

Impact of Internet on Library and Information Services

Dipti Ranjan Sahoo¹
IRC, Associate
TCS, Bhubaneswar

Dhara Sharma²
Junior Project Officer
Central Library, IIT Kharagpur

Abstract

The paper focuses impact of internet on various library processes and services. Today the internet has revolutionised the traditional library activities viz document acquisition, technical processing, circulation, reference service, resource sharing, document delivery, etc. In the modern world of information explosion, internet has become necessity for the libraries. It allows one to enter in the electronic information era. Internet has become a boon for library & information professionals.

Keywords: Internet, Impact of internet on library & information services, tools & services

1. INTRODUCTION

By the turn of the century, information, including access to the Internet, will be the basis for personal, economic, and political advancement. The popular name for the Internet is the information superhighway. Whether you want to find the latest financial news, browse through library catalogs or exchange information with colleagues, the Internet is the tool that will take you beyond telephones, faxes, and isolated computers to a burgeoning networked information frontier.

The emergence of computer and telecommunication technologies in recent decades has had a great impact on libraries. Many of these technologies have been integrated into library operations such as acquisition, cataloging, circulation, interlibrary loan, and reference services. Today's library activities are no longer confined within their physical territories. Many libraries are electronically networked and rely heavily on computer and telecommunication technologies as a means of providing library and information services. Information can be stored in various electronic forms and transmitted at high speed over electronic networks to wherever there are computer facilities to receive it. Internet has become an integral part of library and information centres that helps in meeting the information requirements of the users in a timely manner. "In fact, the library and the Internet are being viewed increasingly as a versatile unified system, providing an enormous variety of

materials in different formats”. The use of the Internet has enabled easy access to many resources, and information sharing has, therefore, significantly increased. It has become a challenge for librarians to prove the importance of libraries in the age of easy access to the Internet. To meet this challenge, libraries take the initiative to use the Internet in their public services and internal operations, and make the Internet an integral part of library’s infrastructure.

2. WHAT IS INTERNET?

- The term **Internet** has been coined from a concept inter-networking that denotes interaction between networking of computers. It is an umbrella under which different networks, small and big, freely exchange information across the globe.
- The Internet grew out of the Advanced Research Projects Agency's Wide Area Network (then called ARPANET) established by the US Department Of Defense in 1960s for collaboration in military research among business and government laboratories. Later universities and other US institutions connected to it. This resulted in ARPANET growing beyond everyone's expectations and acquiring the name 'Internet.'
- The **Internet** is a global system of interconnected computer networks that use the standard Internet protocol suite (TCP/IP) to link several billion devices worldwide. It is an international *network of networks* that consists of millions of private, public, academic, business, and government packet switched networks, linked by a broad array of electronic, wireless, and optical networking technologies.
- The Internet is a tool that connects millions of computers together, allowing them to communicate with each other. Information is not "stored" on the Internet. Rather, information is stored on host computers; the Internet is simply a tool that allows you to access the information stored on someone else’s computer.
- The Internet carries an extensive range of information resources and services, such as the inter-linked hypertext documents and applications of the World Wide Web (WWW), the infrastructure to support email, and peer-to-peer networks for file

sharing and telephony. It provides access to the most diversified source of information hosted by individuals and various organisations world wide on a vast network of servers.'

- Not confining itself to any particular definition, the Internet can be defined as the wired or wireless mode of communication through which one can receive, transmit information that can be used for single or multiple operations.
- No one owns Internet, although several organizations the world over collaborate in its functioning and development. The high-speed, fiber-optic cables (called backbones) through which the bulk of the Internet data travels are owned by telephone companies in their respective countries.

The main **characteristic** of Internet is:

- Users across the world can connect or access information irrespective of time and space factor.
- Point to point communication, rather than one to many broadcast communication.
- Provides access to large number of databases.
- The facility of hyper linking from one server to another by clicking on a highlighted word which enables the user to directly switch to another data source, on the other side of the world.
- Instant and interactive community creation on a global base. (Singh, 2001)

3. IMPACT ON LIBRARY & INFORMATION SERVICES

Perhaps no other recent innovation has impacted the library profession to such a great extent as Internet. Not only is our world becoming an interconnected global community, but this early use of the Internet has changed the fundamental roles, paradigms, and organizational culture of libraries and librarians as well, which created profound impact on L&IS by offering new modes of information delivery and a vast information source. There is a continuing evolution of the roles and functions of libraries and librarians, which appears to parallel the growth of acceptance and use of the Internet by library professionals. The innovative use of Internet technologies enables us

to reach both local and distant users much more easily and effectively than hitherto possible.

Technologies such as email and Web provide tremendous opportunities for library & Inf.Scientists to deliver the information to the desktops of our users. Web offers significant advantage by integrating different library & information services with a common user interface offered by Web browsers. Realising the potentials, many libraries are rushing to getting the connectivity.

