presentation can be downloaded from the [TechDis website](#). You must log in to access Simon's presentations but if you'd rather not register [email me](#) and I'll send you a copy.

JISC TechDis is one of six advisory services offering guidance on the use of inclusive technologies. Within his presentation Simon included links to 10 handy resources for practitioners, which are listed below:

- [JISC TechDis Community](#);
- [Accessibility Essentials](#);
- [Teaching Inclusively](#);
- [Free software](#);
- [Assistive Technologies](#);
- [Case Studies](#) (HEAT Scheme);
- [Getting Started: Mobile Learning](#);
- [Creating Accessible Learning Objects](#);
- [Web 2.0 Evaluation Tool](#);
- [Briefing: Inclusive Culture](#) (A research paper publishing the findings and recommendations of Simon's study to identify what policy and management tools are helping to embed inclusive practice with technology as a whole institution culture, and also what is preventing it).

The main focus of Simon's keynote was to show the group working examples of inclusive technologies such as:

Visualisation/Presentation Tools

- [Instant Presenter](#) - An online recording device delivered and developed by TechDis service and partners, which incorporate presentations and presentation materials;
- [Camstudio](#) (see TechDis [demo](#)) - Video-streaming software useful for creating screencast type tutorials. The software is used to capture both audio and screen activity to create AVI video footage;
- [Wink](#) (see TechDis [demo](#)) - An interactive learning object tool that enables users to capture screens for the creation of audio visual screenshots with helpful tip boxes and buttons. This software is similar to Captivate, our current screencast software;
- [Xerte](#) - This is a piece of learning object software developed by Nottingham University, it produces interactive, rich media learning objects that run in a Flash player. See the TechDis pages for [manual](#). [Toolkits](#) can be downloaded from the play site with the username - techdis and password - jisc;

Reading/Recording Tools

- [Audacity](#) (downloadable - portable Audacity requires no download and can be run from memory sticks) - A sound recording package and simple route into creating podcasts or supporting material as mp3s. To get the most out of it try out some of the supporting [manuals/tutorials](#);

- [D Speech](#) (see TechDis [demo](#)) - Text to speech software used to convert text into audio using computerised voices. This is another piece of software that can be run from a memory stick;
- Robobrain - This email service requires you to send Word attachments to britspeech@robobraille.org without subject or email content in order to convert text to speech. The service then emails back an audio version of your file;
- [Read the Words](#) - A \$15 service to convert Word, PDFs, web pages or RSS feeds to audio files.

One last thing - [AccessApps](#) is an initiative supported by JISC/TechDis consisting of over 50 open source/freeware applications that can be run from a USB stick to support access.

Web 2.0 and you too - Dave Pattern (University of Huddersfield)

The focus of Dave's session was to introduce the idea of data storage getting faster, smaller and cheaper as technology develops. He used the example of an old hard-drive brought from a computer fair in 2000, costing £125 for 20gb compared to 1500gbs costing £97.50 in 2009. i.e. It is becoming faster and cheaper to store greater amounts of information on smaller devices and unlike the Web 1.0 era of slow access speeds and limited interactivity we're now using Web 2.0 to interact with information to create a readable/writable web with high interactivity. In the days of Web 1.0 the Internet was used to connect computers whereas in the Web 2.0 era we're increasingly using the web to connect with people, to share, participate and collaborate in the personalisation of information.

The second part of Dave's keynote focused more on what will happen when information becomes free, for example when all the books in the world fit on one electronic reader device. For the researcher of the future he quotes from a [UCL briefing paper](#) on information behaviour which suggests 'the most significant impact for research will not be how things get published, but how they get accessed'. Some of the challenges we face include reducing the barriers we have to accessing information - information literacy and information systems. As librarians we should be looking to create systems that match user behaviour. Some useful stats from the presentation indicate that only 1% use library web pages as a starting place for information searches and 30% have never even heard of a database (unsurprisingly 84% begin with search engines).

Finally, Dave moves on to talk about Library 2.0 - what is it (a modernised library service actively engaging its users) and what it aspires to be (The 'Third Place'). See Dave's [slides](#) from 57 onwards for some working examples (which includes an image of The Information Commons - slide 76). There is also a [Flickr set](#) from the event uploaded by Dave.

Case Studies:

During the afternoon we broke into smaller groups to listen to a showcase of working examples from the Yorkshire region. The information below only includes details of those attended.

Web-based information skills tutorials, screencasts, Flash tutorials and blogs (Jenny Pacheco and Vic Grant - University of Sheffield)

Vic introduced the University of Sheffield's session with an interesting quote from the recently published JISC report on [Higher Education in a Web 2.0 World](#), which looks at our changing role in higher education. In order to make inquiry based learning relevant we need to make it fun and collaborative to appeal to learners in today's digital age. The use of Web

2.0 technologies is high and pervasive across all age groups from 11 to 15 upwards and so the development of new skill sets need to be addressed to meet learner expectations.

One way in which Sheffield University has begun to embrace the digital future is with the introduction of library blogs, screencasts and flash tutorials with interactive features such as 'drag and drops'. For anyone outside the university there is a [showcase](#) of material available online, but for the rest of us see the [Information Skills Resource pages](#).

Tutorials using Captivate, Articulate and Informs (Alison Robson, Susan Smith and Jennifer Wilson - Leeds Metropolitan University)

Leeds Metropolitan used their session to discuss one of their projects to create structured tutorials as learning objects using Articulate, Captivate and Intute Informs. The presenters discussed how to use the software, emphasising it as a non-techies dream to create visually pleasing tutorials from PowerPoint slides and how they embedded the object within both the library and law department to help students understand legal terms and search legal sources. It was especially useful for law students needing help with legal citations.

QR codes and mobiles (Andrew Walsh - University of Huddersfield)

Rather than focusing on the use of QR codes in libraries Andrew used his session to explain what [QR codes](#) are and offered examples of codes for us to try out with a selection of phones. He also included information on Huddersfield's '[Text a Librarian](#)' service and the text wall, which displays public messages. The service is also intended to be used to text students reminders about returning books etc.

There is a [blog](#) Andrew will be updating with information about the QR project for anyone interested.

Interactive tutorials: bite-sized chunks for new students and engaging undergraduates and researchers with Articulate Engage (Helen Howard and Michelle Schneider - University of Leeds)

The final session attended was presented by the University of Leeds and like Leeds Met focused on a demonstration of information [tutorials](#) using [Articulate Engage](#) and a reference toolkit found at - [skills@library](#). Again it was interesting to see how easy it is to use Articulate to develop fully functional and interactive tutorials that support a wide variety of file types as well as Captivate screencasts and Flash. The software also includes a Quizmaker to create multiple choice questionnaires and quizzes that would be useful for gauging feedback from students.

(Lex Rigby)