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# Web Based Library Services

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**Abstract:**

With the emergence of the web and associated technologies, especially the planet Wide internet has opened up a wholly new medium for providing improved info services and resources for the users. Library services provided by mistreatment internet technology area unit referred as internet primarily based library services. The present paper mainly discusses that what are the web based library services, their features, advantages and disadvantages. Different web based services i.e. library webpage, Web OPAC, ask-a-librarian, email have been highlighted.

**Keywords**: - Web Based Services, Library Web page, Web OPAC, Ask-A-Librarian, Digital Library Services, Electronic Reference Services etc.

**Introduction:**

The day by when the Internet is emerged, more specifically the World Wide Web which is one of its major services has completely revolutionized the way to communicate, studying, teaching, business, employment, education, healthcare and more. It has a major impact on the publishing and information delivery system in 21st century (Arora, 2001). Similarly in case of libraries too, applications of internet and web technologies have changed the way the libraries operate and provide information services to users. Libraries are playing a vital role for the promotion of education and research. With the application of this technology it became possible to have access to various information sources and databases available in various parts of the globe (Deka, 2007). It is not affecting only the formats and resources of the information, but also how and where to provide library services (Bhatnagar, 2005). Traditionally, the library services were static. To access the library users needed to go to the library physically during the library opening hours only. But in web era, library services have become dynamic. Now a day the users can access the library at anytime from anywhere. No need to go to the libraries physically and no time restrictions. With the advent of information technology and web based services, contents are now available to users on their desktop. Digital Library Services, Internet Library Services, Electronic Library Services are the terms used interchangeably for Web Based Library Services.

The first generation of information retrieval tools was designed for use with bibliographic databases. The second generation of tools attempts to collect and index resources as an automation function. The third generation deals with World Wide Web Meta search engines. The fourth generation involves new ideas such as search agent technology currently being developed to search for information on the web. Web Based Library Services are mainly provided through the library portal which is a special kind of gateway to web based

library resources. It provides integrate access to the metadata of a library's multiple databases. It gathers a variety of useful information resources into a single webpage that allows users to customize their info resources by choosing and viewing info they realize in person helpful (Jackson, 2002). Some of the commonly used web based library services are library webpage, web OPAC, Bulletin Board Services, Ask-a-Librarian services, web forms, digital reference services, online document delivery, interlibrary loan, online help and information skill tutorials, online current awareness bulletins, e-mail based services, online reference services, electronic journals (UGC-INFONET digital library consortium), online circulation service, electronic SDI services, online acquisition, electronic article alert service, etc.

**World Wide Web:**

World Wide Web is one of the services of the internet. It is a way of accessing integrated information in the form of web pages over the medium of internet with the help of web browsers. According to (Jeyshankar, 2009) World Wide Web is a global network of internet servers which provides access to interlinked documents locally and remotely. It is a huge network of connected machine-readable text files hold on on laptops throughout the planet which will give computer users' with data on a large sort of subjects. The information can be in the form of regular text, hypertext, pictures, sounds, use net news groups and other types of data. To access such information from web use client program is necessary like Internet explorer, fire fox, etc. Web uses http protocol language over the internet to transmit data. In the web each web page can hold not only information but also links to other pages. In each page a particular word or group of words are highlighted and there is a link between the highlighted item and other information, this is called hypertext.

**Library Services:**

Library Services are defined as the facilities provided by a library for the use and dissemination of library material like books, journals, theses, dissertations, etc. in order to meet the users' requirement. Some of commonly existing library services are cataloguing, classification, circulation services, reservation, renewal, new arrivals, current contents, current awareness service, selective dissemination of knowledge, reference service, document delivery service, interlibrary loan service, externally purchased database, CD-ROM databases, access to alternative library catalogues, access to on-line databases, internally revealed newsletters, reports and journals, bibliographies, indexing and abstracting services and so on. With the advent of internet and web the mode of providing such services has changed to web environment.

