Implications of Social Networking Technologies in Library Services

Suresha N	Ravikumar K.N	Princy Joshy
Librarian St Claret College	St Joshep College	Librarian St Claret College
Bangalore	Bangalore	Bangalore

Abstract:

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 web world. Social network has created a new platform for library and information professionals to provide library services in an effective and innovative way. In this paper, we are intended to describe the possible implications of social networking technologies in the field of library and information services.

1. Introduction:

The rapid development of information and communication technology (ICT) and exponential growth of information forced the LIS professionals in creating new vistas of opportunity to find new updated information for the user. The information seeking behaviour of the users of the library forced the library staffs to use different types of new emerging technology in delivering their services. The developments in free flow and unrestricted access to information guide the librarians to think beyond its Traditional way of providing services. Library are accordingly shifting its focuses from document centric to user centric. The present day libraries are mainly focus on electronic information and are continued to   be hybrid (print and electronic) libraries.

The application of web 2.0 domain in the field of Library information and communication has no exception. The web 2.0 domain has been introduced as an experimental field to be accepted and implemented for rendering virtual digital library services to patron. Social Software is quite lucrative before librarian 2.0 to accept, analyse and apply this new booming technology for the maximum benefit of the user 2.0. Professional competency needs to be developed among library professionals to be readily equipped with these social networking tools such as RSS, Wiki, Blogger, flicker, Library Think, Elf and so on. With the introduction of this domain, the credibility and value of librarians will get a boost. For this, the user needs to be empowered over web 2.0 technologies and services which can be applied for lifelong learning in the scenario of information landscape.

2. Social Networking: A Conceptual Approach

Social networking has becomes one of the integral parts of our day to day life which enables us to communicate with each other in real time. Social networking sites allow users to share ideas, pictures, posts activities, events, and interests with participate in chat rooms, and hold private conversation. Social networking sites are the virtual platform where people share information and use it as an effective means of communication. The

application of web 2.0 gives an opportunity for the libraries to use latest web 2.0 services for their dissemination of information. Social networking sites are widely acceptable networks where user gets updated information in any areas of interest.

3. Web 2.0 in Library:

Web 2.0 is the collection of server-based solutions that have allowed the web to become a publishing platform (Abram, 2005). Instead of the traditional one-way form of web authoring, these solutions invite all Internet user to share, collaborate, and contribute in the process of website development.

4. Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of this study are as follows:

- ➢ To identify the different social networking sites used in libraries for promoting better library services.
- ➢ To study the benefits of social networking in libraries.
- ➢ To study the types of social network used by the libraries.
- ➢ To study the effectiveness of the social networking tools for information sharing and dissemination of library services.
- ➢ To identify the reasons for using social networking tools for library services.

5. Application of social networking Technologies in libraries:

Libraries are now adopting different social network sites for the better visibility of their library services. Libraries use different social networking tools to promote its services. Basically social networking sites are used by the libraries for the following reasons:

- ➢ Promotion of library resources and services.
- ➢ Advertising programs of the library and services.
- ➢ Create a platform to reach new users.
- ➢ Makes awareness to users regarding new updates and news to the users.
- ➢ It provides a collaborative work environment.
- ➢ Provide a link to online resources.
- ➢ Provide a gateway to the users to give feedback about library services and can makes suggestions.
- ➢ Provide a gateway where user can find about library photos, videos and provide a links to articles and the resources.
- ➢ Provide the list of new arrivals.
- ➢ Making announcements on library events.
- ➢ Provide newspaper clipping services.
- ➢ User oriented seminar and workshops.

