

TOOL FOR SOCIAL NETWORKING IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

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Introduction-

Social media is a powerful new form of communication and the number of users on popular social media sites is growing at exponential rates. Millions of people are using social media tools as part of their everyday lives for work, studies and play because of its ubiquity. Academic libraries abroad have found the use of social media as an effective communication tools to interact with faculty staff and students in new ways. The following can be used by academic libraries to spread the word about different events, services that they offer and the marketing of new library products, initiatives, new addition to library collections, links to articles, videos, community information, feedbacks, link wherever possible. In addition to marketing the simple act of having conversations and creating relationships with patrons is immediately useful.

Libraries in this millennium face an extraordinary challenge in serving the millennial users. The use of online social networks by libraries is also increasingly prevalent and a growing tool that is being used to communicate with more potential library users as well as extending the services provided to individuals libraries.

Social Networking

Social Network is a broad term used to denote the blogs users created video's and wikis. A social networking is an online service, platform or site that focuses on building and reflecting of social networking or social relations among people who share interests and activities. Social Networking often involves grouping specific individuals or organizations together. Social Networking provides a quick low tech method to generate , maintain web based subject guides and act as communication tools to enable social interaction among LIS professionals. Most social Network services are web based and provide means for users to interact over the internet. They interact share and exchange resources by social Networks, promotes free flow of information and sharing of resources beyond boundaries.

Social Networking Sites-

Social Networking site functions like an online community of internet users. People use social networking sites for communication personally as well as professionally to contact with others. Social networking sites like Face book provides new venues for young LIS professionals to express themselves and to dynamically form, collaborative groups and creates, publish, exchange, share and cooperate any type of information. It makes use of web sites and LIS professionals are using SNS closely followed by creating awareness, socializing, making friends and new arrival display is predominated by SNS closely followed by topic discussion and metadata linking.

Definition

Boyd and Ellison (2007) define social Networking sites or SNS as “web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, expressive a list of other users with whom they share connections and view and those made by others within the system. In simple words, social networking service is an online service, platform or sites that focuses on building social relations among people, who shares interests and activities”.

Kempe, Kleinberg and Tardos (2003) define Social network as a set of people, organizations or other social entities, co-working or information exchange and interactions to better achieve desired outcomes by sharing expertise, resources and information. Social Networking Tool

1) MySpace-

MySpace extremely popular social Networking sites which primarily have a social function allowing people to make talk online and share resource.

2) Face book-

Another social media site frequented by students, Face book is librarian friendly. Group communication among patrons can be possible in web 2.0

3) Ning-

Librarian can use this tool to get connected with students, library associations and more. You can also use it to share information with many people at a time.

4) Blog-

By creating a blog, you'll be able to disseminate information to lots of people at one time. Whether you're updating students on new collections or just conversing with library staff ,

blogs are a powerful tool especially when combined with RSS.

5) Meebo-

Network and assist students on Meebo, no matter what IM client they use online chatting or virtual reference service in library can impacted by professionals to clients.

6) Linked In-

This social networking site for professionals is a great way to get library patrons connected with the people that can help them find information. Whether that's you faculty , authors, like frequently updates collections, new arrival, current content services of library

7) Twitter-

Use Twitter a micro blogging application to keep staff and patrons updated on daily activities like frequently updated collections, new arrival, current content services of library

Advantages

- 1) Financially the costs of using social media are perceived to be less
- 2) It requires little training.
- 3) It promotes library services and disseminates news quickly, delivering this information more directly to library users
- 4) It increases engagement and interactions with library users.
- 5) It helps gather feedback to enhance users services.
- 6) The promotion of library holdings via social media can help increases usage of content.
- 7) It enhances communication both within the library and with other departments.
- 8) It can be used for outreach activities through onward sharing, well beyond the institution itself helping build connections and reputation more broadly.

Challenges for libraries

1) Lack of Awareness-

Most librarian in the developing countries are not aware of social networking services even the few that are aware still struggling to find out the productive uses of these sites for library services.

2) Bandwidth Problem-

Most institutions have limited bandwidth to support this practice. Poor connectivity can frustrate online participation.

3) Lack of Maintenance-

Maintenance culture is seriously lacking in most institutions in developing countries. The few available technologies are in dying conditions that may not support remote access to information.

4) Lack of training of Staff-

Most librarians lack the 21st century skills that could be required to adopt the social networking tools for effective library services.

Conclusion-

Social Networking has proven itself as useful tools not only in publicizing the availability of online services, but also in building trusted relationships with users. No doubt there are so many challenges to face libraries but this is the time to take step take the library to the newer height by integrate the library services with the sites, using sharing tools and keep update the library users.

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