

## Web Portal for Academic Libraries in India

Dr. C. Muthurasu<sup>1</sup>; Dr. M. Suganthi<sup>2</sup>

Teaching Assistant, Dept. of Library and Information Science, Alagappa University, Karaikudi<sup>1</sup>;  
Assistant Professor, Alagappa University, College of Education, Karaikudi<sup>2</sup>

### ABSTRACT

*This paper is focused on library web portal for online information services. The Library web portal contains the different types of web based services. The library information professionals and researcher are taking interest to use of library web portal as a central component of their integrated online library information system constructions. In this regard, the FOSS-based library web portal has drawn a considerable attention amongst library and information professionals and researchers in the field of integrated online library and information services through internet. There is a need of library web portal which is easy to design, implement and maintain by the library and information professionals.*

**KEYWORDS:** Web Portal, Library Portal, Blog, Wikis, RSS, FOSS, Free Software, Open Source Software.

### INTRODUCTION

Libraries as well as information centers are not exceptional case from the web revolution. They developed their own portals for their users/clients rather than searching information and wasting valuable time of their users going in depths as well as vastness of the web world. A web portal is a web site that brings information together from diverse sources in a uniform way. Usually, each information source gets its dedicated area on the page for displaying information often the user can configure which ones to display. Portal provide a way for enterprises to provide a consistent look and feel with access control and procedures for multiple applications and databases, which otherwise would have been different entities altogether. Examples of public web portals are AOL, Excite, iGoogle, MSN, India.com and Yahoo.

### HISTORY OF WEB PORTAL

Web portals originated from Web search engines in the early 1990s and evolved through Web push technology in mid-1990s to its mature model in the late 1990s. This article also compares Web portals with other popular media, such as radios and televisions, for their audience base and content broadness. As of January 2003, only a few libraries had adopted Web portal technology despite the widespread use of my.yahoo.com-type Web portals in the business sector. The article examines several reasons for the lack of portal development in libraries and concludes with a set of Web portal development guidelines for academic libraries. Some of the pioneer library portals are also discussed, as well as the California State Government, the first government portal to offer customization and financial transactions for individuals and business.

## **DEFINITION OF PORTAL**

Portal derives from the Medieval Latin word *portale*, meaning "city gate." American Heritage Dictionary defines a portal as "a doorway or an entrance, or a gate, especially one that is large and imposing." New definitions for portals in the networked environment can be found on many Web sites. A synthesis of these new definitions is as follows: a Web portal is a doorway that can be customized by individual users to automatically filter information from the Web. It typically offers a search engine and links to useful pages, such as news, weather, travel, and stock quotes. A portal can also be defined as a customizable Web search engine to reflect the MY trend in current Web development. The platform for a portal Web site is a search engine, but a portal is different from a general search engine in that it can be customized by individuals for automatic, constant search for specific information, and it can deliver the results to individuals in a predefined way. A customizable search engine is unique to the user; it is different from anyone else's.

## **CLASSIFICATION OF WEB PORTAL**

Web portals are sometimes classified as horizontal or vertical. A horizontal portal is used as a platform to several companies in the same economic sector or to the same types of manufactures or distributors. A vertical portal (also known as a "vortal") is a specialized entry point to a specific market or industry niche, subject area, or interest. Some vertical portals are known as "vertical information portals".

## **LIBRARY WEB PORTAL**

A portal is a website or web service that provides information content to serve a specific community. It is derived from the Medieval Latin word 'portale', meaning 'city gate'. American Heritage Dictionary defines a portal as "a doorway or an entrance, or a gate, especially one that is large and imposing". Library portals typically provide a gateway to an institution's resources by listing them for users and creating a direct link to the interface of each resource. Library portals in this digital era enhance the value and function of electronic resources with the facility of searching multiple resources. (Barman, 2014).

The idea of a library portal is misdirected. While it is vital that libraries have a presence on university enterprise portals, libraries should build portal pages, portal channels, and portal cameos rather than entire library portals.

There is no single model for what constitutes a portal, all portals offer at least five core features:-

- ✓ Web searching
- ✓ News
- ✓ Reference tools
- ✓ Access to online shopping venues
- ✓ Some communication capabilities (i.e. e-mail, chats)

## **TYPES OF WEB PORTALS**

- Personal Portals
- News portals
- Government Web Portals
- Cultural Portals

## **Web Portal for Academic Libraries in India**

- Corporate web Portals
- Stock Portals
- Search portals
- Hosted web Portals
- Domain-Specific Portals

### **ELEMENTS OF LIBRARY PORTAL**

**Ease-of Use:** The foremost feature to be considered is the ease-of-use, which can be determined by the effectively organized home page.

**Search and Navigation:** In addition to consistent and logical navigation framework, effective search functionality and site maps are mandatory in the homepage.

**Resource Linking:** Resources linking allows a library to seamlessly tie electronic resources together. Example of an index or abstract can be linked to a full-text database or a bibliographic record can be linked to a review or to an e-book.

**Personalization:** Each individual user or a community and or group of users can have settings for each of the portal functional that they use. A portal can be personalized using user-profile to deliver personalized content.

**User Authentication:** User authentication also known as patrons authentication determines whether patrons are eligible for service by checking patrons against a library databases.

**Interactive Services:** Although most portals can support interactive services, only a few academic libraries have incorporated interactive services in their portal.

