



DIGITALISATION OF LIBRARIES (DIGITAL LIBRARIES) AND ITS SCOPE

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ABSTRACT

In comparison to traditional libraries, digital libraries provide efficient and qualitative services by collecting, organizing, storing, disseminating, retrieving and preserving the information. Digital libraries support preservation besides making information retrieval and delivery more comfortable. It provides online access to historical and cultural documents whose existence is endangered due to physical decay. The major areas which offer digital libraries great exploitation are: Information retrieval, multimedia database, data mining, data warehouse, on-line information repositories, image processing, hypertext, World Wide Web and Wide Area Information Services (WAIS). Digital libraries necessarily include a strong focus on the management of digital content, just as traditional libraries have focused for long on the management of content in physical forms. Most of the digital content that is being managed includes human language, either in the form of character-coded electronic text, scanned versions of printed or handwritten text, or digital representations of human speech. Language technology therefore plays a major role in managing digital content. This comes as no surprise, of course. Digital libraries today make good use of what we know about searching large collections, and techniques such as machine-assisted indexing are employed increasingly often as we strive to extend our reach to progressively larger collections. But we are on the verge of a new era, one in which our machines will learn from what we do and then apply those capabilities to enable the management of digital content at a far larger scale than we could ever hope to do ourselves. Few advantages of digital libraries according to Haddouti are: User can access the information anywhere Reduces bureaucracy by providing access to the information The information is not necessarily located in same place Understanding the catalogue structure is not necessary Cross references to other documents speed up the work of users Full text search Protected information source Wide exploration and exploitation of the information The knowledge dissemination is an integral part of the success story of the popularity of creating digital libraries. The aim is to provide universal access to human knowledge, and given the advancement of digital storage and communications this goal is now achievable.

KEY WORDS: *Digitalization of Libraries, Role of community information centers in digitalization of libraries.*

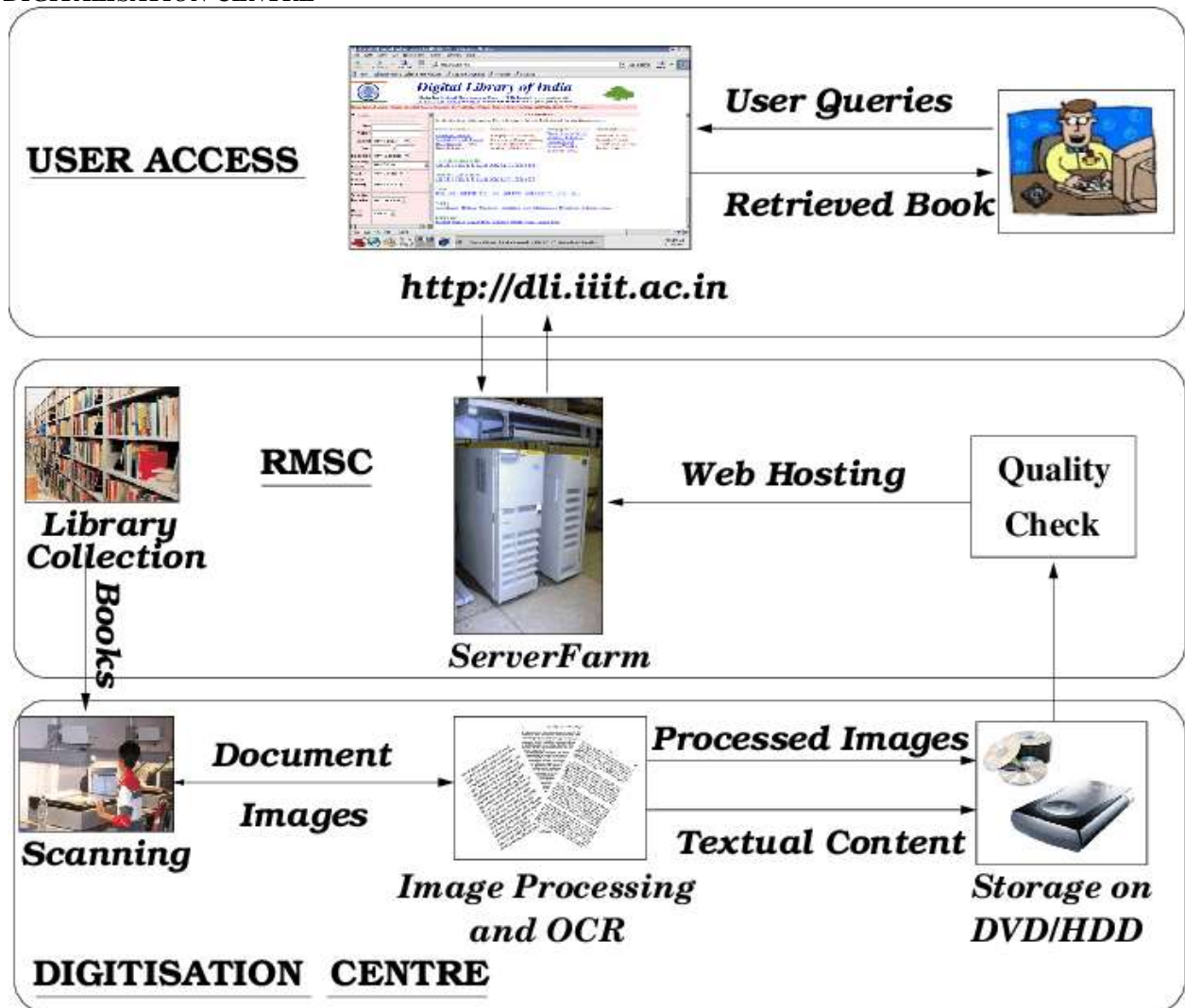
BACKGROUND

Background means doing things in a new way, using new types of information resources, new approaches to acquisition, new methods of storage and preservation, new approaches to classification and cataloging, new ways of interaction with the patrons with more reliance on electronic systems and networks. As it stands today, most libraries in the developed countries have their own homepages providing links to local information, electronic databases, bibliographic as well as full text, apart from its own online system of

