



Changing Role of the College Library Professionals in the Internet Era

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Abstract -

Developed in North America, the Internet has rapidly spread around the world in the past decade and has had an impact on the lives of millions of people. Many could not work effectively without it. Over the past few decades a variety of new and exciting information services have appeared on the Internet, each with its own distinct characteristics. Computer and Communication technologies have revolutionized the whole world of information and have penetrated in areas beyond libraries transforming nearly every facet within society. Powerful PCs, sophisticated network technologies, affordable telephone lines have given a boost for Internet. Use of the Internet and other network resources is changing the traditional library functions. While in the 1980's and early 1990's the Internet's modalities were changing traditional library functions and was used mainly for communications, database searching, and bibliographic access etc. Today, the Internet's modalities are changing or augmenting traditional functions of library profession such as the information transfer process and the perceived nature of information itself.

Keywords: Internet, Intranet, WWW, e-mail , Search Engines,

Introduction : -

Libraries of today have assumed a new role in modern society, by that they integrate educational technology, information and communication technology and the new media. The libraries since their existence have also adapted to changes that have influenced them from outside as well as within. The moveable type brought the first landmark change in the content of libraries. Since that time the libraries started acquiring new media and also a new role to support academic programmes of all educational Institutions. Libraries with changing media enhanced the needs and wants of the learners and the facilitators of learning – the teacher and the librarian.

The ICT is very useful in almost all areas of human life . Recent developments in the Technologies have brought changes in the modes and methods of information, storage, retrieval and transmission. The Internet and web technology has open new dimension to the information systems. WWW has created a sound impact on the library and information centre to have access to different information sources and disseminate to the users. The paper mainly discusses about the importance of Internet and web technologies for the college libraries in the digital environment. Web provides significant advantages by integrating different library and information services with a common user interface provided by web browsers. This paper narrates the changing role of modern academic librarian in the Internet.. With the global shift from storing the information to librarian in the Internet environment .

1). Internet -

Internet is a boon for the information professionals whose main aim is to provide information to their users. It is the most widely used tools to get latest as well as retrospective information. Access to Internet has completely changed the concept of librarianship. Internet and web technology plays a vital role in library related activities for acquisition, classification, cataloguing, circulation, collection development, serial collection, resource sharing, etc.

2). Internet Services -

The emergence of Internet has changed the role of libraries. It reduces the task of the library in retrieving and disseminating the information. It is a substitute for the large number of reference tools like books, journals, encyclopedias, dictionaries, directories, yearbooks, etc. The total collections of a library can be located through web pages. Internet provides a variety of services to the different types of users. So a few of them are:

A) E-mail -

It is the widely used service of the Internet. The messages can be sent to a single person or to a group of persons separately at the same time through this facility. Its speed is high and charges are low in comparison to postal service; owing to which it enables one to be in touch with the rest of the world in most economical and efficient way. E-mail programs allow us to save, print or reply the messages and also to attach word processing documents, graphics of video images with our reply.

Use of Internet in various department -



www, Sports & Chatting, Bulletin Board On-line discussion, E-Marketing E-Banking, Sci , Tech & Medicine, News Groups, Religion, Inf. retrieval, Shopping, E-mail, Viability of Data Mining

3) Internet Resources -

Internet is the treasure of source of information for students, research scholars, professionals, etc. and is incredibly useful in performing literature searches in all academic activities. As information are updated at an regular internal form various fields, the volume of information on the internet is growing at a tremendous speed and has become the biggest resources of global information in varied areas. A few of the relevant sources of information found on the internet are articles, e journals, magazines, biographical, full text databases, newspapers, old books, patents, standards, preprints, full text document, educational resources, mailing list, library catalogues, organization websites, gateways, companies, institutions, associations, organizations, technical reports, directories, encyclopedias, dictionaries, share wares, biographical tools, open source software, etc.

A) Why are Search Engines?

The tools for searching are subject gateways, web directories and search engines.

a) As the content of intranets increases so does the need for tools that help users locate the information they are looking for quickly and easily.

b). Intranet users are much more demanding - they want more refined and quicker way of finding specific information on the intranet, unlike in a typical Internet search where in thousands of items are retrieved.

c). Intranet users do not show the same patience they have while surfing the giant Internet.

d). User needs varies across a broad spectrum - ranging from access to a local file to the Internet websites..

5. Internet and Web Technology -

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A) Advantages of Internet -

a). Web is a powerful medium to integrate multiple information sources & services through a common user interface (web browser)

b). Develop new applications and services

c). Deliver existing services more efficiently

d). Opportunity for delivering information to the desktops of users

e). Reach local and remote users

f). Extend information content to full text, animations and multi-media

6. Internet based Library and Information Services -

Internet created thoughtful impact on library and information services by offering new modes of information delivery and vast information source. The service include web access to catalogues, email delivery of CAS and SDI bulletins, local web access to purchases databases, CD-ROM databases, remote information services, etc. information services are to provide required information to the user on demand or in anticipation and keep the user well informed and up-to-date in the field of specialization and in the related fields. Web provides significant advantages by integrating different library and information services. Some of the information services provided through internet are OPACs, CAS, SDI, DDS, ILL, reference services, abstracting services, database access, and translation service, referral service, etc.

