

“FREE DIGITAL RESOURCES” COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICIES: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

Mr.A.Dharmendran¹, Dr. G.Amudha²,

¹Research Scholar, Department of library and information Science, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai and Librarian, Bharath Niketan Engineering College, Aundipatty,Theni.

²Librarian, VHNSN, College(Autonomous), Virudhunagar.

Email : ¹ksadharm@gmail.com ²amudhagani17@yahoo.com

Abstract: This paper is an attempt to do a sort of content analysis of e-resources collection development policies of 12 western libraries in order to trace out : the selection criteria for free internet / electronic resources ; the exclusion criteria ; de-selection criteria ; copyright issue criteria ; duplication criteria; location and scope criteria available therein. A simple Google search and the results obtained in the first four pages were selected for content analysis. This paper reveals what are the factors to be kept in mind by the library and information science professionals while selecting and embedding free internet / electronic resources in library websites.

Key Words: *E-resources, content design, access and vendor, selection, copyright.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Collection development is the selection, acquisition and processing of library materials in varied formats, meant for users' current needs and their future requirements (Mansur, 2012). A collections development policy is a guideline for the care and development of a library collection. It is a written statement prepared to guide the librarian in relation to planning, budgeting, selection and purchase of informational materials for a library (Khan & Khan, 2010). An Electronic Resources collection development is the process of planning, selecting, acquiring a balanced collection of Library materials in a variety of electronic formats such as e-books, e journals, media and online resources.

2. STEPS OF E RESOURCE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT:

- Selection and De-selection of current and retrospective e resources based on user needs
- Planning strategies for continuing acquisition of e resources looking into financial constraints and their usage
- Evaluation of e resources collections to determine how it serves users need

3. WHAT ARE E-RESOURCES?

According to IFLA/FAIFE (2007) these are “materials that are computer controlled, including materials that required the use of a peripheral (a CD ROM player) attached to a computer; the items may or may not be used in the interactive mode.” Electronic resources are defined as being publicly available information resources, which can be accessed through a personal computer. These include commercially produced resources such as bibliographic databases accessed online or through CD-ROM, electronic journals, electronic books as well as resources that are freely available through the Internet especially to higher education institutions or to the public in general. (www.roehampton.ac.uk/customer/erpolicy.pdf).

4. WHAT ARE FREE INTERNET / ELECTRONIC RESOURCES?

These electronic resources are available in / accessible through internet. The libraries need not pay any amount for subscribing these resources. These WWW resources may include journals, web pages, serials, databases, theses and dissertations, reports, surveys, blogs, wikis etc. Free Internet resources may come in a variety of formats and document types, such as Web pages, listservs, Usenet news, FTP sites, full-text online versions of books, journals, and government documents. It includes bibliographic databases, electronic serials, reference tools and electronic texts accessible through the Internet. To supplement the breadth and depth of the Libraries' collections, free Internet resources which are deemed of value to the research and teaching of the University will be identified and catalogued. While selection criteria from the general and subject policies prevail, the following specific selection guidelines should be met also. Links to these websites will be provided in the Libraries' OPAC.

5. METHODOLOGY:

Google search engine was used by the researchers to get the Electronic Resources Collection Development Polices (ERCDP) of first 10 libraries that appear in the results pages in PDF / HTML form. The keywords used were ‘Electronic Resources Collection Development Polices of libraries’. These 12 ERCDP files (both PDF and HTML files) were downloaded. All the 10 ERCDP files were related to other countries. Not even a single Indian library ERCDP was listed in the Google results in the first four pages.

Using content analysis, these policies were studied and necessary inferences were drawn. The list of libraries whose 'Electronic Resources Collection Development Policies' are analyzed in the study include:

01. Mississippi State University Libraries
02. Minnesota State University, Mankato Memorial Library
03. Alamo Colleges Learning Resource Centre
04. Mary and Jeff Bell Library
05. FAU Libraries
06. John F Kennedy University Libraries
07. The University of Alabama Libraries
08. Owensboro Community and Technical College
09. University of Maryland, University Libraries
10. University of North Dakota, Chester Fritz Library
11. Columbia college Chicago Library
12. The University of Hong Kong Libraries

Out of 12 policies screened by the researcher, only five policies have an exclusive section 'free internet / electronic resources'.

6. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

- To get to know the general selection criteria for free and offline electronic resources
- To dig out the type of free internet e-resources / offline resources that can be excluded
- To understand the de-selection /weeding out policies for free internet resources / offline resources
- To analyse the copyright issues of free internet resources

7. COMPONENTS OF FREE E-RESOURCES / FREE INTERNET RESOURCES COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY:

7.1 SELECTION CRITERIA

The following criteria shall be considered when determining whether or not the Library catalogs a Web site, links a Web site to the Library homepage or in any other way the Library promotes or provides access to a free electronic resource.

Policy : One

Resources available via the World Wide Web may be added to the Library's online catalogue based on the following criteria:

1. The resource provides authoritative factual or original content information, such as the electronic equivalents of research papers or reference tools. Resources which provide only a directory of links to other sites will not be included.
2. Resource content must be easily attributable to an author, editor or reputable publisher.
3. The resource appears to be updated as often as appropriate to assure content is not outdated.
4. The resource has reasonable stability in its location, i.e. a persistent URL.

Policy : Two

Content

- Are the scope and limits clearly stated?
- Is the title informative?
- Does the content fit the scope?
- Are headings clear and descriptive, or do they use jargon unknown to the intended audience?
- Is text well written with acceptable grammar and spelling? What is the quality of multimedia files?
- Is the content organized by the needs of the user?
- Is it a dead end, or are there links to take you further?
- Are the content and the links clearly described and suitable to the expected audience?
- Is the content up-to-date? Are out-of-date links promptly corrected?
- Is the content amplified over time, or is one visit all it's worth?
- Is the origin of the content documented? Are facts verifiable and accurate?
- Is the material on the site covered adequately?
- Is the information on the site accurate?
- Who is the author/source?
- Is it clear who is responsible for the site? Can the author be contacted?
- What are the author's reputation and qualifications in the subject covered?

- Is the information presented in an objective, balanced manner?
- Are biases and opinions clearly identified?
- Is there any conflict of interest?
- How does the site compare with other sites on the same subject?
- Is the content unique or readily available elsewhere?
- Has copyright been respected?
- Is the site appropriate for the intended audience?
- Is there community interest in the content or the site itself?
- Are there reviews of the site?

Access

- Is the site still useable with a standard browser?
- Is it written in standard html, or have proprietary extensions been used?
- Does it use standard multimedia formats?
- What software must be installed to use the site?
- Do parts of it take too long to load?
- Is the site accessible to persons with disabilities?
- Is it usually possible to reach the site, or is it overloaded?
- Is it stable, or has the URL changed?
- Is the URL stated in the text of the webpage?
- Does the site use the words the average person would try in a search engine?
- Is it open to everyone on the Internet, or do parts require membership and/or fees?
- If there is a charge, can the library pay it on a subscription basis for multiple access points?
- Are any rules for use stated up front?

Design

- Are the individual Web pages concise, or do you have to scroll forever?
- Do essential instructions appear before links and interactive portions?
- Do all the parts work?
- Is using the site intuitive, or are parts likely to be misunderstood?
- Can you find your way around and easily locate a particular page from any other page?
- Is the structure stable, or do features disappear between visits?
- Does it look and feel friendly?
- Does it do more than can be done with print?
- Are interactions secured if they involve private information?
- Can you use the site with older browsers?

Policy : Three

- Information provided or created by an authority or a reputable or reliable source on the subject.
- Website is favourably reviewed by a reputable source.
- Site is accessible freely with browser/software and compatible with existing networked environment.
- Site is stable with infrequent down times.
- Policy of periodic review and update of content, with a date of revision statement for websites. E-books, journals, and other documents should have dates of publication or posting.
- Good design with visual appeal and easy navigation of contents within the site, e.g. site index or search engine.

