Future Libraries: Re-Imagining Libraries in Current Digital Environment

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Abstract: - *ICTs are disrupting libraries. Library collections are moving from print to digital. Services are also changing. Now the future librarians have to equip themselves as per the requirement of the electronic information society. The article explains about the change in collection development, library management system, library services and the role of librarians. Future librarians will need managerial skills for organizing, managing and dissemination of information to the users regardless of format, it is much needed that librarian should have quality of a virtual librarian.*

Keywords: Digital library, Collection development, Library services, Future Libraries

Introduction

In recent years, librarians have been moving away from the concept of the library as a space and towards the idea of library as a service. The goal of embedded librarianship is to take this one step further from a service to a library's dedication to finding innovative ways to continue to add value and align with continuous shifting need of our organization. Librarians have always dealt with the organization of collection of documents physically and intellectually, the display and distribution of the document the user the preservation of the documents in today's environment expect access to electronic items as well as physical material. In fact publishers are abandoning the traditional print models in favour of electronic formats that can be less expensive for them to deliver.

Meaning of the word Library

Library is a place set apart to contain books, periodicals, and other material for reading, viewing, listening, study, or reference, as a room, set of rooms, or building where books may be read or borrowed Or a building or room containing collection of books, periodical and sometimes films and recorder music for use or borrowing by a public or member of an institution. A place set apart to contain document

for study or reference (physical space). All the above are in separately related i.e. no collection without physical space, no staff without physical space and collection requires staff and support. In predominantly digital environment the three components of the library are diverging i.e. Networked collection does not require a building, both staff and building have different role to play in digital environment.

Library as a space (Building)

There is a major shift from physical collection to electronic, due to which physical media are being moved, discarded and discontinued, for example Index Medicus, Chemical Abstracts, Engineering Index have disappeared in print. Back files of most of the journals are now made available by the publishers themselves.

Libraries are valued for their collections, services and communities of user, as the collection go digital the bond between the user and the library is bound to change. Physical library will continue to be an important element of the library, even as the warehouse function of the library diminishes. If poorly managed, the library will become just another building or space on the campus. The libraries have managed well till now with central location, fast computer connection, free internet access and related services. The transition from print to digital has just begun, what happens when the transition is completed? In recent years Librarians have been moving away from the concept of the library as a space and towards the idea of library as a service. The goal of embedded librarianship is to take this one step further from a

service to a library is dedication to finding innovative ways to continue to add value and align with continuous shifting needs of the organization.

When we commit to a vision to do something that has never been done before, there is no way to know how to get there, we simply have to build a bridge as we walk on it, a quotation by Quinn, Robert(2004)"Building the bridge as we walk on it". As future librarian is concerned, the first question that comes to our mind is: Is there any more need of Libraries and Librarians? Some thinks that libraries will be without walls and without librarians. But is this really true? Will the traditional print library and library services disappear?

The changes from print traditional libraries to current digital environment

Changes in Collection development

> Subscription of resources has changed to e-books, e-journals, consortia.

> Dependency on open access web based resources

> The existence to E-libraries, Virtual Libraries and digital libraries

> The changes in library management system- the shift from manual library to library automation.

> Digital Libraries, institutional repositories, open source software, online forum and assistance from subject expert.

In physical World, Collection is within four walls of the library. Library catalogue serves as a discovery tool, ILL, DDS, Indexing, services for

material available outside of library with intervention of library staff. Networked world Availability anytime, anyplace and discovery tool is browser in preference to OPAC, Library portals, multiple methods of access RSS feeds, e-print, archives, Blogs, Wikipedia, websites etc. with content going digital dependence of user on staff is gone and contact reduced. Users may be more knowledgeable than the library staff.

Libraries have been in collection business for centuries and are defined largely by the functions of collection development and management that is by a continuum of processes to select content appropriate for a particular community, make it accessible, manage it, and preserve it. These discrete functions have been viewed as necessary components of good collection Library acquires and secures ownership of digital content on local servers and make it accessible to a target community.We see libraries becoming more engaged in the publishing process, including content presentation, management and distribution and policies and practices. This moves the library closer to the point of creation and distribution in the publishing process and broadens its functions beyond archiving and mediation for published works. The collection department can play a unique role in the advancement and reinforcement of library diversity. Initiatives by identifying institutional and community needs, developing collection that support those needs and providing access to said collections. The department can be positioned at the forefront of its parent institutions diversity mission goal and activities through

active collection development that emphasizes the acquisition of new diverse archival records and by selecting and utilizing resources available within the department to highlight diverse collection.

