Social Networking and its Impact on Library Services

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Abstract:

Nowadays, the Internet has become the most popular medium of communication. It is a medium for searching for the latest news, events, views, library catalogues, library indexing, and abstracting from the different databases available online. It is also a medium for exchanging information with colleagues, sharing ideas with experts, and participating in lively debates. (Bedadyuti, 2016) One of the most important inventions of Internet Web 2.0 and Social Networking is the service of Web 2.0. Social Networking on the Internet was started in the late 1990s. This Is a web-based service that allows individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within and sharing of the same, discussion forums, electronic bulletin boards, blogs, chat rooms, instant messenger, e-mail or private messaging, and many more and concluded that social networking sites have a great impact on library and information services. This paper focused on the positive impact of social networking on library services.

Keywords: Social Networking, Web 2.0, Social Networking Services, Social Networking Tools

Introduction:

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines a *"Social Network as an online service or site through which people create and maintain interpersonal relationships."* (merriam-webster, n.d.)

As per Indeed Editorial Team *"A social network is a website that allows users to connect with other people and businesses online. Social networks typically have a similar format,*

where each business or person has a profile, which provides personal or business details. Most social networks allow users to send messages, request information, share information, send connection or friend requests, and search for people or businesses in a large online database. Many social networks have specific functions, like only sharing videos, and pictures or connecting professionals and businesses." (Team, n.d.)

Social networking is one of the most active web-based services that influence the modern world. Social networking is a social structure that lets the user interact and work collaboratively with other users, including the ability to browse, search, invite friends to connect and interact with the web world. The basis of a social network is for individuals, groups, and organizations to be able to share information and connect. With online social networks and sharing tools, this has become easier and more popular, and libraries explore the advantages that these sites have to offer and the benefits that they provide to their patrons.

Social networking sites such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and others have attracted millions of users, many of whom have integrated these sites into their daily practices. Social interaction with an online framework can help patrons to share experiences and collaborate on relevant topics. Using social networking sites and their applications, some academic libraries in developed countries embed the library catalogue to allow students to access the contents of the library catalog without visiting the library's website.

Social Networking Services:

Social networking services are available in two formats i.e. Users' Profiles Based and Content-Based Networking Services. (Kaushik, p, & Pandey, 2015)

Users' Profiles' Based Services: These are primarily organised around members' profile pages that mainly consist of information about an individual member, including the person's picture and details of interests, likes, dislikes, etc. Bebo, Facebook, and MySpace are some examples of user profile-based services.

Content-Based Networking Services: In these services, the users' profiles remain an important way of organising connections but play a secondary role to the posting of

content. Photo-sharing site Flickr is an example of this type of service. Shelfari is one of the current crops of book-focused sites, with the members' bookshelf being a focal point of each members' profile. Other examples of content-based social networking include YouTube for video sharing and last.fm for listening to music.

Besides these, white-label social networking services offer some group-building functionality, which allows users to form mini-communities within sites. Websites such as PeopleAggregator and Ning offer users the opportunity to create and join communities. Users can create their own "mini-MySpaces" small-scale social networking sites that support specific interests, events or activities.

Advantages of Social Networking in Libraries:

- Libraries can create a page to reach new users.

- Social networking could enable librarians and patrons not only to interact but to share and change resources dynamically in an electronic medium.

- For building a network among the interested group in discussing the common interest.

- User content can be added to the library catalogue, including users book review or other comments.

- Strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of existing, formal communication channels.

- Improve innovation and learning.

- Provides a collaborative work environment.

- Users can give feedback about library services and suggest other services provided by the library.

- Provide a gateway where users can find library photos, and videos and provide links to articles and resources.

- To be aware of the users for news and new updates.

Different Tools of Social Networking and its application in Libraries:

Communication Tool:

Facebook

It is a frequently used social media site by the students. It's also librarian-friendly. Facebook started with college students at Harvard and originally permitted only users with a college email address to register. You will find a group for librarian-centric Facebook apps, a JSTOR search, and much more. Academic librarians can utilize Facebook applications like JSTOR search, WorldCat and much more. As we know WorldCat of OCLC connects the librarians to the collections and services of more than 10,000 libraries worldwide and JSTOR is an online archive of scholarly research journals covering all subject areas around the world. Facebook has 3 billion active users in 2024. Libraries are using Facebook pages to disseminate information, forming an ever-growing substitute for the web within Facebook walls. By linking to the library website, the Facebook page acts as a portal to the library. (Andrea & Holley, 2010)

MySpace

It is one of the best places where we can find students. Libraries have taken advantage of this site's calendar and blog features to improve their presence. With a little help from IT professionals can include custom catalogue search tools. MySpace is an online social networking platform where libraries can create web pages communicate with other people and share their resources, events information, information related to the library etc.

