

LIBRARY SERVICES AND THE ROLE OF MOBILES

Neelima Balachandran

Librarian, SIES (Nerul) College of Arts Science & Commerce
neelimahs@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The article speaks about the role of the new mobile technologies in libraries. The easy access and the benefits. The various quick services that can be provided and the new roles that librarians have to play to keep pace. The benefits have been put forth and also a few disadvantages. And finally the need to adapt to changing trends.

Keywords: Libraries in hand , E resources , OPAC , Mobile communications , Current awareness , publishers

INTRODUCTION

New and fast changing technologies everyday are now a way of life. Especially the comfortable wireless and the internet. And also updated mobile technologies. Mobile phones have huge variety of applications. Mobile - technology, has made communication and information access very truly convenient and timely to users. Mobile devices have made a very significant impact on facets like banking, tourism and health services. People use a convenient mobile phone , as their primary interface for surfing the Web, listening to music of one's choice, watching television, reading books, and interacting with friends. Today's cellular phones , have more features and more capabilities than ever before. So the common mobile phone has become one of the major interfaces, people use to access and share information.

IN LIBRARIES

Users want easy and instant access to relevant information, putting pressure on Library and Information Science professionals , to think out of the box for meeting their information needs. Implementation of Information and Communication Technologies has changed the way people access and communicate information. New technologies have always been adopted by libraries to assist in their objective of providing clients with effective and efficient services, as well as timely access to needed information. Application of mobile phones to provide library and information services are a significant step in this direction. The development of mobile - technology , has resulted in shifting the academic environment from traditional to mobile learning settings.

When it comes to mobile - technologies, the very first device that comes to mind has to be the cell phone or the Smartphone. Those new to the Smartphone , in the library may want to consider a mobile based website, a stripped-down design that reads well on small screens. These sites do not really require too much web design knowledge and can be designed in-house (Kate Kosturski & Frank Skornia, 2011)

Mobile devices and services offer wonderful flexibility for those who want to take advantage of library services. With a simple 4/5 G connection, a user can access e-books and multimedia content from a local library. Libraries are social set ups , connecting people with people and people with information. Time has come for libraries to take advantage of mobile - technology. Mobile - Technology will usually help both the newbie and experienced librarians to stay relevant in the mobile society. They need to know of technological changes , for the future of library mobile interaction.

“Librarians must be in tune with this trend and integrate themselves into the mobile realm if they wish to deliver enhanced user services. Mobile devices and services offer amazing flexibility for those who want to take advantage of library services. With a simple 3G/4G connection, a user can access e-books and multimedia content from a local library. Library policies and services should be flexible and open so that new information needs of users in pursuit of organizational needs are met with new technologies. The task of current libraries is

to exploit new technology in a more effective way , to promote and integrate them into the design of future library services.

Librarians are in a move to determine how these devices are affecting information access and ensure that they are communicating with users and providing Web content in the most appropriate and effective ways. Smart Librarians can utilize the mobile - technology and put their efforts to increase the market and demand for mobile access to personalized facts and information anytime, anywhere on one's own handheld device. Mobile devices are ubiquitous in today's society, and there's no evidence that that is going to change. Today most of the library users have mobile phones for their personal uses as well as they also use the mobile phones for some other applications. In the context of libraries, the Mobile - Technology has now come up with "Libraries in Hand" trend. Since mobile handheld devices truly are personal devices, search histories and physical locations can be harnessed to produce more accurate, individualized information and services. Libraries today are covering most of the technologies given by mobile industry like PDA's, Blackberry, iPod, Cell phones, and mobilizing library contents in a portable form suitable for small screen and delivering short services in the form of contents and information with the gadget's multiple searching features. Librarians will need to become proficient in using these devices to enable users to access the many where from anyplace. So, it is crucial for librarians to understand mobile devices and their uses.

LIBRARY SERVICES THROUGH MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

“Vast Database Browsing- Libraries provide access to a variety of its resources and databases. The users can just enter search terms and see results that are designed specifically for mobile viewing. This service includes OPAC - online public access catalogue , integrated search, and original document search. OCLC's WorldCat Mobile application allows users to search for and find books and other materials available in their local libraries through a special web application they can access from a PDA or a smart phone.

