

WEB2.0 TOOLS IN LIBRARIES: AN INTRODUCTION

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ABSTRACT

In modern time Information communication Technology has influenced all the areas of work. It has replaced all the areas of manual work and made services very prompt. Started from the very beginning, libraries have been working for its users. They are providing the services in their way of choice because the ultimate aim of the libraries is to satisfy its users. With the advancement of web and technology, many new tools of web2.0 have been implemented in the library. These tools are very useful for libraries. Libraries are using these tools and applications for information services, promotion services, as a feedback tool and as professional awareness services.

KEYWORDS: *Library2.0, Web2.0, Social Networking*

INTRODUCTION

In the past decades, libraries were only the storehouse of books. The books were kept in the library in such a way as we keep ornaments nowadays. There were only a few books, no print media, no electronic and digital media was there. There was no work in the library as we perform today e.g. providing different types of services to the users. There was no gathering of users in the library, only a few people were there to visit the library. People were allowed only to see the books.

As the time changed by and library movement started, people were aware of the importance of books and knowledge and thus the use of books increased, users started reading books for the sake of knowledge. Libraries started providing a few services to its users and became a well-equipped place for reading for the users. Libraries started acquiring different types of the collection to satisfy the various information needs of the users.

Libraries were doing their work very smoothly. The information was available in books, journals, and manuscripts. There was a large amount of data of documents and users that the libraries were handling. Different in-house operations of libraries were performed by the library staff manually.

Then in the 1960s, a revolution came into a world that influenced each and every area of work. It was the introduction of ICT & Internet. When the Internet started in 1969, there were many applications of it like email, telnet etc. WWW was also one of the applications of the internet. It was created in 1989 at the European Particle Physics Laboratory in Geneva, Switzerland, as a method for incorporating footnotes, figures and cross-references into online hypertext documents. As you read a hypertext document, more commonly called a **Web page**. A collection of related web pages is called a **Web site**.

Initially, these web pages on websites were static in nature. The content available on these web pages was only to read. Even at that time also the facility of hyperlinking was there, people could move to other web pages by clicking on hyperlink but they were not allowed to make changes in these web pages.

So in 2006, a drastic change came in the World Wide Web. It was a change in technological environment named as '**web 2.0**'. **Tim O' Reilly** and **Dale O Dougherty** coined this term in 2006. Most of the people think that web 2.0 is a standard but it is really not a standard. It is actually an experience. Web 2.0 is described as "warm" web by most of the people. It is warm because it provides interactivity and collaboration of people with a web. It is warm because it provides two-way communication and dynamic life. Many people are engaged in changing the web pages daily. They are adding new concepts and new features in World Wide Web daily. The web pages have been changed to dynamic web pages from the static. Stephen Abraham describes web 2.0 as a conversation. The web pages available in web 2.0 are changing per hour.

Web 2.0 and the Libraries

As we know that libraries are a treasure of knowledge and to keep people aware of their updated information and knowledge, libraries provide various services to its users. Before the use of ICT, the nature of providing services to its users was different but after implementing ICT tools in libraries, the services provided to the users became very prompt. All the information was available to the users on a single click. Users were not needed to visit the libraries physically because they were getting their information even from remote areas. Libraries always try to keep themselves aware from each and every new technology. As the technology gets change, users want their information according to the new change. The same thing happened after the introduction of web 2.0. Libraries implemented the tools of web 2.0 in libraries. They started offering their services with the help of web 2.0 tools and thus the libraries became more efficient.

Thus with the application of web 2.0 tools in the library, the concept of library 2.0 evolved. The term Library 2.0 was coined by Michael Casey in 2006 on his blog Library Crunch. Library 2.0 is a concept that represents the library services of a dynamic era and also identifies the needs and wants of a modern library user.

Tools and Techniques in Library 2.0

Emerging modern users desire to live in an atmosphere where they can have access to prompt services. Users do not want to wait for information. Even there are the users who want a quick response from the library, they also give their reaction to any given information. Users prefer dialogue services instead of monologue. This all quick response and promptness in services were only possible in the ambience of Library 2.0. The Library 2.0 provided various platforms to users for having an interaction with the web. In this interactive atmosphere, users are enjoying the services more friendly.

The tools and techniques that are used for developing the Library 2.0 environment are:

- Instant Messaging
- Podcasting
- Wikis
- Tagging
- Blogs
- RSS Feeds
- AJAX (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML)
- API (Application Programming Interface)

Instant Messaging

Instant messaging is an example of synchronous communication. It facilitates real-time communication between the sender and receiver of the message. Libraries are using this tool for providing “real-time reference” services. In this service, the patrons can directly communicate to the reference librarian to get the response of their query. There are many software that is being used by the libraries to provide “live reference services”. This software facilitates more services over simple Instant Messaging applications. Libraries are facilitating Live reference service using IMs 24*7*365 in a collaborative manner. This service works in online mode same as the conventional reference service worked in physical libraries.

