

A Paradigm Approach of Electronic Libraries in an Intellectual Milieu

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Abstract:

Electronic Library consists of a structured collection of information in an electronic format and disseminating the managed information through a network. The paper discusses the objectives of the libraries to get digitized. The paper explores the issues and challenges while implementing the process of electronic libraries and also the importance of the electronic libraries in the modern era and it also emphasizes on the characteristics and functions of the electronic library.

Keywords : *Electronic Library, Digital Library, Electronic Information, Information Resources.*

Introduction:

Electronic information is nothing but an electronic signal which travels through the electronic network to meet the information explosion and also it requires fast and better networks. In order to provide the best electronic library services, the libraries should be equipped with necessary facilities to distribute the required information which need and accessed by the users. Electronic libraries are the one which really helps the users to get access to the electronic resources directly on the screen of their computer itself. Electronic libraries are reforming the dissemination of the information with respect to the availability speed and access. The success of the electronic libraries is depends on the strength and support of their services and their capability to get access to the huge collections through electronically with one another. The rising and growing trends in the electronic media application and ever-present of electronic information are forcing the libraries to endure an extensive structural transformation. Even the association of research libraries reveals that the electronic libraries can provides network for the links to other electronic libraries and it should not be struck up with one single-point source but at the same time, it should facilitate the maximum number of extraction of resources from partnering or neighboring libraries and institutions.

Definition of Electronic Library:

Since we can find lot of different kind of definitions of electronic library can be found in literature which constitutes the value and meaning of it. It is very simple to understand that it functions with the process of conversion of printed materials and other information resources into electronic format which should be stored and retrieved depends on the formats required by the users. The information resources which are available in the electronic format are well known as electronic resources. It is usually managed and recognized in variety of formats but these should be in electronic format. According to Alen Powell the libraries which are little or doesn't have physical plan of periodicals, books, support staff or reading space but it disseminates the information required directly to the distributed users of the library in electronic format. Thus the electronic libraries is location free which can be delivered through network in order to serve the user community by providing access to the organized electronic information resources.

Edward A. Fox clearly defines the electronic library is a machine readable presentation of materials which can be found in the university library with the organizing information which deliberates to help the users to find their required information. Electronic Library services is an collection of storage, electronic computing and communicating machinery collectively put together with the needed software to emulate the services offered by conventional libraries and other material which means of acquisition, preservation, cataloguing, searching and distributing information.

Objectives of Electronic Library:

The objectives of electronic library as mentioned here in:

- ❖ To provide customized and retrospective services in a specialized manner.
- ❖ To provide balanced information within a library in a multiple format.
- ❖ To provide acquire, preserve, organize and access information in electronic format.
- ❖ To provide better services in order to meet the satisfaction of the user needs.
- ❖ To provide various information to broadly discrete communities through network.
- ❖ To save the time of the users and the library staffs by eliminating the usual works.
- ❖ To include and provide enormous number of digitized databases.
- ❖ To reduce the cost involved in the various library activities.
- ❖ To customize massive storage of information and to reduce the space difficulty of large libraries.

Functions of Electronic Library:

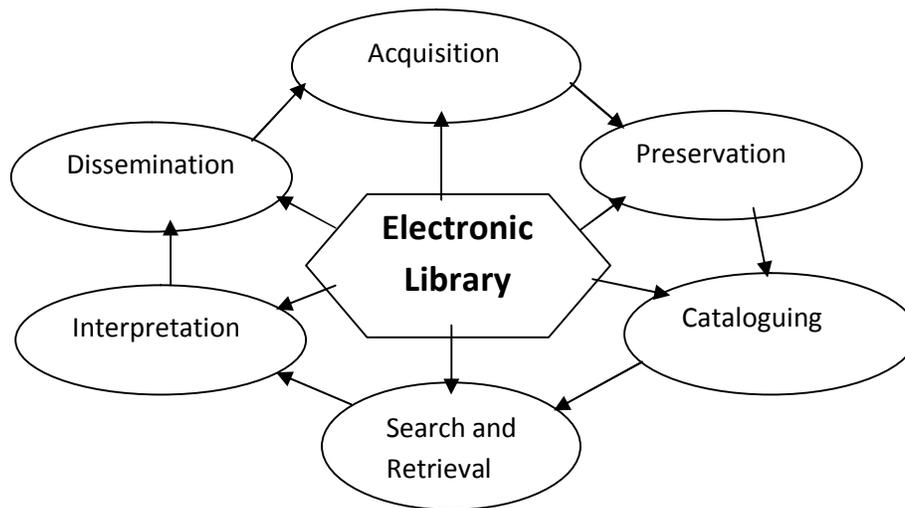


Fig 1. Key functions of Electronic Library

Characteristics of Electronic Library:

