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What's trending in the library cybersphere – Recent conferences and posts focus on data and information literacy

Adetoun A. Oyelude

This edition looks at trending snippets mainly from library conferences around the world in the past few months. The conferences and the themes reflect the thoughts and focus of library and information professionals worldwide as seen in the internet reports from wikis and blogs. Thus far, data and data management is the most focused topic of 2017.

Data mining at the library of congress

Daniel Shapiro in his report on the LITA blog described his experience at the two-day workshop organized by the Library of Congress, George Washington University and George Mason University. The workshop titled “Collections as data: hack-to-learn” had four datasets and five tools to work with. Over the two-day period, participants worked with data tools such as OpenRefine, Voyant, MALLEY, Gephi and Carto. Working with the data and data analysis tools for Shapiro yielded results, but the usual process in research of formulating hypothesis is still crucial even with all the deluge of data. Find out more at <http://litablog.org/2017/06/hack-to-learn-two-days-of-data-munging-in-our-nations-capital/>

The Innovative Library Classroom 2017 Conference (TILC)

Steve Kramer gave a report of TILC, which was held on May, 9, 2017, at Radford University, VA, and posted on May, 15, 2017, at <https://liaisonlife.wordpress.com/>. The one-day conference was impactful and discussed many topics affecting library classrooms and the innovations trending in them. Teaching and leadership, teaching mindfulness and social justice, building classroom

engagement before class begins and other such topics were treated. Lightning rounds at the conference also expanded on the need to train library professionals, as well as users of libraries, and get all involved in library instruction as information literacy is the key. Find out more from <http://theinnovativelibraryclassroom.weebly.com/2017-conference.html>

The AfLIA Conference, Yaounde, Cameroun

The AfLIA Conference held from 14-15 May, 2017, was preceded by a two-day workshop on strengthening innovative library leaders (SILL) that was coordinated by the Mortenson Center of the University of Illinois, Urbana Champagne. The workshop training was to prepare librarians for leadership with emphasis on collaboration and effective communication. The sessions also looked at a wide range of issues bothering on practical experiences on the job. The main conference with the theme: “Libraries in the development agenda: Repositioning African libraries to deliver on the future we want”, had 34 papers discussed. The conference sought to encourage effective information delivery on the African continent and encourage libraries in Africa to move toward becoming centers of activities. A summation of ideas put forth was that, for librarians and information specialists in Africa to get the future that they want, networking and collaboration are imperative. Find out more from the perspective of the International Library and Culture Exchange Group (ILCE-IG) at <https://ilceig.wordpress.com/2017/05/29/the-4th-african-library-summit-2nd-af-lia-conference-yaounde-cameroun/>

IASSIST Conference, Lawrence, Kansas

The IASSIST Conference which was held in Lawrence, Kansas, from 23 to 26 May, 2017, with many papers delivered and a colorful poster session which delivered data-based messages, was a refreshing tonic for participants. The IASSIST Qualitative Social Science/Humanities Data Interest Group (QSSHDIG) Session with topic “Stuck in the middle with you: Building bridges for qualitative social science and humanities researchers” discussed intersections of qualitative social science and humanities “data” needs, a pilot study of the research management practices of historians and mapped their concerns and challenges to questions of research data management among other concerns of transparency in qualitative social science data. From the papers to the Birds of a feather session, to the panel discussions, the main facts gained suggested that qualitative and quantitative data are being seriously worked. A synergy of data work, data management outfits and researchers, is resulting in the focused work of IASSIST at: www.openconf.org/IASSIST2017/modules/request.php?module=oc_program&action=program.php&p=program

Linked Open Data in Libraries, Archives and Museums 2017 Summit

The Fourth International Linked Open Data in Libraries, Archives and Museums (LODLAM) Summit will be held in Venice, Italy, at the Fondazione Cini from June 28-29, 2017. As reported on their website, LODLAM is holding the summit to bring together thought leaders from around the world working in digital cultural heritage, eScience, and the digital humanities to debate, network and share their ideas,

latest projects, hacking skills, data and much more. “Linked data is a combination of techniques, tools and web standards that enable the World Wide Web to evolve from a web of documents to a web of data. When applied to libraries, archives, and museums, linked data transforms the way we discover, analyze, and visualize cultural, scientific and government information”. See more at <https://summit2017.lodlam.net/>

Digital meets culture

To propagate digital culture, Digitalmeetsculture is an online portal that gathers information about various digital cultures around the world, taking into account the different approaches that science, cultural heritage and arts have in the digital age. The portal, www.digitalmeetsculture.net/our-mission/ “aims to act as a reference point and as a valuable mean of information and communication for different users in a global dimension. It is conceived as a meeting place between technologies and arts and humanity vs management methods”.

Technology as the enabler for sustainable services

An article by Ben Sullivan from Axiell explores how libraries can use technology to expand the delivery of library services to the community and make the most of volunteer resources. He recommended four considerations for technology that can help to create

sustainable, community-centric services as follows:

1. use simple and user-friendly tools;
2. embrace digital and new technologies;
3. make the most of big data and analytics; and
4. use cloud computing to help you take your library to the community. More can be found at www.axiell.co.uk/role-technology-creating-sustainable-community-centric-library-services/

LabArchives, cloud notebooks, etc.

Columbia University libraries reported on success in getting data organized for faculty and students. In collaboration with CUIT and the Office of the Executive Vice President for Research, the libraries offered a twenty-first century alternative to inefficient documentation practices, in the electronic lab notebook tagged LabArchives. The notebook keeps research findings organized and easily retrievable. The report explains the advantages of using the notebook, progress made and some challenges among others. Dealing with data just got trendy! See the report at http://library.columbia.edu/news/libraries/2017/2017-03-20_Electronic_Lab_Notebooks.html

Trending technologies displayed

Free online resources. Phil Shapiro in his blogspot, which is referred to on the Techsoupforlibraries.org blog, described

the use of free cloud tools, open badges, Moodles and more. The blog encouraged libraries to make available the free resources to their young clientele, especially through their computers. This is calculated to enhance access to these resources and also bring the youth to use the facilities. Find out more at www.techsoupforlibraries.org/blog/how-free-cloud-tools-enhance-public-access-computer-s-at-my-library

Gamification. In a related development, Shani Cairns in a blogspot described how technology used for gamification was useful in getting more productivity out of the workforce anywhere. It was suggested that at project meetings, or team building events, games could be used to enhance or bring out productivity. The thinking by those researching the subject is that “gamification taps into intrinsic motivators; connects the dots between employee motivation and company success; is data driven; sustainable; and enhances loyalty and drives revenue”. Toys, puzzles and other games are the trends in increasing productivity. More can be read at <http://access-information.com/work-smarter-not-harder-gamification-enhances-productivity/>. All these are trending.

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