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E-Books of Present and Future Aspects for Library Collection

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Abstract

Library is known as a repository system of print and electronic resources. It is integral part of the educational system, whose primary function is to serve his clients. Information technologies have come to play a central role in modern education system. Online resources/ electronic resources are become a common part of the suit of the most academic library resources in today's prospective. Professional expertise and experiences make efficient use of e-resources. Electronic resources have changed the mode of library collection developments, management and user behavior in the age of information technology. Many libraries subscribing and build digital collection for wider accessibility utility and availability of e-resources to fulfillment diverse information needs of the users. This paper discusses about common feature of traditional Vs electronic libraries, E- books, benefits and difficulties of e- books compared to documents in detail.

Key Words: E-resources, E-books, I.T, etc.

1. Introduction

Librarians and information professionals are confronted today by the rapidly changing environment. Automation of library activities and adoption of computers to both routine as well as non-routine activities has become almost a necessity and is being hotly discussed and debated in all professional gatherings. There are many reasons for this change. One of the major reasons to this change is the rapid developments that are taking place in information technology and the potential for new services which they bring. At the same time the demands for information by the library users are also changing. The readers are now coming with new expectations and insist for high quality service. On the other hand the range and variety of information sources that librarians handle are also changing. Apart from print material librarians now deal with online bibliographic databases, CD-ROMs, electronic journals, digital texts supplied from a number of vendors that are downloaded from Internet. Each of these format requires generic and highly specialized skills for searching, identifying, extracting and disseminating the right information to the right reader at the right time and in the right format.

Technological change is a major contributor to economic development. The rapid development of information and information technology has tremendously increased our capacity to process information and accelerated growth in the information intensive sector. The impact of information technology arises from its attributes such as enabling technology which can be applied in a wide range of different circumstances, the capacity of the technology increasing at an exponential rate; and the cost of the technology falling rapidly. These attributes of Information technology will trigger a new wave of economic growth stimulating the

development of information society. It is indeed the avenues of information technology that should. beutilised to the possible extent in libraries and information centres to make use of the information speedily, effectively, efficiently and with precision. The application of Information technology in libraries especially in developing countries like India is imperative in the present day information environment for sustainable development in the socio-economic, political, cultural and educational sphere. The educated society can exist only when information is stored, shared and utilized properly. In an academic arrangement, both 'education' and 'library' are inseparable — indivisible concepts, working for the promotion and evolution of teaching, learning and research for greater use of academia. Library is a repository of resources. It is an integral part of the educational system whose primary function is to serve users (students, faculty, researchers and staff). Computers and related electronic resources have come to play a central role in education. Electronic resources are the prime ingredients and they become a common part of the suite of most academic library resources today. Electronic resources consist of data (information representing numbers, text, graphics, images, maps, moving images, music, sounds, etc.), programs (instructions, etc., that process the data for use), or combinations of data and programmed. The proliferation of e-resources has had a significant impact on the way the academic community uses, stores, and preservers information. These e- resources are added value to the academic libraries to offer better services to users and they are accessible from many different approaches. Users are able to access e-resources either by local or remote locations. The e-resources empower and enrich the academic system. Manpower is the most essential component for the library system. Professional expertise and experiences make efficient use of e-resources. Moreover, the use of electronic tools in the academic environment makes classes more efficient; lectures more compelling, informative, and varied; reading assignments more extensive, interesting, and accessible.

This conviction that Internet is an end in itself has direct implication on libraries. If library users don't visit libraries, libraries have to go to them with much improved services than being provided by commercial service providers. This is the challenge profession is facing today. E-resources have come in a big way in different formats and there has been a sudden change in user behavior. They have become impatient, dominated by convenience. They want information 'just now' or 'never' which Google can provide them irrespective of any other consideration. The main types of academic e-resources which Libraries have to deal with are the following types of e-resources-

- E-journals
- E-books
- Full-text (aggregated) databases
- Indexing and abstracting databases
- Reference databases (biographies, dictionaries, directories, encyclopedias, etc.)
- Numeric and statistical databases
- E-images
- E-audio/visual resources (IFLA, 2012).

