LIBRARY – A NEW PUBLIC SPACE

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Abstract

In the present society libraries are not only an active component of the process of acquiring, processing, communication, preservation and archiving of information resources. Developments in information technology and communications turns library into a public space for communication. In the information society development of library led to the establishment and redefining its roles: information, enlightenment and socialization are the main features of contemporary library. Library become an educational, cultural and social center and also a tool for promoting research experiences and a means by which community members can participate in the social life. One of the fundamental issues that need to consider when talking about the role of public space of communication and library must assume is the understanding that the user needs have changed. Moreover, increasing and diversifying social needs manifests itself as a service request, and, to this end, one important characteristic of contemporary library should represent the increasing complexity of services offered to users. The library becomes an integrator public space where librarians must come to meet users both physical and virtual means. The library becomes a public space endowed with information resources in all areas and all genres.

Keywords: contemporary library, public space for communication, information resources

1. Introduction

The problem of redefining the concept of "library" was released in Europe for the first time in April 2005 at the initiative of the European Commission the question of regulation of digital libraries. In this context, in Romania, the Government Ordinance no. 26/2006 (published in Official Gazette no. 85 of 30 January 2006) are made major changes to the law libraries in Romania. The library is expanded notion of "institution, department or specialized structure whose primary goal is to establish, organize, process, develop and preserve collections of books, publications, and other specific documents and databases to facilitate their use for information, research, education and recreation", as was defined in 2002, to the institution in charge of "initiation, organization and development of cultural projects and programs, including partnerships with public authorities and institutions, with similar institutions or public-private partnership" [10]. For the first time the question of the need of a department of marketing and public relations, on the one hand to have the role to inform the user about the existence and benefits of library resources and services, and on the other hand to help the institution to continuously improving the services offered so as to meet the needs and expectations. For, once with developments in technology, the library will have to overcome their role and informal educational environment and to expand its scope of activities in the field of culture and social, which really means the institution adaptability to the needs and requirements of its users. In this respect, the main provisions set out in the Romanian Government's legislative program for 2014 was considered the Draft Law amending the Law 334/2002 on libraries [13]. Among the regulations of this bill

include: redefining public libraries, with the starting point that these multiple roles to meet: local information center, cultural center, education center, center of information technology, change that recognizes the different functions it performs public library and recognizing different functions it performs public library. These provisions are proof that it was realized that the libraries in Romania must become flexible and to adapt to the new roles assumed by European libraries.

2. Libraries - part of e-culture

The concept of "library" in today's society has changed fundamentally. The traditional role of space knowledge and educational space is added to the roles of cultural space and social space, the contemporary library offering hybrid image library in which, alongside traditional resources meet digital resources (materials in electronic format, video and multimedia) and integrated digital resources (related to virtual communication) [7]. Thus, internationally, have been identified the following roles of modern libraries: educational center for education, social center, a general information center and local center for information technology. In this context, the library becomes a community space suitable for satisfying relationship needs of its users.

Among the most current ways of networking include the development of virtual communities. For more striking and imposing development tools library globalization transforms library into what is called "Library 2.0", concept of increasingly addressed and promoted in the specialty literature. By making a comparison between traditional library and library 2.0, Dediu identifies the following characteristics [6]:

Table 1: Library 1.0 versus Library 2.0

Collections closed	Open Collections
Centered on bringing the library	Centered on finding users
Mission focused on output	Mission focused on value-added
Applications type "monolithic"	Flexible and modular applications
Information obtained easily	Information provided through dialogue / conversation
Services with limited options	Extension great options
Newsletter printed, mailed	Blog by a team
Catalog "Read-only"	Catalog with commenting functions, Amazon style
Services provided only in the presence of users	Global Services available
Integrated library system (ILS) per employee	User tagging
ILS is the core operational	Services for the user is the focus

In this context, the most used phrases to define the concept of Library 2.0 include: library is everywhere; library has no limits; library invites participation; library uses the most flexible and easy systems; library is a human-centered organization [6].

"Library 2.0" is based on the orientation of librarian attention to the needs of users, in order to stimulate participation of users in creating services they want. Tim O'Reilly brought into focus the idea of exploiting the collective intelligence of those who use a product [11]. This, in the online environment, will take the form of feedback and comments on social networks. In this regard, user participation to develop value products, on sites like Amazon, Flickr, My Space, Facebook and Wikipedia, plays a major role. Also, achieving professional blogs and discussion forums have an important role in this respect.

