

## MODULE - 4

LIBRARY AND  
INFORMATION SERVICES



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# MODERN LIBRARY SERVICES

## 14.1 INTRODUCTION

Internet came in to existence in the 1950s and gained popularity only in the mid 1990s. It has completely revolutionized each and every sphere of life, be it banking, entertainment, or education. Likewise, its impact on libraries has been stupendous. Libraries which are also known as knowledge centers, have taken advantage of Internet in offering new collections and services to their users. In this lesson, you will study about modern library services, their characteristics and importance for the users.



## 14.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson you will be able to

- explain the importance of modern libraries for the society;
- describe how Internet has changed the way libraries function;
- elaborate upon the services offered by libraries using new tools and technology;
- distinguish between manual and computerized services which libraries offer; and
- list out the various online resources.

## 14.3 MODERN LIBRARY

A modern library is a social organization which uses technology to offer information services. The services are offered to its heterogeneous population

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on a 24X7 basis as and when required. It does not limit itself to offering “place-based services.”

Some of the characteristics of modern libraries are:

- Modern libraries have a social function in making knowledge publicly available. They play two pivotal roles, firstly, to serve as a local centre of information and knowledge and secondly, to be a local gateway to national and global knowledge. They also serve as gateways to the world of knowledge for children by offering a wide spectrum of books to ignite their minds. They endeavour to cultivate reading habits among the children at an early age.

The modern library:

- selects, procures, organizes and delivers the widest possible range of current and quality information resources to its heterogeneous user population as and when it needs it.
- is a member of some regional or national network in order to cater to the information needs of its users, as, at times, information resources available with it may be inadequate to meet users’ needs.
- maintains an accessible website and relies upon technologies for enhancing its services.
- makes concerted efforts to provide services as and when users need, besides providing place based services.
- provides reference and user education programmes on a regular basis. It also conducts information literacy programmes for its users.
- communicates and connects with the users on a regular basis, telling about its resources in order to attract them and ensure maximum usage of the resources.
- offers free Internet access, high speed broadband, Wi-Fi facilities which are required by students, and research scholars for writing term paper, research activities, searching jobs, etc.
- provides space to students and users for organizing exhibitions and community meetings. It offers “quiet zones” and spaces for group discussions.
- is accessible and friendly to users with physical disabilities. It has an Assistive Technology Centre to enable visually- challenged users to access computer and Internet resources. It also provides information resources in alternate formats in order to help the users with print disabilities.



- constantly evaluates its collections and services by gathering feedback from its user population, evolves and improves them in the light of the feedback received from the users.

**INTEXT QUESTION 14.1**

1. What is a modern library?

**14.4 NEED FOR MODERN LIBRARY SERVICES**

Earlier libraries were “place- based” service institutions which existed to cater to the information needs of their users. The users visited the libraries to consult various sources of information as per their needs. During the last three decades, the emergence of Internet technology, modern telecommunications and other allied areas like data processing, management information system, information retrieval systems, etc., has radically impacted the functioning and environment of libraries. Libraries are continuously transforming themselves and evolving to survive. They do not have the luxury to choose, to change and evolve, but they have to survive and maintain their prominent position as centers of knowledge and learning. There are various reasons behind this social phenomenon. Technology has brought a revolutionary change in every sphere.

There is change in the information- seeking behaviour of the users. Libraries have to change and adapt themselves in order to meet the information needs of the users. Libraries are supposed to provide information to the users as and when and in whatever format they need it. The new generation, which is popularly known as millennials or netizens, is more comfortable working in online environments.

The expectations and demands of the users have increased manifold. They are no longer content with place- based library services as they want information services beyond the four walls of the physical library.

It is advisable for the libraries to transform as per the expectations and demands of their user population. Libraries can implement new technologies for providing innovative information services in order to retain their existing clientele and attract new ones. If the libraries do not transform to provide new modern services as per the demands and expectations of the users, they risk slipping into extinction.

