



Library of Congress, Chile, BCN and the social web

May 30, 2008

Vision / Mission: Summary

Coherent with our vision, the BCN sees it self as a social interaction space where members of parliament and the community can be informed, find and share accumulated knowledge. At the same time is a place that connects itself with national and world renowned facilitators in the social, political and legislative areas.

The BCN operates like...

- A tool to support MP commitments and parliamentary work, fostering their capacity to timely recognize new scenarios in the country and worldwide.
- A space that promotes the comprehension and knowledge of priority areas in the country,
- A repository of collective memory of the labor of Congress and political parties.

Our Challenges are to...

- Create learning spaces in order that members of parliament and their teams' can carry out their work, taking into account the new ways of collaborative networks and social interaction
- Assist in improving the relationship between the members of parliament and the citizenry (e-democracy).
- Create spaces of social interaction, so that the political actors can strengthen and reinvent their identity and that of their country.

As in a crafting strategy, we have been adapting our web to the concerns of our public. Therefore, we are segmenting the web to specific audiences. We are creating a "citizen portal" whose audience is a regular citizen who wants to know about Congress, its members, its history, the public policies being discussed and the new laws promulgated in an easy manner, and so on. From this Portal, a person can choose "Legal Web", "Asia Pacific Web" "Territorial web" (GIS) and in a future "Chilean Political web". Within the webs or directly we are including social web tools.

Social Web

The social or collaborative Web, also known as Web 2.0, has introduced itself quickly in diverse areas of human activity.

Dynamics shown by the Web 2.0, according to Technorati's statistics (www.technorati.com) until 2007 the world had 70 million active blogs. In Chile, according to Orbitando (www.orbitando.com), there are nearly 10.000 active blogs.

Facebook is the number one social networking site on the web and according to O'Reilly Radar (<http://radar.oreilly.com>). Today there are more than 75 million registered users (profiles). Chile is in 10th place compared to all the countries with profiles created in Facebook and finds itself in 2nd place in Latin America after Colombia, with more than 900.000 records.

These and other 2.0 tools allow the development and management of knowledge in a collaborative form; be it in the form of written text, images or videos. These elements are already being used in different countries to support political labor and have proved to be successful (e.g. presidential campaign in Spain). In Chile we are following the same path. BCN is using these tools to help the members of parliament and their teams to communicate with citizens and vice versa in the new modes that are widely used by the younger generations.

Our use of social web is geared to:

1. Publicize MPs and BCN's work in collaborative webs (web 2.0)
2. Explain the law in colloquial language
3. Give social visibility to strategic parliamentary issues
4. Build topic maps of community conversations around subjects of parliamentary interest
5. Train MPs and their teams in order for them to join social web initiatives proven valuable as political tools
6. Support collaborative work within the institution

From these diverse web 2.0 tools, BCN is building information resources that will part of the Chilean Political Memory.

1. Publicize MPs and BCN's work in collaborative webs (web 2.0)

To make the MPs and the BCN's job public, we develop projects to allow a more intimate approach of citizens to the Congress and helping them to interact with MPs.

Our web products:

If you look at our web www.bcn.cl you will find various products:

- "De qué se habla" (What's up today): Updated politics and other subjects.
- "Mirada en Profundidad" (A deeper view): Public policies analysis.
- "A mi me importa" (I care): Videos with in depth interviews about an MP's interest.
- "Tribuna Ciudadana" (Civil platform): Videos where the MPs answer questions about citizens doubts.

Distribution channels:

YouTube "[BCN Videos](#)" or [CongresoChile](#) is a channel that broadcasts on parliamentary labor, legislative topics, interviews on MPs, authorities and

social leaders. Until May 30th it had 49 subscribers and 113 videos. These videos have been seen 2134 times.

- www.podcaster.cl:

In Chile there is a national web called www.podcaster.cl it's a channel that distributes only audio files and works with the "Feed burner" software. The advantage of "Feed burner" is that it publicizes a podcast and makes it easy for people to subscribe and optimizes distribution so that the content is properly formatted for all of the major directories and can be consumed by subscribers wherever they are. What BCN does here, is upload all the interviews' audio for the MP and his team to use and distribute to radios of their district community. The [channel](#) is called "Con Parlamentarios" (With an MP).

- Another web 2.0 tool used by BCN is Really Simple Syndication (RSS) in all its webs. RSS makes it possible for people to keep up with web sites in an automated manner that can be piped into special programs or filtered displays. The benefit of RSS is the aggregation of content from multiple Web sources in one place. A RSS document (which is called a "feed" or "web feed" or "channel") contains either a summary of content that can be disseminated depending on the user selection.