**Web Based Library Services:**

WEB is popularly used because the similar term of World Wide internet or net or on-line. The Internet and its "publishing arm" the WWW area unit necessary elements within the communication method. The web may be a consumer or server system accustomed access every kind of data to anyone on Infobahn. The information is within the sort of regular text, hypertext, pictures, sounds, Usenet newsgroups and other types of data. To access this data, use a client program called browser. Within the web, the information is stored in pages. Each page will hold not solely data however links to different pages. In each page a particular word or sequence of words highlighted item and the other information related to that words in some other pages. This means that there is a link between the highlighted item and the other information, the service is called hypertext. When anyone wants to follow a link, the browser will find out where it is and connect the web server at that location, request the new page and

then display it on the screen. The WWW could represent AN intermediate type between recorded and unrecorded communication and knowledge transfer. Because it is a new medium we have not yet fully identified the dynamics of its behavior. Keeping in mind today's tremendous increase in information and changing users' behavior we can say that web is an ideal media for providing information. There area unit some common facilities we will fancy type internet.

**Web based library services—Background:**

At starting library was simply a store house of books and alternative document. General people were not allowing to use that documents. After while library started document delivery service and circulation came into image. From middle of the 19th century there were drastic change of library services. A large number of different services came into the picture. computer came throughout the center of the twentieth century the mode of library services modified dramatically. It became info service and new reasonably offline service came into image and last one decade of twentieth century it absolutely was began to offer on-line service. If we have a tendency to attempt to ascertain the history of net primarily based services i might prefer to say that it absolutely was Nineteen Sixties we will assume as a primary step. In early 1960's developed countries began to experiment with the use of computer in library and information processing activities.

Mainly these systems were batch orientated and used punched cards as information input media. It was H.P.Luhn of I.B.M. , U.S.A. during 1950's initiated pc –based SDI, CAS and Indexing services. Here it should be noted that the term 'information retrieval' as commonly used refers to systems and procedures for retrieval not of information but of documents that may inform the users on the particular subject areas of interest to them. Actually most retrieval systems do not deliver the documents at all. Instead, they retrieve some type of document surrogate like full list citation or list citation and the abstract. In the USA among the pioneers of large scale bibliographic processing by the computer, the National Library of Medicine, which launched MEDLARS service in 1963. It was the primary massive scale system created obtainable to the final public with none restriction. Even today it is one of the most widely used service in the world. It become on-line throughout 1970 beneath the name MEDLINE. In this way during 1970's libraries made proper use of computers in various library operations and launched local system successfully due to availability of improved computer technology and collaboration between libraries and computer specialists. The Chemical Abstract Service started by the yank Chemical Society in 1907 became on-line throughout 1967.

Another important online retrieval system was the RECON (Remote Console) system of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of the several online services available in the U.S.A. The largest is Lockheed's DIALOG Service started in 1972 . There was revolutionary change in library co-operation and resource sharing as a result several library network like OCLC came into existence. The Online pc Library Center established in 1963 that became the pace –setter for several such library networks. In UK the British Library offers an online information retrieval services with several data bases, called BLAISE (British Library Automated Information Service ). There are also over 140 computer based international information systems in various disciplines and missions established on co-operating basis by 36 UN organization and agencies within the conceptual framework of UNISIST, many of them offering on-line information retrieval service also e.g. INIS, AGRIS,

Global Environmental Monitoring System (GEMS), Population Information System (POPINS), International Patent Documentation Center (INPADOC) and so on. From 1980's the availability of "packaged" hardware and package has come into apply and conjointly gained quality for data storage and retrieval method and reference network of the libraries and bibliographical information center.

## Types of Web based Library Services:

### Library Webpage:
Library webpage can be defined as gateways for searching information about the library. It provides integrate access to the metadata of a library's multiple databases, e-journals and library catalogues and deliver detailed information about a library and also provide access to all computer based services like library collection, library timing, library working hours, list of subscribed online journals, CAS/SDI/Reference services, popular documents based on circulations, reservations, user feedback, etc offered by a library. With the help of library webpage, library can easily propagate its services and facilities to the academic community worldwide.

### Web OPAC:
Web OPAC is a library catalog on the web. Users will search the desired info by connecting to Uniform Resource Locator (URL) of Web OPAC at anytime from anywhere in the world. It facilitates the users to access the bibliographic details of holdings in the collection of particular library. In this system the library books and other reading items are arranged according to the subject content that is given a call number. Some of the major services available through Web OPAC are library catalogue, search facility on entire database, group wise restricted access for users and guest.

### Bulletin Board:
"A bulletin board is an electronic communications forum that hosts posted messages and articles connected to a standard subject or theme or interest. It allows users to call in and either leaves or retrieves messages. The message may be directed to all users of the bulletin board or only to particular users. Several libraries are victimization bulletin boards for his or her net primarily based library services. The bulletin board system is also used as an interactive interface to invite suggestions on activities and services of a library. It can also be used as Associate in Nursing interface to distribute library services."

