

# **LIBRARY USERS TRAINING VIDEOS: A NEW METHOD OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

ÀNGELS CARLES-POMAR, ANA CASTELLANO

UNIVERSITAT AUTÒNOMA DE BARCELONA, BELLATERRA (BCN), SPAIN

Angels.carles@uab.cat

**Key words:** users training, information skills, continuing education, learning, assisting users, teaching videos.

## **Abstract:**

The Medical Library of the UAB organizes courses and training sessions to explain how the various services and areas of the library operate. This includes explanations about how to consult the catalogue, or where and how to locate documents. These courses and training sessions are designed to help users to get to know and understand the tools and services that the Medical Library has to offer. After this first stage, courses that are more specialized are also given, on search strategies and how to locate information resources on a specific subject, and how to find information in general, etc. these courses are free for members of the UAB university community, but they must attend them. Users' preferences are changing; they now prefer flexible attendance rather than fixed users training courses, in other words, anywhere at anytime. Audiovisual systems might provide a good solution for the students as they allow training and instruction to be given as many times as the users want. On the other hand, every day the difference between young and older students, staff or the faculty is increasing, this is called the "digital gap". We think we can help our users to search, find and manage bibliographic information and at the same time, we can contribute to make new technologies easier and friendly for all library users. Tutorial video records could be a good solution.

## **Introduction:**

In 1999, several European countries signed the Bologna Declaration. The European process runs towards to building a new Europe, a Europe of Knowledge. The agreement means some higher education reforms. European Higher Education Institutions, for their part, have accepted the challenge and taken up a main role in constructing the European Area for Higher Education.

The introduction of new changes in Spanish higher education is a paradigm shift and have has wide repercussions for libraries. In many cases, this represents a great challenge as the introduction of new innovative teaching methods involves an intensive use of the library. Students need to use the library for information. The librarian becomes the facilitator, his role is changing, and library has to adapt to new times and help students in their education.

The UAB Library Services consist of seven libraries (Humanities, Social Sciences, Communication Sciences and General Newspaper Archives, Science and Technology, Veterinary, the University Library of Sabadell and Medicine). At the same time, the Medical library is formed of five libraries, one on the main Campus, Bellaterra, and others in Hospital Teaching Units localized in Barcelona Area, forming a network.

Overall, the UAB Library Services have more than 35,000 square meters in of well equipped spaces, about 4,700 reading places, more than a 1 million of books and around 50,000 titles of periodical series (15,000 of them in digital access). Also have a library repository with around 50,000 documents with over 66 million consultations in 2009. The UAB Library Services have a quality certification in accordance with the ISO 9000 standards, The ISO 9002 certification was obtained in 2000 and since 2003 our systems of quality have had the ISO 9001 certification. The UAB Library Services were also chosen as a route to improving quality and surveys are conducted periodically taken to measure the degree of user satisfaction with respect to services. With this background, the UAB libraries are in a good position for meeting the new challenges of the European Area for Higher Education or new information technologies.

For several years, the UAB Library Services have been organizing an introductory eyewitness course to explain how to get library information resources for all “first timer” students. The course, called “Vine a conèixer la teva biblioteca” (Come and get to know your library) is common to all UAB libraries, and represents a very satisfying experience already has a history of several years. But this was before the challenge of the new European Higher Education Area. Now the preferences of our users have changed. Despite this, we still offer this introductory course in all UAB libraries.

First timers medical students come to our library with a basic knowledge of bibliographic sources and information resources. Their background with libraries and finding information is generally poor. Most catalogue consultation is limited to basic handbooks recommended by their teachers. With the new teaching methods, the teacher, in many cases, even provides the student with the basic bibliography for the full development of their subject. Students with their own experience they must find the best possible information, develop their hypotheses and lines of investigation and reach a conclusion. In this context, the library plays a vital role. New teaching methods lead to a more intensive use of the library’s resources, this means that the library, in turn, must adapt to the changing needs of its users. The library is not a bibliographic document repository, it is a fundamental teaching support tool. If the aim is for learning to be self-directed and student-centered, then a reference system that is interactive and flexible is needed so that students can access information with their own selection criteria. The library must be an active space where students can study and share information, it needs to be a place where you can find what you are looking for. Users should be able to access most of its services even after the library has closed and the staff has finished for the day. The preferences of our users are changing; they need access to information and library resources and services “anywhere, and at anytime”. New information technologies have come, once again, to our aid, however, this resource can be a challenge for us and our users.

