An online information literacy program: the case of a Greek academic library

Ilias Nitsos, Aphrodite Malliari Library, Alexander Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki, Greece

Librarians Information Literacy Annual Conference, Manchester, UK, 2007

Overview

- An Information Literacy Program tailored to the needs of a Greek academic library
 - Defining the needs
 - Complying with international standards
 - Getting acquainted with current trends and practices
 - Designing the program
 - Selecting the tools
 - Preview

IL in the Greek academic library scene

- Greek academic libraries have
 - developed considerably since 1996 (EU funding)
 - implemented automation systems, online information services, electronic journals and databases
- But offer only
 - bibliographic instruction tutorials
 - online instruction manuals for OPAC use
 - simple guides in pdf

The Library of A.T.E.I.

- Keeps up with current international trends and practices
 - Institutional repository
 - Electronic education platform
 - Evolution of traditional web site to dynamic portal
- Is the first Greek academic library to develop an online information literacy tutorial



The Library of A.T.E.I.

- Target group
 - Undergraduate and postgraduate departments in the areas of Applied, Natural and Social Sciences
 - 24.000 students
 - 1500 faculty

Defining the needs

- Students of ATEI face difficulties in
 - defining their information needs
 - understanding/compiling bibliographic references
 - searching effectively the web using search or metasearch engines
 - exploring the full potentials of the Library's catalogue
 - managing the information in order to synthesize a report or an essay

Defining the needs

- The difficulties mentioned are substantiated by
 - published research results for the OPAC's use
 - internal reports
 - librarians' experience
 - oral remarks from the teaching staff

Other benefits from the use of IL

- Enhances the value of relevant courses
- Offers additional teaching material and tools
- Brings cutting edge technology to Greek academic libraries

Complying with international standards

- Thorough study of information literacy standards prior to program design and implementation
 - Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL)
 - Australian and New Zealand Institute for Information Literacy
 - Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL)
 - International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)

Getting acquainted with current trends

- Different online information literacy programs
- Open source solutions
 - TILT (http://tilt.lib.utsystem.edu/yourtilt/agreement.html)
 - Searchpath
 (http://www.lib.cmich.edu/departments/reference/instruct/intro/choice.html)
- Technical information
 - HTML
 - PHP
 - MYSQL
 - Flash

Designing the program

- Consists of five basic modules
 - Determine the information needs
 - Identify and obtain information
 - Evaluate the information
 - Synthesize and communicate the information
 - Proper use of the information

Determine the information needs

- Define and increase familiarity with the topic using keywords
- Locate the suggested bibliography
- Understand the different types of information sources and publications
- Use the most appropriate type each time

Identify and obtain information

- Develop effective search strategies
 - OPACs
 - Databases
 - Search engines on the Internet
- Retrieve the needed information
 - Understand references
 - Call numbers
- Keep up-to-date with literature

Evaluate the information

- Assess the search results
 - Are they relevant?
 - Are they up-to-date?
 - Are they accurate?
 - Do they cover all possible aspects?
- Refine the search strategy
 - Find more accurate results
 - Change the search tools
- Develop reading skills

Communicate the information

- Manage the information gathered
 - Focus on key ideas
 - Detect possible relationships
- Write an essay or an article
 - Analyze the subject
 - Conduct research
 - Text organization
 - Presentation

Proper use of the information

- Copyright
- Plagiarism
- Compile bibliographic references

Designing the program

- Easy to use navigation menu
- Simple layout
- Animated user guides
- Comprehension exercises and games
- Bilingual content for national and foreign students
- Teaching material and tools for relevant courses

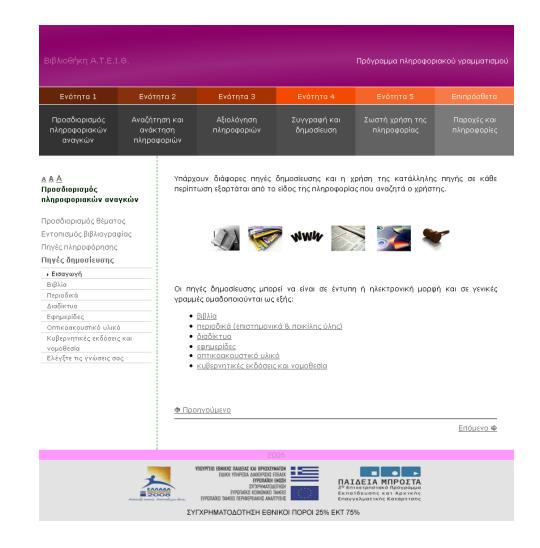
Designing the program

- Not based on open source solutions
- Offering an open source license
- Potential use for information literacy certification

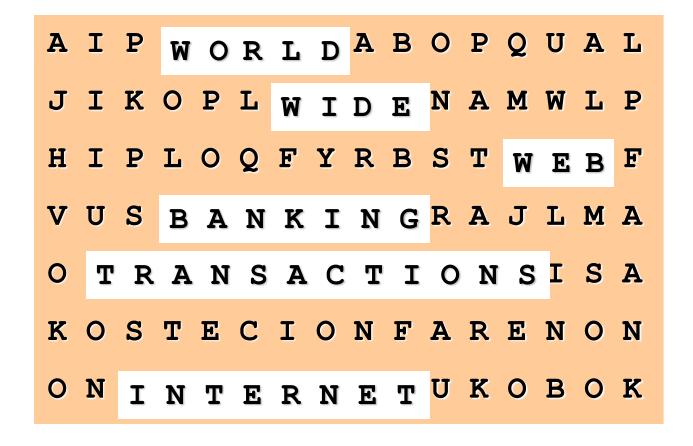
Selecting the tools

- Client side
 - XHTML compliant
 - Javascript
 - Flash
- Server side
 - PHP
 - MySQL

Preview - Layout



Preview – Flash game



Acknowledgements



 Project funded by the Operational Program on Education and Initial Vocational Training (O.P. "Education") cofinanced by the European Social Fund and national resources

Thank you!

- Ilias Nitsos
 - Program Developer
 - nitsos@lib.teithe.gr
- Aphrodite Malliari
 - Reference Librarian
 - malliari@libd.teithe.gr