Chapter 5
Digital Libraries as Information Superhighway

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ABSTRACT

During the decade of 1990s the term digital libraries become a recognized phrase for describing libraries that offer access to digital information by using a variety of networks, including internet and world wide web. Other synonyms used interchangeably with digital libraries are library without walls and electronic and virtual libraries because every online or virtual source of information is electronic source of information but every electronic information sources are not online or virtual form, so digital or electronic library includes digital contents and that can be delivered any time anywhere to the networked computer. Digital libraries provide remote access to the contents and the services of the libraries and other information sources combining an onsite collection of current and heavily used materials in both print and electronic form with an electronic networks which provide access to and delivery for worldwide libraries and commercial information and knowledge sources. Basically the digital libraries are the metaphor for the networked libraries. In the light of this therefore, this chapter discussed digital libraries as information superhighway looking at issues like factors responsible for the emergence of digital libraries, influence internet on digital libraries, etc.

INTRODUCTION

Digital library is a relatively a new concept, the term digital library explains the nature of its collection. Digital library is understood to have the information stored in predominantly in electronic or digital medium. The digital information collections may include digital books, digital/scanned images, graphics, textual and numeric data, digitized films audio and video clips, etc. A digital library is expected to provide access to the digital information collection, direct usage of communication networks for accessing and obtaining information, and copying by either downloading or on-line/off line printing form a master file. Digital libraries enable managing a very large amount of data, preserve unique and rare collections. Provide faster access to information, facilitate dealing with data from than one location, and enhance

distributed learning environments. They also help to perform searches that are manually not feasible or practical and offer to protect content owner's information. The main function of digital library librarian is that, identify, select, procedure, process, organize, provide access, preservation and conservation, and management of digital information. Digital libraries playing a challenging role for advanced users satisfaction, which is a advancement of computer hardware, software, communication and networks made it economically feasible and technically possible to delivery electronic full text to the desktop.

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR EMERGENCE OF DIGITAL LIBRARIES

Following are the factors are catalytic effect in the emergence of digital libraries;

1. Knowledgeable, computer literate and information literate user's base have started to demand more information at their PC or Laptop computer.
2. If library budget is not able to cope with the user's rising demands for hard copy of valuable journals which being provided by various publisher wise full text database.
3. Research community require current and updated information in their respected area of research, such information being published time to time in e-journals for the purpose of rapidly transmitting for research and development.
4. The peculiarity between library collection management and document delivery, the ownership and access approaches, are becoming increasingly unconfident.
5. The rapid growth in the internet as established the potential wealth of information resources available at the click of a mouse button as ICT and Internet technology feature.
6. Libraries and information centers started giving increased emphasis to provide access to resources available elsewhere rather than physically possessing resources e.g. library automation, inter library networks, online library catalogues, and resource sharing activities.

INFLUNCES OF INTERNET ON DIGITAL LIBRARIES

Networked computer or Internet has become backbone for obtaining, storing, processing and transmitting valuable information worldwide. Internet is enabling inter-connectivity of computer networks. Internet is the global network of number of networks with about millions of host computers spread around the world, those dealing with each other through a common set of communication protocols and reaching globally and providing connectivity to millions of users. The growth of internet has been global and continuous. Libraries have been changes their concepts as it placed into digital library e. g. electronic libraries, digital libraries, libraries without walls, shifting the libraries on to a laptop at the office or home. A variety of technologies are used for accessing the huge electronic information available in optical media, internet and on web. Opening with basic tool like e-mail, internet has been shifted to navigation aids like wide area information servers (WAIS), Netscape and Gopher; web clients such as Lynx, Win web and Cello, and more recently to the consumer oriented home pages of the web. Information resources available on the web are getting inter linked through web pages. Internet reacts for spreading of electronic and online journals. Several journals are already available on the Net e.g. Journal of Universal Computer Science, electronic letters online, journal of knowledge synthesis arid Nursing, and

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