Sometimes students have some problems when searching the catalogue and many difficulties in selecting the best information. While most students have followed the training course "Come and get to know your library", this basic introduction is not sufficient for more complex searches, which may go beyond author and title searches. When it comes to look for references on a subject, not only in print publications, but also in databases, summaries of magazines, etc. things get complicated. Each library, in addition to its introductory training course offers specialized courses such as digital libraries or, for example, how to search the *Medline* or *PuMed*, in the Medical Library. These courses are permanent and free, simply complete the registration and agreement

with the library about a time and date. Many students are welcome to these specialized courses. For students to pursue their studies with the new teaching methods successfully, skills and abilities in seeking out and finding information are essential. In addition, staff and the faculty are welcome on users training courses. We make tailor-made courses that are adapted to the specific needs of each person.

These courses were designed to help students to develop the skills and capabilities needed not only for their studies but also throughout their careers. This type of training cannot be forced, it is only when students realize that they lack the ability to find the literature that is relevant to their studies will they take the time to learn more. User education is an investment for the future. The users acquire the skills to find relevant information in the library and this maximizes their funds and makes knowledge accessible to those who need it.

In 2005, we thought Tutorials would be a very good solution to help students get skills and abilities in searching for information. However, things have changed a lot since 2005. Now hardly anybody is afraid of new technologies, our students being largely from the “net generation”. But we also have other kinds of users, older students, staff, faculty members... in some cases these users have problems and doubts about new technologies, and currently, there is an increasing knowledge gap between the “net generation” and the faculty who support their learning activities online. Overall, the faculty is lagging behind in terms of understanding and using information technologies: in the way they work, their capabilities and limitations, how they incorporate e-learning, and how they understand how students use mobile devices as part of their everyday lives. In most cases, users that are not from the “net generation” are embarrassed about asking for help. We have to anticipate to this and help them. For this reason, the old Tutorial is still in use and is updated every year, but the number of users goes down every day.

It has been necessary to find something different to the old Tutorial, something that is useful for students and the faculty. On the one hand, we to explain and demonstrate our bibliographic resources, as well as how to find the best references and how to treat and evaluate the information obtained along with how to process it. On the other hand, we want to help users who have problems with new technologies. In other words, we want to minimize the gap between the “net generation” users and other kinds of users, such as older students, staff, faculty members, etc. in terms of understanding and using new tools and information technology.

The UAB Library Services are planning to make some videos during 2010 to contribute to training and to improve the I.T. skills of all users, students and the faculty. In several UAB Libraries they are making videos using *Camtasia* or *Captive* system. Through these videos, libraries are intended to help their users with the most basic searches, like how to check the catalogue, how to find a book on the shelf, how to find databases, eBooks, digital reviews, etc. Each library has a software licence to make these videos, but the most basic videos will be common to all libraries. At the time of writing this paper a group of librarians specialized in user's support are working on the wording of the scripts. We think that the videos will be ready before the start of the next academic year. We believe that, with these videos, we will be able to help users, students and the faculty, and improve the organisation and searches of the main information sources.

Besides the general videos used in the Medical Library, we are working on a video to help the user to acquire skills and knowledge of technological tools to enable them to take full advantage, in their searches, of information in the main sources of medical information. We are developing videos on topics such as how to setup a *VPN* (Virtual Public Network) in your own computer at home and work as if you were working on your computer on the university network, or how to install *Puget Paper Plan* to get PDF articles faster. With these simple tips, users will be able to improve their questions and get the best result in less time.

### **Objectives:**

The main objective we want to achieve through implementing *Polimedia* videos is to find an easy way to train library users. At the same time, this tool will help students to improve their bibliographic information skills.

For 2010, we propose to make didactic recordings in two phases:

1. Videos with technical content.

- How to set up VPN in your own computer
- How to set up *Paper Plane* and how to search for articles in *Pubget*
- How to find H factor and cite the number of the research works in *Web of Knowledge*

2. Help tutorials for searching in the main health science information sources at the UAB Medical Library.

- Pubmed
- MD Consult
- Harrison's online
- Cuidatge
- etc.

