

Establishing an IM Service

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What is Instant Messaging (IM)?

IM: An information & communication technology (ICT) that allows for real-time, synchronous communication between two or more people from a computer or mobile device. A preferred form of personal & work communication for an increasingly amount of people across demographic groups. A social computing tool that facilitates collaboration, community, connectedness.

Why establish an IM service?

Incredibly easy to use, no-cost communication mechanism. Connects our users directly to the library/librarians via real-time chat. Simple form of digital reference that can reach new & existing user groups. Creates a virtual space for users and staff to interact with one another.

Secrets for Success?

- Determine if this will be a library service/library account or personal service/account (can have both!)
- If library service, pre-determine hours of availability and/or staffing model
- Train staff & teach them how to adopt IM for both personal and work purposes. Keep it simple and fun...IM is both
- Meebo a multi-client, web-based, free IM service
- Install the "Meebo me" chat box widget on key library pages
- Get creative! Align IM with library mission that supports current & new services and programs

Inspiration Please!

Check out the Library Success: A Best Practices Wiki for IM best practices. Here you can see current IM practice across library types and tap into a community of library IM users. libsucccess.org/index.php?title=Online_Reference

Making Instant Messaging Work for You and Your Library Services



How do you create an IM account?

Meebo is the easiest and quickest way to get started meebo.com
Using meebo, you can set-up and access IM accounts in Yahoo, MSN, AIM, GoogleTalk and more.

1. Select an IM Account/Service Name

- a. Is the IM account for the Library or an individual? Does it matter?
- b. What screen name would you like to have?
- c. Keep password simple, if multiple staff will be monitoring

2. Create Your IM Accounts

Go to meebo.com, Set-up new accounts with the four IM services.



Click the "sign up!" links.

Is your screen name available in AIM, Yahoo, MSN, GoogleTalk ?

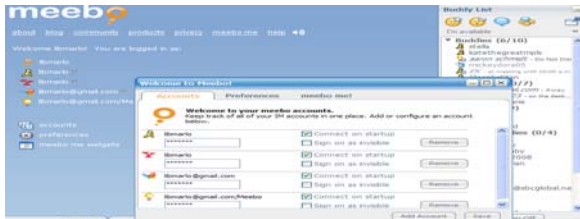
Use Table to Keep Tract:

IM Service	Screen Name	Password
Meebo		
Meebome widget ?		Widget=no password. Short Java script to embed on html page
AOL/AIM		
GoogleTalk		
Gmail acct info		
MSN		
Yahoo		

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3. Now, add your AIM, MSN, Google Talk, & Yahoo IM accounts into your Meebo account.

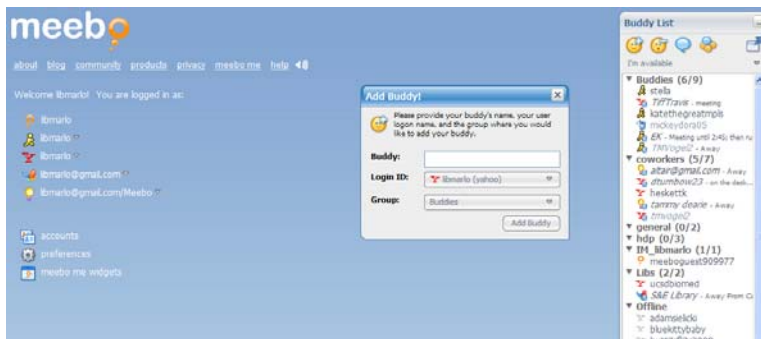
a. On left, click “accounts” and add the four IM accounts one at a time



4. That's It...Really!

a. Sign-in to meebo

b. Give out your IM name and ask people to add you to their list of IM contacts.



If you have someone's IM name, invite them to chat. Click the add icon on your "Buddy List"

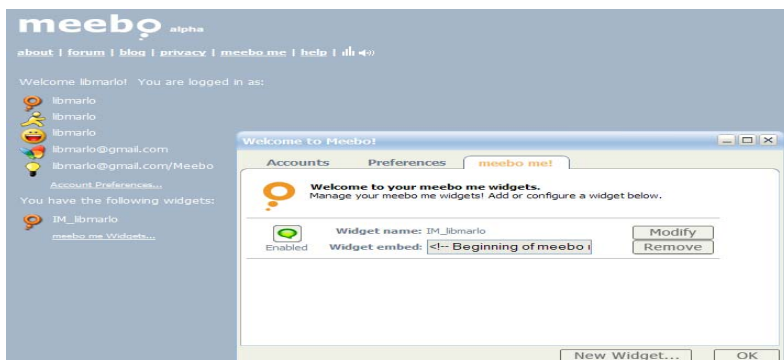
10-15 Minutes: Practice Adding Buddies, Chatting, and Exploring the meebo interface. Create widget, if desired. Ask questions & share experiences.

Notes:

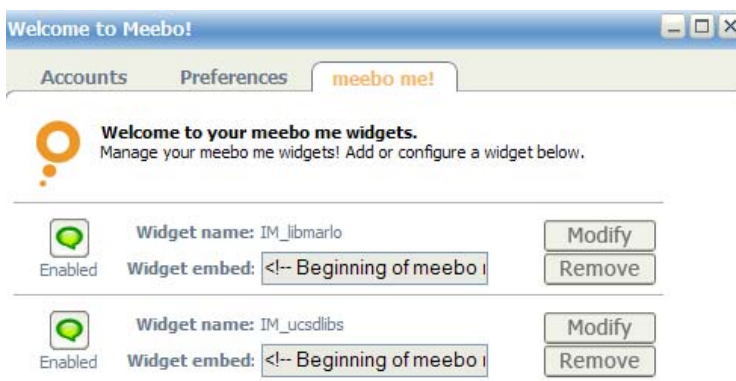
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4. Create, embed, and using the “meebo me!” chat box widgets

- Signed in to meebo, click “accounts” on left side



- Select “meebo me!” tab in new pop-up window
- Enter widget name in box and click “create” button
- Highlight text (java script) in box next to “Widget embed:”
- Paste into any html page/coding or Give to webmaster 😊



4. Now What?

- Promote your IM availability to patrons, co-workers, etc. through word of mouth, webpages, press releases, where ever appropriate
- Embed “meebo me” chat box on appropriate webpages/spaces
- Evaluate your IM presence: metrics, chat logs, surveys, informal feedback, etc.
- Need Help? Check out the “meebo blog” and “help” content at meebo.com or IM me anytime
- Need to Convince Others? Check out Aaron Schmidt’s *IM Talking Points* <http://www.walkingpaper.org/358>
- 10 Points on IM in Libraries: <http://walkingpaper.org/212>