6. Implications of Social Networking Technologies in Library Services:

Social networking helps librarian to share information with patrons and students in the easiest way for digital library environment. Librarian can use in three broad activities in library and information services. The major three are

1. **Information communication,**
2. **Knowledge distribution**
3. **knowledge organization**

1. Information communication,

In this process librarian can keep constant touch and effective interaction with staff, patrons, and faculty in online collaborative environment. The social networking tools that can be practiced by the library for the aforementioned purposes are:

- ➢ **Facebook**: Facebook is most popular social media and is used by all age group in the society. Now it becomes much popular in libraries because of its user friendly nature and library professional can use facebook to a great extent to share and collaborate information among peers.
- ➢ **MySpace:** It is also a popular social networking site which allows people to make friends, talk online and share resources. Through this site students and library professionals can post calendar, custom catalog search tools and blog features to improve their presence.
- ➢ **Blog:** A blog is a website where library users can enter their thoughts, ideas, suggestions and comments in a chronological sequence. Blog act as a platform where user can send their feedback, comments, file their queries, suggestions regarding the services and activities of the library.
- ➢ **Ning:** This is a tool which can be used for making contact with students and faculties. Itcan also used for sharing information with many people at a time.
- ➢ **Meebo:**Meebo is an open source web based instant messaging (IM) service which allows students for online chatting and virtual reference service in library.
- ➢ **Linkedln**: Linkedln is a business oriented social networking site mostly used by business professionals. It is a platform for the library professional to get connected with their user which can be helpful for disseminating information.
- ➢ **Twitter:** It is a microblogging application, to keep library staffs and patrons updated on daily activities, like update of collections status, new arrivals, current content service of library etc. Library professionals can use this tool to provide quick information on the ongoing program of the library. User can send instant message (IM) on complaints or ask questions on a particular issue and get feedback from the library by using Twitter.

2. Information Distribution:

The main aim of the library is to provide the right kind of information at the right time to the users. So information sharing is a vital part of the library in the digital era. Following are the some of the social networking tools that are used for the information distribution purposes:

- ➢ **Flickr:** Library professionals can use this tool to share and distribute new image of library collections. Library can share photo collections of workshop, conference and cover page of new arrivals list (NAL) of both books and journals.
- ➢ **YouTube:** This is a platform where library professional can upload videos of library, eLearning tutorials, and events of inaugural lectures, conferences and workshops.
- ➢ **Teachertube:** It is a YouTube type of application for the teachers which gives an opportunity for the instructor librarian collaboration. This instructor can help students to guide regarding library resources.
- ➢ **Second Life:** Second life helps to create a virtual library for the discussions, classes and more.

- ➢ **Wikis:** It is a free online encyclopaedia where users can get chance to access, edit and contribute to content. This collaborative webpage for developing web content. Wikis can be used for

social interaction and discussions among the librarians and users as well. Wikis can be used for creating subject guides, subject gateways.

- ➢ **Footnote:** It is a gateway to access to original historical documents.
- ➢ **Community walk:** Community walk provides a geographical way to interpret text and event. It can use for instruction such as showing someone where to find a book or walk them through a historical and geographical timeline.
- ➢ **Slideshare:** This is a platform where students, faculty and research scholar can share their slideshow presentations.
- ➢ **Digg:** Digg is a social networking website featuring user submitted news stories. Digg features links from across the internet ranging from widely known news sources to obscure blogs. Digg also builds its own list of popular stories that are going viral across the Web.
- ➢ **Stumble upon**: Stumble upon is a form of web search engine that finds and recommends web content to its users. Its features allow users to discover and rate Web pages, photos and videos that are personalized to their tastes and interests.

3.Knowledge Organization :

Following are some of the social networking tools that are used for the knowledge organization purpose s:

- ➢ **aNobii:** It is a social networking site aimed at readers. It allows individuals to catalogue their books and rate, review and discuss them with other readers.
- ➢ **Del.icio.us:** It is a social book marking tool through which we can create custom directory for the library patron. It is a social bookmarking web service for storing, sharing, and discovering web bookmarks
- ➢ **Connotea:**Connotea is a reference tool, allowing us to share and organize reference links and share them with others.
- ➢ **Librarything:**Librarything is online services to help people catalog their books easily. We can access their catalog from anywhere.

