**WILSON’S PROJECT ON GITAL E-LIBLARY**

Objectives of Digital Library

A digital library provides facilities and services to support research, teaching, learning, and scholarly communication across disciplines.

It helps to collect, organize and collate prints and digital information and disseminate at the point of care and for future use.

It gives absolute access to information.

It acts as a gateway to digital and electronic information.

It provides a global perspective and integrates material from many sources in one place.

**1. Small Businesses/ Entrepreneurs**

It is difficult to build a company starting from nothing because a successful business goes way beyond finding the right idea. This is why more than 30% of new businesses fail according to a study made by ISED Canada. The main reason for failure is inexperienced management.

**2. Job Seekers**

In 2017, most western countries had an employment rate between 70% and 75%. This means that in most countries, 1 of 4 people were job seekers. There can be different explanations for that, but one of them is that people didn’t have the resources to find a job.

**3. People with disabilities**

We all know someone that has a disability and we know their everyday life can be really difficult. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention affirmed that 53 million adults in the US live with a disability.

Citizens with mental or physical disabilities have special needs that cannot be easily fulfilled through ordinary library services. By adding additional services that are personalized to their needs, libraries improve the quality of life of users with disabilities. They provide a place where those citizens feel welcome and understood. The Central Library of Portsmouth has a lot of different services for people with disabilities. For example, they offer free computer training for the visually impaired.

**4. Refugees**

In 2015, there were recorded nearly 1.8 million new refugees. Having to need to move to another country that has a different culture, religion, language, and even values might be a great challenge for many of them.

Public libraries are known to be a safe space where everyone has access to knowledge and information, regardless of their ethnic origin. Libraries give refugees the resources they need to keep themselves on the learning path. At Nottingham Central Library in the UK, they offer conversation workshops which aim to help people with English as a second language get more confidence when engaging in conversation.

**5. Newcomers**

Immigration has been a hot topic over the past few years as western countries receive more and more immigrants. Migrants leave their home country most of the time to find themselves a better situation, to reunite with their families or to experience a new culture.

Libraries through their resources and well-informed staff are in a perfect position to help people settle in their new country. They can help them understand the things they need to know and how they can be part of that new society. Take a look at the North Vancouver District Public Library Website, they have a page where they welcome newcomers and they give them information about what resources they provide to them.

**6. Lonely people**

Humans are highly social beings and loneliness is a huge, cultural problem all over the world. An article from the Guardian states “that loneliness can be as damaging as smoking 15 cigarettes a day”. They also argue that one of the best ways to fight loneliness is to increase social contact by getting into a new group, volunteering, etc.

As Pamela Benjamin mentions in her chat with Princh, “libraries are great at tackling loneliness and dividedness by creating opportunities for different generations, ethnicities, social classes, etc. to connect”.  A great example is Warwickshire Libraries in the UK which emphasizes on an article on Libraries Taskforce Blog that “they support all kinds of get-togethers such as Silver Surfer computer sessions for the over-50s, coffee mornings, Knit and Natter clubs, and reading groups and board games” as health and wellbeing have long been high on their agenda.

**7. Tourists**

Travelling has never been trendier. People want to explore the world and they travel more and more. When we consider countries like Canada, the US, Denmark, Australia, the UK, and Germany, we can see that all of them have an increase in incoming trips between 1 and 5% for the past year.

Librarians with their knowledge and research skills are the perfect guides to explain to them what they should visit and they also can help them find the resources they need. For example, DOKK1 the main branch of Aarhus Libraries in Denmark organizes guided tours of the city from time to time.

**8. Homeless people**

There are numerous reasons why someone is homeless such as house fire, unemployment, physical and emotional abuse, etc. Those people are often alone and without the resources they need.

It’s a sensitive topic and opinions are divided, but it has been noticed that the library plays an important role in their lives. Libraries represent to them a neutral and warm place and librarians help them find solutions to their problems. One of the best examples of this would be the Los Angeles Public Library who have a section on their website where homeless people can easily find the resources they need.

**9. Teachers**

Around the world, we hear about teachers quitting their job after teaching only for a few years. For example, in the UK, almost a third of new teachers will quit their job within 5 years as emphasized by an article in The Guardian. There are numerous reasons for that, but one remains the most important – they lack time.

Visiting the public library is one of those activities that the children love, and that gives some bonus time to teachers. Librarians not only help teachers, but they can also teach young generations the benefit of visiting the library too. The Australian State Library of New South Wales has a full section on their website where they promote activities going on in their library for schools and teachers.

**10. Families with small children**

Having small children is never easy, and some families don’t have the same resources as others to offer entertaining materials to their children. The National Center for Children states that about 15 million children in the U.S live in families that have a low- income. Libraries are the ones who offer families a peaceful environment full of books, games, and activities – basically, a small paradise.

