E-resource Management:

Issues and Challenges

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ABSTRACT

In the edge of digital environment electronic resources are playing an important role in libraries at many levels. Since the information explosion it is difficult to manage resources in the library. Now information is available in different types and formats, for library it is very difficult to maintain. Electronic resources management is a big challenge for library. In this paper we have discussed about electronic resources management and issues and challenges and its solutions to attain competitiveness and how to manage electronic resources in our library effectively with the help of ERMS.

KEYWORDS: Electronic resources, Electronic resource management, ERMS, ICT, Library.

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital environment, libraries are acquiring more electronic resources because of its benefits like easy access of information. Due to increase of different e-resources in libraries, the acquisition, collection and maintenance of these resources have become a complicated issue. This forces the libraries to devise strategies to manage and deliver e-resources conveniently. Therefore, "management of e-resources" or "electronic resource management" (ERM) became a challenge before library professionals which needs to be addressed through research and practice. To meet these challenges, library professionals and content provider decided to develop 'Electronic Resource Management System' (ERMS) for management of e-resources in a more systematic way. The ERMS can be developed with the help of tools, technology, and standards. The use of ERMS will lead to systematic management and optimal use of library resources among users. This study examines and analyses the status of e-resources management also issues and challenges comes during electronic management.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

1) To evaluate the e-resource collection development practiced in the higher education academic libraries.
2) To study electronic resources and electronic resource management system of academic libraries.
3) Understanding the aspect of electronic resource management.
4) To study the issues and challenges comes during electronic resource management.

WHAT ARE ELECTRONIC RESOURCES?

Electronic resources, e-resources or online resources are the resources which are available in electronic form and which can be stored and accessed through electronic tools only. Electronic resources are available in different forms like images and photos, videos, audios, e- books, e-journals, databases and digital documents etc.

IFLA defines Electronic Resources as "to those materials that require computer access, whether through a personal computer, mainframe, or handheld mobile device. They may either be accessed remotely via the Internet or locally".

Some of the most frequently encountered types are: E-journals, E-books, Full-text (aggregated) databases, Indexing and abstracting databases, Reference database (biographies, dictionaries, directories, encyclopedias, etc.), Numeric and statistical databases, E-images, E-audio/visual resources (IFLA,2012)

Electronic resources are available in following type

E- journal, E-book, Databases, E-patent, E-report, E-thesis, CD's and DVD's, Online catalogue (Opac), Institutional Repository, Blogs, RSS feed.

BENEFITS OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES ARE AS FOLLOWS

1) Multiple users can search and access simultaneously

2) Provide multiple searching facilities.

3) It can be searchable from various search engines.

4) Before acquisition e-resources like e-book, e-journals, the content of the resources can be reviewed by experts i.e. faculties and research scholar. Based on their recommendations, the same can be purchased for the library.

5) The users appreciate the ways of online searching, browsing, scanning, retrieval and even submission of manuscript as it saves their time and make them more productive in their work (Rani & Geetha, 2007).

6) Information can be downloaded and shared through various electronic media i.e via email, Whats app, telegram, message etc.

7) E resources provide facility to research scholar to give references and citation which is very helpful in research publications. Therefore, it helps to increase the professional visibility of the institute.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Electronic resource management (ERM) is the practices and techniques used by librarian and library staff to track the selection, acquisition, licensing, access, maintenance, usage, evaluation, retention, and de-selection of a library's electronic information resources. These resources may be e-journals, e-books, e-thesis, videos, audios, computer files, databases, datasets, CD's & DVD's and all digitized and born digital containt. Electronic resources may be available in full text, bibliographical, text numerical form.

Since the electronic resources introduced the use as well as variety of e-resources are increased. With this types and form of e-resources the challenges to manage those resources also increased and feels that there should be mechanism required to manage e-resources i.e. one place solution. Hence electronic resources management system discovered to assist the library to manage the access as well as functions of e-resources.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (ERMS)

Electronic resource management is the practices and software system used to manage online resources. Tools to manage and access e-resources starting from evaluation, selection, acquisition, renewal/cancellation, license agreement, open access and institutional archives, access rights, usage statistics, single access point, implementation and administration is called electronic resource management system (ERMS). ERMS is software that manages all steps in the life cycle of e-resources.

ERMS are used "to keep track of a library's digital titles, subscription and vendor/publisher information, and link resolution with more accuracy and less duplication" (McCracken, 2007). ERMS are systems designed to manage the details involved in the acquisitions of e-resources, including subscription and licensing details, usage, cost, and access tracking and data gathering. In 2002, the Digital Library Federation (DLF) and the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) co-sponsored a workshop that eventually led to the Electronic Resource Management Initiative (ERMI), examine challenges of e-resource management and offered a blueprint for the management of electronic resources. ERMS is act as a one-stop solution of e-resource management which manages the resource and provides access to end user.

BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTING ELECTRONIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

ERMS proves its usefulness for both the librarian and users. Some of the benefits of implementing ERMS are as follows:

1) Life cycle of digital collection will manage effectively and efficiently, such as evaluation, selection, acquisition, renewal/review/ cancellation, access troubleshooting problem.

2) To effectively manage subscription and license agreement of resources

3) It is a one place solution from selection to use

4) Analyze the cost per use, usage statistics, and licensing information. It can also examine cost benefit analysis of the Library.

5) It allows users to multiple databases searching facility simultaneously and get the combined results in a uniform format.

6) A central system for monitoring, management of resources with vendor of negotiations, license agreement, trial subscriptions, subscription management, centralized acquisition, budgeting and ordering etc.

7) ERMS provides usage statistics, feedback and downtime analysis which support for renewal or cancelation of resources.

8) Provides information alerts and notifications through e-mail and other medium to remind the librarian for any change or renewal resources before termination of license agreement.

9) ERMS administration control and restrict the unauthorized user for read, download and staff to update, create or delete the authorization of e-resources workflow.

10) Library staff will get opportunity to learn new updates, tools, technology and standards by implementing ERMS in the library.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The adoption of e-resources has made a great advantage over the library services. In fact, most of the users are satisfied with such facilities since they can easily access and retrieve their required information within a short period of time. However, libraries face few challenges and issues while installation of ERMS and providing good services to the user. To purchase right electronic resources is never simple as we think. To acquire e-resources Librarian has to face many issues and challenges. Out of them some common issues and challenges are as follows

1) Insufficient Library Funds

Electronic resources we never use without electronic and ICT tools, to purchase it needs more funds. In the Indian education system many libraries do not have adequate fund. Therefore it is the most common and big challenge in ERMS. To strengthen the library resources is must and to purchase the resources needs funds also.

2) Technical Infrastructure

To make electronic resource management system effective and easier for the user, we need certain infrastructure such as software, hardware, high speed internet bandwidth connection and other physical equipment. In the absence of this technical infrastructure, it is hard to implement ERMS in the library.

3) Lack of Professional Skill

Handling of Electronic resources is not an easy task, to handle it and to provide effective services to user required skill. As electronic resource management system is not much popular as required, we can see the lack of professional skill to handle it. To train the library professionals librarian should take initiative and organize a training session for them.

4) Security

Electronic resource management system is an online, hence it has some limitations. Online information should not used by unauthorized user/ person is a difficult task. Cybercrime and hackers are also the problem which is harmful for ERMS. To avoid this type of difficulty firewalls and antivirus should be used in ERMS.

5) Copyright Issue

Plagiarism and piracy of data are the big problem in electronic resource management. During the uploading of data into the system and downloading the data from source sometimes creates issue. To avoid that issues librarian should have negotiate the access related issues and orient the library user about the same.

6) Collection of E-Resources

In this edge of Information, it is difficult to maintain the records up to date. Every library should have set policy for acquisition of reading materials so that library fulfill the needs of user not for today but in future also.

7) Organizational Structure

Every library has different organizational structure according to the use and their needs. Also, they have different rules and regulations so that it would be difficult for library to provide the effective services to the user. In this digital environment we should adapt ourselves with the changes and technology. So that work will continue smoothly.

CONCLUSION

Subscription and management of e resources is a challenge for library because of its different types and formats, hence there should be a proper planning, policy and guidelines is required. Since the development of information technology, electronic resources have been the part of library and information centers. Now in this information edge the electronic resources are increasing day by day and to manage them was difficult task but electronic resources management system makes it easy and effective. Electronic resource management system managing electronic resources effectively and provide easy access to the end user.

E resources are helpful because of its advantage and easy access but to manage the same librarian and library staff face many problems. From the acquisition to monitoring of e-resources and from selection to installment of ERMS we face many problems. ERMS has some advantages and disadvantage, but advantages outperformed over disadvantages.

Subscription of any e-resource is challenging because of lengthy process to management and ERMS is an answer of all the activities from selection, acquisition, reporting, organization, handling license agreement, management, providing access and troubleshooting problem, hence ERM is the only option for e-resource management.

As online resources become an increasingly important and expensive element of the library's role, it becomes essential that they are managed effectively. This paper has described the main ways in which ERM systems can help firms get more value from online resources, including: Giving visibility to how services are used, enabling the library to manage subscriptions effectively and to focus the library's effort in many areas, Reducing barriers to accessing online services, Improving cost recovery rates, Improving the way researchers use services by communicating with them at the point of use

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