In short, we can say that modern library services are imperative because of the following reasons:

- Change in information seeking behaviour of users;
- Increased demands and expectations of the users;
- Availability of technology which facilitates availability and accessibility.

## 14.5 MANUAL AND COMPUTERIZED SERVICES

There are different methods of providing services in libraries which can be broadly grouped into two classes-manual and computerized services. These are discussed below.

### 14.5.1 Manual Services

Maintenance of various library records, registers and cards is known as Manual System. It entails execution of various activities and procedures by hand, without any intervention of computers. There are many libraries which perform housekeeping and routine operations, which are repetitive in nature, manually.

The services, which are provided or delivered to the users without using computers as an intermediary, are known as manual services. Whereas computerized services are offered by using computers as tools or intermediaries.

### 14.5.2 Computerized Services

Today, libraries are using computerized systems to maintain records of all activities and procedures. The libraries have computerized their house keeping operations like, acquisition cataloguing, circulation and recording details of journal subscription. Libraries use Library Management Software (LMS) for performing various activities of the libraries. The software has various modules for library activities. Using the software the routine work of the library is done speedily and efficiently. In simple words, in a computerized system, all housekeeping operations are done using computers. The computerized services are also offered to the users through LMS.

For example, the circulation section issues books to the readers by using card system or register system. In a computerized circulation system, there is no need for the library to issue and maintain borrower's cards or tickets. Every member requires a single card with unique identification number (such as library membership number) to be used by the software to access member database. The software also controls the multiple borrowing facilities.

### 14.5.3 Manual Vs Computerized Services

The manual and computerized services can be compared as follows:



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### Modern Library Services

Manual Services	Computerized Services
The circulation section issues books to the readers by using the card or the register system.	Every member requires a single card with unique identification number (such as library membership number) to be used by the software to access the member database. The multiple borrowing facility is also controlled by the software
The Technical section of the Library catalogues the books and prepares print or card catalogues. It also prepares lists of new additions manually.	OPAC is provided to the users for searching and finding library resources.
Libraries prepare bibliographies, abstracts and indexes as per the research needs of the users	Online access to indexing and abstracting services from commercial publishers are provided to the users.
Current Awareness Services (CAS) are provided to the users by routing the photocopies of Tables of contents of the journals.	Users are informed about arrival of new books and journal issues through mail alerts. The users are also taught how to get RSS feeds or e-mail alerts from publishers by signing TOC (Table of Content) alerts. The users have to register at the publisher's website for getting information regarding publication of a new journal. Registration is always free.
Reference service is provided by a face to face interview.	Reference service is provided through e- mail, chat, instant message, etc.
The staff monitors, supervises and maintains security in order to check and control theft, damage, vandalism in the library.	CCTV cameras are installed to maintain discipline and security.
Stock taking is done by comparing the shelf list with the books arranged in stacks.	RFID is resorted to for stock verification.

**INTEXT QUESTION 14.2**

1. Distinguish manual and computerized services with reference to circulation services and stock taking activities.



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**14.6 MODERN LIBRARY SERVICES****14.6.1 Access to E-resources**

Earlier libraries procured, processed, organized and delivered various print resources like books, journals, newspapers, magazines etc., now they can actively procure their e- forms like e-journals, e-books, e-theses and dissertations and online databases. The libraries subscribe to e-resources and provide access to these resources via Internet.

The electronic resources are also known as online resources. They include both, “born digital” material which has been produced directly online and print resources which have been scanned and digitized.

The term “database” is used to refer to a collection of records each of which may have numeric, textual or image- based data. The databases are usually in a searchable format. It means that there is a search facility or tool which helps users in searching, locating and retrieving the information which they need. Library catalogues, OPAC, full text and bibliographical databases are all examples of databases.

