

# Incorporating a Hybrid Blog for the Medical Library into a Hospital Intranet Website



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## Problem

- Lack of a mechanism to convey up-to-date information about the Medical Library to the 5,000+ staff of Community Medical Centers (CMC) in Fresno, California

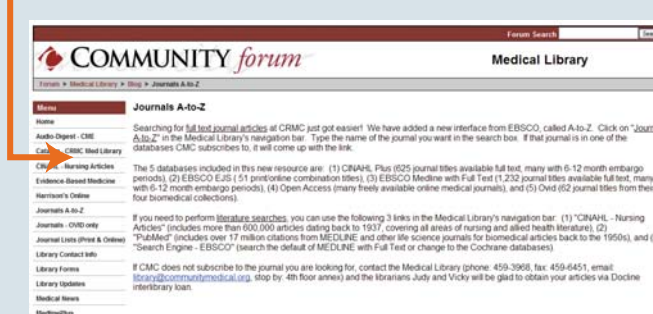
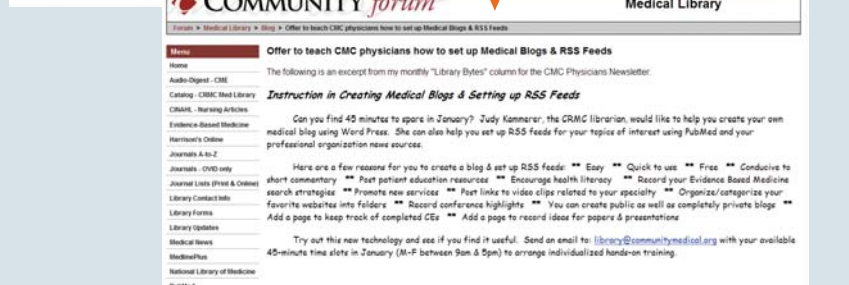
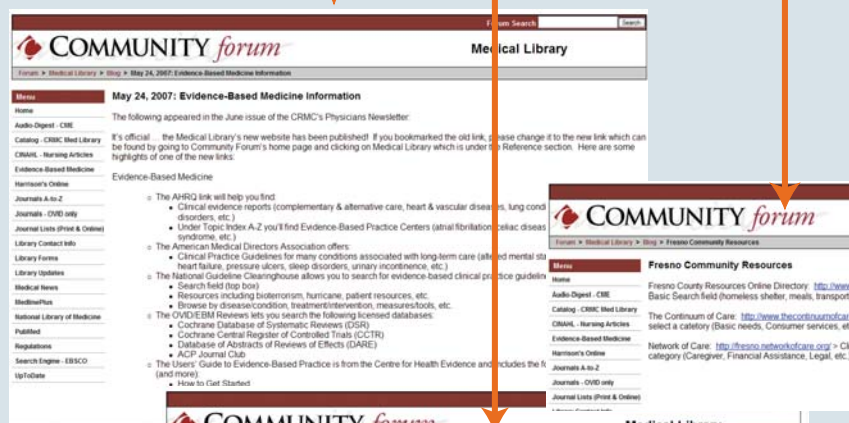
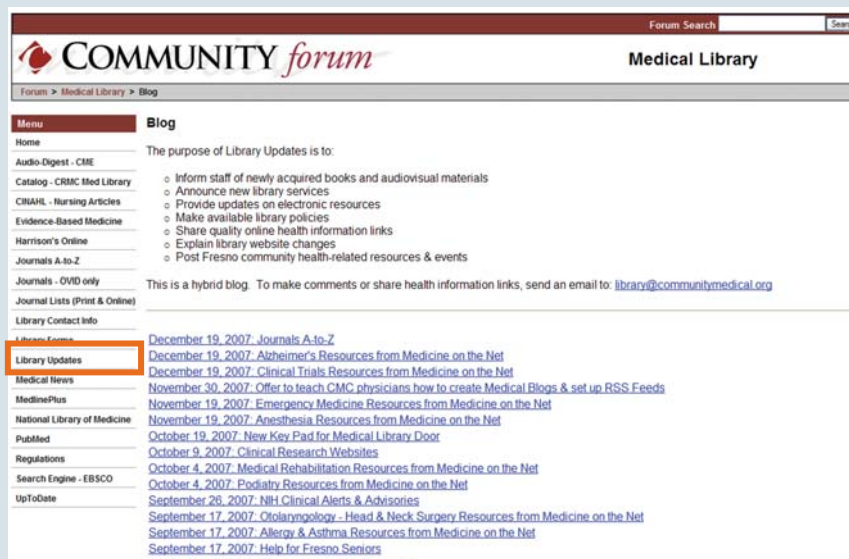
## Desired Outcome