Each type of above e-resource has its own peculiarities and problems in selection, acquisition, displaying, maintaining, etc. However, this paper is confined to e-journals and e-books only which are the main concern of library profession today.

2. E-books

E-books are slowly becoming a part of collection development of every library, which could not become as popular as e-journals. Users' feedback is mixed for e-books, there are still users who have more preference for printed books and believe that 'print is here to stay' and cannot be completely replaced. Survey shows increase in e-book publishing but usability perhaps is not to that proportion. The readership to e-books varies from library to library and country to country. In US e.-books are becoming popular whereas in India users are yet to accept e-books as replacement of printed books. It may be that e-books, rather than replacing printed books, will ultimately serve a role of more like that of audio books — a complement to traditional reading, not a substitute (Khan, Razib, 2013). Elsevier has given speech option to their e-books for promotion of sales and providing opportunity to listen who cannot read. Otherwise also talking books have added advantages. Reading e-book has its own limitation and disadvantages despite its many merits over printed books, yet printed books are showing hard resiliency and are sustaining the pressure of e-books.

Association of American Publishers reported that sale of e-books fell abruptly during 2012, to about 34% (Khan, 2013). E-books have many advantages like portability, flexibility, accessibility, versatility can be read anywhere anytime on computer or even mobile or other devices, having least problem of storage and retrieval. But it is an admitted fact that continuous reading of a book of 500 pages is strenuous despite of good reading devices. However, reference books or any fact finding books have definitely edge over hard cover books where a few pages are to be read and browsed.

Another issue with e-books is the pricing policies of the publishers. Publishers as well as librarians are in anomalous state. Every publisher has its own policy subject to change and negotiation. There is no standard policy and practice which is uniform. In such situation, librarians first have to study the complex pricing policies before selecting the products of a particular publisher. If pricing policy of a publisher does not suit the library, they may not be able to purchase or subscribe the products even if they are useful. Some publishers offer annual package of entire collection or part, some sell at one time payment basis for perpetual access with other conditions of storage, etc., some prefer Full Time Equivalent (FTE), some refuse to sell title by title, some may accept the policy of 'pay per view' and some may not. There are other models like ownership model, subscription model, consortia model, short term loan model or combination, etc. They may further have different models for different types of books, like text books, reference books and popular books, etc. This becomes an area of research for librarians with no findings and conclusion.

Accessibility is an important factor to be considered which both librarians and publishers have to take into account. Terms and conditions of accessibility is an important factor for the libraries. Some publisher may allow unlimited access for all authorized users to access resources simultaneously; however, some may put some restriction on use, download and printing, etc. Libraries also have to share resources among other libraries and need permission for inter-library loan for limited use to selective participating libraries. There are multiple options of accessibility and use. Some may agree to provide off campus access and some may not.

Another related issue is fixing of cost of e-books. It is not like printed books where prices are written and verifiable from other sources also. But the cost of e-books is only known to the

publishers or the vendor. The cost of e-books on an average is higher than their printed version. Finding pricing of e-books on higher side, US Department of Justice had filed a antitrust law suit against five big publishers of US to limit their pricing. Some complied and agreed to reduce the cost whereas Penguin, Macmillan and Apple refused to comply. There was similar move in UK also where Parliamentary Committee asked the publishers to reduce the cost of scientific books. There is a lot of competition among publishers about pricing of books and % of discount to the retailer/aggregators and libraries. Ascertaining the exact cost of individual e-book and its verification from authentic source is not possible. Publisher may change the prices of their e-books from time to time.

Amazon is said to monopolizing sale of e-books because of offering competitive price of books. It had reduced the cost from $ 12.99-14.99 to $9.99 to comply with direction of the Government. Apart from pricing, they have problem of convenient and friendly e-reading of text which are device dependent. There is different e-book readers, tailor made to publications of particular publisher, for example Amazon books have Kindle Book Reader for its collection, Barnes & Noble books are read on Nook e-Reader. There are books which are read on i-pad, i-phone.