As these resources are accessible via Internet, they are also known as online resources. Before the advent of Internet, these online databases were available as printed sources or on CD-ROMs. The examples of databases are given below:

- The journals published by Elsevier are available online through a database which is popularly known as Science Direct.
- The books, book series, journals published by Springer are accessible online through a database which is known as Springer Link.

The bibliographical databases provide references to published information like J-Gate, Scopus, etc. These databases provide abstracts of the journal articles. The users may read the abstracts and make an informed assessment of the relevance of the articles for their research needs.

**14.6.2 Resource sharing**

Resource sharing means common use of (each other’s) resources by two or more

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libraries. It is also an attempt by libraries to share information resources and services which may be limited or specialized and might not be available with a single library. No library can be self-sufficient because of a number of reasons like abundance of information, multiplicity of documents, paucity of space, shortage of staff. They form consortia and networks to share online resources like databases, online journals and books, theses and dissertations. Libraries form an association or network or cooperative organization to procure and share resources and services. These associations or networks are commonly known as consortia.

The examples of some consortia are:

**INDEST (Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Sciences and Technology)** <http://paniit.iitd.ac.in/indest/>

Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Sciences and Technology was set up by Ministry of Human Resources and Development in 2003. It has the following objectives:

- To subscribe to e-resources for the members of the consortium at highly discounted rates.
- To extend the benefit of consortia based subscription beyond the core members to other engineering and technological institutions.
- To find more avenues of cooperation and interaction among member libraries and other consortia.

**UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium** <http://www.inflibnet.ac.in/econ/>  
UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium was set up in 2003 by the then President of India, after providing Internet connectivity to the universities under the UGC-INFONET programme, to provide access and promote the use of electronic journals among the researchers and academics of the country. The objectives of the consortium are to:

- provide access to scholarly electronic journals, full text and bibliographic databases to large number of universities and colleges;
- promote rapid and efficient access to scholarly content to the users;
- create and promote the use of ICTs in teaching and learning activities of the country;
- extend the benefits of the consortium to its associate members; and
- impart training to the users, librarians, research scholars and faculty members of the universities and colleges.

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Many libraries have joined e-journal consortia to have access to computerized databases as well as access to full-text journals for their users. Libraries can now deliver links to full-text journals and articles within journals. With this facility the user can get access to full-text journals on his personal computer, browse through the article and if found useful, can get it printed on his desk top.

### 14.6.3 Remote access

Libraries provide “single sign on” facility to their users for remote access of the resources. In this, a single UN/PW is provided to the members, who can access all the resources of the Library, without visiting the library.

For example, the libraries use EZproxy which is an authentication and access software, provided by OCLC. It helps the users to get remote access to the licensed content of the library.

A screen shot of Jawahar Lal Nehru University, Central library providing remote access to e-resources is shown below:-

