

Tag-Team Approach Highlights 60 Web Sites in 60 Entertaining Minutes

by Brent L. Johnson



Gayle O'Connor (left), an independent consultant, and Jenny Kanji, a library relations consultant with LexisNexis™, took turns introducing a new Web site every minute.

When I initially read the description for I-4: “Around the World (Wide Web): 60 Sites in 60 Minutes,” I was skeptical — skeptical of how anyone could possibly critique 60 Web sites in one hour, and skeptical of how such a cursory glance at any Web site could be of any practical use for a librarian. But I was also intrigued to see if the presenters could pull off such an ambitious endeavor in such a short time frame.

The theory behind this entertaining yet educational training presentation was to highlight selected interesting Web sites in about one minute in a tag-team fashion by two presenters: **Jenny Kanji**, a library relations consultant with LexisNexis™, and **Gayle O'Connor**, an independent consultant.

“Our intent is to entertain,” Kanji said. “While there will be some educational value, this will only be by accident.”

From the onset, Kanji was the “voice of intellectualism” for the dynamic duo as she discussed Web sites such as <http://www.lexisone.com> and Judges of the United States Courts at http://air.fjc.gov/history/judges_frm.html, which could be valuable tools for librarians. Gayle O'Connor played the role of comic relief as she went over entertaining sites that featured pictures of dog owners who look like their pets. My personal favorite was <http://www.10k4awife.com>, where a single male in his late 30s will pay \$10,000 to the person who introduces him to the woman he chooses to marry.



Attendees found the program to be both entertaining and practical.

In addition to the Web site that promises to store a pet's DNA at death or the site that teaches you how to construct a “thought cap” to keep aliens away from your brain, Kanji and O'Connor presented Web sites that allow visitors access to a wide variety of information and statistics. For example, GenSwap at <http://www.genswap.com> is a genealogy information site that includes free genealogy records and links to immigrant ships' registry data. Catch The Web at <http://www.catchtheWeb.com> features a software program that enables a user to capture entire or parts of a Web site — great for offline Internet-related presentations.

I definitely give “Around the Word” a positive review. In addition to enough practical and educational value to justify a professional librarian's time, Kanji and O'Connor had the crowd roaring with laughter. After all, it's pretty hard to keep a straight face when being exposed to “the abductalizer,” a mechanism for computing an individual's “Personal Abduction Analysis Factor.” (If interested, the “abductalizer” can be found at <http://www.alienabductions.com/abductalizer/zqframe.html>. Unfortunately, when I did a field test of this site, after I finished the questions and clicked on “abductalize” to compute my PAAF, an error message appeared.) In spite of all the laughs, it can probably be said that keeping an audience entertained is an effective way to maintain an audience's attention, which was accomplished successfully in this case.

Kanji, who has been doing this presentation at the Special Libraries Association conference for several years, has placed her handout for the program online at <http://www.lexisnexis.com/infopro/tip/default.shtml>.

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