This is true for all families. By targeting families with small children, libraries indirectly target families with low-income, but also all the other families that can benefit a lot from the libraries’ environment and activities. An example of this is at The New York Public Library, where they have a specific calendar for children which is full of activities.

**11. Teens**

Teens are the future, but a lot of them don’t even finish high school. There are many reasons why, and a recent study on dropout prevention highlights the two most important. Firstly, teens may quit because they are failing too many classes. Secondly, teens may drop out because they are simply not interested in school.

Librarians are a big help in these cases. They have the capacity to show teenagers what is beyond high school. They open their minds and let them discover an infinite spectrum of possibilities; from science to mathematics, to languages and communication. A good example of this is the Public Library of Montreal. They have a space completely reserved for teens between 13 and 17 years old where they have access to new technologies like laptops, video games, 3D printers, etc.

**12. Students**

Data from the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement shows that there is a lot of evidence that students are more engaged in their studies if they use libraries. The report argues that “Libraries actively contribute to students’ awareness, understanding, and capabilities in using, managing and working critically with information.”

Most universities have their own academic library, but that doesn’t mean public libraries don’t have services available for university students. Librarians are definitively the best in helping with research and planning.  A great example of that is at Melbourne Library where you can book a librarian to help you research a subject.

**13. Elderly**

The population is getting older. As mentioned in this article from the American Library Association, the first wave of baby-boomers has now turned 65. In most western countries, the percentage of the population older than 65 years old is now between 15% and 20%.

Elderly is, therefore, an important segment considered by many libraries. Libraries are providing services specifically for the elderly, but at the same time, they also help with the transition they go through, from working every day to being at home every day. The Brooklyn Public Library offers multi-session art workshops for old people.

Conclusion

The examples above are just a few of the segments a library targets with its services, programs, and events. Libraries are for everyone and they are an important pillar of the community. For many users, it is not easy to distinguish between the different offers that a library has specifically for them.

Advertising the services to that segment is also important. This is why those that succeed in personalizing their communications, they will be able to prove their value to the local community.

We’ll be back next week with another interesting article from the library world! Until then, you can get more interesting bits from libraries around the world by following us on Facebook and Twitter. Thanks for stopping by!

**1. Variety of content**

Due to physical restraints, traditional libraries lacked the flexibility to include a diverse range of content. On the other hand, digital libraries are able to keep the books alive by also broadening the availability of the content online. It stores a wide range of content in a virtual environment in the form of e-books, PDFs, podcasts, and videos that can be updated and modified according to the user’s needs. Unlike traditional libraries, which have physical constraints, e-libraries can be stored online on a cloud, drive, or hardware.

**2. Availability**

There’s no better luxury than having access to knowledge and relevant information pertaining to specific subjects. E-libraries save a lot of time by drawing out relevant resources only through a simple search tab. In the case of a physical library or book, the same could have taken hours. Finding a book in a library can be like finding a needle in a pile of hay. Options like in-built content search options, a few keywords, and title suggestions, would help a user draw relevant resources from the vast range of material available online. Instant availability of these resources helps users save time, prioritize other tasks, and store the found resources for future use.

**3. Technological integration**

Since the world is gradually transitioning to digitization, it’s important that students- the future generation, are introduced to technology in the early academic stages. They can adapt their skills to prepare them for technological changes. Ever since the COVID-19 outbreak, the usage of e-libraries has been emphasized as it has brought seamless access to reading and study materials with the use of e-libraries. Students not just have access to relevant resources but also gain technological education, which is beneficial in the long run.

Sources like Pearson E-library, offer interactive and top-notch quality learning content to students. They are easy to comprehend and are suitable for students of various academic years. This e-library comprises course books for various disciplines like engineering, humanities, social sciences, mathematics, etc.

**4. Preserve knowledge for future generations**

Physical storage devices like CDs, DVDs, cassette tapes, and even books and journals are prone to damage. Or, they can be discarded simply because they are not compatible with today’s technologies. Due to this vulnerability, traditional libraries fail to preserve valuable research and studies for generations to come. But thanks to the wonders of the internet, it has become possible to store and access this valuable information on the Cloud, which keeps it a lot more secure. Furthermore, sophisticated security measures also ensure that only authentic users have access to it, so that the data present online isn’t tampered with.

**5. Restores quality of information**

It costs a great amount of investment to preserve and conserve library resources in the traditional style. Since readers frequently access and reuse physical library resources, it can be very difficult to prevent the deterioration of books and other resources. Many organizations are moving to digitize their libraries in order to preserve the data and make it available to a large number of users on a consistent basis with minimized physical material preservation.