- Create a Medical Library blog on the Community Forum intranet, to be managed by the librarian, in order to:
  - Inform staff of newly acquired books & audiovisual materials
  - Announce new library services
  - Provide updates on electronic resources
  - Make available library policies
  - Share quality online health information links
  - Explain library website changes
  - Post Fresno community health-related resources & events

## Methods

- (Dec. 2006) Contacted the hospital's IT Department for permission to create a blog and incorporate it into the library's website.
- (Jan. 2007) Roadblocks were encountered, including:
  - Hospital policy restricting traditional interactive blogs to administrative executives
  - Community Forum branding required all web pages to have similar format and appearance
  - IT Department was in the process of migrating the intranet platform to a new system
- (Feb. 2007) The librarian felt strongly that the Medical Library needed a frequently updated presence on the Community Forum intranet and communicated the following reasons to the Senior Web Developer:
  - In order to advance the hospital's mission to promote medical education, the means must be in place to communicate what resources CMC makes available to its staff including new print materials and online databases.
  - Professional medical personnel are encouraged to provide evidence-based care which requires frequently up-dated sources of information and the training to use these resources to their full advantage, which needs widespread promotion via online channels.
  - The Medical Library contributes to the advancement of health informatics when it has the capacity to use & promote electronic tools that can mediate & enhance the health provider-patient relationship.
- (Feb. & Mar. 2007) The Medical Librarian and Senior Web Developer worked together to create a "hybrid" blog that:
  - Had the major components of a traditional blog
    - Allowed librarian to have direct access to create postings
    - Dated entries in reverse chronological order
    - Descriptive titles
    - Hot links
    - Downloadable files
    - Ability to comment via email link
  - Worked within hospital policy & the intranet's CSS architecture, and was compatible with the new intranet platform
    - No external blog program
    - Retained the Community Forum branding
    - Structure compatible with the look of other departmental websites
    - Utilized RedDot web content management software
    - An Application Developer from the hospital's IT Department taught this librarian how to use RedDot (<http://www.reddot.com/>) and provided follow-up support.
  - The Medical Library's revamped intranet website which included an improved navigation bar and the new library blog titled "Library Updates" was successfully rolled out in late March 2007.

## Results



## Conclusions

- The initial problem of a lack of mechanism in place for conveying up-to-date library information to a large hospital staff (many of whom do not visit the library) was successfully resolved with the incorporation of a hybrid blog into the hospital's intranet (Community Forum).
- Is it essential for librarians to clearly explain their reasons for wanting an active electronic voice and to participate in their hospital's intranet. Make the most of your hospital's mission statement and address key areas where hospital goals intersect with medical librarian skills.
- It is important to back up the arguments that led to the creation of a hybrid blog with its ultimate utilization, so that the desired outcome is adequately reflected in the blog's content.

## Discussion

- Advantages of hybrid blogs:
  - Provides the means to convey important library information quickly and easily
  - Allows librarians to showcase online resources and services to staff
  - Librarians can highlight their role in evidence-based medicine and health informatics training
  - Gives librarians an entry into Web 2.0 technology with an interactive electronic voice
  - Licensed database information can be shared within the protected intranet environment

- Disadvantages of hybrid blogs:
  - Since the listing only contains the date and title, librarians need to be selective in postings so as not to create an overly "busy" list, and the title needs to be adequately descriptive to entice the reader to click on the link to open up the actual post content
  - No "categories" or folders are available to organize postings with similar topics
  - No "archives" are available to retire old postings