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Core digital resources for small and/or medium size libraries (Academic, Public, Special)

Mark Quaye AffumDOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/27076636.2021.v2.i2a.46>**Abstract**

Libraries have long been very crucial to our search for information. To this day though google has taken over, libraries still play a very important role in the academic society especially with the provision of study space.

Whatever the size of a library is it can be digitized to meet the specified standard. The need for digital librarianship was advocated for during the inception of the internet and the world wide web. It takes a lot of commitment, concerted effort and interest from management, policy makers and the government at large to convert the traditional library and a digital and sustain it as well.

Creating a digital library also require the services of experts and technicians within the information technology jurisdiction and the training of library staff. The prolific use of Facebook, high powered servers, high specification smart phones, Instagram, Whatsapp have all brought about the necessity for the digitization of the library.

Keywords: world Wide Web, Facebook,**1. Introduction****1.1 Background study**

A digital library is a collection of digital books, artifacts, magazines, journals or materials in the library that has been digitized to suit a particular purpose such as portability, storage, consumption convenience, readability, etc. digital libraries have been very popular since the inception of the information age and the explosion of the internet.

With the increase in production and decrease in the cost of storage devices, digital librarianship has been very effective and also developed to a level.

Digital librarianship has come to stay, it will be big and it will probably overtake the traditional paper back librarianship with time. A lot of library software such as silverbird et has also come to support the development of the digital librarianship.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Information is very important for solving various challenges within the shortest possible time. If information cannot be accessed early enough, preserved well, protected, portable, updated easily, expensive then it becomes problem. The patronage of library information should be at the reach of almost everybody. It is the reason that digital librarianship has become very salient. A lot of important books, pictures, images, music, videos are now in pdf, jpeg, mpg, and mp4 format or digital books respectively. Information communication technology is being taught as part of school curricular making it part of everyday activities.

The traditional ways of organizing library resources or materials such as books, maps, artifacts, audio, video, magazines, journals, etc. are quite cumbersome and involving. The digitize for of these materials make it quite easy and quicker to organize them. Based on the software used, organization of materials look very attractive to patrons and users and also make it easy for them to browse, access, select, retrieve and use them or even share.

Maintaining digital library resources is very easy and effective it also allows easy sharing of resources among fellow patrons or even between two or more different libraries.

1.3 Objectives

This project deems at assess the creation of basic digital library for small and/or medium size libraries (academic, public, special).

To create a library not just for borrowing of hard copy books but also for sharing of information between patrons and also for efficient and effective use of the library materials.

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The cost of buy hard copy books could be very expensive. Ranging from GHC50 to GHC5000. The obviously makes it difficult for patrons and libraries alike to purchase books. The cost of online books is free. Digital books can also be duplicated and shared among multiple patrons remembers of a particular library.

With hard copy books, many books need to be purchase at the same cost in order to meet the growing demands.

Small libraries based on their size also have small budget. For this reason, a digital library may be ideal for them.

Large libraries such as academic and national libraries need regular update of their volumes since information changes every three years. For this reason, it is prudent that they embrace digital librarianship.

1.4 Scope

The study revolves around what goes into digital librarianship. It looks into both the hard and software components that is needed to establish such facilities.

1.5 Limitations

The challenges I will encounter during the research are:

Digital librarianship may be synonymous to mobile libraries but they are not exactly the same though both use digital technologies one could be static or stationary while the latter is movable.

It's also not easy to come by the latest technology needed to implement digital librarianship. If even this becomes possible, the cost involved in purchasing certain infrastructure especially for the small libraries is quiet expensive or not easy to afford.

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Literature on digital libraries writes about its definitions and origin. There have been different definitions of digital libraries. The literature tries to bring all to bare and propose a unified one. It also looked at how digital library evolved and how synonymous is it to information science.

Other literature also looks at the conversion of hard copy library volumes and resources into digital one to create a digital library.

2.3 Critique of the existing literature relevant to the study

In the literature review, all the authors looked at digitizing an already available traditional library. They focused on how to turn the essential resources in the library into a digital one for preservation, and for a wider service. One particular literature shared more light on why digitizing is crucial for libraries and what to look at before digitizing takes place.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

For this project, the following things can be used: scanner, network devices, internet accessibility, server, greenstone library software, etc.

3.2 Building a digital library

i. Selecting and acquiring

not all volumes or library materials will need to be digitized. Some materials called heritage books and other rear materials such as in the library really need to be digitized as

they are crucial and very essential to the image of the library.

