

Collection Development in the Academic Libraries in the Context of Library Networks and Internet

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Abstract

Electronic publications and the networking technologies enable the academic libraries to overcome various information problems and to access and provide relevant information to the users. The electronic media like CD-ROM, On-line databases, electronic journals and newsletters, multimedia packages, E-mail and fax media, teletext and videotext etc. play significant roles in collection development activities in the academic libraries. The author describes how these electronic media can be accessed through the INTERNET and establish resource sharing facilities among the libraries and information centres of various countries in the world. The emphasis in the libraries have been shifted from collections of books and journals to the networked information services provided through modern technologies like CD-ROM networks and INTERNET. For collection development activities, the libraries are required to adopt these technologies.

Introduction

Academic Libraries throughout the world are facing the new challenges of the rapid growth of publication, ever rising prices, the evolution of information and the ever increasing expectations of the users. The electronic publications and the networking technologies enable the academic libraries to overcome these problems and to provide relevant and adequate information at the right time and to access information across the globe to a very high extent.

Electronic Publications in Academic Libraries

Now-a-days books, journals, conference proceedings, magazines etc are published instead of paper media, in the form of electronic media such as CD-ROMS, Videotex, Teletext, Multimedia/Hyper Text packages, e-mail, etc. which are known as electronic publications. In the academic libraries these electronic publications are very much important and they are emphasised to meet information thrust of the end-users and to reorient and re-design the curricula of the academic systems.

CD-ROM Publications

CD-ROM (Compact Read Only Memory) discs are the best, powerful and economical tool for storing and retrieving of huge amount of information in academic libraries. Since CD-ROM discs save high cost building and shelf storage space, they are a boon, especially for the academic libraries, which provide instantaneous reference service to the students. Linking of several CD-ROM workstations through networks enable the users to access the information from all other systems at a time in the multi-user environment. CD-ROM union catalogue is an effective medium for resource sharing among libraries.

On-line Databases

Databases are the collections of related numeric and/or textual information in machine-readable form that are processed for computerised publishing through networks. The electronic publication media of dissemination, OPACs, BBSs, Usenet Newsgroups, electronic journals & newsletters are such databases. Online databses can be accessed through Internet facilities.

Electronic Journals and Newsletters

The electronic journals and newsletters are available on various Internet service providers. Details of these electronic-publications can be got from Strange Loves directory of Bailey's list. They can be subscribed by sending the e-mail message to : <listserve@vhupvml.bitnet>. It reduces the budget problems and removes time consuming job of searching manual systems. We can browse or retrieve all the issues of the available electronic-journals & newsletters through the networks and can get the required information in few seconds and it can be downloaded.

Multimedia Packages

Multimedia is a powerful tool for retrieving information which has influenced significantly, the present process of collection development in academic libraries. It plays a vital role in the field of education and training. Since multimedia is an integration of text, graphics, video, audio and animation on a single medium, it adds much quality to the collection of the libraries. Multimedia always helps the students to develop new skills that printed medium alone cannot produce. There are multimedia CD-ROMs on Encyclopedia Britannica on Wild Life, on cities, on music, CD-ROM magazines, discs to teach the alphabet, words, language, games, history of cinema, telling fairy tales etc. available in the international market just like books and music cassettes.

- The information sources of Electronic journals, Preprints, Technical reports, Softwares, Campus wide Information System (CWIS), databases, Institutions, Electronic publishing, Marketing and publicity of products & services, etc can also be accessible through Internet.
- On-line education & access to multimedia information is possible through Internet.
- In the context of resource sharing Internet plays a very vital role in the academic libraries.
- Internet provides SDI, Bibliographic, patent & other referral services also.

Collection Development through Resource Sharing

Library & Information centres cannot dream of acquiring all the literature published world-wide individually, but the users, have the right to ask for all. Thus libraries have to co-operate to share their resources of information. Library Network communications & Internet are the newly improved techniques for the sharing of expensive resources to provide information at optimal cost and to develop the quality of their collections.

The term resource sharing refers to the term library co-operation. Co-ordination, co-operation and exchange of bibliographic data through electronic publishing is possible only through CD-ROM Networks and Internet. Internet improves the Inter and Intra Library co-operation through resource sharing among various countries in the world. In addition to the collection development, resource sharing with network facilities saves lot of money through Internet acquisitions.

Conclusion

Previously, the quality of library was judged on the basis of the size of its collections of books, journals and other materials, but today the emphasis has shifted to the Networked information services provided through modern technologies like CD-ROM Networks and Internet. Hence to develop the collection environment in academic libraries and to pace with the rapidly growing publications of books and journals, libraries are required to adopt to the modern communication and Network technologies to ensure timely availability of indigenous and quality instant-information.

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