

Role of Digital Libraries in E-learning

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Abstract

Today the concept of e-learning or online learning is getting emphasis in many Organizations like academic, research, corporate or government. But method of implementation of e-learning is still a question. Many Organizations have developed separate IT based systems for e-learning. Digital Library provides a compatible base for e-learning module. This article deals with various aspects of e-learning, Strategies for e-learning implementation, role of digital libraries in developing e-learning.

Keywords: Digital library, E-Learning, Internet

Introduction

Let us consider the term library the way Dr S R Ranganathan defined and called it a "growing Organism" in past decade, we have observed a dynamic change in anatomy and physiology of library. For books some few years back has now become an information provides and valuable capital of an organization.

As the type of format of information changed from written to e-format, libraries assumed the role of digital libraries with the help of laptops. This approach reduced major barriers in the path of information dissemination like distance and time.

Today library is a hybrid of print and digital resources. Many developed and automated libraries who have large amount of digital content are now trying to provide e-learning through their digital libraries web inter face, there by developing fully dependable knowledge system. In this article we will look upon various aspects of e-learning how digital libraries can contribute to e-learning.

1. **E-learning:** E-learning refers to learning and resources that are available through a computer. In an online environment the computer displays material in response to a learner's request. As the world is contracting and time is reducing human aspire for more information in less time. Her internet brings in picture "Online learning or e-learning. Online education is becoming increasingly common on schools, colleges and the training centers.

Online education in particularly best mode for distance education, i.e. settings in which learners and teachers are located in different places and all or most interaction takes place via the network. In e-learning learners are responsible for their own education and study strategies to accomplish their academic goals.

2. **Brief History of E-Learning:** Use of technology in learning in true sense, started around the beginning of this century, with the invention of films and motion pictures.

Next era of e-learning started when television was invented, but television did not become everyone's in

the area of computer based training in the eighties a tremendous efforts were put in this field.

The real revolution in the field of e-learning started with the coming up of internet. As quoted by noble laureate Gary S Becker in 1992 "The interest has begun to radically change the teaching of adults in the U.S. who want to improve their skills or further their general education.

Today internet (web) is like a universe library which is anyway easy to manage update with world wide accessibility. Actually Internet is the perfect e-learning tool available to all.

Digital Libraries in E-Learning: Libraries serve three roles in learning process.

1. **Sharing valuable resources:** Digital library plays vital role here by allowing several information seekers to access materials simultaneously regardless of their physical location.
2. **Preserving & organizing projects & ideas:** Digital library serving for preserving old projects of intellectual importance by archiving their soft copies. The material is digitalized with the help of scanning devices.
3. **Bringing people & ideas together:** Digital libraries offer diverse information resources shared by groups of learners irrespective of physical space & time. Digital Libraries bring people together with different learning missions.

Various aspects that make e-learning through digital libraries an advantage are,

1. Full text digital resources contained in a digital library database can be directly linked to e-learning module.
2. Efficient Digital library software provides ability to identify, access, evaluate, Organize & Communicate information & Knowledge.
3. Digital Library of an Organization or Institute is Intranet based, thus providing a readymade framework for e-learning.
4. Digital Library provides a platform for all information and Knowledge Communication, user

to user interaction, and provides facility for dual role of user as both Teacher and learner.

The key functions of Digital Libraries are

1. Provide access to a very large information collation
2. Support multimedia content
3. Provide user friendly interface
4. Enables link representation to local/external objects
5. Information available for a very long time
6. Support advanced search and retrieval
7. Support editing, publishing, annotation and integrate of information
8. Integrate personal, group enterprise, public digital Libraries

Advantages of Digital Libraries:

The major advantages of digital Libraries are,

1. Promote Universal accessibility
2. Access to more information than is possible to physically Acquire & Maintain
3. Protecting rare books that are rapidly deteriorating due to over use and poor storage conditions
4. The user can purse them instantly
5. The e-books & Journals provide key words subject and various other searches. Provide multiple access & access through the campus LAN
6. Facility for the downloading and printing
7. Saving the cast and manpower required for publishing and bringing out new edition.

Conclusion

Digital Libraries have proved themselves not only as effective repositories of Knowledge and information, but also as effective communication medium between peers and for Scholarly discourse, are capable enough to provide an information rich platform to both instructors & students to teach, learn and share knowledge. Thus in future we will witness major role of Digital Libraries in Online learning or as we call it 'e-learning'.

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