

Google Sites for Academic Library: A Practical Approach in Pub Kamrup College Library

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Abstract

With the application of information and communication technology, the library and information centers are now become more available as well as usable for all. IT based library and information center gives the maximum opportunity to the user- community to search their required information using different IT tools. The Google Sites is a service of Google where a webpage can be designed. The steps of designing a website using the Google are discussed in this paper among with the example of Pub Kamrup College Library website.

Keywords: Google Sites, ICT, Pub Kamrup College Library

1. Introduction

In the present digital era, information and communication technology (ICT) becomes a buzz word which means the bundle of tools and techniques of collecting, storing, editing and passing or communicating information in various forms. Application of ICT in different sectors like education, socio-economic, political, entertainment is now a common thing for the common people. Now a day, in the participatory library service, ICT becomes one of the basic component for the library and information centers and services. The application of different tools and techniques of ICT makes the library and information center more user-friendly and a center of infotainment in real sense with the relevance of web 2.0 and Library 2.0.

2. Web Site for Academic Library

The website is a web-based tool for world wide information dissemination. A website is

composition of different related web pages that includes different contents in different media such as text, video, music, audio, images, etc., which can be viewed over the internet. The drastic development and application of science and technology has brought tremendous changes in the concept of traditional library as well as in its services. Availability of e-resources and usages of ICT tools brings the library and information nearer to the user community, which are searchable from any where at any time. The library webpage is the gateway for entering in the library from a remote place.

The website of any organization including the library is the right place for quick access of authentic, official and update information regarding the organization. Library website generally contains the information about the library's work, facility, services, rule & regulation and about its parent body. In addition, the library site works as a platform for accessing the e-resources including the e-journals, e-books, e-newspapers etc. Moreover, the web OPAC can be accessed through the library website. The library website helps in quick contact with the librarian.



The National Knowledge Commission (2005-08) is a high-level advisory body to the Prime Minister of India. The Commission has submitted around 300 recommendations on 27 focus areas. In the Report of the 'Working Group on Libraries', the Commission explains about the role of the Libraries as, "Libraries are recognized to have a social function in making knowledge publicly available to all. This role becomes even more critical in making India a knowledge society". In this Report, the importance and need of the website for the library as a medium of information dissemination is specially highlighted.

The National Mission on Education through ICT (NME-ICT) is the right step of Government of India for implementation of information & communication technology in the academic institutions, where the academic library website can play a major role. The usage and development of website is become essential for information sharing at its global level. Now the entire library specially the academic library should have a separate website so that it can provide right and updated information. In a paper written by Remigiusz Sapa, described the basic roles of website for academic library as

- ❖ Provider of online information about printed resources of the library and a tool for handling processes connected with accessing such resources
- ❖ Gateway to online resources not fully integrated with World Wide Web
- ❖ Access point to digital resources integrated with World Wide Web.
- ❖ Provider of information and reference services online.
- ❖ Tool for educating library and information users.

- ❖ Space for communication with various groups of library users, supporters and collaborators as well as for e-publishing.
- ❖ Tool for promoting the library (as well as its online services), creating its image and realizing public relations tasks.
- ❖ Keystone for a given university local web environment

3. Google Sites: A Site Development Tool

Tim O' Reilly, the father of Web 2.0 declared that the 'Google is most certainly the standard bearer for Web 2.0'. Google basically a search engine provides different services and application tools that can be used by a user with its user ID (and password) free of cost. The Google account ID can be used for different ID-Password based Google services. The popular services/ applications of Google are mainly of the Gmail, Orkut, Web, Scholar, Image, Picasa etc. The newly added social networking service of Google is Google + (Plus). Google Sites is a tool which gives a platform for creating a webpage using plain text with minimum or no knowledge of HTML (a webpage creating language). The template based system has the customization facility to give a customized look on the page. The Google itself describes Google Sites as the easiest way to make information accessible to people who need quick, up-to-date access. As the Google Sites is log-in based, therefore the creator (owner) of the page can design the site online and can edit the page with others selecting as collaborator. The permission setting helps in controlling users/ viewers just by selecting the option.

The Google Sites offers different types of pages such as web page, announcements, file cabinet,

dashboard and list. The Google Sites is integrated with other Google services/ products, which gives the provision to insert videos, docs, spreadsheets, presentations, photo slide shows, etc directly onto the Google Sites pages. Moreover, it offers the feature of searching the information within the particular site using Google search technology. The mobile version of a website can be developed using the Google Sites. Just by selecting the particular option the site can be adjusted automatically to mobile phones. Last but not the least; the Google Sites gets the memory space of 100 MB which is available free of cost.

