CREATION AND MANAGEMENT OF DIGITAL RESOURCES AND SERVICES AT REC, TRICHY LIBRARY

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ABSTRACT

In the mist of fast emerging Information explosion, finding a particular relevant information is a very cumbersome job. So it is very urgent and inevitable to create and manage digital resources of information and make them easily accessible to the user. The traditional libraries should be changed to Digital/Electronic libraries by providing Digitized Information Services to cope up with the needs of these 21st century end users. Now-a-days, CD-ROMs, Computer Networks, Internet, Multimedia, Email, Electronic Texts and Journals play vital role and involve very much in creating and managing information in digital libraries. This paper explains the above digital resources of information and also it deals with various digital information resources available and the digitized information services provided byREC, Trichy Library.

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0.   Introduction:

In the fast emerging and evergrowing mist of information explosion, it is very difficult to retrieve a particular information without wasting the time. The computers and telecommunication technologies have paved the way to the development of Information Technology which involves use of Computers and Information systems for storing, managing and accessing useful information in an optimized and organized way. So, to cope up with the information needs of the 21st century end users, the traditional libraries should be changed to Digital/Electronic libraries by providing Digitized Information Services. Digital Information services can be provided only by collecting and maintaining the digital resources of information like Computer Networks, CD-ROMs, Internet, Multimedia, E-mail, Electronic Texts and Journals. This paper explains about the digital resources and the digital information services provided by REC, Trichy Library.

1.   What is a Digital/Electronic Library ?

Digital Library is an Electronic Library in which a large number of geographically distributed users access the contents of large and diverse repositories of electronic objects using computer networks. Yarkey defines Digital Library as Electronic Library in which large number of users across the world can access information in the form of Networked Electronic texts, images, maps, sounds, videos, catalogues, Government publications, hypertext, hypermedia and multimedia compositions etc..

2.   Digital Resources of Information

The resources of information which are available in the form of Digital or Electronic format are known as digital resources. Digital resource is the knowledge that becomes a dynamic resource for global sharing more easily than knowledge in any form and lends scope for automated delivery mechanisms. Information have been embedded in varieties of ways and forms in various kinds of digital resources. Following are some of the digital resources of information by which we can retrieve the required information with in a reasonable   time   with   speed   and   accuracy   :
1. OPAC (On-line Public Access Catalogue)
2. Electronic Texts and Journals
3. CD-ROMS
4. Computer Networks like LAN and WAN
5. Multimedia
6. Internet
7. E-mail and Bulletin Board
8. Audio-visual aids

3.   Advantages for Digital Resources of Information

? Information that is digitized can become available to anyone anywhere in the world at minimal cost and its source does not get exhausted with unlimited use.
? Digital information obtains full networking capability
? Effective searching can be possible to retrieve a particular information.
? Downloading of the required information is very easy.
? Presentation of information through the digital resources can be done within a reasonable time with speed and easy.
? Multiple access to electronic resources is possible.
? Access to information is instant
? It develops a distributed learning environment by which all the users can be benefited at a time.
? Large volumes of data can be stored in the digital resources and made accessible to the users.
? Remote access to information also can be possible.
? Addition of information to the collection of digital resources is faster.
? Cataloguing, editing, referring, indexing etc. can be done with ease and speed.
? Education and Training can be provided through digital resources effectively.
? Information transfer can be provided with speed and accuracy.
? Career planning and related information can be accessible using the digital resources of information.
? Above all, the quality of information service can be improved and maintained through the digital resources.

4.   How to Craete and Manage Digital Resources in Libraries

To create and manage digital resources, first of all libraries must be automated by computer applications. The basic requirements for creating digital resources are:

? All the functions of the library should be computerized.
? Networking facilities like LAN and WAN must be available in the library.
? CD-ROM and Multimedia Workstations to be installed.
? Internet connection must be provided
? Digital computer scanner and CD-writer facilities to be established.