The following listing will give an idea of which various functions of libraries may take advantage from Internet and Web technologies.

Acquisition:

- Correspondance with Book seller & Publisher.
- Reminders, Price verification
- Bibliographic details and downloading of bib. records etc
- Ordering, billing
- Bookshops are on-line e.g. amazon.com

Classification:

- Network resources (in place of conventional sources)
- available on the net
- subscribed or free or trial basis
- Dewey Online
- Maths. Classification System
- Engineering Electronics Lib. Classification
- Search engines – such as yahoo use DDC.

Collection Development:

- Ownership vs Access
- Subscribe in print or e-form
- Subscribe in print as well as in e-form
- Pay-per-use
- Consortial approach

Cataloguing :

- Cataloguing of network resources
- Online Catalogues
- WorldCat (OCLC)
- WebOPAC – web sites

- MARC adds 856 field
- OCLC Scorpion project- MARC & AACR2
- Metadata standards- Dublin core

Circulation :

- Remote login
- Status check
- OPAC access
- Reminder to users
- User requests
- Direct borrowing
- ILL

Resource Sharing:

- Union Catalogue
- Access, adding, downloading
- Access to databases over networks
- Ohionet, ILLINET, WLN, OCLC, BID(UK)
- full text journals access etc.

Services:

- ILL
- Document Delivery Service e.g. Ariel
- Reference / Inf. Services
- CAS
- Recent additions,
- Contents pages
- SDI
- From library collection (Lib. Catalogues)
- Databases
- Internet Sources
- OPAC
- Database access
- Bibliographical
- Full text

- Many vendors & organisations are moving to Internet (web) access

Subject Lists/ Gateways:*(With their own Search engines)*

- Internet Public Library (University of Michigan)
- EEVL – Engineering
- SOSIG – Social Science
- OMNI- Medical
- ADAM – Arts, Design etc.

User Education:

- Through Email
- Through Web
- Setting Intranet

Preservation & Storage:

The Internet is also a medium for the preservation and storage of information. In past, libraries were seen as the main storage facility of information. As society becomes increasingly more digital and more information resides on the Internet, the focus on storage and preservation is shifting. For example, some academic libraries are now faced with the problem of whether or not to purchase serials that can be just as easily accessed on – line. Preservation of these same media also becomes an issue of economics, not the “just in case” preservation ideology of the past paradigm. Co joined to the function preservation is the destruction of information. Because the Internet can be seen as a medium for preserving information, the process of destruction of information also is affected. As more and more information is created and stored on the Internet, the capacity to store this information is also decreasing.

4. DIFFERENT TOOLS AND SERVICES OF INTERNET

The different tools and services of interner are as follows:-

Email - Exchange of mails

- Text, Graphics, Programmes, Audio, Video etc.
- One-One, One-many, many-many.
- Usenet, listserv, mail base etc.

Telnet - (Remote login)

- Connect to remote machine & login and use the facilities.

File Transfer Protocol (FTP)

- To move files between computers.

World Wide Web (WWW)

- Navigational tool that enables browsing information linked to other related information.
- Hyperlinks/ Hyper text/ Hypermedia based.
- Provides unlimited access to large universe of e-documents

Other tools include:

Gopher, WAIS, Archie, Veronica, Usenet, bulletin Board Services etc.

5. RESOURCES AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET

Due to the advancement of Information & communication technologies, all the information sources and services are available in an easy manner. Internet is changing the way we view information sources. Information bundled in World Wide Web in the form of structured and non-structured sources create huge problem for professionals who are dealing with information. In this, library professionals play a vital role in solving the problem. They organize the information and bridging the *information gap*. Internet has become an important part for library environment today. So, the resources may include:-

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|-----------------|---------------------------|
| ➤ E-journals | ➤ Preprints |
| ➤ E-books | ➤ Library catalogue |
| ➤ Standards | ➤ Bibliographical Tools |
| ➤ E-TDs | |
| ➤ Share wares | ➤ Directories |
| ➤ Old books | ➤ Films |
| ➤ News papers | ➤ Maps |
| ➤ Dictionaries | ➤ Technical reports |
| ➤ Magazines | ➤ Audio/Video Proceedings |
| ➤ Encyclopedias | ➤ Patents |
| ➤ Databases | |

- Websites of Companies,
Institutions, Organisations,
Associations etc.

6. CONCLUSION

In the modern world of information explosion, internet has become a necessity for the libraries. The use of internet is now facilitating the role of librarians which should be of great concern to the profession. The use of internet tools and services by the libraries are changing the overall development of libraries. Libraries are using the internet mostly for acquisition, cataloguing and reference functions. Librarians can increase the users of libraries by providing valuable information of library holdings through internet.

Lastly, basic training should be provided to the staffs. In order to run the libraries smoothly libraries should take the initiative in providing best services to the users and make the internet an integral part of library's infrastructure. Therefore each and every should be attached with internet.

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