

Research Information Management in Organizations: Researcher-Based Digital Shelves

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Abstract: Social network sites (SNSs) and digital libraries (DLs) are two significant phenomena of networked world, and combining them can improve information and knowledge management in the information explosion era. Participation of users and creation of collaborative content, that are characteristics of SNSs, are crucial elements that can open doors to self-managing DLs. Therefore, linking SNSs with DLs can lead to better managing digital information and knowledge resources and the goal of this paper is to define an appropriate model of this integration for organizational purposes. Generally, this linkage can be investigated from two points of views. The first one, which has been the dominant one, is to integrate SNSs features and capabilities in DL platforms. The second one, which has received less attention and this article is intended to highlight that, is to integrate DLs features and capabilities in SNSs. The challenge of the first approach is that users' interactions and participation are low and the emphasis is mostly on delivering library services. On the other hand, due to the relatively increasing development of SNSs and positioning them as platforms, it seems features and functionality of DLs can be implemented in SNS platforms in an effective way. In this paper, the linkage between SNSs and DLs is studied through the second approach. Therefore, impacts of DLs on academic-oriented SNS platforms are investigated; accordingly, researcher-based digital shelves model for research information management is proposed. Advantages, limitations, capabilities, and challenges of this model are also discussed. These shelves can be used by organizations to enhance the management of their employers' explicit knowledge, such as articles, reports, books, etc.

Keywords: digital shelves, social network sites (SNSs), digital libraries (DLs), organizational information and knowledge management, information resources and objects

1. Introduction

"The rules have changed. True power is held by the person who possesses the largest bookshelf, not gun cabinet or wallet." (Anthony J. D'Angelo)

Information and knowledge management systems have evolved significantly along with the recent developments of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). These developments in information and knowledge management are gradually reshaping our world, and then standing on ICT edge. It seems difficult for organizations to adapt these newest tools and solutions. We can consider ICT as an unstoppable power which can change and reshape the world (Garson, 2006). Whether we like it or not, ICT affects most aspects of our life, education, business, and etc. One of the most tangible effects can be seen in the acquisition and dissemination of information resources. This impact has pushed researchers to redefine the term of *library*, as well as, information resources in new environments. As a result, the word *digital*, *electronic*, or *virtual* was added to some traditional concepts. For example, digital library is a term that describes modern libraries in the virtual space. Currently, digital/electronic/virtual libraries are playing an important role in modern knowledge sharing among diverse cultures around the world.

Besides its impact on other fields, ICT itself has evolved during recent decades. Internet and the World Wide Web (WWW), as important innovations over the last two decades, are two significant technologies of ICT. Undoubtedly, WWW –is one of humans' most impressive recent inventions, if not the most important.

This revolutionary phenomenon is developing quickly. As a result, we are witnessing innovative WWW tools and solutions day by day. Web 2.0 and Social Network Sites (SNSs) have emerged in this context. SNSs, as newfound social media, have attracted millions of people around the world. As reported in academic publications, just in 2009 there were more than 350 SNSs on WWW platform (Farmer et al., 2009; Fu et al., 2008).