Chapter 23

Information Seeking Behavior in Digital Environments and Libraries in Enhancing the Use of Digital Information

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ABSTRACT

The authors discuss in this chapter the emergence of digital library environments of the modern world. The emerging field of digital libraries brings together participants from many existing areas of research. Currently, the field lacks a clear agenda independent of these other area. It is tempting for researchers to think that the field of digital libraries is a natural outgrowth of an already known field. From a database or information retrieval perspective, digital libraries may be seen as a form of federated databases. From a hypertext perspective, the field of digital libraries could seem like a particular application of hypertext technology. From a wide-area information service perspective, digital libraries could appear to be one use of the World Wide Web. From a library science perspective, digital libraries might be seen as continuing a trend toward library automation. New concepts and applications appear fast in the information world. Current exploitation of multimedia technology is changing our understanding of the interconnections of graphics, sound, and images, and the types of information they present. Thus, we need to understand both human psyche and available technologies in order to create and to interpret new expressions. The chapter highlights the benefits of digital information and how the libraries are helpful in enhancing the use of digital information. The chapter shows that libraries can provide Internet access, electronic contents, and training to the users. It explains the changing and changed attitude of information professionals in the present scenario.

INTRODUCTION

Digital library is a newly emerging perspective in the modern world. Apart from this view, there is some truth to these perspectives (as well as others) but none address the field as a whole and its research agenda. The field of digital libraries will be limited if viewed only as a sub field of prior research interests. To realize its full potential, the field must be viewed as a union of sub fields from a variety of domains combined with additional goals, and thus new research issues. Digital library research must both respect the existing tradition of our physical libraries and transcend current practice in developing a new, broader research agenda. What are the research issues central to digital libraries? One issue might be how to digitize objects and put them on-line. A second might be how to include new forms of information that do not have temporal or tangible representation necessary for inclusion into physical libraries. Another could be how to locate materials in the new digital library. Yet another would be when to use and when to transcend the existing technologies and traditions of the physical library in its digital form. Still other issues stem from the problems of information overload created by new information technologies. This framework presents for thinking about the field of digital libraries and the research issues that are part of it and demonstrates how these issues affect digital library systems.

The recent decades have witnessed tremendous advanced in information technology and its application. The latest technologies offer cheaper price computer processing power, mass storage inexpensive access to high speed networks and retrieval devices which gives us the ability to crate, manipulate, store and transfer large quantities of formation in digital form at low cost, electronic publishing and resource sharing activities have become very easy and convenient today. These major changes have led create and develop digital libraries. Digital libraries store of materials in electronic format and manipulate large collection of those materials effectively. The key technological issue is how to search and display the desired selections from and across e collections. The main focus of digital libraries should be on issues of access, cost and digitization technology and how to develop the necessary infrastructure for effective mass manipulation of the information network.

WHAT IS DIGITAL LIBRARY?

Digital Library, a global virtual library, is a library of thousands of networked electronics libraries. There will be a vast population of users scattered around the globe, who are able to access, easily and conveniently, the complete contents of thousands of repositories containing texts, images, sound recordings, videos, maps, scientific and business data, as well as hypermedia combinations of these elements. The library must a network based distributed system with local servers responsible for maintaining individual collections of digital documents. A digital library is a collection of digital objects. A collection of research papers is a typical example. When this collection gets sufficiently large, users of the digital library cannot examine each paper individually to find if its subject interests them. To address this problem, digital librarians create an interface to stand between the content of the collection and the user. In a traditional library, an example of this would be a card catalog—a collection of small cards that represent the larger objects contained in the collection. These cards are more manageable than the books that they represent. In a digital library, there are a number of ways that we can present the digital collection to the user. The first thing that we need to do is to describe each object in a manageable way. This description is called metadata—data (the description) about data (the digital object). This metadata is more manageable

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