Instant Notification via SMS - Libraries may provide the alerts on latest news, events and notices via SMS and MMS to users wherever they might go. The users can get notified immediately with notice alerts such as- alerts on bringing new books to the notice of users for suggestion, intimation of arrival of indented documents by users, informing availability of reserved documents for collection, appraising about overdue books, outstanding fines, reminders to return library items, renew books, library circulars, ejournals subscribed, change in timings, information about important events, loan request etc. Such alert notifications can be generated , promptly using integrated library management system/software.

Useful Formal Education, Distance Learning and E-learning- Students are very versatile in using their mobile phones and various mobile applications. Academic libraries can make use of the advantage to lead implementation of library services through mobile devices to aid distance learning, formal education, and research activities in e-learning environment by making the information resources ubiquitous. Library services should also blend with teaching and research practice of colleges/universities, scientific community or other patrons whom they serve.

Varied E-resources with Mobile Interfaces- Libraries can make use of multimedia messaging service (MMS) on mobile devices to share photos, videos, and audio. Most of the e-book publishers provide full on accesses to the library subscriptions from any internet kiosk within the campus, as well on mobile devices, such as iPads, Android devices, and Kindle. There are publishers already delivering e-books (both text and audio) that are accessible via mobile phones. It offers access to a number of databases and digital resources such as e-Books, e-Journals, Web databases, dissertations, audio books, streaming music, films, images and article databases which can be used on mobile. These can either be downloaded from the library websites , on users own mobile devices or libraries lend mobile devices with the collections already on them. A very large collection of audio books both free-and subscription based services are available for download and also transferable to mobile devices.

Innovative my library- My library is a personal library space where users can find information and resources of their choosing. Users can read alerts, check records, renew resources, request items, track interlibrary loans and document delivery requests, have email notices of new books and journal articles, set up preferences for catalogue searching, etc.

Unique Library Virtual/ Audio Tours- Library Virtual/ Audio tours, instruction/induction/orientation programs have been quite significant in bringing the uninterested to libraries and also help the remotely located or users located in different geographical locations. Library users, who are disinterested to attend an on-site workshop, can get access to library tours on their mobile devices. Audio/ virtual library tours spent helping new users to orient themselves in the library and explaining the facilities available. It can easily be given both as downloads from the library website and on mobile devices.

Special Library guide- If users have questions and want to contact the librarian for help, they can get a quick response from the library via the mobile device and find the appropriate information needed. Libraries can give customers the best of library guide information such as library use guide, question - answering - service, and library statistics delivering rich content in a way that works best for users.

Fast Mobile document supply- The mobile environment and technology present new opportunities for sending document requests and scanned images , monitoring the use of collections as well as the automation of administrative operations. It can support funds transfer electronically , supply chain management, e-marketing, online marketing, online transaction processing, electronic data interchange, and automated inventory management systems.

Unique Text reference service- Librarians can provide instant answers, and links to articles/references in real time. If the library receives a very high volume of enquiries that require brief responses, such as dictionary definitions, facts or service information then

Immediate QR Codes on Mobiles- QR code stands for “quick response”, and basically two-dimensional bar codes that can incorporate any alphanumeric text and often used to store URL’s, text, etc., known as “mobile tagging”. Data can be easily translated into a QR code by any QR generator, many of which are available as free download. Users simply key in data , to be translated, and the generator produces the code, which can then be displayed electronically or in printed format. Decoding the relevant information can be done with any mobile camera phone that has a QR reader, which is freely available online for most devices.

BENEFITS

- Libraries can enrich OPAC by allowing users , to incorporate user created content like notes or images uploaded by users.
- Personalized fast service helps users , to interact with library staff to seek specific information or reference away from library.
- Information access from anywhere at any time will , be of great help for users who cannot visit library in person and provid
- Users need not record information , about resources while browsing and searching library resources or keep waiting at a library transaction counter to renew/reserve books and hence the time of the user is saved.
- Mobile communication enables libraries to offer location-based services/content through global positioning system (GPS) capabilities. Libraries can guide the users , to the location of specific document or service through maps and navigational tools.
- All online resources accessible on their desktop also become accessible through mobiles.