Podcasting

This term “podcasting” has been derived from two words, namely “broadcasting” and “ipod”, ipod is a popular MP3 player from Apple Computer. In podcasting, digital-media files are captured and distributed on the Internet with the help of RSS feeds. A podcast is an episodic series of digital audio or video files which a user can download and listen. Libraries can use the podcast to deliver lectures and stories. Children section of a library will be very attractive after the use of podcasts. Libraries can also use the podcast to support their orientation programmed. Similar to ‘Podcasting’, there is a concept of ‘vodcasting’. In which ‘VOD’ stand for ‘video on demand’. Both concepts are similar to each other, only one difference is there, ‘podcasting’ is used for delivering audio files whereas ‘vodcasting’ is used for delivering video files.

Wikis

The term ‘wiki’ comes from the word ‘wiki wiki’ which means ‘fast’ in the Hawaiian language. A wiki is basically a server program that allows users to collaborate in the formation of the content of a website. A wiki website is operated on the principle of a collaborative trust. **Wikipedia** is one of the best-known wikis. Wikis are used in business to provide affordable and effective Intranets and for knowledge management. In libraries, wikis can be used as a communication tool to enable social interaction among library staff and its users. Wikis can be used as a knowledge base for FAQs in the libraries e.g. query of the printing facility in the library, issues related to laptop etc.

Tagging

Tagging is an important tool for web 2.0. It is described as the process by which the resources in a collection are assigned tags in the form of words, phrases, and codes. The concept of tagging has been widened far beyond Website bookmarking and services like Flickr (Photos), YouTube (Video) allow a variety of digital artifacts to be socially tagged.

Blogs

A blog is a short term for weblog. The term web blog was coined by John Berger in 1977. It belongs to the category of websites in which content is represented in a continuous sequence of entries. In simple words, we can say that blogs are online diaries that are published on the World Wide Web on a personal website or a hosting website. A blog can be created by the single person and also it can be taken out collaboratively by a group of people. Blogs are very useful for libraries. Creating a blog for a library is a free, easy and fast way to communicate any information to its users. It acts as a communication medium for the users of the library. The blogs can be useful to libraries in various ways like information services and in promoting library services. Blogs can be used as a feedback tool and also as a professional awareness service.

RSS Feed Technology

Acronym of RSS is Rich Site Summary or Really Simple Syndication. Rich Site Summary is an extensible markup language format for distribution of content. First RSS was invented by Netscape. RSS feed Technology involves two component, First is RSS feed and second is RSS reader. RSS present the latest update from the website and arranged in newest information to oldest information. Any can copy URL though RSS feed and with the help of RSS reader subscribe to regularly update. Nowadays most of the websites update their user through RSS Feed Technology. Modern libraries are using RSS feed for keeping up-to-date their user.

RSS can be using some of the following library activities:

- Current Awareness services.
- Bulletin Board Services.
- Bibliographical Services.
- Selective Dissemination of information.
- Delivery of selected information to selective users.
- Reference Service
- Library blogs.
- Web resources announcement.

Steps in use RSS

- Get an RSS feed Reader.
- Copy the URL of RSS feed from a website.
- Paste URL in RSS reader.
- RSS reader reads the content.

API (Application Programming Interface)

The Term API stands for application programming interface which is specially used by one software as a component to establish the connection with another software. It may include a specification for routine, data structure, object, class and also of the variables. It may take many forms of including the International standard of the vendor documentation like POSIX, Microsoft Windows API respectively. It also embedded and include the library resources various programming language is such as C++, Java API etc. API is completely dependent on programming language along with their particular syntax that makes it more powerful. Web API is a virtual synonym of the services web 2.0 which has moving able services of simple access moving protocol to direct state transfer style communication. 'Mashup', the combination of multiple services into a new services is enables because of API. Nowadays tracking of railway courier and other real-time access provider using API to fetching data from the main server or from the host server.

AJAX

The acronym AJAX stands for Asynchronous JavaScript and XML, where is XML stands for extensible markup language but AJAX is not a programming language it is just a combination of few Technology such as a browser which has embedded feature of XML, HTTP, request from a particular web server of the host and uses JavaScript and DOM for display and use of data. Ajax is one of the most powerful applications of web 2.0 this enable the updation of web pages asynchronously by exchanging data with a web server on the back and in which no reloading and refreshing the webpage is needed to provide dynamic data. Ajax is widely being used in the library for their virtual platform that are E-sources or web pages for enhancing more dynamic pages for the user.

CONCLUSIONS

The libraries are changing according to the needs of its users. They are providing information to the users in their manner of choice. Libraries have successfully modified themselves according to the world of information communication and technology. The implementation of web 2.0 tools in the library is a good example of their changed face. With the introduction of web 2.0, libraries also became library 2.0. These libraries with well-equipped web 2.0 tools are providing an attractive, interactive and collaborative environment to its patrons.

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