Effective usage of e-resources

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Abstract:

There is a large quantity of subscribed e-resources which contain quality rich information in technical institute's libraries. In spite of advantages in terms of access and search capabilities, they are underused. Systematic plan has to be in place for their promotion of use. While a good ICT infrastructure is a prerequisite, it alone will not do. Proactive strategies are required and these need to be adopted imaginatively. Access to e-resources need to be made easier for both on campus and off campus users.

Training will increase the confidence level of the users. Traditional awareness methods include: Personal visits, orientations, brochures, posters and displays. Newer technologies from the Web 2.0 such as RSS alert service, Blogs, Wikis and Face book make the interaction with the library not only interesting but also add more value.

Keywords: e resources, ICT, promotion, orientation, marketing, user awareness.

Introduction:

The Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have made a great impact on all functions of academic libraries. Library and Information Centers play an important role in enhancing the quality of academic and research environment and basic and core activity centre, which helps the user to identify and access the knowledge resources in an academic institution. The developments in ICT have changed the users' expectation from the academic libraries in different ways. To meet the end-users demands effectively, the academic libraries moving from print media to non- print media or electronic media with the advent of latest technologies.The rapid changes in the ICT influencing the libraries of today should equip themselves and change in the tune with the times and technology. With the well worse knowledge of ICT users want to explore the latest updates in the field of science and technology sitting at their workplace via internet. In higher educational institutions,

Some of the publishers like IEEE, ASME, ASCE, Elsevier, Emerald, Gale Cengage, McGraw Hill, Springer, Taylor & Francis, Wiley and other world renowned publishers are famous for journals and book publishing work. They have lot of expertise in this field. Due to the applications of ICT, users' interest and to provide the access to

books, current and previous issues of journal issues publishers have begun expanding their business market for e-resources and can serve better and faster compared to the print mode. Internet or World Wide Web has become an important mode of delivery of needed information which serves as an information channel.

Now many world renowned universities and some higher educational institutions like Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Arizona University, Mysore University, etc are of the habit of developing institutional repositories, wherein the user can have access to their e sources like doctoral thesis, projects etc.Many non-profit organizations have started their repositories for publishing the e journals for the benefit of user community.

Library Resources:

According to Dr.S.R.Ranganathan, in his fifth law – Library is a growing organism. Library is not a store house of books, it is a knowledge centre. Every reader visits the library with the intention to get the solution for his problem. Explosion of Information and tremendous developments in the field of ICT caused the availability of information at the users finger tips. Publishers have begun to promote their goods in electronic format along with the print version. World famous publishers like IEEE, Springer, Pearson, McGraw Hill etc.have made their products available in electronic form and some of the ICT companies have developed some equipment to read online books, journals and other online products. They are IPods, Kindles, eBook Reader, etc.

Online Resources:

Libraries of today are suffering from expensive cost of publications, shrinking library budget, ever increasing demands of users, urged the libraries to subscribe the e books and e journals. It influenced the librarians to make consortia and share the information. In India there are more than 25 consortia are running. They have negotiated with the publishers and purchased the e journals and e books for the libraries, comes under them. Interested libraries can subscribe the contents as per their requirement. AICTE will do the negotiation for the technical institutes coming under its governance.

Higher Educational institutions and R&D centres of today subscribe Ebooks and E journals for the user community to provide current information within the stipulated time. All major publishers of Science and Technology division prefer to publish e versions of contents along with the print version and e version of the information available before the print version comes. In case of journals, publishers give access prior one month in advance.

A. **EBooks**: there are so many e book vendors are there to sale the online version of the books. They have worldwide network to give access to their contents.

Major supplier of e Books:

B. **E Journals**: E journals are the main resources of information available abundantly for the research scholars and R&D centres. This is the list of major e Journals available through net.

Major e Journals providers:

- ❖ ACM DIGITAL LIBRARY
- ❖ ASCE
- ❖ ASME
- ❖ ASTM DIGITAL LIBRARY
- ❖ DELNET
- ❖ ELSEVIER
- ❖ EMERALD
- ❖ GALE CENGAGE LEARNING
- ❖ IEEE
- ❖ INDIAN STANDARDS
- ❖ McGraw HILL
- ❖ SCIENCE DIRECT
- ❖ SPRINGER – CS. EE, EC
- ❖ SPRINGER – MECHANICAL
- ❖ TAYLOR & FRANCIS
- ❖ WILEY BLACK – CIVIL
- ❖ WILEY BLACK – CS
- ❖ WILEY BLACK – MECHANICAL
- ❖ BIOSIS

E Databases:

- ❖ ABI/INFORM
- ❖ CAPITAL LINE
- ❖ EBSCO
- ❖ INFOTRACK
- ❖ J-GATE
- ❖ ERIC
- ❖ HIGH WIRE PRESS
- ❖ DOAJ
- ❖ CRIS INFAC Ind. Info

- ❖ EUROMETER
- ❖ PROQUEST
- ❖ COMPENDEX PLUS
- ❖ INSPEC
- ❖ JCCC
- ❖ MATHSCINET
- ❖ SCIFINDER SCHOLAR
- ❖ WEB OF SCIENCE

Issues and Challenges:

There are several issues and challenges in optimum utilization of e-resources. A few among them are discussed below.

a. User attitude towards e-resources
b. Technicalities
c. Infrastructure
d. Cost factor
e. Access
f. Copyright issues
g. Achieving
h. Availability

a. ## User attitude towards e-resources:

