

REPORT 2018

The NAPLE Sister Libraries program continues its growing tendency one more year: visits have increased, having reached an average of more than one thousand visits from around five hundred visitors per month. The visits came from 129 different countries. The average visitors consults 2.4 pages per visit, which shows that the content of the blog is appealing enough to stay for a while reading something else apart from the information the visitor was looking for in the first place.

Two New Sections

Studying the Statistics of Wordpress we realized that this information they look for in the first place has to do with the International Library Days (most visited page after the Homepage, 10% of the visits last year). We had published years ago a post where we announced the days in which different countries celebrate their Library Days. We have turned this post into a Section of the blog in order to give a more structured information, calling for the contribution of our readers to complete the list. You can see the section here: [International Library Days](#).

At the same time, another section has been created: the [Sister Libraries Calendar](#), where we announce the ephemeris related to the topics concerning libraries. We realized through our Facebook account that Public Libraries organize a lot of activities around these ephemeris (for example, the Day of Europe, or the World Day for Cultural Diversity). This tool aims to be a reliable source to consult which are these days and also to consult the activities the Sister Libraries develop around these ephemeris. We encourage them to send their activities so they can announce them in our Calendar. By doing this they both help others to get ideas to replicate in their own libraries and also promote their library at an international level, which can be very beneficial in terms of cooperation opportunities.

Both the International Libraries Days and the Sister Libraries Calendar have a strong collaborative approach: the libraries will make of them powerful tools or irrelevant ones by maintaining them. If they send their activities and information, it can be a

very good source to access these kind of projects at an international level. Nobody else is gathering this kind of information and this is a precious thing to have nowadays.

The Facebook Strategy

Last October 2017 we opened a Facebook account to strengthen our presence in the Social Media. We had a Twitter account that we still maintain, but we realized that the Public Libraries in Europe don't use Twitter as much as Facebook. It's the main tool for showing their activities, making announcements to their patrons and interact with others.

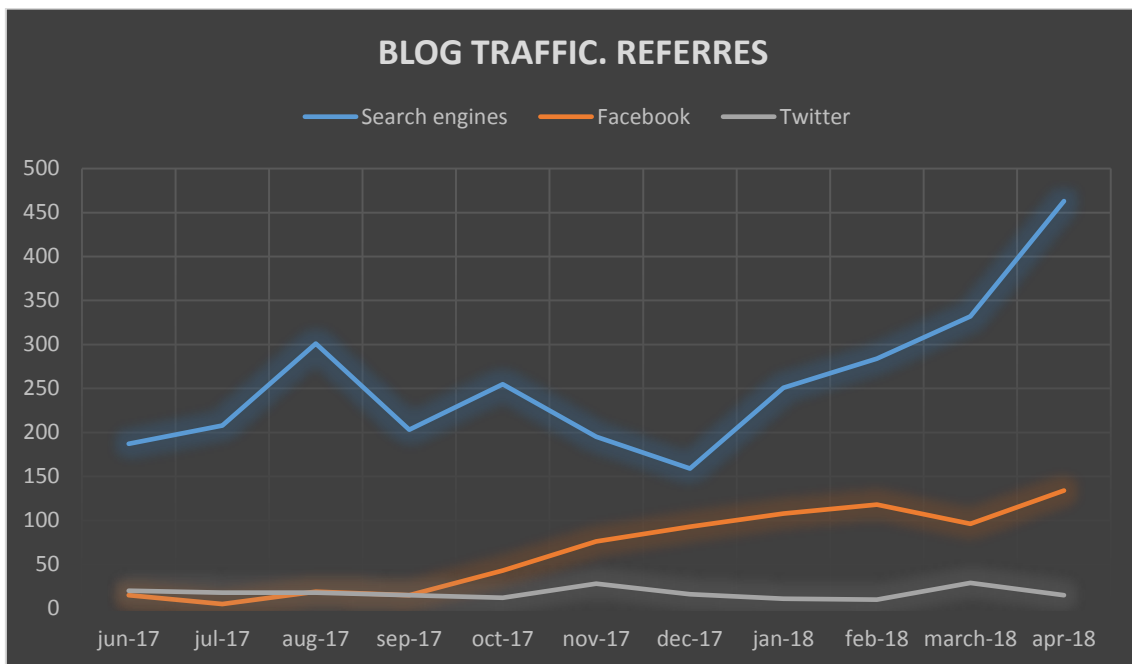
We publish one piece of information per day, about the following topics:

1. Meet the Libraries: where we give information about the libraries in the program, with a link to either their application form or a relevant activity they've developed.
2. This week at the blog: to disseminate the post published on the week
3. Information about the project: to give information about how to participate, encouraging the libraries to be active in sending their activities or feeding the different sections, etc.
4. Activities published: to promote the activities we publish in the blog on a daily basis.

