Chapter 8
Library Analytics on the Web 2.0 Era: Technology Integration Needs and Indicators to Monitor "User Awareness" with Web Analytics Techniques

Jorge Serrano-Cobos
Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain

Alicia Sellés
Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain

Nuria Lloret
Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain

ABSTRACT

The indicators that have traditionally been used to measure the activity of a library user satisfaction and other management data are not sufficient in the Library 2.0. This is a context in which in order to deliver user-centric services through the Web, libraries are increasingly using heterogeneous and specialized tools, which are not included in most cases, and are used both within the library portal (on-site) and other sites like Twitter or Facebook (off-site).

Therefore, the authors study some useful clues to understand the need to integrate these tools beyond visual consistency by offering each other the functionalities needed by the service in order to provide information and technical difficulties inherent in this strategic and new state.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-1912-8.ch008

INTRODUCTION

The indicators that have traditionally been used to measure the activity of a library (ISO / DIS 2789, 2000), user satisfaction, and other management data are not sufficient in a context in which the action space of the library is not reduced to a physical space, and the Integrated Library Management System is no longer the only tool with which libraries are working to manage their services and collections. This is particularly special in a Web 2.0 environment (Chalon, 2008), in which the website is not the only information space from which to enjoy the services offered or where information can be measured (Poll, 2001).

Regarding to services and Internet activity, there is a need to integrate "user knowledge," OPAC, other collection management tools and Web portal. There is also the need to analyze the interaction of users within the OPAC (simply the best, as provided...) and the impact it can have on the rest of the site without currently having a direct relationship with ILS. For example, metrics such as "how many users have accessed the "schedule of events," then searched "books," and / or have borrowed books from the author who came to sign on "event X".

In this chapter, we will describe the necessity for real integration between all services and tools that the library provides to improve the overall system, in terms of profitability and re-using of resources, but also to bring the necessary added value to library services, increasing the relationship between the contents of a website and a library catalog. In addition, we will look at how we can learn from the system usage and interaction patterns to improve our service.

BACKGROUND

Beyond the simple examination of the catalog, libraries have provided online services to a user that connects more often and through different devices (using the library and other Web applications). Thus, we find new features (and not so new, but standardized) in both and the new library portals.

OPAC, Online Public Access Catalog, a tool of public access to a library catalog, has enabled users to perform library automation, detection, or finding a physical catalog item, then collect and order "consume" (well off watching a video or reading a book).

When the internet came along, libraries started developing library portals, Web pages, in addition to the catalog. Libraries wanted to feature other information such as local links, opening hours, activities, and events to specific audiences, photos or videos of events, etc.

The big problem that arose then has rarely been solved: it created a rift between the catalog, managed by the ILMS (Integrated Library Management System), and the library Web portal, operated either manually at the beginning or by content managers (CMS or Content Management Systems).

To these tools, we also have to add other specific collections management and systems management repositories, tools for serial control of electronic publications as well as new tools called "discovery" (Next Generation Discovery Tools), which enable the user to retrieve and discover information through disparate sources in an integrated retrieval interface. The road ahead is long, and integration, for now at large, it is only in name.

TRENDS

It is not easy to detail all the technological and conceptual developments that are emerging in the world of OPACs and being defined as new-generation catalogs. Try to give a brief outline of what is happening in a market which, thanks to the efforts of Open Source and the emergence of new technologies and services, is awakening from decades of lethargy, which should provide an opportunity for the sector, and therefore, to the user.