All of these contents will be divided in three "pills" of knowledge

1. Technical pills
2. Medical pills
3. Nursing pills

At the end of each "pills", we intend to make the users aware of the new library service. Currently we have made no attempts to propagate these videos, but, as you will see over the following pages, the number of users consulting these videos is increasing every day, and the service has only been available for one week!

Meanwhile, in parallel to this, the UAB Library Services are working on scripts and other technical requirements, like buying software licenses, training sessions for librarians, etc. for general help videos like:

- How to consult the UAB catalogue
- Digital bibliographic resources

- Refworks
- etc.

**Background:**

In 2002, the UAB Medical School wrote a Plan to address the challenge of creating the new European Area for Higher Education. The aim of this Plan was to promote the increase in use of multimedia learning and encourage computerization and audiovisual media in teaching, one of its consequences was the creation the Learning Resources Centre. The main aims of the Plan included the introduction of new technologies (hardware and software) to the faculty and support in the development of teaching materials that make use of these technologies. Since 2002, when the Learning Resources Centre was created, the production of this kind of teaching materials has increased day by day.

Meanwhile, some work groups and some teachers from the UAB Medical School worked on projects to improve and promote the introduction of new technologies as part of the teaching methodology. One of these work groups was in contact with a group from the Universidad Politécnica de Valencia (Spain). The Universidad Politécnica has developed software for online courses, which is known as *Polimedia*.

Contact began between the UAB Medical School and the Universidad Politécnica de Valencia in 2005. The first one was interested in using *Polimedia* for creating virtual lessons as a supplement to traditional lessons. Finally, in October 2008 the Universidad Politécnica de Valencia and the UAB Medical School signed an agreement authorizing and allowing the Learning Resources Centre to use *Polimedia* and ended in the creation of a recording studio at the UAB Medical School.

Moreover, since 2005, the Learning Resources Centre and the Medical Library have been collaborating on several projects. The first one was the design of a library tutorial. The aim of this tutorial, which is still in use today, was to help library users in their search for bibliographic information.

After that, following the philosophy of wanting to provide flexible and participatory communication between the library and its users, we wanted to establish a joint working relationship between the UAB Medical Library, the Learning Resources Centre and the UAB Medical School Distributed Computing Service. This occasionally results in projects that involve the collaboration of all of the above UAB resources. We have established an informal partnership of collaborative participation in the preparation of new projects.

This alliance allows us to share specialized software for teaching, the building of a website with educational material, the creation of a platform for content syndication, recording videos, tutorials, etc. to create and develop new products that will help in the training of users, propagating new information products, supporting teaching activities, and facilitating access to information. On the other hand, we intend to involve our users to contribute their knowledge to make our content richer. Their suggestions and feedback are essential.

In this case, we would like to present the collaboration between the Learning Resources Centre and the UAB Medical Library by making a video.

### **Material & Methods:**

What is *Polimedia*?

*Polimedia* is the brand name of a special tool designed at the Universidad Politécnic de Valencia. It is a multimedia production system with educational material content. It can be used to support and supplement physical teaching, but it is no substitute for this. It permits teaching material to be distributed via different media like TV, Internet, CD, mobile phone among others.

Put simply, this is a multimedia material that combines, in a single space, the simultaneous execution of two videos. Normally, one video shows the speaker making the explanation, while the other, projects what the presenter displays: Power Point presentation, a software application installed on your computer, Internet browsing, video... Its versatility allows to make a lot kind of different proposes, for example, you can make a tutorial video using and combining two videos, with or without the teacher speaking, or just with the speaker doing a demonstration. It's up to you. You decide how you want to make it, the duration of the explanation, when visual examples are introduced and so on. Advantages for the teacher include the prerecording of lessons on *Polimedia* videos without the need for to explain anything more than once, so time can therefore be devoted to other tasks and/or reinforcement learning.

*Polimedia* plays a complementary role in the lesson, allowing much more learning to take place than in traditional teaching models. It helps to improve the learning process and aid in a greater understanding of dynamic concepts that are usually difficult to understand in lectures.

What are the advantages for the students?

