

Using Libguides/Research Guide to Enhance Personalized Service in Academic Library

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Abstract

From pathfinders to modern guides, Libraries are adopting different tools and technologies to provide quality service to its user. The growth of quantum of information & the weak paid ranking of search engines is creating a big challenge for the user to access relevant information. Library, as the guardian of the knowledge, has the potential to serve using different technologies. However, it needs extensive cooperation and collaboration from its user community. The library can guide the users if they understand the user queries, academic structure, research needs and information seeking modes. Library personalized service is user-centric service. It aims to personalize the content and serve in such a way that could assist users in getting relevant information and gain maximum user satisfaction. The paper has highlighted the process of personalized service, and how Libguides can be a useful platform for a library in achieving user satisfaction. It has also mentioned the primary personalized feature of libguides software.

Keywords: Academic Library, Libguide, Library Personalized Service, Research Guide, Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), Web 2.0

1. Introduction

Technology has open the different roads of content generation. The quantum of contribution to the web has also increased. In every second, an average of 6000 tweets has been generated (Internetlivestats.com). The Information explosion and rapid advancement of technologies have influenced the working of the library and its professionals. As a knowledge center library now has the primary responsibility to collect the relevant information, and organize the same in such a way that could facilitate easy retrieval. Every document has its unique user, so evaluating the relevance of the information is always a challenge for the LIS

professionals. As library is service organization & so far it considers user-centric approach in providing the information and assess their user needs frequently. Library personalized service traditionally known as Selective dissemination of Information(SDI) is not new and include serving of both current as well as user-centric information.

Now the web is dynamic, people are smart using advanced devices, updated quickly or they are largely literate using technology. The changing scenario of information consumption have influenced the information process so library is also working to serve in a more flexible manner using different technologies. The study here focusses on the relevance of personalized service and how far libguide/Research guide can be useful to fulfill its academic user's information requirement.



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2. Library personalized Service

Users are getting smart in academia, and they know the use of technology in accessing resources. However, they sometimes fed up in getting the quality resources due to weak ranking system of different search engines and missed the relevant. The other factor is most of the users are unaware of the use of resources, copyright, authenticity, and here the library plays a crucial role.

As per the Cambridge Dictionary, the meaning of personalization is “the process of making something suitable for the needs of a particular person.” Personalization refers to the individualization of the

resources as per the customer needs and interests. The word, personalization is quite popular in the business sector, and the big merchants are using this strategy to enhance their user satisfaction. The library is a service-oriented organization and played a crucial role in promoting the academic excellence of the Institute, so from the beginning, it is using this service.

3. Process of personalized service

There are no such standards or principles about the process of the personalized service. It varies from organization to organization as it's based on user type and the way user's seek information.

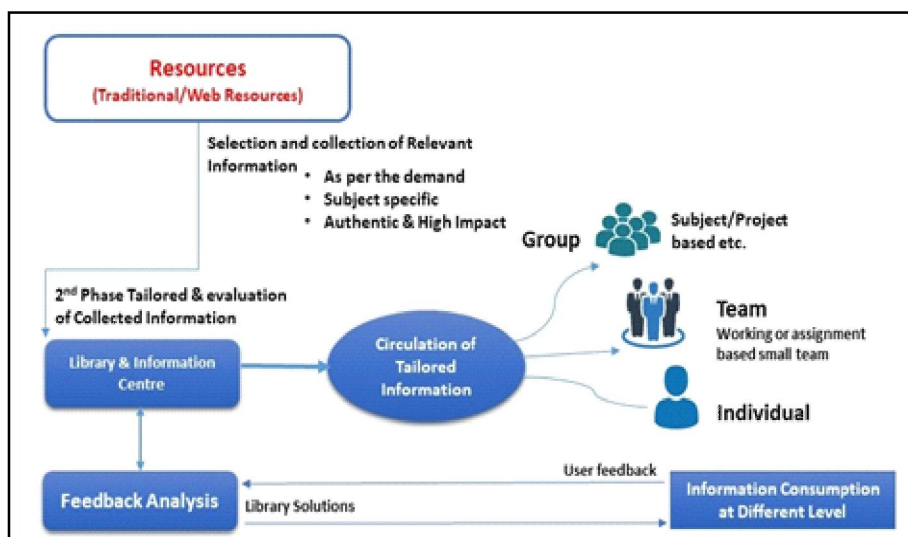


Fig:1 The basic process of Personalized service

An academic library is planning for any personalized service, it must have information about the goal of the organization, different research areas, the user wants, subjects, projects, etc. As from the fig:1 indicates that at the time of collection or organization of relevant information, library personnel have to go through various parameters like on-demand, authentic, subject-specific, or high impact resources. The library can use different tools

like scanning technology, web 2.0 tools to collect data. Analyzed the information need of its user, the library must build group, teams, or small group of information seekers to provide the information smoothly. Before the circulation of information, it should be tailored or filtered thoroughly by the library personnel to avoid any information bias. In the Information consumption process user gives their feedback about their level of happiness or

relevance over the information. By doing the proper analysis of user feedback, the library needs to work remodified it the way of collection and circulation of knowledge.