collection and services. In Toren and Czech's view, libraries in future will become icons on the screen and library buildings will function as book warehouses. The future implication of such a situation needs to be contemplated seriously. Defining Digital Libraries The term "digital library" is the most recent in a long series of names for a concept that has been written about nearly as long as the development of the first computer: a computerized "library" that would supplement, add functionality, and even replace traditional libraries.



➤ **DIGITALISATION CENTRE**



OPEN PARADIGMS AND MODELS

There is a new trend emerging as the Open Source movement—the concept of collaborative software development with developers sharing the source code — reflects a fundamental shift away from proprietary software and systems. These open models are appearing in new applications areas such as the Open Knowledge Initiative to share learning technologies. The increasing interest in open models is leading towards more generalized acceptance of collaborative development and sharing of intellectual goods and services. Cyber law experts suggest that the creation of a “commons,” wherein the free exchange of ideas and collaboration prevail, is fundamental to an open society. Themes of openness and collaborative exchange have also emerged in the context of publishing, particularly with respect to the relationship between authors and commercial publishers. As information becomes more distributed and open models of exchange become more common, the library’s relationship with content creators, publishers, and consumers

will change. In these open trends there is evidence of a shift from publication as product to publication as process. When content is available Three general characteristics of the digital library of the future are:

A comprehensive collection of resources important for Scholarship, teaching, and learning; Readily accessible to all types of users

Managed and maintained by professionals The information explosion, the wide bandwidth data networks and the potential of

Internet-based technologies - such as the Web - make digital libraries one of the important application areas of computer science.

National Knowledge Commission (2005) advocates the role of libraries in providing widespread and inclusive access to knowledge is widely acknowledged. In today’s context, libraries have to play two distinct roles - to serve as a local centre of information and knowledge, and be a local gateway



to national and global knowledge. In order to achieve this goal, existing libraries must modernize their collection, services and facilities, become more pro-active and collaborate with other institutions, agencies and NGOs in order to develop a community-based information system. 'Information' has been described by subject experts as the fifth need of man ranking after air, water, food and shelter. In fact, in view of the vital role played by information in daily life, it should be considered as the first need in terms of survival. This is because it is information about the availability of food: which food to be eaten, how to build a shelter, protection of territory, ensuring information, it is difficult to go through the challenging process of life. As a matter of fact, every organization knows or need to know about its surroundings, availability of food and probable potential dangers for its life. Information is so basic that it is a part and parcel of nature. This is evident from the fact that every organism is endowed with certain amount of knowledge or knowledge-base by nature itself and it tries to add to its knowledge – base though sensory perception or experience. Without information, Survival would be impossible.

Community services have been in existence since the inception of Gram Panchayats in India but the term Community Information Service (CIS) is of recent origin. In the late 1980s Community Information Services (CISs) were a well-established feature in Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. These services emerged strongly in the 1960s and 1970s. Much of the literature documenting their principles and practices are drawn from the 1970s and 1980s. The late 1980s however, marked a decline in the fortunes of community information centers particularly in Britain. It is evident in the Indian context that, large gaps exist between information required by the different sections of the society and actual availability of information either from Government, Non- Government and Local Self Government organizations. To bridge the information gap, Community Information Centers plays significant sections of population at a right time and right place.

A community library intends to provide local and regional information for the whole community, rather than only offering book stock to the readers. Community Information Services assist individuals and groups in solving daily problems and their participation in the democratic process. These community information services concentrate on the information need of the people commonly face problems related to lack of information at homes, their jobs and for their rights. Thus, the key concepts of community information services enables information access, physical and attitudinal changes of people, including staff motivating, citizen's action, disseminating information, developing co-operation and acting as a community liaison.

It is, of course, true that information is a birth right of human beings irrespective of class and creed, he/she belongs to as per the Right to Information Act in the Indian context. To achieve this, Libraries in general and public libraries in particular which are also called as community Information

Centers has to play a significant role in catering to the information needs of the society.

NEED FOR THE DIGITALISATION OF LIBRARY THROUGH COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Society and social system must be changed with the new developments which occur from time to time. Community Information is the basic need of the masses and lacks access to Information both public and private information is one of the major drawbacks for community development. In this context, Bundy (1977) rightly describes that "Access to information does not in itself give people, so as to be informed about the changes around themselves and to improve their standard of living in all aspects.

In the present information age, information is considered to be a resource, a product and thereby a need. Therefore, the problem of developing countries or the third world countries is not merely economic poverty; it is also the information poverty which must be a matter of great concern to all human beings. It is the basic need of information which also has to be met on a priority basis. This kind of productive, survival information or developmental information is called the Community Information (CI) which is crucial for socio-economic development in the third world countries and the 'right to information' should be considered as one of the fundamental rights of all human beings.

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