- Web enabled mobile devices provide , owners with around the clock access to the internet, regardless of location.
- Many of today's smart phones and pocket PCs , have global positioning systems (GPS) capabilities which make them aware of where they are at all times.
- The mobile - web encompasses not only those sites that have been specially designed for mobile browsing, but also the World Wide Web.
- The mobile - web offers users , the participatory experience of the read/write web in the palm of their hand. Users can create content, share and rate media, make comments, write blog posts, tag resources, and form connections , on social networks.
- Users Mobiles communications help providing services orally to vision-disabled and physically challenged users.
- Familiarity with their own devices and technology , helps the users in accessing information quickly and does not require orientation and training. Mobile users are using the facilities on mobile phones like SMS, instant messaging, web browsing, e-mail effortlessly to communicate. Most of these features are pre-installed on mobile devices or option for data plan packages.

MORE SERVICES

Commonly current Awareness Service is a form of service can be from different new latest e-journals articles. It can be made available to the users through wide range of mobile devices. They can access and search the same over their mobiles. Reference services in libraries today are becoming increasingly a virtual, as more and more researchers are working remotely. Technologies such as instant messaging, e-mail and SMS text messaging are making it easy or libraries to maintain their relevance as information hubs by offering convenient services to busy users.

Ask-a-Librarian services can be offered to mobile patrons, enabling them to submit their research questions remotely by text.

The design of mobile devices and services is important to accessibility. As reading becomes more inclusive of diverse communities, libraries will need to address the ongoing accessibility challenges of the mobile world.

5.0 Services of Mobile Technology in Libraries

Librarians are in move to provide better services with the use of mobile technology to their users for information access and information retrieval and ensure that they are communicating with their users and providing Web content in the most appropriate and effective ways. Since mobile handheld devices are personal devices, search histories and physical locations will harness to produce more accurate, individualized information and services.

6.0 E-Books and Databases

The publishers are in move to convert content into an e-book format for mobile devices (ranging from Kindle, Sony's e-book reader, cell phones, and other e-book readers) and this allows for remarkable functionality and formats the e-books as you desire and provide a great reading experience for the user. Google has worked with major authentic publishers , to bring chapters, pages and volumes off of the bookshelf and onto the mobile device. The end result would be downloadable e-books which regular Google users would store on their Blackberries, PDA's and smart

phones (or mobile e-book reading devices) along with the traditional PC's and laptops which would either be free and advertiser supported, or available via „on demand“ micro payments.

7.0 SMS/Texting – Library Instant Access

Google SMS easily enables you to send queries as text message over your mobile phone or device an easily get precise answers to our questions without Links, without web pages just text and information in seconds. Merriam Webster (online) has mobile - subscription facility, and just by putting our mobile number we get the word information just by messaging. Library OPAC system is now mobiled facility of text message to check the availability and the details of books.

Websites are now giving the option of sending content to IM addresses and via SMS. Publishers are sending specific extract from books via SMS.

- SMS if requested book is available ; SMS reminder if a book is due
- requesting a list of loans via SMS ; renewing books via SMS
- requesting an overview of outstanding fines via SMS ; to check available books via SMS
- requesting the opening hours of the library via SMS

2 CURRENT AWARENESS SERVICE

7.4 Text Reference Service

If the library receives a high volume of enquiries that require brief responses, such as dictionary definitions, facts or service information then Librarians can easily provide instant answers, and links to articles/references in real time.

