

Review

Library Homepage: Tools and Techniques

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Information professionals recognize that appropriate and credible resources are important for research. However, the 24/7 availability of the internet does not always allow librarians the luxury to intercept, interpret and intervene for users, so library instruction is not always possible (Burke, 2005). One of the emerging information delivery systems via the internet is the homepage. Library homepage provides general information about the site acts as a table of contents and serve as a directory to a set of Webpages. This paper examines the concept and importance of library homepage.

Keywords: Library, Homepage, Webpage. Open Access, Links.

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INTRODUCTION

Users have less reason to visit the library, since they can access resources without going to the library (Fialkoff, 2006). The first or "Front" page on a website that serves as the starting point for navigation, where the site's information actually begins is also known as the welcome page. Library homepage is a particular type of web page that provides general information about the site, acts as a table of contents and serves as a directory to a set of web pages. A collection of web pages linked together which exist on a particular server is known as a website (Nielsen, 2001).

Academic libraries are nowadays using web environment to provide high quality information for their users mostly in digital format, but their most important role lies in numerous and enriched library services (Pareek & Gupta, 2013). Technically, a portal is a network service that brings

together content from diverse distributed resources using technologies such as cross-searching, harvesting, and alerting, and collates this into an amalgamated form for presentation to the user (Hamblin, 2004). In such a scenario, library portals aid the potential users to overcome such a confusion by providing a gateway to an institutes resources by listing them for users and creating a direct link to the native interface of each resources (Kumara, 2013).

Lancaster talked about a paperless society several decades ago. In today's electronic environment, the value of having access to information is greater than having access to physical space. This brings up two important issues: the diverse needs of academic users for library resources and the importance of user awareness of library resources. Timeliness and accuracy are also important. One of the tools in achieving these things is the library

website (1989; Nooshinfard and Ziaei, 2011)).

LIBRARY HOMEPAGE AS OPEN TEXT AND CLOSED TEXT

A text can be considered in two ways:

Open or closed a closed text is characterized by plain, prose style, linear syntax and absence of metaphor, logic and the language of science.

1. An open text is deliberately ambiguous, connotative, and is the language of arts. A library home page may of course be either, if the page is to provide specific information, with no links to other pages, then it is closed.

2. However, a homepage which provides thoughtful links to other relevant pages, which in turn link to other relevant pages, which in turn link. It must be quickly added that the operative word in the above sentence is "thoughtful" (Powazek, 2006).

WHAT MAKES AN EFFECTIVE LIBRARY HOMEPAGE

A library homepage is 'the initial interface to a series of other pages' on the World Wide Web. One typical evaluation form, which provides an implicit listing of what makes an effective library homepage, requires users to evaluate a web page (or website) according to the following criteria.

- a. Graphic design (aesthetic appeal)
- b. User interface (ease of use, of navigation around the site).
- c. Interactivity (quantity, functionality, and relevance of hyperlinks)
- d. Educational value (potential for educational use)
- e. Global references (hyperlinks to sites around the world)
- f. Multi-sensory appeal (text, images, sound, video,)
- g. Overall site ranking.

GOALS OF AN EFFECTIVE LIBRARY HOMEPAGE

New visitors coming to the particular site via a search engine are usually looking for something specific. If the link that brought them to you accurately summarized those services, than the library homepage should be an extension of that presentation. An effective library homepage needs to accomplish two goals.

- 1 First, it needs to introduce and develop site's theme or purpose. Development of a theme is the most important element of a strong library homepage because the theme is the element that defines sites purpose and

content. Library home page is the first "look" for visitors about your website on business and is often the determining factor as to whether a visitor stays or leaves. If the theme is developed and presented well, your visitors will know immediately if they came to the right place.

- 2 The second most important goal of an effective library home page is to present your site's position statement. A position statement will tell your visitors what you can do for them. It gives them an idea of the benefits and or services you offer with a focus on value. Somehow, you need to convince your visitors that your site is better than all the other sites that have the same theme.

GENERAL STEPS IN LIBRARY HOMEPAGE DEVELOPMENT

a. Content planning and message design

- ❖ Define objectives / audience
- ❖ Organize content points to be presented in the library homepage
- ❖ Prepare the structure, formal and presentation sequence

b. Teaching Planning

- ❖ Review the hardware and software to be used (built-in software. browsers, existing files in the computer such as pictures, illustrations, templates)

c. Implementation

- ❖ In ready templates, the work is simpler, because one only needs to fill in the blanks.
- ❖ Replace existing text on template with the content that needs to be places in the library home page.
- ❖ Put, add, subtract or modify elements (colours, illustrations, pictures, borders, etc.)

IMPORTANCE OF LIBRARY HOMEPAGE

One of the emerging information delivery systems via the internet is the homepage. Some of the reasons for growing popularity are:

- a. It is an information service desk that never closes. Once online, the information recipients have access to the information twenty four hours a day, Seven days a week and throughout the year information is accessed without any information officers or trainers or other project staff. It offers interactive sessions are virtual reality with the help of sight, sound and motion.
- b. It is a venue for sharing information and knowledge. The overlying philosophy of the internet is the spirit of sharing, especially when information is of particular interest to specific users. The basic assumption is that no information is too insignificant to merit a space in the net.
- c. It readily accessible to the present clients and

interested clients. The library homepage is totally at the user's disposal, whenever and wherever he or she needs it. It has the ability to combine institutional information, new trends, research and service desks into one package.

d. It reduces the distances and geographical isolation. No matter how remote the location of the user is, the library homepage provides the same information to all users and covering urban areas.

e. It provides general orientation as well as learning enrichment facility.

CONCLUSION

Library homepage is clearly the single most important page in website. It is usually the first or second page visitor's see. The line is "If your visitors don't make it post your homepage, than your homepage failed". Homepage is the friendly, non-threatening term for the special document used to serve information systems on the web. The library homepage on a server is roughly analogues to a magazines table of contents.

The paper discusses about the importance and development of library Home Page. Web masters can create or improve their own library home pages, combining uniformity with originality so that visitors to library home pages can quickly find the information they seek. Use of web 2.0 technologies in creating library home pages will help the libraries to serve their users more efficiently and effectively. Library staff must be equipped with the recent trends and technologies to cope up with the upcoming change.

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