Libraries have responded to the challenges of content description for new digital media from existing cataloguing practices to develop various metadata schema. Metadata harvesting techniques address the inability of the popular network search engines to tap the riches of digital libraries and other content that lives within databases and repositories. In short

Print collection requires skills to process documents for making itself ready as well as for its discovery and access. The process of acquisition, circulation shelving brings staff in touch with the collection and its location. Users were dependent on library staff. The library is a kind of support, without this support information cannot be used efficiently, but when better support mechanism then libraries comes along we should embrace them find strategies that provide the most value for the available support library should promote open access set op OAJ, IRS should produce more scholarly content with the current investment in resources.

ICTs are disrupting libraries- Indexing and abstracting services disappeared in print; journals preferred in e- format, print version are disappearing. Books increasingly are appearing in e-format.

Changes in Library services

- Change in user approach and their expectation- Now the library access at

user's desktop and access of information in their fingertip.

- Network access and internet connectivity – Users are getting information from different sources and in different format that to be free of cost.
- ICT become a strong agent of change in libraries and information centres.

Accessing is not relevant to e-books. Books have online interactive interface to order and access e-books directly from publishers and journals through consortium and national licensing. For catalogues and copy cataloguing for printed books and not required for e-books, also classification is not required for e-books and Kardex not required for e-journals. All documents are accessible to all libraries. Reference service not required every librarians use browsers to find information now reliance on printed resources to find information now reliance on printed resources has degraded. Even circulation binding, photocopy, Redundant in e-environment.

Significance of print resources

The reason behind the need of printed resources are-

- Not everything is online
- Materials in e-format are not always free.
- Materials in e-format are not always accurate or authenticated.

So far many studies were conducted to find the user preference on print and e-resources and the results were as follows: Print resources are convenient to use, some users felt that, both electronic and printed are essential. No one has not said that print resources are not needed. It shows that significance of print resources.

Future of print resources

From many years librarians have invested and are investing a lot of funds on purchasing of print resources and also preserved the same for future generation. Many of us felt that future libraries will be museum, but Dr. S.R. Ranganathan said Books are for use, every book has its reader, library is growing organism. It means ICT can assist the libraries but can't replace it and the reasons behind is-

- The literacy rate in India is low
- Lack of basic infrastructure.
- I.T. is expensive
- Lack of English knowledge
- Failure in fulfilling the basic needs.

The Future Libraries

- Users will be different
- Users expectation will be different
- Collection will be different
- Modes of research will be different
- Scholarly communication will be different
- Library will become learning hub to meet the teaching research and learning requirement of user.
- Close collaboration with research develop and maintain an institutional repositories, preserving the university's research output.

Although maintaining digital repositories requires skills that may go beyond the skills of librarian,

however if librarian take the responsibility of maintaining institutional repositories. It may provide foundation for the future of academic libraries.

Features of future Libraries

➢ Library resources and services available anywhere and everywhere.

➢ In campus and out of campusaccess to e-resources.

➢ Faster internet connection in library, on campus.

➢ Outreach activities extended both in depth and breadth to the community.

➢ Migrate from print to electronic collections, services phasing out print collection

➢ Social space comfortable and dynamic space conducive to problem based learning discussion and interaction between users.

➢ Library space being prime location will increasingly be used less for storing books and journals and more for other purposes.

➢ Repositioning of library and information tools resources and expertise create facebook cite for information searching and social exchange.

➢ Library needs to be where the users are, be it on Google, my space, face book, etc. Reposition of library and information tools, resources and expertise develop new skills

➢ Research involvement- Library becomes learning hub to meet the teaching, research and learning requirement of users.

➢ Develop and maintain an institutional repository (IR) preserving the university's research output.

➢ Although maintaining digital repositories requires skills that may go beyond the skills of librarian, however if librarians take the responsibility of maintaining institutional repositories, it may provide a solid foundation for the future of academic libraries.

New Roles for Libraries

• Providing quality learning space

• Creating metadata

• Offer virtual reference service

• Teaching information literacy

• Choosing resources and managing licenses

• Collecting and digitizing Archival material

• Maintaining digital repositories

Conclusion

The traditional print library and traditional Library services will not disappear. But as Librarians, we must accept and adapt to the introduction of new techniques and systems. We must recognize the enormous potential of the virtual Library address the issues evolved in its creation and take a leadership role in integrating these new systems and services into our libraries for our own good and for the good of our user. Libraries can adapt to social and technological changes, but they can't be replaced and accept introducing new techniques and recognizing potential of virtual Library.

"Honor the past and create the future"

Quotation by Michael Gorman

That means- In Line with the past and online with the future.

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