ELECTRONIC SERVICES: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT: - *Libraries have changed with time from mere static store houses of collection of documents to dynamic service centers having electronic access points. Now libraries are more dependent upon digital resources rather than the traditional sources. The constant changes in the technology have direct impact on the functioning of library and information services. Modern libraries need to update themselves in designing, implementing and providing alternative services to meet users and to retain their identity in the digital environment. Purpose of this article is to discuss the changing nature of library services it changes on electronic services such as chat, video-conferencing, tele-conferencing, online database, collaborative services, challenges and staff skills required to successes on digital environment has been highlighted.*

Key Words – *E-services, Database, Search Engines, Information Technology*

1. Introduction

Definition - E-services, a business concept developed by Hewlett Packard (HP), is the idea that the World Wide Web is moving beyond e-business and *e-commerce* (that is, completing sales on the Web) into a new phase where many business services can be provided for a business or consumer using the Web.

Library services are cataloguing, classification, circulation services, reservation, renewal, new arrivals, current contents, and current awareness services, selective dissemination of information, indexing and abstracting, reference service, document delivery, inter library loan, externally purchased database, CD-ROM database, access to other library catalogues, access to online databases, reports and journals, bibliographic services etc. These services have changed their mode to an extent with the advancement of emerging trends in technology it provides many options and possibilities which facilitate value added and on demand library services. Electronic services are attracting users. Network of libraries creates a completely digital environment, in which the user identifies the required resources in electronic form. Therefore, library professionals

increasingly need to provide their services in their users.

2. Evolution of Electronic Library Services

Library collection has ranged from clay tablets to papyrus sheets, paper documents and silicon chips, optical and magnetic disc. Library has just store house of books and other documents, local peoples are not allowed to use those documents. Now libraries started document delivery service. In 19th century there was drastic change in the library services. Computer came during the 20th century with the mode of library services changed dramatically. Today academic libraries are established electronic library. The academic and research librarians have always taken guidance from subject experts for various purposes. Now the time has come when the librarians not only need to equip themselves with the modern technological advances but also feel free to take assistance from subject experts in the field of electronics and communication technology.

3. Types of Library Services

3.1 General library services

3.2 Electronic library services

- Access to database
- Bulletin board services
- Bibliographic & cataloguing
- Current awareness
- Electronic Selective Dissemination of Information
- Email
- Internet Subject Gateways
- OPAC
- Internet
- Video Conferencing
- Teleconferencing

3.3 Referral service

3.4 News Paper Clipping Services

3.5 Reprography Service

4. Collaborative Technology

Collaborative includes wireless and satellite video. Wireless technologies are being implemented to support video conferencing users both in close proximity and great distance from hard wired high capacity networks. Wireless networking supports a variety of options for video conferencing.

5. Some Relevant Free Web Sites

- INFLIBNET- www.inflibnet.ac.in
- WHO India- www.whoindia.org
- WHO International- www.who.int
- National Medical Library, New Delhi- www.nml.nic.in
- Free Medical Journals- www.freemedicaljournals.com
- Free Full Text- www.freefulltext.com
- Priory Medical Journals- www.priory.com
- Public Library of Sciences- www.plos.org
- Directory of Open Access Journals- www.doag.org
- MEDLARS Databases- www.nlm.nih.gov/databases
- Open Med- www.openmed.nic.in
- Health Books- www.unifesp.br
- Free Books 4 Doctor- www.freebooks4doctor.com

6. Emerging Library Tools

Librarians to understand how users in the present generation deal with information to be successful in delivering appropriate to them. It is user centered. They view within the library's web presence, OPAC, video conferencing, internet, e-book, e-journals, online databases etc.

7. Staff Skills

Present society is characterized by the presence of ever growing technology and information explosion. With the advancements in electronic technology, it becomes very difficult for an individual to get the required information without wasting their time. The information professionals have to keep pace with the latest developments that are taking place due to advance technology. In the information age new era librarians require two main types of competencies i.e. professional and personal. Professional competencies relate to the librarian's knowledge in the area of information resources, information access, technology, management and research. It also includes the ability to use these areas of knowledge as a basis for providing library and information services. Personal competencies represent a set of skills, attitudes and values that enable librarians to work efficiently, be good communicators, and focus to continuing learning throughout their careers.

8. Challenges and Opportunities

The contemporary electronic libraries are being built along self service line. They are designed for use with librarians serving not as intermediaries but as consultants. Librarians have started to play the role of information provider to the users in the electronic library systems. The library without walls has become reality, while the delivery of services and resources has changed formats. In the environment of electronic library systems the users are doing their jobs themselves from their desktop PCs. Modern technology has introduced image libraries, audio libraries, and even digital video libraries. Modern libraries have collections that now reside in database, text-bases, gopher-space, or the World Wide Web. Library budget are now increasing share for the electronic services such as online Database, E-Journals, OPAC etc. Academic libraries have responds by making their catalogues and collections available online. In the final analysis, with the emergence of Digital library, It has become absolutely essential to address the role of the library professional in the transition from traditional to Digital environment.

9. Conclusion

Libraries of the present times cannot be conceived in isolated of such a situation. Repositories of information and knowledge the libraries need to revamp themselves in tune with the changing circumstances. Libraries and professionals need to update every now and then cater efficiently to the increasing demands of their clientele. Electronic library services are the need of the day and are feasible with efficient and continuous training of the professionals and creation of awareness among the users. Now all types of libraries need

to acquire new skills and knowledge as matter of urgency. The digital era requires staff to be proactive in terms of both their approach to work and their own professional development.

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