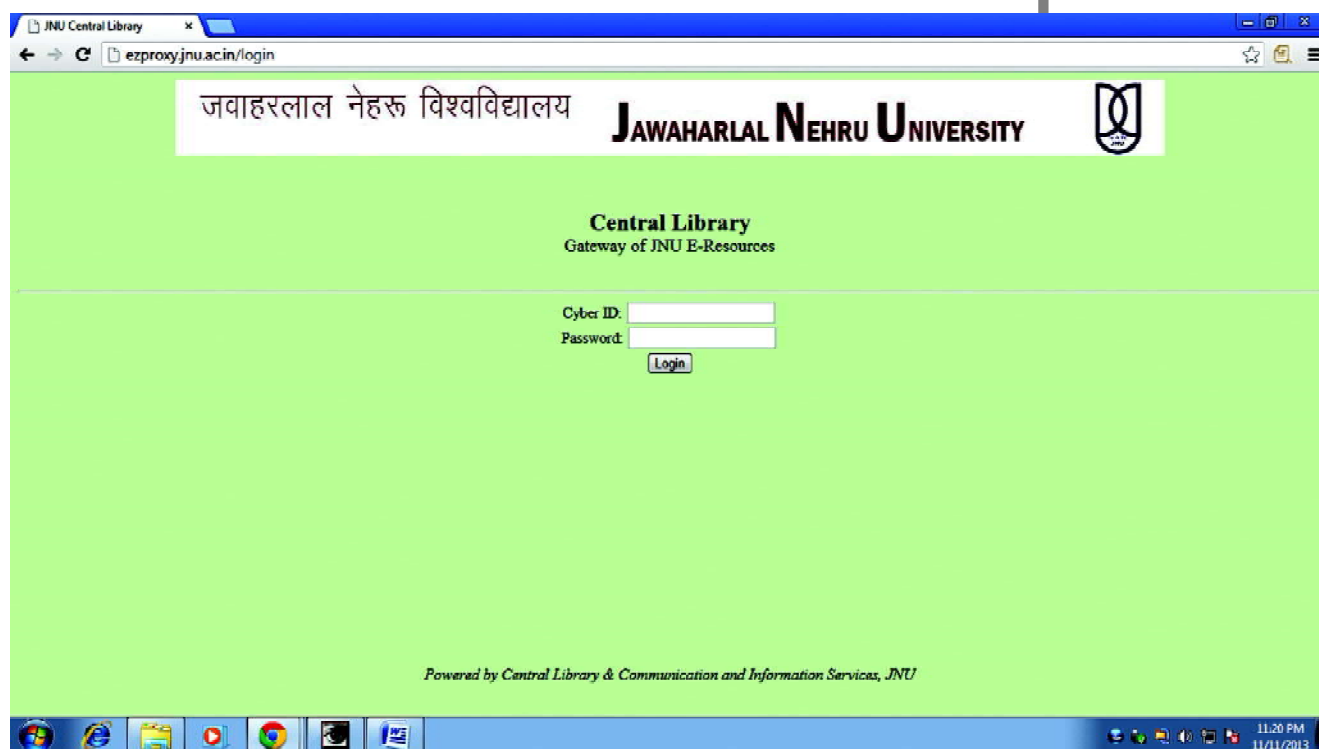


Fig. 14.1 : Snapshot of Gateway of e-resource of JNU Library





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**INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.3**

1. Explain with examples how a library consortium promotes resource sharing.
2. What do you understand by remote access?

**14.6.4 Union Catalogues and Web OPAC**

The union catalogue is a combined library catalogue describing the collection of a number of libraries. Union catalogues and Web OPACs are useful to the library, as they assist in locating and requesting material from other libraries for document delivery and interlibrary loan.

**14.6 5 Digital Reference services**

Digital reference service is e-reference service, where users interact with computers or other Internet technology to communicate with reference staff, without being physically present. Communication channels used in digital reference are chat, videoconferencing, e-Mail, voice over IP, or Instant Messaging. It is also known as virtual reference service, online reference and remote access reference service.

**14.6.6 E- Mail**

This is the electronic mail facility which enables messages to be sent from one person's computer to another across a network or Internet. Libraries provide reference services through e- mail. The e-mail address of reference staff/librarian is given on the library's website, readers can write and seek assistance for their information needs or any other aspect related to library. It is convenient for users as they can seek assistance without physically visiting the library. In online environment, the readers can freely submit their queries, unlike in face to face contexts, where the users may be hesitant to ask questions and seek help.