7. Advantages of social networking library services

The main advantages of social networking are as follows:
- ➢ Social network is vital for promoting library services
- ➢ Social network can provide a better services than the traditional ways in which libraries are providing their services.
- ➢ Social media confine potential users of the library
- ➢ Social network allows user to create, connect, communicate, to contribute, vote and share information.
- ➢ It enables the libraries to have close contact with users
- ➢ It helps libraries to build a collaborative network with the user
- ➢ It helps the libraries to reach new users
- ➢ Through social network user can identifying library resources easily.
- ➢ It facilitates users to sharing knowledge
- ➢ Social network can provide right information to users very quickly
- ➢ It creates a platform to fulfilling needs of distance learners

8. Disadvantages of social networking library services:

The disadvantages of social network are as follows:

➢ Need to learn large number of social networks.
➢ Lack of time for the library professionals to use social network.
➢ Chances of lack of privacy and identity theft.
➢ Confidentiality of information.
➢ Lack of adequate knowledge among staffs about its operation.
➢ No adequate fund required for libraries to acquire such type of technology.
➢ Shortage of insufficient library staffs for handling such technologies.
➢ Low interest of librarians in learning and utilizing social media.
➢ Lack of training opportunities for library staffs.
➢ Low bandwidth of Internet and ICT infrastructure in the library.

Conclusion:

There is a great deal of potential inherent in social networking software's (SNSes) for professional development and professional networking purposes. This is particularly true for the library and information industry which is already embracing web 2.0 technologies across many of its core activities. However, at the same time, there is a significant level of confusion, scepticism, resistance and even fear surrounding the use of these technologies within the workplace by many librarians, and not just the baby boomers. A suitable plan and strong evaluation needs to be look while pioneering social networks in library. User required to aware and sufficient training should be imparted to staffs to accomplish the task of planning social software in library. Last but not the least large encouragement and user empowerment on technologies used in web 2.0 should given the prime priority so that thinking on implementing social software in library may be possible. The possible implication of social networking can be successful by conductingmaximum research and experiment on social networking from different point of view on library. Librarian is the sole custodian to accomplishment the task of planning, organizing and implementing social networks in library and information centre. In this context sufficient training and more expertise need to be gain by him to furnish an absolute shape to social networks in the library.

References:

• Abram, S. Web 2.0 - huh?! Library 2.0, librarian 2.0. Information Outlook.2005. 9 (12), 44-46.
• Boyd, d. m., & Ellison, N. B. Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 2007,13(1), 1. http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/boyd.ellison.html. [Accessed on 12 June 2008]
• Crawford,W. Library 2.0 and 'Library 2.0:Cites and Insights, Journal of Libraries, Policy, Technology and Media.2006,6(2). http: //www.cites.boisestate.edu/civ6i2.pdf. [Accessed on 10 June 2006]
• Fitzpatrick, M. The Deleting Online Predators Act of 2006.Journal of Tech Law, 2006. http://www.techlawjournal.com/cong109/bills/house/hr5319/hr5319ih.asp [Accessed on 29 December 2007].
• Habib, M.C. Toward Academic Library 2.0: Development and Application of a Library 2.0 Methodology. North Carolina University,Chappe Hill, 2006. http://etd.ils.unc.edu/dspace/bitstream/1901/356/1/michaelhabib.pdf. [Accessed on 7 July 2008]

- Hupp, Jessica.25 Useful Social Networking Tools for librarians.Collegedegree. 2008.8(6), 67.http://www.collegedegree.com/library/financial-aid.htm. [Accessed on 25 August 2008]
- Maness, J.M. Library 2.0: The next generation of web-based library services. Journal of the WorldBook Community, 2006, 17(3), 139-145.http://www.atyponlink.com/LOG/doi/abs/10.2959/logo.2006.17.3.139.htm [Accessed on 27 August 2008]
- Maness, J. M. Library 2.0 Theory: Web 2.0 and its implication for libraries. Journal of Webology, 2006, 3(2), 25. http://www.webology.ir/2006/v3n2/a25.html. [Accessed on 24 April 2008]
- Miller, P. Web 2.0: Building the New Library. Ariadane Magazine, 2005, 4(45), 34. http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue45/miller/. [Accessed on 21 July 2008]
- O'Reilly, T. What is Web 2.0? Oreillynet.com, 2005, 9(30) http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/a/oreilly/tim/news/2005/09/30/what-is-web-20.html#mememap. [Accessed on 17 July 2008] 11. O'Reilly, T. (2005). Web 2.0: Compact definition. http://radar.oreilly.com/archives/2005/10/web-20-compact-definition.html. [Accessed on 26 March 2008] 12. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Library_2.0