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## Ideas, Hints, and Tips

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## *Ideas, Hints &* TIPS

by Thomas Ganzevoort, UGA and Reference Services Interest Group

Librarians of 40 years ago might have trouble recognizing the 21st century library landscape. The modern library has been transformed from an analog, print-centered environment to one in which computers, the Internet, and Web-based technologies predominate. Internet technology has presented libraries and librarians with challenging new issues affecting every aspect of library services. The near-constant profusion of new software and evolving technologies can be dizzying even to those who are accustomed to such rapid technological change.

The flip side of this development, however, is that Web 2.0 technologies have opened up a world of exciting new possibilities for reference and instruction librarians. We have more and better media tools at our disposal with which to create instruction content for our students. One media tool that I've found particularly useful for library instruction is screencasting software. Screencasting provides the capability to record what a user does on a computer, capturing images and action on the monitor screen. The captured screencast footage can be combined with recorded narration to create a demonstration video. The creator can teach viewers various Web procedures like navigating through a website, using a search engine, or searching a library catalog. Screencasting is a versatile tool suitable for both face-to-face and online instruction.

One screencasting program with which I've had great success is Jing, a software program available as a free download from Techsmith at their website ([www.techsmith.com](http://www.techsmith.com)). Although there is a deluxe version of Jing called "JingPro" which costs money to download, the basic, free version of Jing serves my needs perfectly. Jing can capture both still screenshot images and moving video footage. Jing also comes with audio recording capability, so that users can record narration simultaneously with video footage. Creating screencasting instruction videos complete with narration

thus becomes a relatively simple and streamlined process.

Once the video is complete, the user can upload the video to [www.screencast.com](http://www.screencast.com), Techsmith's video-hosting website. Registration is free, and users can create an account to post their videos online, making them available via a URL or hyperlink. I've created several instruction videos in this manner, uploading them to Screencast.com, and posting the links for my online library instruction course.

Creating and watching videos is quite easy with Jing. Not being a natural "techie", I was initially nervous about learning to use the software, but I found it to be simple to operate and easy to learn. I recorded my first practice video after about five minutes of playing with the software, and recorded my first "keeper" about ten minutes after that.

And, my students report that the Jing videos I've created are easy to access and view—they just click the link I've provided, and the video pops up, ready to go. Several of my colleagues have also used Jing to create video tutorials for our library website. Screencast.com has proven to be a stable, hassle-free platform for video storage and access.

While Jing is a great tool, there are a couple of downsides: once recorded, the video footage cannot be edited in Jing; and, videos can be no longer than five minutes. Fortunately, I've found a way to turn the five minute limitation to my advantage: in order to convey the most information in the shortest possible, I write a narration script beforehand. This eliminates the rambling, repetition, and the conversational "ahs" and "ums" that result from speaking extemporaneously. I can then break down what might have been a twenty minute video into four five-minute parts, allowing

students to take in information in smaller, more manageable chunks.

Jing has proven to be an excellent tool for me as an instruction librarian. If you're looking for an uncomplicated, intuitive way to create video tutorials, you can investigate Jing at the Techsmith website (<http://www.techsmith.com/jing/>).

*Thomas Ganzevoort is Instruction Librarian at Columbus State University*

## GLQ Publishing Update

Please note that this will be the final issue for which a formal layout will be done for the Georgia Library Quarterly.

For future issues, all articles will be posted to and distributed for review by the GLQ Board on the DigitalCommons site at: <http://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/glq/>

Once articles are reviewed and ready for publication, they will be reposted to the DigitalCommons site, automatically converted into PDF files and made visible for download.

Thank you,  
Jeff Heck  
Editor, GLQ