

LibraryCrunch

Service for the Next Generation Library: A Library 2.0 Perspective by Michael Casey

[« Kurt Vonnegut, 1922 - 2007](#) | [Main](#) | [my favorite slide from Jenny Levine's presentation at CIL2007](#) »

Discuss



Michael Stephens and I are writing our next column for [LJ's The Transparent Library](#) and we realized what a perfect place to discuss the recent *Wired* piece "The Naked CEO" by Clive Thompson.

Thompson blogged about the article while writing the piece and asked for input. At his blog, Thompson sums up so much of what we've been discussing about the advent of web 2.0, Library 2.0 and the almost-left-the-station Cluetrain:

Reputation Is Everything: Google isn't a search engine. Google is a reputation-managment system. What do we search for, anyway? Mostly people, products, ideas -- and what we want to know are, what do other people think about this stuff? All this blogging, Flickr, MySpacing, journaling -- and, most of all, linking -- has transformed the Internet into a world where it's incredibly easy to figure out what the world thinks about you, your neighbor, the company you work for, or the stuff you were blabbing about four years ago. It might seem paradoxical, but in a situation like that, it's better to be an active participant in the ongoing conversation than to stand off and refuse to participate. Because, okay, let's say you don't want to blog, or to Flickr, or to participate in online discussion threads. That means the next time someone Googles you they'll find ... everything that everyone else has said about you, rather than the stuff you've said yourself. (Again -- just ask Sony about this one.) The only way to improve and buff your reputation is to dive in and participate. Be open. Be generous. Throw stuff out there -- your thoughts, your ideas, your personality. Trust comes from transparency.

Let's try this. We'd love to hear from directors, librarians, library staff -- heck even users. Please comment here or at [Tame the Web](#).

Some points to ponder:

- What does it mean to be radically transparent?
- How closely tied is it to radical trust?
- Is secrecy dead?
- What reputation do you want your library to have? What reputation DOES it have?

Posted by Michael on April 17, 2007 10:58 AM | [Permalink](#)

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Well, to take 'radical' at its root meaning (har har) 'radical transparency' suggests that all of your processes are founded on openness and accountability. That, as far as reasonable demands for privacy allow, policy systems etc are carried out in the open, reported on openly and open to comments,

'Radical trust' has always suggested to me that your relationship is founded on trust- not exchange, or contract, but the idea that you are worthy of being told things and welcomed in because you are trusted to use that welcome well.

Posted by: [Pete Smith](#) | [April 17, 2007 11:52 AM](#)

I attended a session on 'Radical Trust: State of the Museum Blogosphere' last week at the Museums and the Web 2007 conference.

I must admit that, although the session was very interesting, the term 'Radical Trust'; didn't do a lot for me.

I blogged about this on my UKWebFocus blog at <http://ukwebfocus.wordpress.com/2007/04/19/radical-trust-were-doing-it/> - and have just received a comment from collin douma from radicaltrust.ca, who seems to be in agreement that 'radical trust' is what libraries and museums have always been doing.

He's invited feedback on this.

Brian Kelly, UKOLN

Posted by: [Brian Kelly](#) | [April 19, 2007 11:15 PM](#)

In many management training courses, they often refer to radical trust as the type of trust you give in which your life depended on the other person. (The example is when a Navy Seal gives it). Its pretty extreme and makes one very reluctant to be trusting if that is the angle to take.

I think the transparent manager has to be able to open the decision making to his or her staff and be able to handle criticism openly. Managers must remember that if they don't open up decision making, often the decision may not be followed.

I would like the library to be as open as possible. When a patron asks why we do a certain thing, or don't have a certain book, I should be able to explain why and be comfortable with showing the patrons the data in the decision-making. I would like to have that reputation.

Posted by: [Jeff](#) | [April 23, 2007 12:51 PM](#)

As a library director, transparency is one of my major focuses. I'm not sure I've reached the radical point yet, but I am striving towards it. To create transparency, I have many many meetings with all levels of staff from different departments. I also involve staff in ways they aren't used to, such as department staff being very involved in hiring their new department head. Conversation is encouraged, talking to me and asking questions is important, and being willing to bring up problems is appreciated.

I also try to use technology to promote transparency. We have several staff blogs where all levels of staff from administration to pages are welcome to post about anything. And I promote IMing among the staff as a way to break down barriers. While I have a certain number of experienced staff members who have been here for 20+ years, I find that they are often the ones most willing to play and learn. I am constantly surprised by them.

Any meetings that take place are blogged about and the minutes are posted on email and blogs so that staff have them very quickly. I want the library staff to all feel they are part of the conversation, part of the solution, and a great asset to the library. I believe that a large part of radical transparency is radical conversation and radical trust combined.

I want our reputation to be one of respect for one another, for our patrons and for our community. I want everyone to feel they are part of the larger conversation, whether they are young, old, experienced, new, patron or staff, they are vital to our success.

Posted by: [Tasha](#) | [April 24, 2007 02:59 PM](#)

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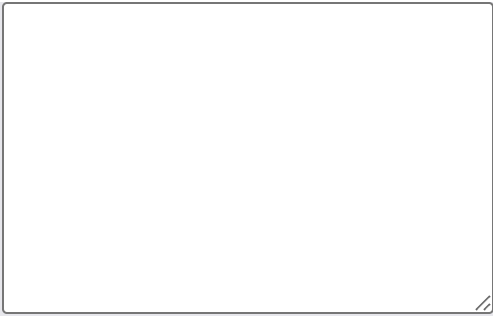
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