**14.6.7 FAQ**

This stands for frequently asked questions. It is a file or list of frequently asked questions with answers in the form of question and answer. The FAQs offer help to the users by giving information on various aspects, activities and issues of library. The library staff prepares a list of questions which are frequently received by the library, provides answers and hosts it on the library website. The readers can access the FAQs in order to get answers to their queries related to library matters. The screenshot of FAQ of university of California Berkeley library <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/kb/> is given below:

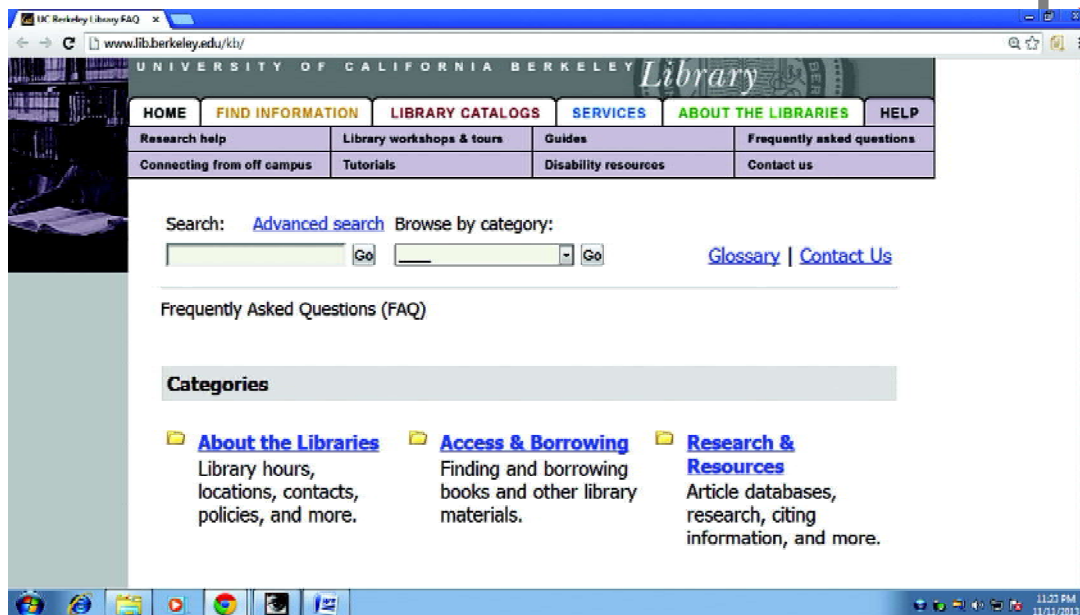


Fig. 14.2 : The screenshot of FAQ of university of California Berkeley library

### 14.6.8 Reader Advisory Service

Libraries also offer advisory services to the readers including online book lists and recommendations. This service provides users with information they need to select a book. It is a value-added service, and matches the user with the right book (3rd Law of Library Science). This service is actively provided by public libraries for promoting fiction books. This service may also be provided in academic libraries to help the new researchers who want to deepen their knowledge in a particular field. In order to offer this service, the reference staff should know about the availability of various titles in any given field. They should be thoroughly familiar with the library's collection. The reference personnel should be able to convey their suggestion or opinion in a friendly, polite and conversational manner.

### 14.6.9 Web 2.0 tools

Web 2.0 tools are web-based facilities which allow users to gain access, contribute, describe, web-mediated content in various formats, such as text, video, audio, pictures and graphs. Some of the Web 2.0 based popular websites are Flickr which can be used to share Photos, YouTube for sharing videos, Last.fm for sharing audio, and MySpace for sharing text-based information. These sites allow users to create, describe, post, search, collaborate, share and communicate online content in various forms. Libraries use Web 2.0 tools for imparting information literacy to the users.



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Libraries can use blogs as promotional tools to inform clients about changes, additions and other developments in library services and collections. Libraries share pictures, events and instructions by using podcasts and vodcasts. Libraries are also actively embracing the use of these tools for serving the users and attracting the potential users. These tools help libraries in offering their resources and services to their users in a proactive way.

**IM (Instant Messaging) and SMS (Short Text Messaging)**

Instant messaging allows online communication between two or more people using text based short messages via the web in real time. The reference staff may answer ready reference questions, directions or policy related queries through IM and SMS. The reference staff is required to be very brief and to the point while responding to the instant messaging (IM) & short text messaging (SMS) queries. If an answer to a query is long, the staff may ask the user to give an e-mail address and give him more information on the topic in context or encourage the reader to visit the library. The users find IM and SMS helpful for their convenience, anonymity and quick help. Academic libraries use IM to provide virtual reference services, improve access to other services and provide the latest information to the users. It also acts as an additional medium to facilitate interactions with users.