The user attitude towards e-resources varies from region to region. Western people are more familiar using computer, laptop etc. Most of the Indians are still of the habit of reading materials feeling it by having it in their hand. It may be a newspaper, magazine, journal, article etc. Most of the time, the faculties even the article they require is downloaded from internet and mailed it to them, they are of the habit of taking a printout and read the same instead of reading the same using the laptop or reader. But the college students are being cultivated the habit of reading the articles on their laptops or eBook readers. So in such cases it would be difficult to make a shift from print to non print media.

b. ## Technicalities:

Delivery of e resources mainly depends on the network, type of connectivity hired/subscribed, leased line/broadband, speed of the network, bandwidth, hardware/software interface etc. Platform incompatibility is another hindrance to the smooth functioning of the e resources. Uninterrupted power supply is another important technical aspect.

c. **Infrastructure**:

Infrastructure of the library or campus also plays an important role in the access the e contents. Local infrastructure should be compatible with the service provider. Library should have an adequate digital library with high end personal computers with CD/DVD Reader and Writer, photocopy facility.

d. **Access**:

Access or search to e resource should be given in all possible ways else the user feels unhappy and may again switch to print version. All major supplier of e contents give IP based online access or password based access to the library users to utilize the resources whenever they feel required at their seat only through internet.

e. **Copyright issue**:

Publishers provide limited access to e resources. So if simultaneously more number of users has to access the same then the problem raises. Unlimited access points and number of times is a better solution for the problem which is again cost based factor because if we opt for multiple accesses the cost would automatically increase.

f. **Cost factor**:

Cost factor is another point for which management thinks twice for investing on e resources. The argument is if the same fund is invested on print version, then there would be a physical asset for the institute but in e resources no such physical assets are seen on the shelves or racks. So it would be highly difficult to convince the management and get the same. Another important factor is day by day the cost of printed materials is becoming dearer and dearer. Whereas in the case of e resources the cost can be cut down. This can be done very effectively wherein with a limited number. Maximum utilization can be made by giving access to all the needed ones in the institute. Wherein in case of printed materials cost is more and also the investment would be dearer compared to e resources. The same if archived may be used for longer period of time with no extra investment. And also if we subscribe the e products through the consortia, they will give permission to access archives of minimum ten years. But there is no such facility in case of print version.

g. **Archiving**:

Non access to the e-resources after the subscription period expires or if the subscription is ceased then there is no point to have access to archives of the particular e journal. Therefore whether willingly or non-willingly the institute is forced to continue the subscription to have access for the previous issues. But in case of print versions, we

will have the previous issues of journal articles and we can keep the same as long as we need.

h. **Availability**:

In case of e journals, the users can access server round the clock, even the library closes.

i. **Faculty Effort:**

Usage of e resources should start from the faculty. They should insist the students to utilize the facilities. Faculties should be involved in the research activities and encourage the students and make them involved in their projects. The assignments given for the students should be based on the e-journals. Then the students will utilize the e resources effectively. And also faculties should insist on standard IEEE format for a seminar paper presentation so that students will have an awareness of e-resources.

j. **Library Orientation**:

At the time of commencement of class in the academic year, library should conduct orientation programme for newly joined students. If the library has subscribed new things than the library should intimate all faculty and students through proper channel and give them the demo for using the e resources subscribed.

k. **Promoting the use by traditional methods.**

Various traditional methods are available and they continue to be effective. They are listed below:

1. A-Z lists of journals: Providing a list of e journals subscribed and providing a direct link to the journals either from the library homepage or from the OPAC. This will ensure that the user does not miss out a particular periodical though it is hidden in a database. Such periodical list can be made alphabetically title wise

2. Access e-books through library OPAC. Some library automation packages do allow the integration of e-books metadata with library OPAC provided the metadata is in the standard format. Integration allows a single point of search both for print and e-books.

3. Banners, posters, brochures, bookmarks, emails etc: Use of printed brochures, flyers, posters, bookmarks etc should not be underestimated. Such flyers, brochures, bookmarks etc

be made freely available in various service points in the library. Posters be pinned in library, hostels, faculty meeting places etc. Various e-journal publishers have brought out templates of banners, posters ,brochures, bookmarks, emails and press releases which can be used for publicizing their e-books. These communication toolkits can be customized by putting your library logo, address etc.

4.   Various in- house magazines are brought out by student bodies, academic associations etc. Write ups on subject specific online resources will attract the students and researchers.

5.   Library stalls and road shows. Library stalls and road shows in Institute events on fresher's day will create awareness for various e-resources available in the library.

6. **E-mails**.

Emails to all library users indicating new subscriptions, launch events, training programs will promote awareness. Emails are very proactive. Emails have to be short, specific news items, which could be read quickly.

7. **Web 2.0**

RSS Feeds, Blogs, Wikis, Face Book, Twitter are the newer methods which can be effectively used for the promotion of usage of e resources.

Conclusion:

Developments in the information Communication Technology facilities available in the present made tremendous changes in the library operations. It is boon for technocrats, usage of the electronic products enrich the knowledge of user. While good ICT infrastructure is a prerequisite for the effective use of e-resources, there has to be a well organized plan for the promotion of use. Various methods need to be explored in order to make the e resources visible. Traditional methods such as launch events, personal visits and training workshops need to be continued. Printed brochures, posters, newsletters do create awareness and provide the much needed publicity. E-mails and alert RSS alerts bring the information for the personal attention of the user. Improvement in Infrastructure like high speed network, wi fi campus, LAN portals at various access points in the campus and also in departments can be made to improve the usage effectively.

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