We are following all the libraries in the program that have presence in Facebook, so we can easily track their activity. We comment on their activities, share them in our wall and ask them to send a text and picture of their top activities to our Gmail account. This strategy has been very fruitful: A 30% of requests for information has been replied, so we can secure an income of activities that allows us to publish at least one post per week.

Our presence in Facebook also reflects on the traffic to the blog. Since we opened the account, the number of visits has increased (now easily over 1000 visits, almost reaching 1500 in occasions), and Facebook has become an important referrer as we can see in this chart:

Referrers / months	jun 17	jul 17	aug 17	sept 17	oct 17	nov 17	dec 17	jan 18	feb 18	mar 18	apr 18
search engines	187	208	301	203	255	195	159	251	284	332	463
Facebook	15	5	19	15	43	76	93	108	118	96	134
Twitter	20	18	19	15	12	28	16	11	10	29	15
total visits	1164	885	959	709	767	946	860	1155	1131	1465	1201



Goal achieved: to be relevant

In last year's strategy one of the main goals was to grow on relevance in the library community worldwide. For doing so, we increased our presence and activity in the social media and focused on improving the quality of the posts published in the blog.

These are the results of this strategy:

Visits to the blog have almost doubled (an average of 1000, where last year we had an average of 700 per month)

6 new sisterships have been established

8 new libraries have joined the program (one of them the first library from Denmark)

And also:

We've been [Library Project of the Month](#) for Princh, a blog where prominent professionals give their insights from the public libraries world.

We've also caught the attention of the University of San Jose, California: Jeanna Clampitt, a student of Library Science at this University studied the Sister Libraries program and wrote [a very interesting essay on Sister Libraries](#), making an in-depth investigation of a sistership within the program.

Here you can see the evolution of the main figures from the last 3 years

	2016	2017	2018
Libraries	84	90	98
Countries	15	16	16
Sisterships	36	37	43
Twitter Followers	565	671	794
Facebook Followers	-	-	86
Visitors/month average	300	700	1000

Most relevant posts

Lastly, I'd like to show some examples of what kind of information we publish in the blog. They are relevant because they show the potential of the program to become a highly relevant tool for public libraries.

- Various posts regarding the Erasmus+ Program, including:
 - [An offer to establish a partnership](#) to concur to this program with a proposed project.
 - the [Migrate to the library! project](#), funded by Erasmus+ with 2 Sister Libraries participating in it.
- [The European Volunteer Service \(EVS\) Step by Step](#), where a sister library from Croatia has created a document that's a step by step strategy for applying to volunteers based on their experience.
- The activities designed by the Sister Libraries from Vega la Camocha (Spain) and Vodice (Croatia), like [this one to celebrate Valentine's Day](#).
- A cooperative activity between 2 sister libraries to [Exchange Christmas traditions](#)
- Although the preferred channel of communication is Skype, there's 2 libraries that have arranged visits to meet their partner library and discuss the activities to do together. We explain the experiences [here](#) and [here](#).

Conclusions

The NAPLE Sister Libraries program has grown to become a network of almost 100 public libraries from 14 different countries in Europe. It's a source of information for Best Practice, a tool for promotion of activities and a network for partner searching. Thanks to this program, public libraries have engaged in projects that have been granted by the European Commission, involved the Primary and Secondary schools

of their towns in cooperation activities with other countries through the libraries and enriched the services they offer to their communities.

They've caught the attention of the traditional media, appearing in newspapers and radios to show how they're cooperating with other countries, and also from professional projects like the Princh blog.

Cooperating between different countries is very challenging in Public Libraries: they are institutions that are in the center of their communities and develop projects that have a strong local tenor. But experience tells us that these services and activities can be reinforced by the cooperation with other libraries that have similar audiences, goals and activities, no matter in what country they are placed.