

A Seminar on Social Media and Libraries

3rd Dec, 2012

Lecture Hall, Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai

10.00am to 5.00pm

A Report

Diverting from the Digital Library's regular feature of a two day seminar on KRM every alternate year, this year we spread the seminars on two independent days addressing newer issues in information science. The first seminar was on "Competitive intelligence" in May 2012. The second seminar on "Social media and Libraries" was organized on 3rd Dec 2012.

Social media is an advancement of technological tools allowing intense networking and connectivity. These technology tools of web2.0 generation have ample potential to connect, and disseminate information. It has been observed that there is speedy exchange and spread of information amongst the persons who are connected. These are the tools often used by regular advertising agencies to promote products and services. Many libraries in the west have already adapted to these technologies and both end users and libraries seem to have benefited.

It was therefore felt that as an advanced library, we too could consider this option to promote and facilitate services to end users. The aim of this seminar was to understand these tools their applications, implementations, effectiveness, barriers, risks and threats. Thus, shaped the seminar.

It was decided to have a seminar with limited participants. This was a free seminar, supported by TMH from Library seminar fund.

Around 45 LIS professionals registered for the seminar, the participation was limited and by invitation only. The participants came from various libraries – academic, commercial and business houses, hospitals, management schools, medical colleges, and performing arts.

The Program:

- Welcome and Introduction, *Dr. M V Joshi*
- Opening Remarks, *Dr. V N Patkar*

- Libraries on social media - what users expect –*By Madhuri Sawant, IIT Mumbai*
- Applications of social media and their effectiveness learning through case studies-
By Anand Gharat, Ogilvy One World wide, Mumbai
- A brief on ICOASL 2013 – *By Medha Joshi, TMH*
- Secure social networking tools & technology to promote your activity – *By Manoj Singh, BARC, Mumbai*
- Evolving information technologies in biomedical research – *By Jay Bhatt, Drexel University, USA*

The Seminar began with opening remarks from **Dr. Vivek Patkar**, an independent researcher. In his talk he traced the development from Agricultural society to the wisdom society emphasizing on the proliferation of information that may not be available with the library, situated at some remote place and still can be accessed.

Dr. Patkar emphasized on removing the barriers, such as administrative and technical, on the usage of Social Media by the Libraries. He also stated that technology is to serve mankind and the libraries always played an important role in adopting / disseminating the usage of the technology. In conclusion, he remarked “Social media provide a powerful avenue to the library to collaborate with the users to contribute to the e-research, e-maturity & e-harmony”.

According to our next speaker **Mr. Anand Gharat** (Creative Director, Ogilvy worldwide one) Social Media is a platform to share-opinions, experiences, ideas, information etc... He opined that information on social media is like influenza- spreads very fast. Usage of social media is increasing across the world. Currently there are about one million social network users and about 82% of Indians daily log onto Social media sites. He emphasized that conversations are the key drivers behind our inherent social structure and the social media has redefined the way we communicate.

Throughout his talk, he shared his experiences at Digital Advertising and marketing at Ogilvy and Mather. His talk was interspersed with case studies in the form of advertisements on social media such as Face Book, Twitter, Youtube, Pinterest etc. essentially created to promote products, health education programs, well being. These case studies enabled the audience to understand how effectively social media can help in spreading the information as viral infection to larger population and in minimum time frame. Of the examples that were showcased, the classic examples were ‘One copy song’ - which was published on you-tube, an online publication of Book, which a reader could access it by “paying through a tweet”. This enable the author to market the book aggressively and within no time the book was in great demand. Another case study where Sweden made effective use of Twitter was depicted. The Dept. of Tourism of Sweden encouraged its people to speak about their area on twitter, for one week

thereby promoting their country and thus boosting their tourism. Similar activities can be adopted by the libraries to promote their books, resources, services and the library as an information centre, using various social media.

Dr. Madhuri Sawant, an Analytical Chemist at IIT, Mumbai, presently involved with the development of AAKASH tablet for Government of India. She elaborated that the Library is a social place and hence it is necessary for the library to have its presence on social media, to project its activities, services and resources to its end users. She stressed on the fact that the library must be where the users are and facilitate information at point of need / place through social events, social gathering, extended activities etc. and cited several examples from libraries within India and abroad. According to her the best feature of social media is connecting from “**One to Many**” and it is this feature that must be utilized to reach maximum number users and beyond users. Her talk emphasized on the use social media by libraries for the benefit of its clientele in various ways (resource promotion, book reviews, etc.), and also facilitating collaboration amongst professionals, organizations and clientele within and outside the organization.

Post lunch sessions were conducted by Mr. Manoj Singh - Head, Information Technology Section, Scientific Information Resources Division, BARC and Dr. Jay Bhatt - Liaison Librarian, Drexel University, Philadelphia, USA.

Mr. Manoj Singh emphasized on the issues related to the threats, security and confidentiality issues in using the social media tools, citing various examples and practices at different institutes, and library at BARC. His talk dislodged the myth that adopting social media technologies in government organizations is a serious security issue. According to him, these issues and threats could be addressed with proper actions and controls within the system. He cited example of BARC library using social medial tools (RSS, blogs, etc) on intranet, and how they were able to integrate, and provide alerting and updating services to their scientists on various subjects of research interests. In his talk, he suggested methods of controlling threats and overcoming various technological, social and security related barriers.

Dr Jay Bhatt, our last speaker from Drexel University has been actively using social media tools of various types primarily to help his clientele, especially students and faculty. It has been observed that all publishers have facility for RSS feeds to keep one updated on new contents. According to Dr Bhatt, there will increased use of web 2.0 applications. Publishers will increasingly use such feeds, increasing Information awareness in all subject areas supporting enhanced sharing of information and maximizing outreach. With several examples from various web sites and library services at Drexel University, he illustrated how value adding was possible, benefitting the end user.

His talk emphasized Drexel library’s presence on social networking platforms and use of other tools like RSS, blogs, and face-book accounts of library, not only helped him to promote library, its services and its resources but also increased its visibility on campus, and gave several opportunities for the library to collaborate with faculty and their activities.

In concluding remarks **Mr. B. P Prakash** (Global Head, Information Services TCS) appreciated the efforts of Digital Library TMH to address such an interesting and most important topic for LIS professionals. He appreciated the bringing of different perspectives/ view to application of Social Media through the showcase of advertisements, the flow of the seminar, logical coverage of theme, developing from one aspect in to another and culminated well with the application in library services.

According to him, the small no. of participants almost 45 the group was manageable and very good. He encouraged arranging such small group one day programs for the use of the library professionals with still new topics with different kinds of applications.

The day ended with vote of thanks a by Dr. Medha Joshi, promising more such similar programs in future.

Observations, Outcomes, Recommendations and Suggestions of the seminar were –

1. Communication is the centre of social media tools and communicating with end-user is essential to libraries
2. Social media tools like RSS feed, Blogs, Face-book, Researchgate, academia, etc. are useful tools and can help in promoting activities, services
3. They expand horizons and visibility for all persons on the network and libraries as well.
4. Social media can be adopted easily and are easy to use by the end users.
5. Social media tools can be adopted within the organizational network as well.
6. Although there are barriers and threats, proper controls and other measures can be adopted, without violating policy and security of the Institution.
7. Libraries must effectively use social media tools especially - RSS feeds, Blogs, and face book accounts, considering most of the end users visit these sites daily.
8. The aim of libraries using social media should be promoting education, resources, services, and providing personalized services as well.
9. Libraries through networking should support, enhanced global sharing of information and facilitate collaboration among students, researchers, faculty members and librarians.