7.2 EXCLUSIONS

- Commercial sites which are mainly advertisement or promotion of services or products.
- Web sites or web pages of institutions, corporations, government agencies, and/or professional societies which contain largely promotional or newsletter type materials about the activities of the organization. Institutional web sites/ pages should only be included if there is a substantial amount of full text documents useful for the research and learning purposes.
- Sites that require a user fee, or access to the contents within requires fee.
- Portals which are merely links to hosts of other links but lack organization and /or substantial annotations, as opposed to an organized and annotated series of links which may be deemed useful as a subject bibliography.
- Other institution's Electronic-Resource pages.

- Websites deemed out of scope to one's curriculum or level.

7.3 DE-SELECTION GUIDELINES

The collection of Internet resources must be monitored for sites that are no longer maintained and links which no longer point to the correct location for a particular resource.

- The resource is no longer available or maintained.
- No longer current, reliable or relevant.
- Overlaps another resource which offers more comprehensive coverage or treatment of subject.

7.4 DUPLICATION

Internet resource which duplicates an existing print resource is deemed acceptable if no fee is incurred and its inclusion provides greater access and convenience than the single point of access which a print resource provides. The Web format is preferred generally, and print duplication is usually discouraged due to space and processing costs. The Libraries will duplicate print resource with existing free Internet resource when:

- One format is unstable and retention is expected or required.
- Multiple formats meet the needs of different users.
- The print format is needed for archival purpose due to its significant historical value.

8. COPYRIGHT FOR INTERNET RESOURCES:

In order to protect the Libraries and its users from copyright infringement in establishing hyperlinks to Internet Resources, the following policy should be observed:

- Effort will be made to identify and acknowledge the owner/creator of the Internet resource.
- Hyperlinks to the material content will not be set up in such a way that the remote webpage or resource be brought within a frame under library website, thus implying that the library has created the resource.
- A disclaimer is placed on the Electronic Resources webpage, announcing who may link to our information, and to remove any of the hyperlinks made to remote webpage/resource if the copyright owner requests.

9. LOCATION AND ACCESS:

Selected resources will be listed, linked and annotated on the library Web site.

10. WHO AND HOW?

The subject selectors are responsible for gathering and annotating Internet resources according to their areas of collection development. Selection of Internet resources that do not require a paid subscription may be linked by the librarian selecting the resource, or submitted to the library web architect for linking. Any member of the library may suggest useful Internet sites for inclusion. All suggestions must include complete bibliographic information (Title, Author, URL) and an annotation. Suggestions should be submitted to the proper selector for that subject area or the library Web architect.

11. CONCLUSION:

Electronic resources are creating a revolution in libraries and information centres. Many librarians believe that these resources have changed the principles of selection radically; some believe that they will virtually eliminate selection. Although, it is true that the art of selection is undergoing profound change, the selection of resources is still crucial for libraries & Knowledge Centres. The four basic criteria for selection - quality, library relevancy, aesthetic and technical aspects, and cost remain the same in the digital era of information. What they mean and how they are used has changed. Though the electronic resources offer ease of use, wider access, more rapid updating, cost saving over local maintenance and storage, the librarians are finding it difficult to define issues related to policy of Collection Development and Archiving of these Electronic Resources. The electronic resources require continuing management to a far greater degree than print resources do is an accepted fact.

REFERENCES:

1. IFLA/FAIFE (2007). Access to libraries and information: Towards a fairer world. IFLA/FAIFE World Report 2007, World report Series Vol. VII. Edited by Theo J. D. Bothma. Hague: IFLA. <http://www.ifla.org>. (Accessed on 4th February 2011)
2. Khan, S.I., & Khan, M.A. (2010). Collections development of Maulana Azad Library (AMU) and Central library of University of Delhi : A comparative study. *Brazilian Journal of Information Science*, 4(2), 3-19.
3. Mansur, Sunil. (2012). E-Resources collection development in Engineering college libraries : A challenge for knowledge centre managers. *International Journal of Digital Library Services*, 2(1),166-177.