

The Integrated Library System (ILS)

a coup (d'état)?

Poster handout

Anette Lessing
Academic Information Service
University of Pretoria, South Africa
anette.lessing@up.ac.za

Due to the impact of digital technology, the library is no longer the top source of information.

"...Information-seeking behaviors and habits are changing."
Campbell (2006)

The library's fundamental purpose as Information provider is in danger of extinction.

Search-engine providers integrate the world's information resources and invest a great deal in web interfaces to make online searches fast and easy.

Libraries find it difficult to integrate their information resources in order to provide a single search interface and their clients do not want to search various interfaces.

What actions are suggested for libraries to claim their turf?

Develop robust websites

Detlor & Lewis (2006) feel strongly about the investment of more resources in developing robust library web sites that can function as portals or unified gateways to scholarly information resources. Users want a one-stop single interface and the search box should be placed where users find it easily and fast. These user-centered interfaces should also be able to be personalized and to interact with the library.

Breeding (2007) also stresses the importance of developing up-to-date interfaces with good relevance ranking and faceted navigation providing access to diverse content collections.

Emphasis on users and services

Information content and services should be packaged to meet user needs. (Detlor & Lewis, 2006); (Storey, 2007). Coyle (2007) mentions that the primary focus should be on users and their information needs.

Market the library Web site

The library web should be marketed to all stakeholders as "the" first place to look for information and their learning needs (Detlor & Lewis, 2006).

The library as social and learning space

Tangible "people" spaces should be created (Detlor & Lewis, 2007). This could include hardwired computer spaces as well as physical and social spaces. Campbell (2006) also refers to these learning spaces that currently serve symbolically to reinforce the spirit of learning and knowledge interaction.

Next-generation finding tools

Tennant (2007) suggests tools that go beyond federated searching where libraries locally aggregate information and use metasearching for information that cannot be aggregated. He refers to The Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH) to index article indexes along with catalogue records. He further refers to products developed by ILS vendors to provide unified searches. A major trend is to provide access through a single search with the aid of federated search and metasearch tools (Breeding, 2007).

Capture, preserve and distribute locally produced materials

Cohrane (2007) stresses the importance of the preservation of unique local material not available elsewhere. Campbell (2006) refers to institutional repositories as a possibility to provide a solid foundation for the future of academic libraries.

Virtual reference services

Reference services have become more virtual, but search engines using sophisticated natural-languages are improving and scholars increasingly prefer them over reference services offered by the library (Campbell, 2006).

Information literacy

Information literacy is currently playing an important role in libraries. Campbell (2006) is however uncertain if this need will continue as the migration of information to the Web increases.

Creating metadata

"Cataloging" practices are no longer an adequate description for digital resources and "librarians have been slow to recognize the validity of some kinds of data as appropriate for libraries". (Campbell, 2006). Librarians should be involved with new technologies. Coyle (2006) refers to attempts by librarians to retool for the future.

Manage Resource licenses

The increase in digital publications will shift the librarian's role from collection development to managing resources. (Campbell, 2006).

Decisions about future of academic libraries and roles of librarians

Librarians have always been the guardians of authoritative knowledge.

Due to the impact of digital technology, the scenery however changed and we should urgently engage in discussions about the future of academic libraries and the future role of librarians. (Campbell, 2006).

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