The main advantages for students are that they are enabled to improve their control over their studies, they are permitted to decide about when, where and how many times they can benefit from this tool. They are responsible for their own workflow, which is beneficial as every student is different. Because of its open and flexible nature, *Polimedia* means that each student decides where they work.

Students can review a recording as many times as necessary, at the same time another user can watch the same video. All the videos are saved on a *streaming* server enabling simultaneous multi-user query.

Are there any advantages for libraries?

Of course!! We think there are many advantages for libraries. To this end, we have decided to implement *Polimedia* recording as a new UAB Medical Library service. The collaboration between the Learning Resources Centre and the Medical Library facilitates the recording production, because sometimes it is difficult for librarians to understand and solve technical problems. In this way, the Learning Resources Centre is

in charge of the recording process and the Medical Library makes it available to their users.

*Polimedia* videos are a good solution for training library users as it shows you how the Self Check works, as well as how to browse the catalogue, and it presents and promotes library services.

The Learning Resources Centre has a recording studio located in the UAB Medical School basement. This studio is about 20 square metres and equipped with:

- Two compact camcorders
- One digital audio table
- One wireless system “wireless” microphone
- Three cold spotlights
- One digital video mixer
- One interactive audio compressor
- One handset study
- Two stereo speakers
- One tablet pc
- One gyroscopic mouse
- Two personal computers

The Learning Resources Centre staff is formed of three Multimedia Technicians. Each one has his own function. One works “full time” and is responsible for recordings, another is responsible for the programmed tasks and the other coordinates and promotes *Polimedia* among the faculty members.

The recording process is easy to explain. The speaker is placed against a whiteboard, illuminated by three cold light sources. Using a gyroscopic mouse (long range) he can control the presentation (slides). During his presentation, the Multimedia Technician records two videos at the same time, one is of the slide presentation and the other records the speaker in action. The final product is a recording of about five to ten minutes, where the image of the speaker and the presentation, appear synchronously. The publication of the video is almost immediate.

Although the videos are hosted on a streaming video server, Multimedia Technicians have developed in parallel, on another server, a platform where users can access these materials.

This platform is made in *ASP* and powered by two databases, created with *MySQL*, and is a three layer model:

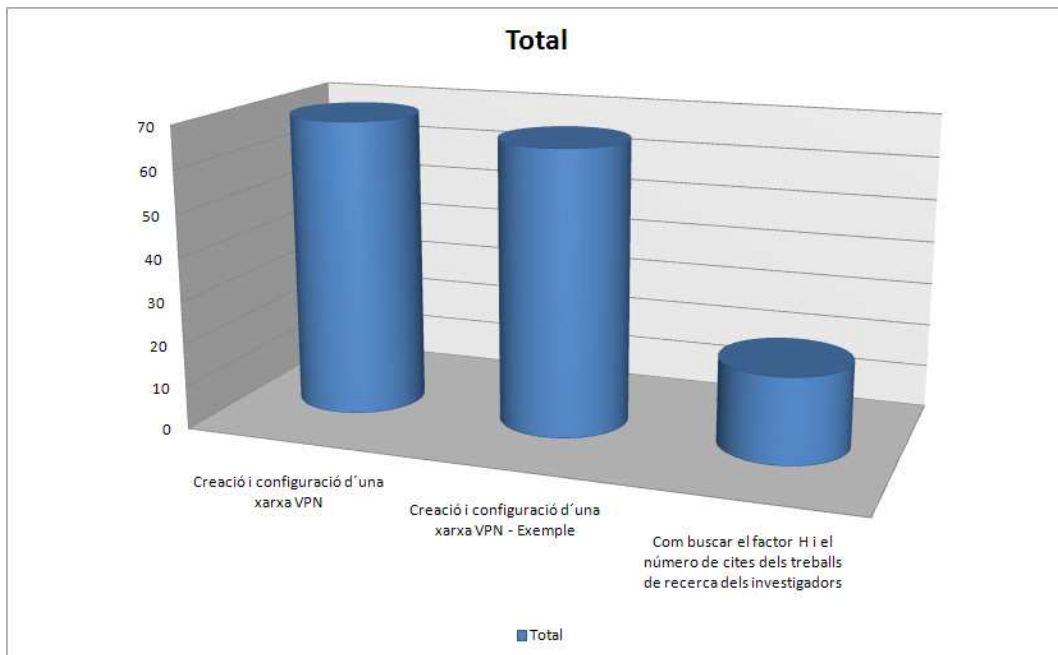
- 1 - Administrative private zone, which manages the first database with data from the speaker, the entity to which he belongs, title of the video, etc ...
- 2 - Statistics private area (second database), where the administrator controls access to material (most visited videos, check access by country, access counter for each speaker, by subject, days, weeks, months, etc ...)
- 3 - The public area, which is fed by the two databases, mentioned previously, and where