**14.6.10 Creating Finding Tools and Websites**

The reference staff creates finding tools and pathfinders for library users. The libraries prepare pathfinders for very common queries raised by the students. The pathfinders may assist and guide the users in selecting and locating appropriate reference source, pertinent databases, search terms, authoritative current websites, and tips for searching the OPAC for any other additional material.

**14.7 ADVANTAGES OF COMPUTERIZED SERVICES****a) Speed**

Searching electronic databases is much faster than their print counter parts. These databases offer current as well as retrospective searching. Sitting at the computer terminal one can retrieve current as well as retrospective records speedily.

**b) More Search Options**

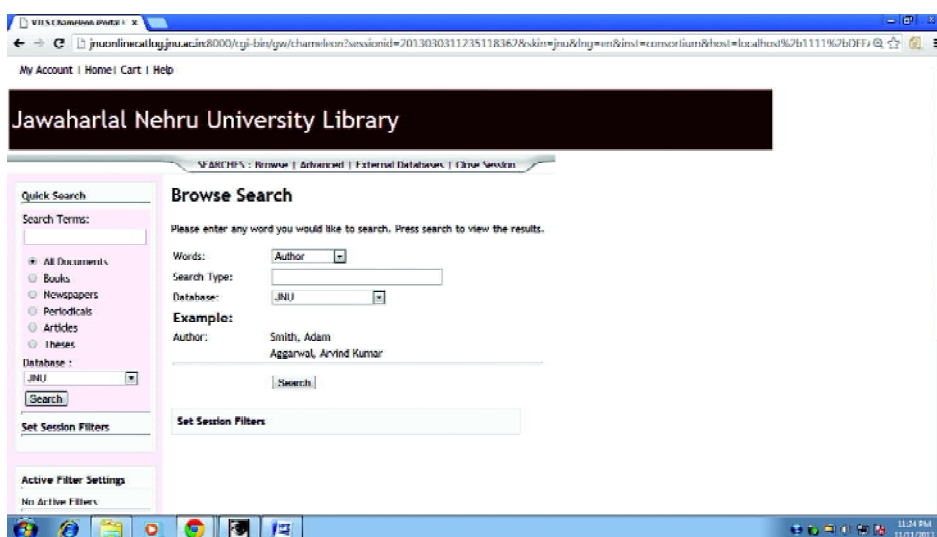
Search options provided by e-databases are far more extensive than those available in their print counter parts. In printed sources the searching is limited to the indexes (such as author, subject, keywords, etc.) provided by the print


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publication. In e-databases, one can search by any field like year of publication, journal title, keywords, author, etc. In addition, these databases offer more search options, such as **keyword or phrase search** (one can search by single term or by phrase comprising more than one term), **Boolean search** (using Boolean operators like And, Or, Not), and **Truncation search** (one can search all different forms of a word having same root).

Similarly, more search options are provided in OPAC than the card catalogue. In addition, OPAC can be used by more than one user at a time, user can reserve a book and send a request for purchase of a new book remotely, without visiting the library.

The screen shot of OPAC <http://jnuonlinecatlog.jnu.ac.in:8000/cgi-bin/gw/chameleon?sessionid=2013030311235118362&skin=jnu&> of Jawaharlal Nehru University Library is given below:



**Fig 14.3 : The screen shot of Online Public Access Catalogue**

### c) Easy Availability and Accessibility of Data

Users can search library resources remotely. Searching e-databases and retrieving information is less time-consuming than searching their print counter parts. E-databases provide easy availability and accessibility of data.

