Chapter I

Survey and History of Digital Library Development in the Asia Pacific

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Abstract

Over the past decade the development of digital library activities within Asia Pacific has been steadily increasing. Through a meta-analysis of the publications and content within ICADL and other major regional digital library conferences over the past few years, we see an increase in the level of activity in Asian digital library research. This reflects high continuous interest among digital library researchers and practitioners internationally. Digital library research in the Asia Pacific is uniquely positioned to help develop digital libraries of significant cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge and advance cross-cultural and cross-lingual digital library research.

Introduction

The location and provision of information services have dramatically changed over the last 10 years. There is no need to leave the home or office to locate and access information now readily available online via digital gateways furnished by a wide variety of information providers, for example, libraries, electronic publishers, businesses, organizations, and individuals. Information access is no longer restricted to what is physically available in the nearest library. It is electronically accessible from a wide variety of globally distributed information repositories.

Digital libraries represent a form of information technology in which social impact matters as much as technological advancement. It is hard to evaluate a new technology in the absence of real users and large collections. The best way to develop effective new technology is in multi-year large-scale research and development projects that use real-world electronic test-beds for actual users and aim at developing new, comprehensive, and user-friendly technologies for

Table 1. Major (Asian) digital library research and development milestones

1994	• NSF Digital Library Initiative Phase 1 (DLI-1)
	• The First Annual Conference on the Theory and Practice of Digital Libraries, College Station, Texas
1995	• First IEEE Advances in Digital Libraries Conference, McClean, Virginia
1996	• First ACM Conference on Digital Libraries, Bethesda, Maryland
1997	• First European Conference on Research and Advanced Technology for Digital Libraries (ECDL), Pisa, Italy
1998	• The First International Conference on Asian Digital Libraries (ICADL 1998), Hong Kong, China
1999	• President's Information Technology Advisory Committee (PITAC) Report
	• NSF Digital Library Initiative Phase 2 (DLI-2)
	• Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Program
	• NSF National Science, Mathematics, Engineering, and Technology Digital Library (NSDL) Program
	• ICADL 1999, Taipei, Taiwan
2000	• ICADL 2000, Seoul, Korea
2001	• ICADL 2001, Bangalore, India
	• First ACM/IEEE-CS Joint Conference on Digital Libraries (JCDL 2001), Roanoke, Virginia
2002	• ICADL 2002, Singapore
2003	• ICADL 2003, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
2004	• JCDL 2004, Tucson, Arizona

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