The problems are not at librarians end only publishers also have their own problems with e-resources. All digital resources are vulnerable to be misused. If access is IP and password based, there is every possibility of infringement. When any digital document becomes public, it is difficult to control its authorized and legitimate use. There is every possibility of unauthorized use and repackaging from the databases under subscription. The possibility of infringement and violation of copyright also cannot be ruled out. The acquisition of e-books in Indian libraries is yet to take off which is the concern of both librarian and the publisher. As libraries must know their users so should publishers know their consumers (particularly librarians) and their requirements and problems which need proper understanding and goodwill between the two? Both need to abide by their respective professional ethics and responsibility to harmonize profit and service motive.

3. Benefits and Difficulties of E- books Compared to Documents

The main disadvantages for downloadable e-books to standard hardware and those remaining on the provider's web site include reading from PC screens; unattractive formats; and download times dependent on the speed of data lines (Hawkins 2000). Landoni, Wilson and Gibb (2000) and Lynch (1999) add other technological issues such as the dependency on access to unstable telecommunications networks. With books remaining on a subscription Company's web site, is the added disadvantage of restricted printing and copying limiting portability (Kirkpatrick 2000). On the other hand, an e-book is an "integration of the classical print structure with an electronic environment giving additional value added features that paper cannot provide" (Landoni, Wilson & Gibb 2000). Some of the advantages are timely and cost efficient distribution; the ability to search and interact with the text easily; and widespread accessibility through the Intemet (Lynch 1999; O'Leary 1999; Schilit 1999). With a desktop PC, the e-book is not as portable as its print counterpart, but with technological developments resulting in increasingly lightweight computers this is changing. Schilit (1999) cogently outlines benefits that dedicated hand held devices introduce to reading. In addition to those already mentioned, these include: mobile access to large amounts of information; organizing e.g. by annotating; filtering by generating personalized queries; and support for different modes of reading. Some of these advantages can be obtained, when using e-books with other types of hardware, through the use of special reader software.

Even with these potentially attractive functions, the quality of the display, and hence legibility of the content, in both dedicated- device dependent and independent cases is a critical issue (Chaiken et al 1998; Damton 1999; Hawkins 2000; Kristl 2000; Landoni & (uibb 2000; Lynch 1999; Terry 1999). Ardito (2000) notes that "displays are improving, but the development of a device that delivers the brightness and resolution of a printed page may be a long time coming." However, Chaiken et al (1998) found that readers were satisfied with the quality of the display of their prototype appliance. These authors consider that the price of suitable high-resolution displays will determine the economic viability of the device. They also note other factors needed to make reading appliances successflul including: the weight, orientation and packaging; well-designed user interfaces; and support for both passive and active reading. Landoni, Wilson and Gibb (2000), studying computer screen-based electronic books, were in agreement with the issue of costs to the user being a limiting factor. They also stress that "the quality aspect is crucial because of cognitive issues related to the ability of the reader to use, appreciate and prefer books in electronic format to paper ones." Overall, there are differing opinions as to the degree reading devices and computer screen-based electronic books stack up against their print counterparts. Hawkins (2000) indicates that current e-book readers are generally lightweight, convenient to carry and easy to use, whereas Ardito (2000) includes the size and weight of portable reading devices amongst the disadvantages. Sottong (1999) outlines technical specifications and comparisons with printed paper indicating that current technology is incapable of producing readable, cheap electronic books. User studies are needed to resolve these issues.

Benefits

1. Access of e-books anytime and anywhere.
2. Do not require much space for storage.
3. E-books will be accessed quickly.
4. These are cheaper than Books.
5. Automatic check in, no last, no damaged and no re-shelving.
6. Particular Topic can be easily search in e-books by keyword only.
7. E-books can be accessible worldwide easily through the internet.
8. E-books are Kinder to trees.
9. E-books can be read on screen or parts of your e-book can be printed off and read.
10. The users can change the font size and even add hand written notes in e-books.
11. Modem youth take interest in e-books and help children develop a love of reading.
12. E-book provided Multimedia information full-text searching, citation formatting, reference linking, and portability.
13. E-books are portable easily.
14. Progress towards creation of a Virtual Library.
15. Circulation & Photocopying activity reduced.
16. Even add hand written notes.
17. Authors and Editors can create discussion lists or particulars topic & data.