Similarly, computerization leads to decentralized access to records. The users can check through Web OPAC the availability of a book in a library whether a book has been loaned out to any user. They can even reserve a book online as per their need. Similarly, a member of the library staff in the main library may check the availability of a book or any other record without visiting the library.

**Notes****d) Integration of Data**

The Table-of-Contents service of many libraries provides links to full-text electronic journals and articles within journals, for browsing as well as for printing. Providing full-text links to resources is most important value-added service provided by modern libraries.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.4**

1. Define digital reference service.
2. What are Web 2.0 tools?
3. State the advantages of OPAC.
4. List out the advantages of computerized library services.

**14.7 ROLE OF LIBRARIANS IN THE INTERNET AGE**

There is a general feeling or apprehension among the experts that the role of librarians will be insignificant in the Internet age. This apprehension is totally unfounded, in fact, their roles will not diminish in Internet age, provided they learn and evolve themselves. The Librarians have to know and use new tools and technologies in order to provide user-centric services. They are expected to provide services beyond the four walls of libraries, wherever and whenever the users need them. This can be easily done if the librarians are prepared to learn and implement new tools and technologies in their day-to-day work.

There is a phenomenon of information deluge which means that there is too much of information and the users are overwhelmed with it. At this juncture, the librarians have to play a significant role. They are required to tell the users that everything available on the Internet may or may not be reliable. They have to teach the users how to navigate the Internet and evaluate the quality of information which they find. The librarians have to use their skills to be the gate keepers of essential knowledge, to guide users through an ever-expanding on-line world. They are also expected to perform an active role in creating, promoting and implementing new models of scholarly information diffusion such as institutional repositories, ETDs, etc.

In this Internet age, the librarians are cyber guides besides being the custodians of knowledge. They are required to:

- Act as value-adding information professionals,
- Adopt and integrate digital services with traditional ones,



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- Have good negotiation skills. They have to negotiate with vendors in order to finalize the license of e-journals, online databases for remote access; make consortial agreements for economical subscription prices.
- Have the skills to convince authorities to grant funds for digital projects,
- Know the latest technological developments and be knowledgeable enough to know how to harness the potential of technological tools for providing efficient services to the users,
- Ensure access to e-resources both on- site and off- site. They should know about different print and online resources and have the skill to develop and maintain a sound collection keeping in view the objectives of the parent organization,
- Develop a close working relationship with the users for providing individual and personalized services,
- Use web 2.0 tools like blogs, podcasts, vodcasts for providing services and connecting to the users,
- Arrange, procure, organize and maintain content in alternate formats for visually- challenged users. They should also ensure that the library as a physical place is accessible to the physically- challenged users,
- Have good interpersonal skills in order to work with others in an amicable manner, and
- Have good managerial and communication skills. They should be able to analyze, take judicious decisions, and know when to look for guidance. They have to promote their services among the users. They should know how to communicate with the users and satisfy them with their services,

Thus, it can be seen that librarians have a challenging role to play in the Internet age. Their role is not static, but is constantly evolving with time and strides of the technological developments. Librarians will have a major role to play in future, no matter how much advancement in technology takes place. As technological development can never become a substitute for the “human interface” provided by the librarians.

**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**

- The advent of Internet has completely changed the way libraries function. Earlier they focused on collection development, now they are more concerned with connecting and communicating with the users.

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### LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES



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#### Modern Library Services

- Earlier libraries were considered storehouses of books and other reading material and librarians as custodians, whereas now the libraries are concerned with providing access to the users where and whenever they want to.
- Librarians are no longer custodians but are guardians and purveyors of knowledge who use the new tools and technologies to augment their services towards the users.
- The manual services have been replaced by computerized ones which have proved speedy, prompt and cost effective in nature.
- A modern library is a social organization which uses technologies to offer information services to its heterogeneous population on a 24X7 basis as and when they need them. It does not limit itself to offering “place - based services.”
- The roles of librarians will not diminish in the Internet age, provided they learn and evolve themselves.



#### TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the characteristics of a modern library.
2. Describe the role of the librarian in the Internet age.
3. What are web 2.0 tools? How can they be used for promoting library services?
4. Discuss the necessity of modern library services.
5. What are the advantages of computerized library services?



#### ANSWERS TO IN TEXT QUESTIONS

##### 14.1

1. A modern library is a social organization which uses technologies to offer information services to its heterogeneous population on a 24X7 basis as and when they need. It does not limit itself to offering “place- based services.”



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**14.2**

1. The services which are provided or delivered to the users without using computers as an intermediary are known as manual services. Whereas computerized services are offered by using computers as tools or intermediaries. The computerized services are offered to the users through the Library management software (LMS).

**14.3**

1. Libraries form an association or network or cooperative organization to procure and share resources and services. These associations or networks are commonly known as consortia (consortium: singular).
2. Remote access is the ability to get access to a computer through a network located distantly.

**14.4**

1. Digital reference service is e-reference service, where users employ computers or other Internet technology to communicate with reference staff, without being physically present. Communication channels used in digital reference are chat, videoconferencing, e-Mail, voice over IP, or Instant Messaging. It is also known as virtual reference service, online reference and remote access reference.
2. Web 2.0 tools are web- based facilities which allow users to gain access, contribute, describe, web- mediated content in various formats, such as text, video, audio, pictures and graphs.
3. More search options are provided in OPAC than the card catalogue. OPAC can be used by more than one user at a time. The user can reserve a book and send a request for purchase of new books remotely, without visiting the library.
4. Advantages of computerized services are:
  - Speed
  - More Search Options
  - Easy Availability and Accessibility of data and
  - Integration of data

**GLOSSARY**

- **Assistive technologies:** It is a term which refers to assistive, adaptive rehabilitative devices, products or equipment for helping people with





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disabilities. These improve, increase and maintain the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities. The assistive technologies assist the individuals in communication, education, work and recreation, helping them to achieve greater independence and enhance the quality of life.

- **Current awareness service (CAS):** It is a service designed to alert users to new developments in a particular topic or issue; an example is a service which distributes the contents listings of journals.
- **Database:** It is a collection of records with details of different data items- which may be numeric, textual or image- based. It is usually searchable.
- **Electronic journal:** It is a journal which is produced in an electronic format; sometimes the electronic equivalent of a paper based journal. Examples are Ariadne and Cell.
- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):** This is a file of commonly asked questions with answers about a particular topic or issue. These serve as a source of help information for www sites and pages.
- **Information literacy:** It is defined as a set of abilities enabling individuals to identify when information is needed and have the capacity to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information. In simple words, it means teaching the users how to access the card catalog or OPAC, print resources, and retrieve information from online databases.
- **Internet:** It is a worldwide network of interconnected computer networks connected together using recognized standards to enable electronic communication and the exchange of information.
- **Podcast:** It is a kind of digital media file consisting of audio, video, PDF, or e-Pub file that can be downloaded directly from a streaming Internet onto a computer or a mobile device.
- **Radio Frequency Identification (RFID):** It is the wireless non-contact use of radio-frequency electromagnetic fields to transfer data, for the purposes of automatically identifying and tracking tags attached to objects.
- **Search facility:** It refers to any tool or facility which can be used to search information which is accessible via Internet; this includes search engines, library catalogues and online databases.

- **Union catalogue:** A union catalogue is a combined library catalogue which describes the collections of more than one library.
- **Vodcast:** Video stored in digital form that can be downloaded from the Internet on to a computer and MP3 player.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Visit any library in your vicinity and write about its collection and services.
2. Visit the website of any library of your choice and write about the web2.0 tools it has used. Find out about the online resources it subscribes to.
3. Visit any library in your vicinity. Write about any two manual and computerized services which it offers.
4. Visit the website of any library and capture the screenshot of its OPAC.



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