Ning

It was launched in 2005. Ning is another important social network site that helps librarians to get connected with users, library associations, academic discussion forums, and more." The beauty of Ning is that libraries can create a community based on interests. The beauty of Ning is its content features. It has a drag-and-drop builder which allows users to build unique social networks. (Shihab, 2014)

LinkedIn

This site is for professionals it's a great way to get library patrons connected with the people who can help them to find information. Whether that is faculty, students, authors,

historians, or other sources. They can find them in your LinkedIn network. The LinkedIn Learning library allows learners to browse for learning paths, courses, videos, collections, and custom content. You can use the Learning library to find Learning content in an area of your choice, without searching for specific keywords.

Twitter

Libraries use this site to keep staff and users updated on daily activities, like frequently updated collections or events just scheduling. Twitter allows librarians to go where the students are already located. Libraries post hour changes, events, new resources available, search tips, links to the library website, responses to the students' comments, and news.

Distribution Tool

Flickr

It is an image distribution tool. Is a great way to share new image collections. You can create image sets with metadata as well as take advantage of the many plugins available for Flickr users. Academic libraries use Flickr to post pictures of the library building and its staff. Libraries can also post material from special collections on a Flickr account.

YouTube

 Libraries can spread the word about library information and library events using YouTube sites. It allows post original videos. Libraries can post videos of library tours and bibliographic instruction videos for users. YouTube is also used as a medium for education. TeacherTube, a new feature of YouTube for teachers, presents an excellent opportunity for teacher–librarian collaboration and guides students to helpful video resources and library resources.

Second Life

On the Second Life site libraries can create a virtual library with streamed media, discussions, classes, and more.

Blogs

Blogs have several potential uses by academic libraries. Blogs encourage user interaction through their comments feature, which allows students to provide feedback regarding the information provided and the library itself. Libraries can post news about the library as well as events occurring at the library. Blogs are also used to create subject guides. Blogging platforms such as Blogger, Weebly, WordPress, thoughts.com, edublogger, Tumblr, Movable Type, Express Engine, Joomla, Drupal, Friendster etc are both free and easy to use. edublogs is education-based blogging service.

PBwiki

PBwiki is the world's largest provider of educational wikis. It encourages collaboration from students a way to showcase work and offers a central gathering point for information. PBwiki offers controlled access, so you can give some editing privileges while others can only read.

SlideShare

Libraries can share their slideshow presentation for the greater community to access on SlideShare. It is a great way to disseminate library information. Online collaboration tools such as GoogleDocs recently knows as Google drive, Zoho wikis, Kahootz, Slideshare, etc can be used for collaborative work which helps in research.

Instant Messaging

Instant Messaging (IM) tools such as Google chat, Yahoo messenger, Trillian, Skype, WhatsApp, etc can be used for reference/research assistance. Instant Messaging (IM) can be used to ask reference questions and help students in online catalogue search.

Rhubcom

rhubcom.com also provides remote access technology in libraries which is useful for the students and faculty staying in rural areas who can refer to eBooks, e-journals, and databases in any place with web access.

Organization Tool

LibraryThing

This social cataloguing network is great for librarians, and you can catalogue along with Amazon, the Library of Congress, and many more libraries around the world. It also provides recommendations and easy tagging.

aNobil

This site for book lovers is a place to share reviews and recommendations. Users can also take advantage of due date alerts, lending, and discussions.

Lib.ratio.us

This catlaguing site provides a platform to put media such as books, CDs, and journals on display for easy access and tracking.

Cannotea

Cannotea is a great reference tool that allows libraries to save and organize reference links and share them with others. They can be accessed from any computer and offer integration with lots of other tools.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that social networking sites have a great impact on library and information services. Through these sites libraries and information centres can share the needed information as well as disseminate the information to its valued users on demand. Social networking sites provide various types of ways for libraries to interact with users. In this present era, Social Networking sites have become one of the largest online platforms in the world for sharing real-time information and implementation which has also made to understand the users' usage patterns of social networking sites from the library perspective. It is up to the library professionals to adapt and upgrade themselves to modern technology for the betterment of their career and as well as the service offered to modern-day Library Users.

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