4. What are Libguides?

Library guides from the beginning had different names based on their functioning and developments. The term generally used are bibliographies, pathfinders, subject guides, online tutorials, etc. using which the library serves its users.

Pathfinders initially identified in the 1950s. But it formally used by one of the MIT Librarian in 1972. The pathfinder program has a set of strict functions and steps which need to be followed during the process of creating guides. The program has been developed to find the path to various resources of the library. In 1990s pathfinders available over online, using the hypertext links & incorporating the URLs the guides were prepared. The influence of web 2.0 technologies had open the way of modern libguides.

LibGuides are a powerful Content Management System(CMS) and modern pathfinder designed to fulfill the primary objective of the library. It is easy to use and require less effort in organizing different resources. It allows building specific-subject guide, research guide, or unit-based guide for the academic community. It is popular among the academic libraries and giving a top competition to the library website too. Most of the libguide is focusing on issues like plagiarism, reference management, fair use of resources, copyrights etc.

5. LibGuides Softwares

There are two open source software and commercial software which are generally used by library in building libguides.

Library à la Carte (<https://github.com/Library-a-la-Carte>)

It is an open source CMS developed by Oregon State University Library & Press design for the library. It has been built using Ruby and MySQL. It has all the features as available on other libguide software. It is web 2.0 compliance and integrate third party widget, RSS feed. Tagging, comments is available with this software. Last in the year 2010 it has released 1.5 version so far no activity has been found on the GitHub website.

SubjectsPlus (<https://www.subjectsplus.com/#section-1>)

It is a powerful CMS developed by Ithaca College Library, and now the University of Miami Libraries. It is one of the mostly used open source solution in libguide. So far more than 50 sites are using SubjectPlus. It also supports web 2.0 features. Latest version of Subject Plus is SubjectPlus v4.4 and they have also plan to release the SubjectPlus 5.0 in next year. From India NIT Rourkela, IIT Gandhinagar and IIM Ahmedabad are using SubjectPlus.

Springshare Libguide CMS (<https://springshare.com/libguides/>)

It is commercial software compatible with web 2.0 tool developed by springshare. This is most widely used CMS more than 5000 institution are using this as their libguides(<https://community.libguides.com/>). It is having all the advance features and widget, API can be integrated with this. They have also inbuilt suit or other product of personalization of content which makes them better than other software.

6. Basic workflow Libguides

Libguide is power Content Management System(CMS) that supports all the quality of a CMS

and specifically designed to meet the needs of library in providing various services. The workflow of libguide is simple but implementing practically is challenging. Librarian are subject experts however,

they can't cover each and every topic without collaboration of the faculty, staff, students or the user of academia.



Figure: 2 Basic Workflow of Libguides

7. LibGuide in Library personalization service

In an academic environment, different stakeholders seek information like faculty, students, administrative personnel, Technical personnel, non-technical personnel, and administration. Librarian has to listen to each of its stakeholders carefully and thoroughly to avoid any biases ion its service. To provide personalized service using libguides first library team has to consider what they have to know about the organization. As per my observation, in developing a personalized service using libguide or any other tool you need to work initially on the following areas.

- ❖ **Understand the vision & mission of academia:** Each of the Institution has its own goal and objectives especially the areas where institute want to excel.
- ❖ **Understand the academic structure:** Academic structure means the departments, subjects, courses, programs offered and the working group.

- ❖ **Understand its user and their diversity:** In an academic environment, users are different based on gender, economy, and physical challenges. etc. For example, if you have blind students in the organization you should have the option of providing screen reader access facility.
- ❖ **Understand the user's wants on information:** Different subject or course user wants different information. To assess their need, you may develop feedback mechanism on pilot basis first. As the user have different interests for the development of career, jobs, sports etc. so you need to be sure to cover all relevant information
- ❖ **Understand behavior and model of information seeking of its user:** Different users have different approaches in seeking information especially the technology or platform they used by the librarian.
- ❖ **Assessment of the previous demand or queries of its users:** This is important, as we need to

ensure first what we have done for them or their queries to develop a trust for further developments.

- ❖ **Develop knowledge on the ongoing research and projects:** This is crucial and quite challenging but librarian has to keep updating herself/himself about the research areas on ongoing projects. Users always need of information in these areas especially faculty, research scholars etc.