### Access to Database:
Several publishers these days provide web-based, computer network solutions for providing native access to their databases. Examples embrace Silver Platter, Cambridge Scientific Abstract and Institute for Scientific info. Journal publishers have conjointly begun to supply similar scenario, for instance Elsevier, for electronic version of their journals. Large R&D libraries can take advantage of these developments and provide desktop access to key database and electronic publications to their users. Apart from the outwardly purchased databases, libraries have their own assortment of ROM databases mounted on their CD server/tower. Online database vender such as Dialog, Lexis-Nexis, ERIC are delivering their database over internet. So a library which subscribes to these databases can now easily access them over Web.

**Electronic Selective Dissemination of information:**

Most of the R&D and academic institute because of the tight teaching and research schedule, it was found that scientists and faculty members of the institute were hard-pressed to personally visit the library. Here an electronic SDI service was formulated to deliver current information of interest to faculty members on their desktop. Through this service the Research Interest Profiles (RIPs) of users are searched in a batch mode on the latest updates of EDB's on a monthly basis and the result are e-mailed to respective faculty members. Thus this service not solely operate as a Current Awareness Tool, but also influenced the acquisition of information sources as well as usage of other library services like document delivery, resource sharing and acquiring reprints. For promoting E-SDI services on the web, library should create a link from the existing library environment (i.e. E-SDI page is accessed by clicking the SDI siblink from the information service link of library main page) and the different task followed provide the services can be traced by hyper-navigating the active link. A general definition about E-SDI can be given on the basis of H.P.Luhn's original definition of SDI developed in 1958 which involves the matching of user profile with the new materials, the notification to the users feedback from the users and therefore the modification of users profile. Further link outline the different step followed in delivering the output, how the RIPs are constructed, answering the frequently asked question, feedback received from the users, statistical details about the service, and a figurative representation of the whole activity.

**Ask-A-Librarian:**

Ask-A-Librarian services square measure web based mostly question and answer service that connect users with people UN agency possess specialised subject data and ability in conducting exactness searches. Users ask question either through web form or by an e-mail address provided by the service. Once a query is read by a service, it is assigned to an individual expert for answering who in turn responds to the query with factual information or a list of information resources. The responses are either send to the user's email account or is posted on the web so that the user can access it after a certain period of time.

**Web Based User Education:**

Web guides and teaching tools square measure found all over on the net as a result of they're simply updated, accessed and printed on demand. The web based mostly user education provides a high degree of interactivity and flexibility to the users. The library websites will use web-based user education for impartation coaching to users in the following area:

- Basic library skills in conjunction with wordbook of library terms;
- Using Library OPAC/ Web OPAC, locating books, magazines and other library materials;
- Instructions for looking fixed storage and internet based mostly databases and alternative electronic resources; and
- Instructions on subject search training, using Boolean operators and searching internet resources through search engines.

**Advantages of Web Based Services:**

Following are the advantages of Web Based Services:

- It saves the precious time of the users.
- A large number of users can be helped simultaneously by using web based library services.
- Less dependent on the library staff for getting the required information.

- No need of library staff in large numbers to carry out library works and services
- availableness of knowledge in several places and additionally in several formats.
- Cut in Library Budget.
- Fulfill information requirements instantly.
- Operating costs are minimal.
- Cannot be stolen or miss shelved.
- Saves considerable storage space.
- Immediate receipt of issue.
- Fast publication

**Disadvantages of web based services:**
- A huge volume of information is generated every minute.
- No order or rules are imposed on the generation, distribution, access and use of this information.
- No absolutely comprehensive record of the various documents is obtainable at the instant.
- Requires some training for users to use special equipment required.
- Use is limited by copyright laws and licensing agreements.
- Access is currently unreliable (URL problems, internet connection problems).
- Format is in the early stages of development.

**Conclusion:**

The first and foremost function of the library is to provide quality information service in order to satisfy their users with the right information at the right time. Web based library service is a trend. Although, we actively transfer library services but our central purpose remains the same, to serve and teach users to find, evaluate and use information effectively. To meet these challenges, the librarians may play a leadership role in providing better web based library services to their techno savvy users. The librarians have to join the learning community as coaches and collaborators, guide the students, teaching them how to search effectively and helping them judge the quality and usefulness of the information that they meet with.

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