

Report on National Seminar on "Contemporary Issues for the Information Professionals in a Digital Era"

NASCIP

January 22, 2011 at INMANTEC Institutions, Ghaziabad

Objectives of the Seminar

The long seminar on contemporary issues for information professionals in digital era has reached its conclusion successfully. The main objective of the seminar was to explore the contemporary issues for the library and information professionals in the digital environment. Beside, the seminar provided a platform and enable interaction among the Information Professionals, Researchers, Academicians and Students for adopting, implementing and utilizing new technologies towards shaping Information paradigm. The seminar also provided an opportunity to identify the strengths and weakness in the library and information system and to suggest new models, policies and mechanisms for information management and services.



The well attended event sourced together nearly 300 participants from almost all the parts of the country including the premier institutions. This included Invited Speakers, Experts and Delegates ranging from Academicians, Librarians, Corporate Managers, to Media Persons and Publishers.



The convention consisted of 2 invited talks, 2 technical sessions, product presentations, 33 paper presentations, exhibition of books and other library products. The conference was marked by lively talks, interesting presentations and arguments and counter arguments. Delegates from across the country grappled with issues and offered wide range of opinions and views. It was indeed a significant occasion for the professionals to have such wide group on a common platform and allow a free flow of healthy arguments and counter arguments to give a face-lift to the library profession.

It was concurred that in digital era, information has become an integral requirement of the present society. Knowledge and it is key resources for development of the information Society. The Libraries need to change by adapting to the digital technologies and information professionals have to remain relevant with the present and future information need based society. Librarians and other information professionals need to be better aware of the challenges they face, as well as the cutting edge trends and solutions that may best work for them

One of the recurring and common thread which held the discussion alive during the day was to have a focused approach on the emerging paradigm of Knowledge Dissemination and leverage its advantages for the common benefit of library users. Nevertheless, the canvas was large enough to cover allied areas too.

It was opined that libraries are facing unprecedented challenges which requires the dismantling of outdated system and fabricating new structures with increased focus on user requirements. This can be achieved through innovative services and application of modern information and communication technologies. It is a matter of satisfaction that libraries have adopted contemporary technologies and moved ahead with times.

Delivering the welcome address Mr. Pankaj Gupta, Director INMANTEC welcomed the guests and hoped that deliberations would be fruitful. Chief Guest Ms. Kalpana Dasgupta emphasized the need to evolve futuristic approach to knowledge dissemination. She stressed upon the need for understanding the requirements of library users. It is important to know the information seeking behaviour for rendering effective services. She further highlighted the need for collaboration and networking among libraries to meet the challenges of new information environment. The introduction of modern technologies in new information environment has far reaching effects on libraries and information centers This new information environment created additional responsibilities for the library and information science professionals.

Delivering his address, Mr. Akhtar Parvez dwelt upon the theme and structure of conference. Dr.PR Goswami, complimented the organizers for holding the event and spoke about the activities on MANLIBNET like resource sharing and networking of library professionals for exchanging of information. He emphasized the need for increased social intelligence for collecting and dissemination of information and for also to enhance the capacity of absorbing information by users.

The inaugural session ended with the release of conference volume and vote of thanks by the organizing secretary Mr. Manawar Iqbal.

The agenda of technical sessions were set by invited talks covering a wide spectrum of the LIS field. There were many eminent speakers and experts who shared their experiences and knowledge of wisdom

Delivering the first invited talk, Dr.Masoom Raza dwelt upon new roles and responsibilities of library professionals in terms of new medium and technologies. He emphasized the need for organizing information more systematically and provide access through single window. Dr. Raza touched upon some other issues like copyright and developing competencies in digital environment.