Our web offers subscription to 11 RSS information resources (channels).

- Flickr is the most popular online photo management and sharing application in the world. BCN has many photos classified by subjects, named PortalBCN. So there is [an institutional Flickr](#) with public event pictures.

2. Explain the law in a colloquial language

We are publishing legislative issues in an easy language inviting our users to collaborate with us. As now we have:

Distribution Channels:

- Podcaster "[Ley Fácil](#)" (Easy Law). These are dialogues in colloquial language explaining the impact of a law for an individual.
- Podcaster "Ley Fácil" in Mapuche (Easy Law Podcast in native language Mapudungun). This is an on going project.

Cyber social networks:

- [Chilean Law Group](#) is a community created in Facebook where people interested only in legislative topics have joined: MPs, social leaders, public authorities, etc. There are more or less 1300 members in this Facebook community.
- "Blog Leyes Ciudadanas" (Blog: Laws for Citizens) <http://leyesciudadanas.bcn.cl> it has updated issues on legislative laws and debates on bills.

3. Give social visibility to strategic parliamentary issues

Asian Pacific Web www.asiapacifico.bcn.cl:

This [site](http://www.asiapacifico.bcn.cl) was created as the main access for Chilean citizens to understand the Asian Pacific world. The idea is to create awareness of and develop the Chilean market. You can find news, interviews, articles and columns on Chile and the Asia Pacific region.

Cybersocial networks:

- "[Grupo Vive Asia](http://viveasia.bcn.cl)" (Group Asia Lives): this is a community of people in Facebook interested in Chile and Asia Pacific (120 members).

- "[Blog Vive Asia](http://viveasia.bcn.cl)" (Asia Lives Blog): Community of Chileans that shares their interest and experiences related with Asia Pacific
<http://viveasia.bcn.cl/>.

4. Build topic maps of community conversations around subjects of parliamentary interest

Cybersocial networks:

- "[Blog Ligas Mayores](http://ligasmayores.bcn.cl)" (Major Leagues Blog): This Blog is focused on those who have retired and find themselves in the "golden years". Various communities address issues of their interest and the most important and relevant topics are channeled to the MPs. <http://ligasmayores.bcn.cl>.

- "[Blog Leyes Ciudadanas](http://leyesciudadanas.bcn.cl)" (Blog: Laws for citizens): This Blog has a community based on legislative interests <http://leyesciudadanas.bcn.cl>.

5. Train MPs and their team in order for them to join social web initiatives proven valuable as political tools

Training on Social Web tools:

- Presentations and personalized courses are given to MPs and their teams, in order for them to understand web 2.0 and handle these tools for parliamentary use (Facebook, Flickr, Youtube, Blogs, Twitter, etc.)

"[Portal Parlamentario](http://portalparlamentario.cl)" (Private Parliamentary Web):

- "Blog Tendencias Legislativas" (Legislative trends Blog). This blog researches on cyber activism and 2.0 politics so as to develop products and spread trends on web 2.0. Nowadays this is of great interest for the MPs and their teams.

6. Support collaborative work within the institution

The knowledge management group (12 people) is working towards implementing a collaborative working strategy. This new approach has required changing working practices that in some cases have been acquired and carried out by individuals over decades. To do so they are using 2.0 tools in everyday tasks:

- Managing information enquiries, both from MPs and researcher, through an online database in order that all members of the group can track both the original request and the member of the team it has been assigned to, promoting a culture of transparency, mutual support and individual

responsibility. This is achieved by having one sole password that gives everyone access to Google Documents.

- Selection, organization and storage of used and recommended sources to facilitate reference work. Google notebook, allows the sharing of resources with the remainder of the institution as well as the inclusion of comments and recommendations. This tool includes RSS and multiple user features that encourage collaborative work.
- Online archive, where group members submit their individual work and have access to all other enquiry responses. Google Gmail is used, as it allows the labeling, organization and retrieval, key word as well as full-text, of information, serving thus as an internal repository.
- Online alerts of journals and other sites of interest are being created by RSS, through the use of Google reader.

7. Strengthening of Internal Communications

Inside BCN there is a Communications Policy and it consists on informing personnel about different topics; training them on diverse issues that will make their work more efficient and professional, in other words, the goal is to maintain a healthy and stable relationship among everybody. For these purposes there is an internal website <http://intranet.bcn.cl>. Here are a few examples:

- "BCN Activa" (BCN Activates), is an interactive section where everybody gets a chance to write about what pleases them.
- Community BCN in Facebook (ongoing project).