7.1 Content Classification & Categorization

The structure of libguides supports the content categorization. It has the facility to archive content over three different groups based on Subject, Topics and course guide. It is customizable, and a hierarchical tree of guides can be created as per the requirement. As per the basic structure of the libguide the subject designates the department or core guides and course are under the main subject guides. Topics category guide can be any topic relevant to its users. User can directly search or can land in specific guide without browsing the other guides. For example, if a user search information related to machine design he can directly go the Mechanical engineering subject guide & or search through the common searching tool.

Each of the broad subjects is divided into different sections or tabs. Each tab has unique information i.e., books/e-books, e-journals, online resources, etc. From a single portal, user can browse all its relevant information In-house resources, subscribed resource, and open access resources.

7.2 Collaborative contribution to the content

Libguide with web 2.0 technologies facilitates multi-collaboration in content archiving and building guides. Liaison Programme enables the faculty and

library to work together in different aspect library services. Faculty and Subject Librarian can work together and evaluate the contents as per the requirement of the subject or course. The faculty member can contribute the content directly to the guides or modify. However, there should have different level review system and its supports in libguide CMS. The library can ask the user to add or suggest for relevant contents of libguides

7.3 Users can create their guide

As there is no limitation of nos of users and guides in libguide, a library can invite different academic groups to develop their guides. User can add or suggest for relevant contents of libguides. It is simple to use and widget-based, so the user can quickly build their guide. The administrator has to initiate the different stages review system in this regard.

7.4 Security and Restricted level access

Libguide has IP based restriction facility or each guide or group guide can be restricted to the concerned user. There is a facility of guide level privileges and authentication. Each user group can contribute or share their guide contents confidentially.

7.5 Assessment Boxes

One of the vital components of the personalized service enables the librarian to know about the user perception about the library. Feedback box captures data in email and tracks the usage of the libguide. Interactive Poll empowers the user to rate the guide quality and activities. Survey Box enables the engagement of participants as the time of live demonstration. Google analytics track the usage.

7.6 Group Functionality

There are different academic research & working groups in an educational organization. Their information need also varied. The group punctuality feature of libguide allows each group to separately design their guide with their interest, look & feel. They can set their own rules and restricted access to the IP to specific members.

7.7 FAQ and Discussion

FAQ are the closed-ended questions prepared for the benefit of the user to solve their common queries quickly. FAQ can be prepared for different subject/collection. The libguide has the feature of live or offline discussion on a topic. Using live discussion enables the user to talk on important topic and issues.

7.8 Integration of API and other CMS

The software available for libguides allows integrating API. Librarian as per the requirement can use different API to track user expectation & demands. As like the online market, the system can suggest the user based on their interest. It depends on the administration how far we can track user interest modified our policy accordingly.

7.9 Instant Messaging & Live Chat

Libguide has the facility to instantly connected with its user in solving their queries through message and live chat. The commercial software Springshare LibGuides have inbuilt feature of live chat and live discussion forum.

7.10 Subscription and Altering Service

Librarian can create an alert system using Email and RSS feed. It enables the user to track their guides by subscribing through email or RSS reader without visiting the libguides.

7.11 Tagging & Bookmarking Facility

Tagging is the new web 2.0 feature, which enables both the user and the administrator to tag their resources. In libguide guide creator give tags, and also user can add a tag. All the tag saved as cloud tag which enables the user to retrieve information from a similar tag. Bookmarking feature allows adding favorite links its user accounts area.

7.12 Video Management & Database Management

Creating a record or updating is easy. A record can be browsed from A-Z Resources which are on the home page of libguide. The record can also be grouped as per the need section of the resources. There is a facility locally store video file, or we can give the link of YouTube, etc.

8. Conclusion

If I search in google about plagiarism, reference management tool, I can find many guides all over the globe service the research need of every researcher. As per the data of Springshare 701,695 Total guides, 451,430 Librarians, 5,419 Institutions from 92 countries. As per the Subjectplus data approx. Fifty nos of libraries are using the libguides. Libguides are getting recognition as a useful hub of all resources day by day. Academician in its learning or research process faces lots of issue and libguide can at least the user in solving some of its research queries. It can help them providing sufficient assistance in doing their research. In her study, Mira Foster found that out 17 librarians 12 has mentioned libguide especially helped user in research assistance. There is some difference with regards to the use of open source & commercial softwares in libguide, but most of the feature is same in every software. It is the responsibility of the librarian and its team how they can get the trust of their user in providing relevant information. Librarians

collaboration with academician and its self-learning of the learning process can make a better-personalized service environment. People participate when they feel it is exciting and they can do this in simpler way, and libguide is a simple tool make the things happen with collaboration.

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