4. Google Sites for Pub Kamrup College Library: An Initiative

From the above discussion, it is cleared that a website for an academic library is now like a basic requirement. An initiative has been taken for designing the website of Pub Kamrup College Library using Google and in this paper the practical approach is discussed. An outline on Pub Kamrup College and its Library has been given here before discussing the steps.

4.1 Pub Kamrup College

The Pub Kamrup College is situated at Baihata Chariali, the eastern part of Kamrup District of Assam. This College was established in 1972 and now is providing secondary education and Bachelor degree courses both in Arts & Science stream. Besides these, this College offers professional courses like BCA, BBA, and PGDCA in regular mode under Gauhati University. This Institution is affiliated to Gauhati University and approved by UGC. This College got its affiliation in and listed under 2(f) 12(B) in 2002. The NAAC accreditation was completed in 2004 and ranked with B Grade.

4.2 The Pub Kamrup College Library (PKCL)

The Pub Kamrup College Library (PKCL) is an academic library and having wide variety of collection including, different textbooks, reference books and other reference sources like encyclopedias, dictionaries, etc. The Library provides four daily newspapers and numbers of magazine to its users. The Library procures 15 printed journals on science and technology and management regularly. The Library collection is classified using DDC 18th Edition and catalogued following the AACR II. From 2005 the Library computerization process has been initiated using SOUL and now the Library database is created using SOUL 2.0. The Library has started the OPAC services recently. At present the PKCL has 28,000 books serving near about 2000 students and 100 staff members. The library is fully open access and spacious reading room facility is also there. The Library is providing ready reference service using both offline and online sources of information; paid reprographic facility is there for the users and is planning to introduce some more user-services to its users in the future.

4.3 Pub Kamrup College Library Site: A Practical Approach

A separate webpage for the PKCL has been designed using web 2.0 technology. The Page is developed on Google Sites platform using both plain text as well as html.

Step i

For using the Google, the user has to sign-up first for creating a new Google account. With that Google User ID and Password, one can use all the applications of the Google.

For designing a Google page using Google Sites, first 'sign-in' the Google account and then click on 'Google Sites'. There a 'create' option is available for creating a new site. Here a screen will be appeared with a numbers of the pre designed templates, themes. The site description, the site name and the location should be defined here in this page. At last 'Create' option should be clicked.

Step ii

After clicking on the 'create' option, the 'Home' page will appear automatically and in the specific content area, one can write just typing the plain text.

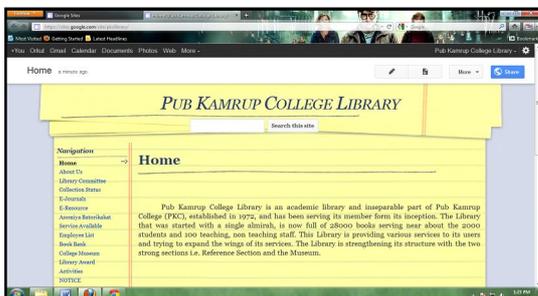


Figure 1: The Homepage with other Navigations of PKCL website

Step iii

There options like 'edit page', 'new page' and 'more' option are visible in the right top of each page. For editing the content of the exiting page one has to click on the 'edit page' and for developing another page one has to click on 'new page'.

Step iv

In 'new page' option, the name and the type of page from the pre defined types (i.e. web page, announcements, file cabinet, dashboard and list) can be selected. The location of the page i.e. under the 'Home' page or other page or as an individual

page should also be defined here. Again, click on 'Create' option and a new page will appear. In this new webpage, the Attachment and Comment option will show, which is optional.

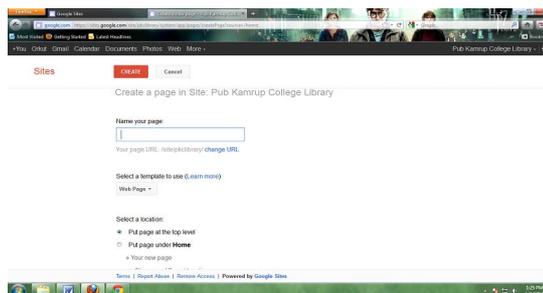


Figure 2: New page creation for PKCL website

Thus for the PKCL website, other 19 separate pages have been developed according to the need of the Library, where all information regarding the PKCL is trying to be included.

Step v

The 'more' button of each page is very important as it allows controlling the settings of a particular page as well as the entire website. The actions like deletion, move and print of a particular page are possible through this 'more' button. Besides these, 'manage site' option is there from where the access setting can be controlled for the entire site. Moreover, the site can be made automatically adjusted with the mobile phone settings from here.