- ❖ The collections of the electronic library are chosen and arranged in such a way to make easier for achieving and easy access to the users.
- ❖ Electronic libraries are accessible in a network environment. The information in the electronic libraries can be easily accessible from anywhere of the world and it facilitate many users can access single information on the network at the same time.
- ❖ Electronic libraries can be accessible freely or through a form of payment for accessing and usage of the collections of it.
- ❖ Electronic library services include of search, organization and filtering, reference services in order to satisfy the information needs of the users. Resources of many libraries are linked together through appropriate technology and these linkages are translucent to end-users.
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- ❖ The collections of the electronic libraries can be diverse and wide-ranging. It depends upon the intention of its subsistence.

- ❖ Electronic libraries are the electronic face of traditional libraries which inclusive of both electronic collection and traditional like fixed media collections.
- ❖ Electronic libraries ideally endow with logical view of type of information in any form or format contained within a library

Issues and Challenges of Electronic Library:

- ❖ The principal issue is that of the technical structural design that underlies any electronic library system. Libraries will necessitate the promotion and development of current technical architectures to accommodate electronic objects.
- ❖ One of the foremost issues in building electronic libraries will be the constructing of electronic compilation. Actually, for any electronic library to be possible, it must eventually have a electronic compilation with the critical mass to make it truthfully functional.
- ❖ Digitization is the main concern that has to be taken care in the progression of electronic library concept. It should be determined on the following approaches, such as retrospective conversion of collections, digitization of a particular special collection or a portion of one, highlight of diverse collection and their potential for long term usage.
- ❖ Metadata is another central issue to the enlargement of electronic libraries. Metadata is the data that describes the content and attribute of any particular item in a electronic library. It is a perception recognizable to librarians because it is one of the primary things that librarians do; they generate cataloguing records that describe documents. The lack of common metadata standards, ideally defined for use in some specified context-is yet another barrier to information access and use in a electronic library, or in a coordinated electronic library scheme.
- ❖ It is noted to be quiet difficult of naming in a electronic library. Names are strings that exclusively recognize electronic objects and are part of any document's metadata. Names are as important in a electronic library as an ISBN number is in a traditional library. The issue of persistent naming raises it head in a coordinated scheme, as well. Persistent names are managerial problem, rather than an engineering problem. Technically, a system to handle names is feasible; however, inimitable identifiers will only persist if some institution takes responsibility for their management and migration from a current technology to succeeding generations of technologies. Thus, one goal of a coordinated electronic library scheme would be to identify an institution or institutions that would take charge of issuing, resolving, and migrating a system of unique names.
- ❖ Electronic objects are less fixed, easily copied, and remotely accessible by multiple users simultaneously. The problem for libraries is that, unlike private businesses or publishers that own their information, libraries are, for the most part, simply caretakers of information--they don't own the copyright of the material they hold. It is unlikely that libraries will ever be able to freely digitize and provide access to the copyrighted materials in their collections. Instead, they will have to develop mechanisms for managing copyright, mechanisms that allow them to provide information without violating copyright, called rights management.
- ❖ Preservation is another foremost issue in the electronic libraries, keeping electronic information available in eternity. In the preservation of electronic materials, the real issue is technical obsolescence. Technical obsolescence in the electronic age is like the corrosion of paper in the paper age. Libraries in the pre-electronic era had to worry about climate control and the de-acidification of books, but the preservation of electronic information will mean persistently coming up with new technical solutions.

Conclusion:

Electronic libraries are playing a vital role in providing the expanded access to the variety of information in electronic format for all level of users. In the past few years, procedures for digitizing the materials of the libraries are going on at high speed and comparatively low costs have improved considerably results in creation of electronic libraries. Thus electronic libraries are becoming an imperative component in the era of information technology. Electronic library is the electronic library where the information can be stored in the electronic format. With the rising advancement in the field of information technology, the information professionals should need to improve new skills in order to be familiar with the new technologies and it also requires reorientation of traditional skills of librarianship and it is must for the information professionals should improve their networking skills and web based technologies. The initial cost of digitization might be quiet expensive, but once it is done, the maintenance charges of it would be much cheaper comparing to the maintenance cost of the traditional libraries. Hence, the electronic libraries can offer the reasonable and appropriate access to an immense amount of assorted resources in a shared basis in a given sphere, stimulating traditional obstruction space and time.

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