8.0 Formal Education, Distance Learning and E-learn.0 Formal Education, Distance Learning and E-learning

Library services, should also blend with teaching and research practice of colleges/universities, scientific community or other patrons whom they serve. Students , are very versatile in using their mobile phones and various mobile applications. Academic libraries , can harness the advantage to lead implementation of library services through mobile devices , to support distance learning, formal education, and research activities in eLearning environment by making the information resources ubiquitous. **9.0 My library**

Users can read alerts, check records, renew resources, request items, track interlibrary loans and document delivery requests, set up email notices of new books and journal articles, set up preferences for catalogue searching, etc. My library is a personal library space , where users can find information and resources of their choosing. **10.0 E-resources with Mobile Interfaces**

“Some publishers , are already delivering e-books (both audio and text) that are accessible via mobile phones. It offers access to a variety of databases and digital resources such as e-Books, e- Journals, Web databases, dissertations, audio books, streaming music, films, images and article databases which can be used on mobile. These collections can either be downloaded from the library websites on user's own mobile devices or libraries lend mobile devices with th collections already on them. A large varied collection of audio books both free-and subscription based services , are available for download and also transferable to mobile devices. Libraries can give their users the best of library guide information such as library use guide, question answering service, and library statistics delivering rich content , in a way that works best for users. If users have relevant questions and want to contact the librarian for help, they can get a fast response from the library via the mobile device and find the appropriate information needed. Libraries can make use of multimedia messaging service (MMS) on mobile devices to shar photos, videos, and audio. Most of the e-book publishers provide 24x7 access to the library subscriptions from any internet terminal within the campus, as well on mobile devices, such as iPads, Android devices, and Kindle.

The mobile rich environment and technology present new opportunities for sending document requests and scanned images and monitoring the use of collections as well as the automation of administrative operations. It

can support electronic funds transfer, supply chain management, e marketing, online marketing, online transaction processing, electronic data interchange, and automated inventory management systems.

13.0 Library Virtual/ Audio Tours

Library Virtual/ Audio tours, instruction/induction/orientation programs have been quite significant in bringing the nonusers to libraries and also help the remotely located or users located in different geographical locations. Library users, who don't have time or inclination to attend an on-site workshop, can get access to library tours

APPLICATIONS & WEBSITES & OPACS

“**MobileTuts** - provides tutorials for all mobile developers, regardless of platform. Some topics are also techniques for building mobile apps and mobile Web sites.

MobiSiteGalore - helps to build a mobile Web site , in less than 60 minutes. Technical or programming knowledge is not required.

MoFuse -It helps to build a mobile version , of an existing Web site or blog with the MoFuse (short for Mobile Fusion) content management platform.

Mobile Web Best Practices 1.0 - is created by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C); this document specifies guidelines for developing Web-based content for mobile devices.

Android Developers - It provides Resources , for creating Android applications. And has developer's guide, tutorials, and videos.

AirPac (Innovative Interfaces) - offers a mobile version of the Innovative Interfaces (III) library catalogue. Also has features such as cover images, integrated library locations with Google Maps software, request and renew items, and more.

Boopsie - can provide mobile applications that are compatible with all Web friendly phones. **Library Anywhere**- is a mobile catalogue for any library. It includes mobile Web and apps for iphone, Blackberry, and Android.

W3C MobileOK Checker - helps to validate mobile-optimized Web sites for compatibility with current Web standards.

Benefits of the mobile web - is internet for the small screen, and thus provides many of the same benefits as its desktop counterpart.

FEW DRAWBACKS

Mobile IT devices can expose, valuable data to unauthorized people if the proper precautions are not taken to ensure that the devices, and the data they can access, are kept safe.

Also the Major drawbacks are there are costs involved in setting up the equipment and training required to make use of mobile devices.

CONCLUSION

The active nature of technology has significant impact - on every aspect , of modern life. To target , its special place as an information provider, libraries must not hesitate to adopt all possible new technologies like ICT, Wi-Fi, mobile communications, etc. Particularly, ICT - information and communication technologies have provided faster access to information , and it is also demanding the libraries to modernize and rethink , their services adopting the technological changes. In the present world , libraries are not at all solo information providers. Internet facilities , provide broad range of information; the content may not always be free or with value addition. There is a greater influence of mobile - technology , on Libraries, particularly as network access

becomes more affordable and reliable, the modern libraries can adapt to this emerging trend to make the libraries easily accessible via mobile devices.

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