There are other books that are of great number in the library and it will take a long time for the library to run out of its stock. There may be some other information that is not present in the library though needed. Such books, information or materials can also be acquired, digitized and added to the library stock.

ii. Organizing

Organizing information in digital library requires a lot of careful planning and a good library software. Information or materials need to be place under their subject areas such as reference books, business books, engineering, science and technology books, fashion books, catering and culinary studies books, etc. This will facilitate easy browsing and selecting of books by users of the digital library. Organizing information will also enhance the interface of the online library browser and the digital library software interface.

iii. Indexing and storing

This is where files, documents, digital books and other library materials are named and saved for easy identification of books and library materials, security purposes, browsing and selection.

iv. Searching and retrieving

This is where patrons and users of the digital library browse and look for books, journals, project works, and magazines on the library web site. The interface should be very flexible and easy for users to identify where they want to go and what they want to consume. The browser must also be compatible with all platforms be it a tablet, smart phone, phablet, a laptop or even a desktop. The website must also support any kind of browser whether it is Mozilla or internet explorer or opera mini.

Planning

It is a very crucial state of every digital library project. The library must find out the size of the proposed digital library. If it is a big project, the library must decide whether to give it to a project manager to execute it. If it is small, it must also decide whether to execute it internally. It must also wait for financial approval from management if it is an institutional or government. The assembling of the all the infrastructure for this project all comes of here.

Promotion and Provision of Services

For users and patrons of a library to be aware of the presence of a digital library within the library itself, the library should be able to advertise it. This can be done by pasting a sign post on the entrance of the computer lab or the digital library door and also on the notice of the library. The library should also add all the other services it provides to it.

Registering

It is very important to note that document that are about to be digitized must first be labeled to avoid confusing and mixing them with those that has not been digitized yet. Also registering documents will allow staff or project managers to be able to know which file, books or materials needs digitization and the one which do not need to be digitized.

ii. Scanning documents

All hard documents that need to be digitized first of all needs to be converted into their soft copies first. This is where scanning of the hard copies comes in. special scanners with very high resolutions are need for this particular job. The sizes, formats and pixels of these files are then made reduced or increased to meet the demands of it specific purpose.

iii. Optical Character Recognition (OCR)

This is an application that reads lines from hard copy documents compares it with stored letters and converts it to the letter it recognizes or resembles. It is mostly used to convert image text or hand written documents into word, typed or text format.

iv. Proofreading

After a document or hard copy has been converted form an image into a text, it is then proofread to remove any character errors and spell checked before it finally accepted as fit for the shelves or for patrons' consumption.

Infrastructure

This is one important part of digital libraries. Without infrastructure about 80% of digital automation would not be possible. This is because, they form a major part of the project. The necessary infrastructure needed are; scanners, printers, photocopiers, personal computers, laptops, server, routers, internet access, modems, software package etc.

There should also be available a big hall to house all these infrastructures. The scanner should be huge enough to scan age volume books and it should have a high resolution. There should also be software that would be able to convert files into acceptable formats and sizes for easy accessibility by the computers, server and the library software.

Human resource

Personnel who will administer the digital library should be an information technology savvy. He should be someone with at least a postgraduate degree in digital librarianship or MSc. Information technology. He will be responsible for the maintenance, upgrading etc. of the digital library. He should regularly be retrained to update him of the new trends of library and information technology. He will also have to assist patrons of the library who may have problems accessing the digital library.

Greenstone Digital Library software

This is one of the most commonly used library software. It is very flexible, accommodative and easy to use. Originating from the Denmark greenstone one of the maiden library software. This software is ideal for most digital library. It can accommodate any types of file be it audio, text, video, image, etc. it is widely used because of this property. File formats such as jpeg, jpg, doc, mp3, mp4, avi are all compactible with this fill format. Greenstone is affordable. In fact, it is an open ware which means it is freely available for download.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, it must be emphasized that the need for a digital library is for the good of a traditional library for it to be able to preserve most if its antiquarian. It should be

emphasized that digital library has come a long way to assist patrons to access information at a distance.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations**5.1 Results**

Form the study conducted, the research found out that digital libraries though quite expensive is very essential in the information and the benefits of digitizing far outweighs the traditional library.

5.2 Recommendations

Libraries should go for the latest information technology and digital resource that will keep the library system modern for a long period of time.

There should be regular in-service training, workshops, conferences, and human resource upgrade for librarians to increase an update their knowledge in the digital librarianship trend.

Library professionals that are recruited should have least a postgraduate qualification in information technology since that is the latest trend in the library industry.

All library should strive to get digital library within the library.

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