Technical sessions witnessed scores of presentations as contributed papers which covered topics like,

- Information Resource Management
- Knowledge Management & Knowledge Engineering
- Conflict Management and Stress Management
- Human Resource Management

- Digital Library Management
- Customer-focused/customer-centered, user oriented
- approach in provision of services, CAS, SDI
- Marketing of Library & Information Service
- Information Repackaging & Consolidation
- Globalization of information
- Library & Publisher partnership
- Professional Competencies
- Ethics of Information Professionals
- Development of digital/electronic/virtual library
- Enterprise resource Planning, Retrieval Technologies
- Web Technology (Social Networking, Web 3.0)
- Digital infrastructure and technology Integration
- E-Publishing, Institutional Repository

Although all the papers presented during the conference were followed by animated discussion, it would be worthwhile to name a few which generated lot of interest in the first session chaired by Dr. S Majumdar had following papers.

1. Awareness and use of ICT application by PG students of AMU by Salma qadri
2. Role of E-Resources by Rohtash singh
3. Management of Digital Libraries by Nazia Salauddin
4. Development and analysis of Child Health repository by Anil Kumar Mishra
5. Digital Library Management System by Divya Choudhry
6. Life Cycle of software by Rahul Sharma
7. Preservation of Digital resources by Aziz Fatima
8. Application of ICTs in Islamic Libraries of Kerala by Mr.Mohd Mustafa
9. Open Access Repository by Muzammil Mushtaq
10. Impact of ICT and role of libraries by Mujul Jha

The second technical session was chaired by Dr.Ramesh Gaur and invited talk was delivered by Dr.Jaideep Sharma who spoke on knowledge society: issues for LIS professionals. He dwelt upon various components and features of knowledge society. Dr.Sharma spoke about challenges of knowledge society and changing role of LIS profession.

Some of the interesting papers presented during the second technical sessions were:

- 1 Marketing of LIS by Anil Kumar Jharotia
2. Library Blogs by Nadeem Sohal
3. TQM in libraries by Ms.Bhavna
4. Current awareness service: A contemporary Issue in Digital Era by Mohd.Asif

The important issues deliberated upon during the conference by invited speakers, session chairman, authors, paper presenters and participants can be summarized as:

- The unimaginable developments in the information environment such as improved accessibility, interoperability and open access to educational materials has on one side facilitated a shift in the paradigm but on the other side have posed a serious challenge to harness the technology and provide state of the art services, otherwise the LIS professionals will be left behind in the transformational phase.
- The open information culture has shifted focus from subject experts and limited modes to common man's participative domain where inputs can be simultaneously added and accessed and new modes of wikis, blogs, Web 2.0, are now well entrenched, which increases academic libraries' onus of quenching the quests of information seekers by incorporating the revolutionary technological changes to provide state of the art services
- Reorientation of the library systems to make them vibrant and proactive is call of the hour. Management libraries need to respond to the growing and diversifying information needs of the end-users and they must become a local gateway to world's knowledge and information. The most important and critical issue is how to manage change in the libraries so as to create a balance of printed publications and digital documents. The future library must be a hybrid library which must be user-centered and expert-assisted.
- Faced with this unprecedented challenge, the libraries should reengineer their outdated system and illustrate new structures with increased focus on user requirements through innovative services and application of modern information and communication technologies.
- Libraries should identify new roles that they need to play in the context of emerging knowledge economy as a means to support teaching and learning process and identify

strategies for improving library performance. There is need to critically examine the strength and gaps in the management of library system and suggest new management models, mechanism, policies and programmes for reshaping these libraries into next generation libraries for higher education.

Recommendations

1. Facilitating and Enhancing collaboration among libraries across the country.
2. To foster greater cooperation among libraries through regular and sustained professional activities and interaction
3. Developing specific policies and programmes for strengthening ICT infrastructure, and setting up of centres of excellence in Advanced Learning and education in library and information science and also for the promotion of research activities.
4. Promoting Standards and Best Practices for enabling special libraries to work in a networked environment.
5. Evolving and Promoting value added and customized information services for enabling Business and Management libraries to market their products and services.
6. Developing and promoting Information Literacy, Competency and Life Long Learning programmes for the users of special libraries.
7. Taking up of advocacy activities for shifting the focus from traditional print based services to modern electronic and digitalized concepts of library services among all stakeholders.