Chapter 13
Social Media, Social Networking, Copyright, and Digital Libraries

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ABSTRACT

Libraries have evolved over time in tandem with the prevailing innovations. This is evidenced by the changes witnessed from the time writing was done on clay tablets to the virtual libraries of today. Technological advancement has been a key pillar of the development of libraries. Indeed, it has given rise to digital libraries that have given access and use of information resources a new focus. Technological developments such as Web 2.0, and specifically social media as well as social networking, have enabled users to access creative works in digital libraries freely. Similarly, they have enabled library users to share the same content freely on social networks. This situation has brought a conflict with copyright laws that require users of creative works to seek permission from their owners before accessing or sharing them. This chapter analyses this conflict and provides recommendations on how it can be managed.

INTRODUCTION

Libraries have evolved from time immemorial in tandem with the prevailing technology. Their growth can be traced way back to the time writing was done on papyrus, scrolls of sheep, leather, palm leaves and clay tablets. These materials occupied a lot of space and were guarded with priority against every danger for posterity. The usage of the original text was limited to the privileged few. The invention of the printing press in the 15th Century changed this scenario with the introduction of the modern book. Human beings started collecting these books and other reading materials. They gradually put the books in buildings that later came to be known as libraries. This was meant to facilitate easy access to these materials. The emphasis at the time was on creating an organised collection occupying one or more spaces commonly referred to as brick and mortar libraries. The resources in these organised collections included print and non-print materials such as books, journals, newspapers, magazines, films and video recordings, among others (Konig & Oikonomopoulou, 2013). The collection was normally organised

through a scheme such as the Library of Congress Classification Scheme. The organisation involved the physical arrangement of the materials on the shelves or other devices in various rooms. Access to these materials required systems such as catalogues and indexes that could point to their location. To use the materials, one was required to: 1) find space to sit and read - space that was supposed to provide a warm and conducive place to read; 2) borrow the information materials to read away from the building for a specified period of time; and 3) borrow materials held in other libraries through services such as inter-library loans or document delivery. The book could also be bought and used by many people. All these changed the role of the library from that for the select few to one for everyone. With the advent of technology, this role has been enhanced further to that of a library that embraces all users and not necessarily those in the physical space. The activities of the early libraries described above have also been redefined and been given new meaning. For instance, one does not need to confine him/herself in the brick and mortar building in order to use the library materials. Digital technologies are now making libraries the prime movers of large-scale publishing projects and positioning them at the heart of intellectual information. The technologies have given rise to what is now referred to as digital libraries.

THE DIGITAL LIBRARY

The term digital library means different things to different people. Therefore, various definitions of the same are found in the literature. This chapter adopts the definition proposed by Witten and Bainbridge (2003) who argue that a digital library is not really a "digitised library". Conversely, a digital library is about new ways of dealing with knowledge: preserving, collecting, organising, propagating and accessing it - not about deconstructing existing institutions and putting them together in an electronic box. Witten and Bainbridge (2003) further argue that a digital library is an organised collection of digital objects; including text, video and audio, along with the methods for their selection, organisation, access, retrieval and maintenance. Digital libraries are specially constructed to meet the specific information needs of a community of users. They are responsible for providing citizens with equal access to information and for preserving knowledge for the next generation. Of course, traditional libraries will stand the test of time, but digital technology has brought about transitions from analogue to digital forms of information creation, delivery, and use. This transition has given rise to a generation and society generally referred to as the digital age/era and information society. These times are characterised by individuals who demand fast and efficient access to information when, where and how they need it (around the clock). This demand has seen the entry of social media tools and social networking into the library arena.

Historical Development of Digital Libraries

Several scientists have worked towards the development of digital libraries. In 1945, Vannever Bush wrote an article, "As we may think" that appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly.* In his article, he expressed the belief that research should improve society. What he meant was that efforts should be made to improve access to information so as to improve research initiatives. In other words, what he had was a vision for a future library. He believed that in the coming decades, it would be technologically possible to build a logic machine that stored, searched and retrieved data. He called this machine a "memex" which was short for "memory extender". This machine would link data by association (Purcell, 2016). The machine would hold the entire collection of works pertinent to a scientist in pursuit of his research in a single

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