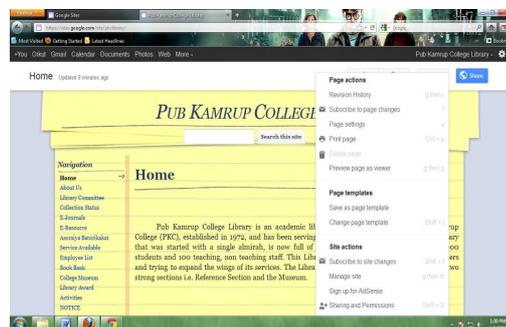


Figure 3: The 'More' Button Option in the Website

Step vi

In the ‘navigation’ area there is another option named ‘edit sidebar’. This button gives the facility to change the layout of the page of the entire site, where one can change the size of the header and sidebar, can insert institutional logo etc. Editing the navigation, the location of a particular page can be managed. The colour and theme of entire page can also be changed/ adjusted from this ‘edit sidebar’ option.

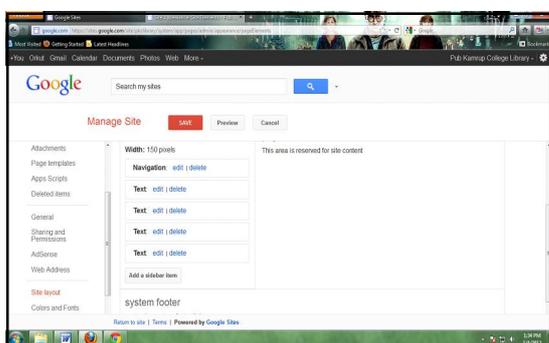


Figure 4: The ‘Edit Sidebar’ Option in the Website

Step vii

After, the completion of the entire site, the site can be published by clicking the ‘sharing and permissions’ option. The default address (URL) for the Google Sites is generally a long one as it prefixes with https://sites.google.com/site. To simplify the address there is another option ‘web address’ from where the default address of a particular Goolge site can be customized.

In the PKCL website, web address is registered with the co.nr domain which provides domain and URL redirection services free of cost. These are the basic steps by which a website can be developed with a minimum technical knowledge and finance for a library.

4.4 The Pub Kamrup College Library (PKCL) & E –Journal:

The Open Access Journal (OAJ) is now become one of the important reference source for scholarly information. The PKCL also tries to spread these benefits among its user community through its website. For this, a separate navigation named ‘E-Journals’ is created in this site where two open access e-journal directory/ search engines are linked; from where an user can search a number of full text peer reviewed journals covering maximum facet of universe of knowledge.

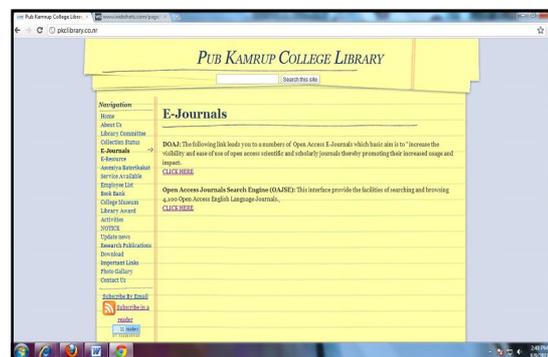


Figure 5: The ‘E-Journals’ navigation of PKCL Website

At present the Library site connects two sources of open access journals’ directory/ search engine link. These are:

- ❖ Directory of Open Access Journal (DOAJ)
- ❖ Open Access Journal Search Engine (OAJSE)

As the Google Sites offers the facility of editing the page with HTML code, here the websites of the two directory/ search engine are linked using HTML code from this page E-Journals.

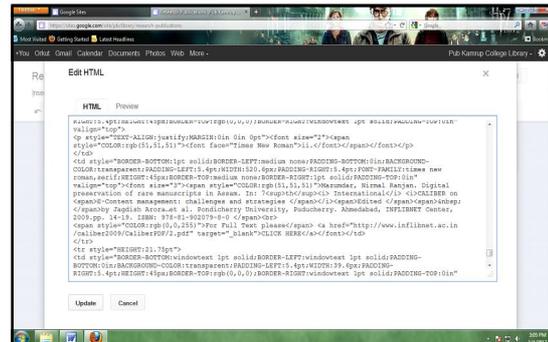
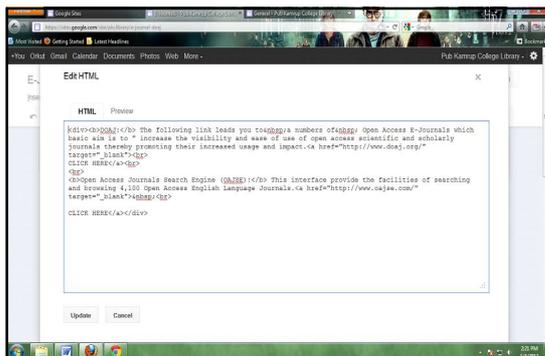