### **FREE/OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE (FOSS) FOR BUILDING LIBRARY WEB PORTAL**

The term “Free software” is meant that “the software is available freely” and the term open source software (OSS) has been defined to include “software which is available to the public in source code form, and which limit use modification or redistribution” (Madhavan, 2003). There are various licensing models to which the OSS label has been applied, but the basic idea is that the software’s “license may not restrict any party from selling or giving away the software as a component of an aggregate software distribution containing programs” and the working software must either be distributed along with its source code or have a “well publicized means of downloading the source code, without charge via the internet.”

### **NEED OF OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE IN LIBRARIES**

- Code of software is open to modify, improve, and redistribute
- Mature software
- Libraries outlive the any software producer or vendor
- No dependence on vendor or producer
- It is more reliable
- Perform better and Reduce Cost
- Use without restriction

### **WHAT ARE BLOGS, WIKIS, AND RSS?**

Blogs, Wikis, and RSS are Web 2.0 tools. Think of Web 2.0 as a “read/write environment” rather than “read only”. It is characterized by tools that invite participation, content creation, and sharing. Creators of blogs and wikis can generally determine privacy settings as well as choose who can post or edit.

### **WHAT IS A BLOG?**

A Web log (or blog) is a website that contains chronologically arranged postings which typically look like diary entries, announcements, news, or commentary – depending on the purpose of the blog. Blogging allows interaction from readers in the form of comments. Blogs can also utilize tags which allow readers to track their favorite blog posts.

### **WHAT IS WIKI?**

A wiki is website that can be collaboratively authored and edited. The most famous wiki is Wikipedia, but wikis can be used to great advantage on a smaller scale as well.

### **WHAT IS RSS?**

RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is a hand by way to make information come to you. It is an XML file format that allows content to be distributed to those who subscribe to it. When you see one of these icons – RSS/XML-or terms like “syndicate this site”, you will know you can subscribe you view your subscriptions using a content aggregator, also called a news reader.

### **WHY DO LIBRARIANS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BLOGS, WIKIS, AND RSS?**

Blogs and wikis give libraries new way to market and deliver their services, and to incorporate user feedback and participation. RSS allows librarians to stay up to date and to push the latest information about library services out to teens and other library users.

### **CORE FUNCTIONALITY OF LIBRARY WEB PORTAL**

- If the library contains the consisted and organized resources, then searching would be far easier for the users.
- User should be able to search for suitable resources to interrogate, using in depth collection level descriptions.
- It would be more effectively to the users, if there was one fully functional library maintained search interface available for any database.
- It would often be convenient to search multiple databases from one search box.
- The search results should be presented in a way familiar from search engines.
- The user should have the option to revert to the database’s native search interface if this offers greater functionality.

### **ROLE OF LIBRARIAN**

As educators who organize and evaluate information resources, academic librarians bring unique perspectives and skills to the development of portals in their colleges and universities to campus portal planning and implementation,

they bring their expertise with content, their knowledge of copyright, their commitment to customer service, and their experience in creating customized web-based information delivery systems.

### **CONCLUSION**

Most library patrons want information regardless of where they find it. They don't want to limit themselves to their library's Collection. A portal offers them one-stop shopping that takes them from the initial need for information through its delivery without having to use several different tools. If well designed, a portal also provides effective navigation of complex, multiple collections. Over the past decade, academic librarians have been evaluators, selectors, and organizers of information on the web portal. Our experience and expertise make us valuable players in a team approach in planning and implementing library portals. An interactive service such as "Ask a Librarian" can make requesting assistance simple and convenient by connecting web portal users with librarians.

### **REFERENCES**

- [1] Agosti, M., Crivellari, F., Di Nunzio, G. M., & Gabrielli, S. (2010). Understanding user requirements and preferences for a digital library Web portal. *International Journal on Digital Libraries*, 11, 225-238.
- [2] Brantley, S., Armstrong, A., & Lewis, K. M. (2006). Usability testing of a customizable library web portal. *College & research libraries*, 67(2), 146-163.
- [3] Bringula, R. P., Sarmiento, J. J. M., & Basa, R. S. (2017). Computer self-efficacy and its relationship with web portal usage: Evidence from the University of the East. *arXiv preprint arXiv:1707.02435*.
- [4] Chen, Y. H. (2011). Undergraduates' perceptions and use of the university libraries Web portal: Can information literacy instruction make a difference?. *Proceedings of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 48(1), 1-10.
- [5] Chen, Y. H. (2015). Testing the impact of an information literacy course: Undergraduates' perceptions and use of the university libraries' web portal. *Library & Information Science Research*, 37(3), 263-274.
- [6] Chen, Y. H., & Chengalur-Smith, I. (2015). Factors influencing students' use of a library Web portal: Applying course-integrated information literacy instruction as an intervention. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 26, 42-55.
- [7] Das, R. (2019). Library Web Portal for Academic Libraries in India: A Case Study. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 2977.
- [8] Kumbhar Kalyan, N. (2020). Creating a Library portal by using Google sites. *Journal of Advances in Library and Information Science*, 9(2), 46-52.
- [9] Li, T., Tang, J., Xiao, L., & Cai, M. (2021). Evaluation of smart library portal website based on link analysis. *Procedia Computer Science*, 188, 114-120.
- [10] Mane, M. B., & Pange, B. (2016). Research on web portals in library environment: A literature review. *International Research: Journal of Library and Information Science*, 6(2).
- [11] Pratheepan, T., & Jayakanathan, M. (2021). Application of Google Analytics Model for Evaluating the Visibility of Library Web Portals of the UVA WELLASSA University, Sri Lanka. *Sri Lanka (January 3, 2021)*.
- [12] Rani, N. S., & Aswath, L. (2020). Effectiveness of National Digital Library India (NDL) Portal in the field of Education and Research. *Journal of Indian Library Association*, 55(3), 62-68.