

## **Collaborative Workspace Project – report by Christine Mackenzie**

<http://www.yprl.vic.gov.au/ifla>

### **Background**

At the Seattle meeting in May 07, it was proposed that the original project of MLS Videonews be re-visited to capitalise on the available Web 2.0 technologies to develop a collaborative workspace for all MetLib members to share innovation and best practices. Such a tool would allow easy access to contributing information and news, link to members' blogs and to provide an archive for information. It would also serve as a good communication tool for the group and encourage networking and collaboration.

### **Report**

A number of options were explored, including some of the social networking sites. We were looking for something that was:

- easy to use
- have an intuitive design
- be “self-sustaining” i.e. it won't be the responsibility of any of the MLS members to maintain
- have an alert system- preferably for members to receive an email alert when there has been a change or addition to the content
- to be hosted by a member library rather than a free site such as PBwiki or MediaWiki.

With the assistance of a librarianship student who worked on this project, vBulletin was chosen. It met all the above criteria, has an extensive Frequently Asked Questions forum on the website, and an established reputation for customer support.

vBulletin has the following features:

- Email updates when new posts/threads are added
- The option to post attachments in a variety of formats (Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, You Tube videos, photographs etc)
- Users can create a profile with an avatar or photo.
- The colours and font styles can be customised, so we were able to have the same colour scheme as the IFLA website.
- It cost less than €500 Euros.

A screenshot of the MLS bulletin board can be seen below
















## Metropolitan Libraries Section

MLS Space

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**Welcome to the MLS Space.**  
If this is your first visit, be sure to check out the [FAQ](#) by clicking the link above. You may have to [register](#) before you can post: click the register link above to proceed. To start viewing messages, select the forum that you want to visit from the selection below.

Forum	Last Post	Threads	Posts
 <b>News and Discussion</b> Share YouTube videos and the latest news with other MLS members.	 <b>General Discussion</b> by <a href="#">admin</a> 10-07-2007 02:23 AM 	4	4
 <b>Projects</b> Share documents and post messages about MLS projects.	 <b>MetLib Section Brochure</b> by <a href="#">Sharon Thien</a> 10-22-2007 04:59 AM 	8	18
 <b>Social networks</b> Links to members blogs and facebook group	 <b>Blogs</b> by <a href="#">Sharon Thien</a> 10-22-2007 03:59 AM 	4	7
 <b>MLS Conferences</b> Information about the MLS conference.	 <b>MLS Conference Planning...</b> by <a href="#">Sharon Thien</a> 10-22-2007 07:05 AM 	3	4
 <b>Resources</b> A place for sharing documents, plans, and anything else you think might be useful	 <b>MLA UK Better stock, better...</b> by <a href="#">Christine Mackenzie</a> 10-19-2007 01:59 AM 	10	10

[Mark Forums Read](#) [View Forum Leaders](#)

## Evaluation

The site has been available since December, and there was some good activity early on. It is easy to use, and offers the functionality and usability we were seeking. It now needs more marketing and promotion to become a useful tool for the group. There are 12 members.

## Facebook

A group has been set up in Facebook for the Metlib group. There are 17 members and this offers a more social and friendly online space to interact.

A short demonstration will be given at the meeting.