7. Intranet -

An intranet is a private computer network that uses Internet protocols, network connectivity to securely share part of an organization's information or operations with its employees. Intranets are in-house versions of the Internet - LANs set up to take advantage of popular Internet communication protocols such as TCP/IP and HTTP, and other Internet tools such as web servers, web browsers, and HTML. It strictly control access to content, allowing authorized users only, which consist of web pages, documents, databases, and other information that sit on a web server behind an Internet firewall. Employees use a standard browser to search and locate internal information and these web sites are devoted to providing access to internal information to employees, while keeping their content secure from the rest of the Internet community. In simple words, intranets are networks within the organization that use the Internet and web technologies for collecting, storing and disseminating useful information throughout the organization.



9) . Information Resource Sharing in College library Through Internet -

Until, the emergence of World Wide Web, INTERNET surfing was not an easy task for the common man not having some skills and knowledge of commands and the ways of computers but www has made it possible to access this information just by clicking the highlighted terms and icons on the screens. Now, it is very easy to access the information from the net. It can be used to access the information from remote locations to read, download and print the electronic books and journals besides some of the housekeeping operations like acquisition and cataloguing etc. The following Internet resources are useful for the academic libraries:

A) Library Catalogue - The Internet gives access to the bibliographic records of millions of books and details on the holdings of academic and research libraries around the world. One can check the new titles and even order them from a number of libraries.

B) Electronic Journals - Hundreds of electronic journals are available in different fields of study; particularly in the library field on the Internet for the benefits of information users; as for example LIBRES (Library and Information Research Electronic Journals), MC (The Journal of Academic Media Librarianship), and Electronic Journal of Communication etc. All these journals also provide information on how to access the back issues and focus on a specific topic.

C) References Sources - A number of reference sources are also available on the Internet such as Martindale's Reference Desk, which has sites of various science- (PAM) and Division of Special Libraries Association, which gives access to physics, astronomy and mathematics reference sources.

D) Discussion Groups - There are thousands of discussion groups available on net for various subjects, which act as forum for discussion and even as a media for exchanging information. The PRL library has subscribed to PAMNET, STS-L, LIBREFL and LIS FORUM for such purposes.

E) Discussion Lists - Thousands of electronic discussions lists and conference proceedings are available over the Internet. They give direct access to scholars in their field of interests with an opportunity of assistance in the form of online help.

F) OPACs - The OPACs or Online Public Access Catalogues are playing an important role in information retrieval. These can be broadly divided as

- OPACs, which are used in a particular library using either a multi-user system or a local area network.
- Those, which can be accessed by other libraries through emergence of Internet. These are very easily and quickly accessible on the Internet from any part of the globe. The Availability of these catalogues on web allows anyone to see the contents of various library Collections at their home.

G) Newsgroups -

There are many sites, which give news for various subjects and also bring out electronic newsletters as, Young scientist Network Digest, Yahoo Physics etc. In addition to these, there are thousands of Bulletin Board Services covering various subjects.

H) Databases -

There are different types of databases, which are exceptionally useful; for example, Carl Uncover is a database that contains table of contents of over 19000 multidisciplinary journals published since 1993. The uncover database search is free for periodicals.

Conclusion -

The changing roles of librarians, as facilitated by the use of the Internet, should be of great concern to the profession. There are three major areas, which should be addressed by the information profession to meet the challenges of these changes:

- 1) Because the Internet provides library users with a vast array of seemingly accurate information, librarians will need to increasingly adopt the role of teacher or guide. Users will not only need to learn how to best access information, they will also need to be taught to critically evaluate Internet resources to determine their validity. Librarians can and will need to provide this guidance.
- 2) Library professionals will need to address the issues of information organization and retrieval via the Internet. Librarians should remain proactive in dealing with policy and procedural issues concerning organisation and access. In this way, the Internet of the information retrieved by library users can be ensured.
- 3) Library professionals should embrace the changes confronting them. Radical shifts in traditional ideas of service need not occur. Library professions do, however, need to remain flexible and open to the potentials the Internet can have for the profession and for library users. Internet access should instead be seen as a means to augment information access for users. Library professional who embrace this new environment of collaboration will be better able to provide customized service to their clients.

There is no crystal ball that can predict the future of the library or the impact the Internet has and will continue to have on libraries and librarians. However, as long as library professionals never lose sight of their mission and purpose to serve library users in the best possible manner, there will always be a place for librarians and libraries—virtual or not. It is also



fair to suggest that further research is needed to assess the impact the Internet has upon library professionals, so that we may enable all librarians to prepare for the future.

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