

## **Meeting Summary: Web 2.0 - The Intellectuals' Playground? Boston KM Forum, Breakfast Discussion, Oct. 6, 2006**

We discussed: How do we reconcile the ability for two select groups - intellectuals and dilettantes - to afford the time to engage fully in the Web 2.0 features (blogs, wikis, RSS, social book marking, etc.) and those whose points of view or interests don't get represented? Are search results getting skewed toward the perspective of effete classes that have the time and inclination to position their interests and preferences more prominently? How can we truly democratize the content mix and expose more diverse points of view?

The cynics among us were persuaded that these new Web 2.0 options have value and will create more options for the non-effete, non-intelligentsia, and less educated to participate in the information sharing and discussions they choose to join. It has increased opportunity for interacting in public debate rather than restricting it as the mainstream media often does.

Until recently, Web content has largely been controlled and distributed by commercial enterprises (e.g. publishers, e-commerce vendors), educational institutions, and government agencies. Introducing more opportunities for everyone to become a publisher, editor or writer increases the diversity of points of view.

A big part of using non-traditional media, commercial, and government sources on the Web is that, like making discriminating choices about which print media, TV or radio station we are going to use, we simply have another bunch of options.

For most of those attending the meeting, using blogs, wikis, etc. was a matter of considering the context of the information. Trust in blog content is largely built through relationships and awareness that we have of the blogger. Social book-marking is useful when we find content marked by people whose interests match ours or whose previous information has proved to be useful or trustworthy.

One person considers select bloggers to be particularly useful as aggregators of content that he may want to consider.

Next meeting topic: Sharing trusted blogs: whose blog do you go to?