4.1   Creation of Digital Resources of Information

Computerized Catalogues may be created and made accessible for the users by maintaining separate computer systems through LAN. Efforts have to be made to produce all documents in digital form. This will reduce our expenditure in converting texts to digital form. Creating texts in digital form would facilitate in publishing of documents electronically either on the Web or in the form of CDs etc. Information using the Electronic texts & Journals should be created and provided through LAN or WAN or Intra/Internet facilities to the users.

Separate Web page may be created by the library highlighting its services and collections on Internet which will support electronic publishing of reports, announcements, new additions, notices etc. and increase the use of its resources.

Daily news, important notices and circulars, list of new arrivals of books and journals, academic advertisements, fellowships etc. can be created and provided through E-mail and Bulletin Board Service .

CD-ROM search may be admissible to the users by creating and managing separate CD-ROM workstations for which a good collection of CD-ROMs and Multimedia CDs should be purchased and kept at the libraries for accessing the relevant information after getting signature and data about the CD-ROMs searched by the users. For that, a separate register should be kept to avoid mutilation or misplacement of CD-ROMs.

Using the Computer Scanners and CD-Writer, relevant and required images from Textbooks and Journals and other primary documents may be scanned and included in the required documents and they may be provided to the users on demand with reasonable charges.
Internet access may be provided to the user for retrieving the required information and fee may be collected for browsing the Internet and a separate data and account may be maintained for the same.

5.   Digital Resources and Facilities Available at REC, Trichy Library : REC Central Library

The Regional Engineering College, Trichy has a modern Central Library with more than one and half lakhs of documents consisting of 94,200 Technical Books, 7,350 Reports,

12,740 Indian Standards and 16,000 Back volumes of journals. The Library also has a Book Bank Section with 15,000 textbooks, an Audio-visual section with 1500 Educational Video cassettes and 31 Audio cassettes, 4 CD-ROM Workstations with more than 150 CD-ROMs and a Reprographic section.

Library Automation:
The library functions like Circulation Control systems, Serials Control and Cataloguing systems have been automated using an integrated software package called LIRS+ which has been developed locally by the REC Computer Support Group staff using CLIPPER , Foxbase and C++ computer programming languages. The REC library has been connected in the Local Area Network of REC Computer Networking systems. Hence the users can access the required information regarding the library resources and services from anywhere , at any time inside the campus.

5.1.   Digital Resources of Information Available at RECT Library

REC, Trichy Library has the following digital resources for providing information to the users through LAN:

1. OPAC (On-line Public Access Catalogue) on LAN.
2. CD-ROM Workstations - 4 nos. with a collection of
    a. Dialog-on-disc/ Engineering Index from 1987 to till date
    b. Inspec-on-disc/ Proquest/from
    c. About 125 CD-ROMs collected from the Books & Journals
    d. DK Multimedia Encyclopaedia of Science and Technology
    e. McGraw-Hill Encyclopaedia
3. Computer Scanner and CD-writer which facilitate the users to download the required information and data in floppies / CD- ROMs or as printouts.
4. E-mail facility through LAN is available in the Library by which Bulletin Board service is provided through LAN.
5. Internet Browsing Centre is established at the Computer Centre and the users are allowed to search and download the required information on demand with reasonable charges.

5.2   Digital Information Services Provided by RECT library

- OPAC service
- E-mail and Bulletin Board Service
- Document Scanning service
- CD-ROM networking service
- Internet Access
- Electronic Referencing service
- Indexing and Abstracting service
- CAS & SDI service
- Other Bibliographical services

6.   Conclusion

The RECT Library has adopted few digital information technologies and is providing the Information services through the above said digital resources by which more users of our Institution have benefited and the automated control systems are enabling the staff to create and provide effective information service to the user. The present day library system is inadequate to acquire, process and disseminate the right information to the right user at the right time. The latest developments in Information Technology have opened a gateway to digitize the library resources of information by which the traditional libraries can become Digital/Electronic libraries. Librarians as Information Engineers have to learn more about the Digital Information Technology and they must, of necessity, change their way of thinking if they are to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

7.   References

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