Figure 8: The HTML Code for the Page ‘Research Publications’

4.5 Research Publication

There is another navigation named ‘Research Publications’ in the PKCL site where the bibliographic information of the scholarly articles/papers of different faculty members of Pub Kamrup College are listed department wise. These are documented by the Research and Publication Cell of the Pub Kamrup College. Some of these papers are published under open access initiatives and these full text papers of the faculty members are linked in this page from where one can view or download the same clicking on the particular link.

4.6 Some Other Options

As mentioned above the Google Sites is integrated with other Google services/ products, which gives the provision to insert videos, docs, spreadsheets, presentations, photo slide shows, etc directly onto the Google Sites pages. Here in the PKCL website, the ‘Photo Gallery’ is created using the Google Picasa service. In the PKCL website, book requisition form is uploaded in the ‘download’ navigation, which is inserted using Google docs viewer from the clicking on the ‘insert’ button. Besides these, the updated news of the PKCL is uploaded on the site and these are posted to the subscribed users regularly through their email IDs. This is done posting the news through the Google feed burner.

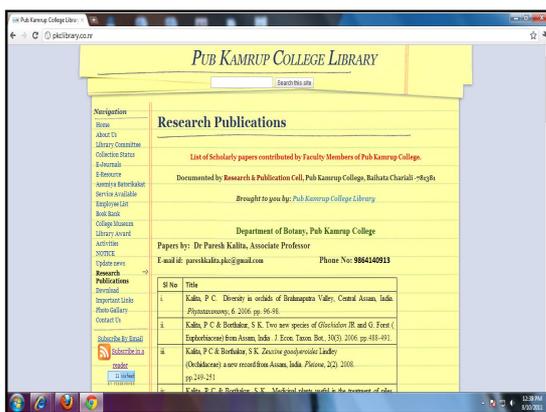


Figure 7: The ‘Research Publications’ Navigation of PKCL Website

To know the number of the page visitors, automatic hit counter are generally used in the website. This feature is also there in the PKCL website. For that, a free web hit counter is uploaded in the navigation area from the link <http://www.onlinedegreeadvantage.com/support-online-education.html>

As the Google has a numbers of application tools and services, one can use and develop the website more attractive as well as effective by their own expertise. Here a minimum level is mentioned which are used for developing the PKCL website.

5. Conclusion

From the above discussion, it is cleared that in the present e-era, application of ICT in library and information center is become the demand of time. According to the annual I-Cube Report jointly published by IAMAI and IMRB, India's internet population is expected to grow to 121 million users by December 2011 from 100 million in September this year.

Out of 121 million, 97 million are expected to be active internet users, who access internet at least once in a month. (News Report, Times of India, dated Nov 7, 2011). This numbers show the requirement of applications of IT tools in library and information center along with the other sectors. The website for an academic library is need of hours as it can play as a common and the single platform for authentic information dissemination. As an academic library, the PKCL has developed its website using the Google site platform which has been running since 2010.

The open access journals are now used by the leading institutes like IISc, Bangalore, Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, IIT Bombay, National Institute of Technology, Calicut etc where the OAJ are linked in their library website. PKCL site also tries to link some OAJs and other online free (open) reference sources from this page. One can able to read newspapers from different countries of the world along with Indian newspapers,

magazines of foreign country and different story books by clicking this Library page. Moreover the popular Assamese dailies are also made available over this site. As it is the first kind of initiative in Pub Kamrup College and only a few numbers of college libraries of Assam have separate library website, therefore there is addition and omission in the page and the PKCL tries to develop its level best to provide up to date services to the user community.

As the academic library is a part and heart of its parent institution, therefore the library website should be well linked or accessible from its parent institution's website. The PKCL site can be accessed from the www.pubkamrupcollege.org.

For enhancing the skill on web 2.0, the practical classes should be included in LIS course syllabus. The short term course, workshop, training programme etc may also be fruitful in this regard. From 2011, KKHSOU, the State Open University of Assam started a one week long skill enhancement program on website design for library professional, which is very helpful for the professional working in the IT environment.

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