Dificulties

1. Maintenance is costly.
2. Machine dependent and other infrastructure dependent.
3. Effect on eyes.
4. Direct reading from computer if difficult.
5. Do not access
6. Speed of internet.

7. Less permanent.
8. Lack of Standardization.
9. Lack of support from administration.
10. Trend technical staff

4. Common Features of the Traditional and the Electronic Library

The Electronic/ Digital Library is an ICTs based system for acquiring, storing, organizing, searching and distributing information in digital format The concept of a "digital library" is not merely equivalent to a digitized collection with information management tools. It is rather an environment to bring together collections, services and people in support of the full life cycle of creation, dissemination, use and preservation of data, information and knowledge. The IT explosion and its implementation changed the entire scenario of the present world. Dynamic multimedia information is needed to meet the requirements of user of today. Digital libraries have become important elements in this era of Information Technology.

Digital library does not mean library in the classical sense, but a network of multimedia systems, a media server or group of interlinked workstations, connected through high-speed networks. Unlike a conventional library, where clientele are provided with physical materials from many sources, a digital library is a group of distributed repositories that clientele see as a single repository in digital form. In other words, in the digital library, the information arrives as needed at the users' screen. Library without walls and digital library have been used interchangeably to describe this broad concept. Depending on the specific library, a user may be able to access magazine articles, books, papers, images, sound files, videos, etc. Numerous terms are used by organizations as well as individuals to denote the concept of digital libraries. Generally, it denotes converting a document from non-digital medium to digital medium for better information storage and retrievals.

5. Characteristics of Digital/ Electronic Libraries

Following are the important characteristics of a digital/ electronic library:

- To expedite the systematic development of procedures to collect, store and organize the information in digital form
- To encourage cooperative efforts to save and share the investments in research sources, computing and communication network.
- To strengthen the communication and collaboration between creator and the user of the information.
- To provide the leadership for the successor for dissemination of knowledge in the area of research.
- To preserve the library reading material for a longer duration and saving the space.
- To solve the resource crunch in the library budgets being spent for the purchase of hard copies of books and journals.
- To create a comprehensive networked information environment.
- To facilitate quicker and efficient handling of information.
- To provide better services in a more personalized way and also provide retrospective services efficiently.
- To maintain and handle large amount of digitized databases.

- To help to save the time of library personnel by avoiding routine jobs.
- To present coherent view of all information within a LIC (Library Information Centre) in any format.
- To serve to widely dispersed communities throughout the network.

Thus, because there is such a strong relationship between traditional library tasks and the task of building new digital libraries, librarians have an important role to play in the new information order. There are a number of ways in which this is already happening. For example, the traditional task of intelligent collection building translates into the task of Internet resource discovery and listing. The process of stock acquisition becomes the creation of mirror and cache as electronic collections are built on local file servers and accessed over an intranet. The skill of classification has become the art of knowledge management. Preservation is now the process of backing up to long-term data archives, while information skills training remain a necessity wherever information sources are not self-evidently usable. However, there is one aspect of the interrelated tasks of traditional library classification and Knowledge management that is worth treating in greater detail. This is the role of interface design.

6. Conclusion

Academic activity i.e. teaching, learning and research are the main concern of higher education system. Library is a supporting system though; it is an integral part of the higher education system whose primary function is not only to obtain resources but also to serve the whole academic community timely as per needs of user. Building electronic resources is a significant that enriches the academic library system largely. For many reasons, the academic libraries often prefer electronic resources alternatively to substitute print collections for the optimum use. Today's libraries have richer e-resources, have long a way to build their e-resources due to various probable reasons including planning, initiation and expertise behind the development of electronic resources among the academic libraries. Moreover, distribution of e-resources subscribed by the Ministry of Human Resource Department (MHRD) for academic libraries through INDEST (Indian Digital Library in Engineering Science and Technology) Consortium is not equally shared. For libraries have so far not availed equal share of e-resources facilities, whereas other academic libraries are being availed. However, all libraries have reasonable resource facilities at their end.

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