Libraries and Social Media: Modern Practices and Coming Opportunities

Patel Mahendra B.* and Priyanki R. Vyas**


ABSTRACT
Now a day we hear the word social media everywhere. Use of social media is necessary and one of the important parts of human life. With the increasing use of social media such as Face book, Twitter, YouTube, What’s App, etc., library and librarians have started using this tools to interact with their users in real time. This papers focus on different purposes for using social media in the library, an advantage of social media in the library, some challenges of using social media, future of this media and some commonly used social media tools in the libraries.

KeyTerms: Social Media, Library, Users, Services, Resources, Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, WhatsApp, YouTube

INTRODUCTION
Social connections are very important in the library profession. Social networking sites built a relationship among a group with a common interest. Now in the 21st century, professional groups started to spring up and in current time the library profession had its own groups with the sole purpose of sharing ideas, gathering first-hand information regarding the profession and satisfied then users' multidimensional demand. With the increasing use of social media such as Facebook, My Space, Twitter, YouTube, What’s App etc., libraries and librarians have started using these tools to interact with their users on real time. Social media is used to provide latest information to users, to provide open source link of library resources, for providing information regarding new arrival books and journals and many more purposes.

Social Media and Library
Social media have the capacity to build a much closer relationship between the library and their users. Nowadays, library community using social media are adhoc and experimental, but if these tools are updated, they will play crucial role in library's present and future. Social media are now widely used by the librarians to fulfill a variety of objectives. This paper highlights how social media is currently used by librarians and libraries and for what purposes and their effect.

Different Purposes for Using Social Media in the Library

- For promoting the events
- To promote library services
- For advertisement of library resources/ collections
- To update on library modernize
- To promote new acquisitions coming in the library to users
- For the promotion of library guides, exhibition guides
- To build relation with new students joining the university
- To engage with the academic community
- To build relation with the wider community beyond the university e.g. the town in which the institution is based
- To connect with distance learners for satisfied their information needs and give satisfactions
- As a customer services tool - complaints, suggestions, inquiries, feedback
- To highlight subject-specific information related to specific subjects
- For promote information literacy, technology, and techniques
- To promote courses and to develop institutional capabilities
- As a research tool to locate official documents and studies
Related Studies
Charniso & Barneet Ellis found that the library was in limelight because of providing a range of services through Face book, such as library tour and promotion of resources. This study also found that the use of social media in the library was also helpful for closer working relationships between staffs.1

Kai Wah & Du Clarified that how social media use is becoming mainstream in the libraries. In this study library covers are Asia, North America, and Europe. This study found that 71% were using social media currently and 13% says that they have planned to use it. The study also found that Face book and Twitter were the most commonly used tools in libraries.2

Taylor & Francis this study covers 497 responses’ coming from different international libraries community. This study found that 70% of librarians now feel that the use of social media is one of the important parts. 68% of libraries were managing between one and four social media accounts. The study also highlights that 61% librarians are having a social media account for three years or longer.3

Advantages of Using Social Media in the Library
- The cost of using social media is low.
- Use of social media requires little training.
- It promotes library services, disseminates and delivers latest information more directly to library users.
- It increases interactions and participation with library users.
- With the use of social media, users give the feedback and enhance user services as per coming feedback from users.
- It can help to increase the use of content.
- It increases the communication between libraries, other departments’ users and other institutes.
- It is helping to build institution reputation more broadly.

Challenges of Using Social Media
- Social media can require significant time dedication from library staff.
- It can require technological and technical expertise.
- Use of social media is a challenge for librarians to use an informal but presentable tone.
- It can require training for using this media.
- The problem of limited library budget to support more advanced social media.
- Library staff need to work hard for user’s likes and so on.
- With the use of social media, it can be difficult to maintain library brand for content/resources made available via social media.
- With the use of social media, there are potential copyright issues.
- Some other factors such as internet speed, connectivity, coverage, technological infrastructure, government restrictions, management interest, etc. may restrict access to social media.

The Future of Social Media in the Library
Latest development and fast adoption of technologies indicate that social media is seen as an important support tool for changing into this new role. It is difficult to forecast how social media and its use will develop in the library so the priority for the librarian is that first it is to remain experimental and flexible. There are challenges in the future that how much information and contents being consumed through social media by humans. Librarians are also giving paths to find complex content and develop smart applications for users to give good services and for getting users satisfaction.

Commonly Used Social Media Tools in Libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logo</th>
<th>Social Media</th>
<th>Uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 🔊 | Twitter     | - For the dissemination of library news and information  
|      |             | - Built connections with users and researchers  
|      |             | - Built connection with other libraries, librarians and institutions  
|      |             | - Getting users satisfaction from the provision of customer services |
| 👤 | Facebook    | - For distribution of library news and information  
|      |             | - For sharing photographs and uploading videos  
|      |             | - To increasing use of online information network  
|      |             | - It will help to embark wide knowledge to the student’s  
|      |             | - It works as a tool to mobilize library services among the younger generation |
| 🎨 | Pinterest   | - For Promotion of general library collections, digital and archive special collections and information literacy  
|      |             | - Making online repositories for students, users, and researchers  
|      |             | - To display book titles to save time browsing and promote new titles  
|      |             | - To provide an area for students and subject specialist to pin reviewed and recommended reading for a particular topic  
|      |             | - Develop communities with other online libraries |
| 🎥 | YouTube     | - For uploading videos related libraries and beneficial to users for satisfied user’s needs. |
| 📩 | WhatsApp    | - Instant and fast information sharing with users  
|      |             | - For connecting with members and users  
|      |             | - Any issues can be discussed and clarity sought and speedy  
|      |             | - All members can discuss and give their suggestions  
|      |             | - Use of emoticons instead of writing long winded answers |
CONCLUSION
With the increase the use and development of social media, most of the libraries and librarians are ready to adopt this media for various purposes and getting benefit from this media and connect more closely/informally with their users and others library community. It is important that frequent updation and the use of this updation of social media are important for libraries and librarians. So it is important to use this media in the libraries for users and society.

REFERENCES