users gain access via web content through URL <http://polimedia.uab.cat>. This page consists of three divisions where the listing of these videos can be ordered by: *Subject*, *News*, and *Most visited*.

Likewise, users also have the opportunity to search the material by title, course, subject, speaker and date.

### Findings:

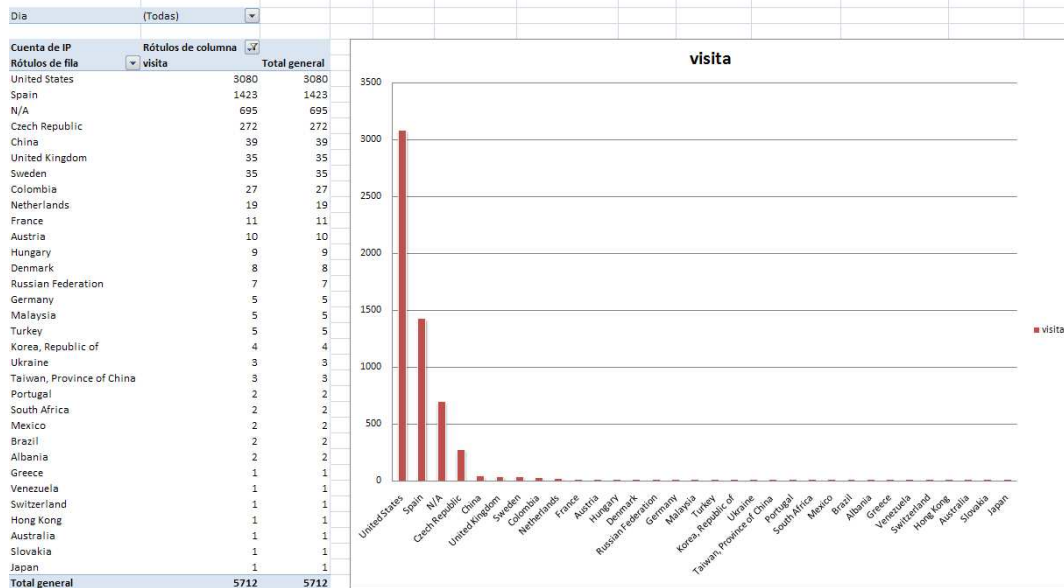
Statistics are the best evidence for evaluating *Polimedia's* impact among users. At the moment of writing this paper the Medical Library videos are too new and we are working on publicizing their existence. The first one was made in early April 2010, about a week ago, but the statistics of consultation are increasing day by day, up to 70 visits so far. This result shows the importance of this kind of user's training, it also confirms that some users (often older users) are afraid of new technologies.



In this image, we can see consultation statistics of the first three UAB Medical Library recordings in *Polimedia*. Right now they still have not been publicized



## Visites a Pàgines



Statistics of all *Polimedia* videos. We have promoted its use among students. You could see the precedence of visits. Curiously, the most significant number comes from the United States.

### Conclusions:

We'll be very brief with conclusions because we are sure these library training videos are a great tool for acquiring bibliographic search skills.

Users show interest in this kind of information literacy. It's different because it's flexible and private. Users can access training videos everywhere, anytime, as many times as they want, without explanations or showing their ignorance or fear of information technologies.

Technology is changing at a great rate, not all users are able to learn quickly enough, young students don't have problems, but this is not the case for older students, staff and the faculty. Sometimes aged users feel embarrassed about asking the librarian at the information desk for help.

As we said at the beginning, we are sure this kind of information literacy is a good way of training users to acquire bibliographic search skills.