



Chapter XXV

Library Networking of the Universidad de Oriente: A Case Study of Introduction of Information Technology

Abul K. Bashirullah
Universidad de Oriente, Venezuela

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Universidad de Oriente was founded in 1958 and structured in five campuses, located in five different states in the south northeastern region of Venezuela, with a current total enrollment of 43,000 students and 200 teachers. A total of 20 libraries of different kinds manually served these students and professors until 1999. To introduce new information technologies to the libraries and all laboratories of the university, the intranet of the university — with 32 networking systems — was introduced for all campuses with the technology of Main Frame Relay. Automation services of libraries were introduced with Alejandria, a locally produced software in effect since 2001. The challenging job is to create consciousness about information literacy. Creation of university digital databases and digitalization of valuable documents are in progress.

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

The south northeastern region of the country, belonging to five states, which comprise over 40% of the national territory (Figure 1), did not have any higher educational institutions to offer professional courses. The people were mostly fishermen in the coastal areas, small farmers in the central region, or miners in the south. Most younger generations with or without primary or secondary education used to follow the parental profession to earn their livings. Few exceptional younger people from well-to-do families pursued higher education in Caracas, the capital of the country.

Figure 1. Map of Venezuela

Immediately after installing a provisional democratic government on November 21, 1958, the government decreed to create the Universidad de Oriente (UDO), one university for five states, to promote and develop economic, educational, and cultural progress in each of these states. The newly appointed rector introduced the centralized campus system (or Nucleo), a new experimental educational system in the country. Each campus initiated the academic activities with a specialized faculty, in accordance with the characteristics of the land and culture of the region. The first inaugural class started on October 12, 1959, in Cumana, the headquarters of the new university, with 120 students and nine teaching staff. As of 2002, the university had an enrollment of more than 43,000 students, over 2,500 teaching staff, and over 5,000 administrative and supporting personnel. The five initial campuses had grown by another five sub-campuses by mid-2002 to meet the demand of the local students. The university offers graduate, undergraduate, and some diploma courses in all branches of science, technology, and humanities, except Law. An evaluation committee reported in 2001 that the UDO achieved the original objectives in bringing cultural changes in the region.

The university is completely financed by the Central Government. Students pay less than US\$1 per semester for inscription, and receive a well-balanced lunch and dinner on campus for less than US\$.01 per meal. The UDO could not keep pace with the outside world in modernizing laboratories and libraries with the new information technology due to the devaluation of 37.2% of local currency in 20 years; also, the financing from the Central Government did not match the devaluation.

The university is centrally organized, headed by the rector and three vice rectors (academic, administrative, and secretary). These posts are elected every four years and

5 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/library-networking-universidad-oriente/6322

Related Content

The Impact of National Environment on the Adoption of Internet Banking: Comparing Singapore and South Africa

Irwin Brown, Rudi Hoppe, Pauline Mugera, Paul Newman and Adrie Stander (2008). *Global Information Technologies: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1924-1931). www.irma-international.org/chapter/impact-national-environment-adoption-internet/19083

The Impact of Open Source Development on the Social Construction of Intellectual Property

Bernd Carsten Stahl (2008). *Global Information Technologies: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 3777-3805). www.irma-international.org/chapter/impact-open-source-development-social/19211

Technological Growth in Religious Organisations: Exploring Social Media Through System Dynamics

Courage Matobobo and Felix Bankole (2022). *Using Information Technology Advancements to Adapt to Global Pandemics* (pp. 148-176). www.irma-international.org/chapter/technological-growth-in-religious-organisations/308860

Towards Perceived Playfulness and Adoption of Hearables in Smart Cities of China

Yuanyuan Anna Wang, Victor Chang, Adam R. Cross, Qianwen Ariel Xu and Simin Yu (2022). *Journal of Global Information Management* (pp. 1-19). www.irma-international.org/article/towards-perceived-playfulness-and-adoption-of-hearables-in-smart-cities-of-china/309956

Sentiment Analysis in Social Medias for Threats Prediction of Natural Extreme Events

Marilyn Minicucci Ibañez, Reinado Roberto Rosa and Lamartine Nogueira Frutuoso Guimarães (2025). *Encyclopedia of Information Science and Technology, Sixth Edition* (pp. 1-23). www.irma-international.org/chapter/sentiment-analysis-in-social-medias-for-threats-prediction-of-natural-extreme-events/322106