Blogs created for professional libraries have an important role in terms of providing news and information for users and librarians, comment and recommend some resources available in the Internet, the presentation of data or new reviews about the newer books in collections, user training on information retrieval in certain databases [5]. Blogs offer two major advantages when it comes to interaction with library users, namely: update rate and chronological ordering of messages. This may be very useful in situations such as: library provides users with new services and new resource, the library organizes cultural, scientific or other events that require a punctual and quick communication, library doing some timetable changes. All this is easier perceived when using blog tool compared to using the library Web site, where the information current can be "hidden", or electronic mail, which can be bored recipients [5].

Regarding blogs for professionals in the field, they provide expert information on librarianship and information science in general. Librarians have worked just to list including the requirements that should be met by a professional who works in a library and this took the form of "Librarian 2.0 Manifesto". The author of the first version of "The Librarian 2.0 Manifesto" was Laura B. Cohen [4], Web Support Librarian at the University of Albany, SUNY. The most important aspects mentioned in the "Manifesto librarian 2.0" were included in the code of ethics for librarians. Among the provisions that manifesto meet the following: "I will create open Web sites that allow users to join with librarians to contribute content to enhance the learning experience and to assist colleagues"; "I will lobby for an open catalog that offers customized and interactive features that users expect environments online information"; "I encourage members of library administration to keep online journals "; "I guarantee, through my actions, the vital role of the librarian in any type of culture evolving information" [6]. All these provisions demonstrate that the librarian, aware of the impact of information technology development, aims to adapt to new user requirements and to meet their needs. Likewise, Lancaster observed that the expression "to consult a librarian" will become synonymous with "contact a specialist in information". The librarian will become a consultant with extensive competencies.

3. Library – Center of Information and Communication

The value of information resources offered through various channels is the key feature to understanding the evolution of the idea of the current library. Among them one of the most

important roles is to understand the library as an information and communication center. Beyond the traditional aspects of the idea of information, such as: on-the place of traditional documents (books, magazines, brochures, flyers), copy and print information, Internet access, access to their own databases using catalogs, and, more recently, the use of hyper-catalogs (hyper-catalogs involve integrating links to more information on a document to a full text, to an audio or video, links that allow extending the search of similar documents and annexation of information that add value document original [8]), newer libraries provide community information services.

Community information centers consist of providing citizens of diverse information from various fields, such as: education, culture, law, minority issues, different aspects of NGOs or international organizations, statistical studies, aspects of economic or tourism, aspects of public administration, health care and social assistance [6]. Thus, a library may identify one or more areas that are of interest to the community it serves and perform specialized databases with information relevant to the target group. In providing information to citizens can appeal to modern means of communication (email, blogs specialized, subscriptions to specialized programs) and the traditional means, such as telephone, fax or mail.

Another fundamental aspect that we must carefully when we understand the library as public space is that of meeting space, especially for users who for various reasons can't use regular library services. In this respect we talk about special services that any library should have their attention. These include: external services; information technology services for the blind and people with visual or hearing disabilities; information technology services for people with neuromuscular disabilities and guidance services and user training, conducted by target groups.

External services are services provided by public libraries outside the central or subsidiaries. Making mobile libraries, libraries-bus, libraries-boats or other forms of transport used to serve those living in remote areas [6]; services offered in prisons, hospitals, homes for children and the elderly are examples of this. With regard to information technology services for the blind and people with visual or hearing disabilities, libraries must take care to purchase equipment and special technical means for people with physical disabilities (hearing or vision) such as large monitors and contrast functions increased or displays that convert information into Braille and programs that convert the text spoken by the user into text written. Information technology based services for people with neuromuscular disabilities requires the purchase of special equipment for people with learning difficulties: readable documents, audio tapes, CDs [6], keyboards with few keys or devices that replace the mouse and allow for special orders. As for the guidance and training of users, conducted by target groups, depending on their interests, imply the involvement of users in different social or cultural programs, conducted in different physical spaces designed for this purpose or virtual environment, within communities involved management issues that concern them at a time. In this respect, the librarian is to provide essential information and landmarks users and the actions they propose.

Where is achieved strong relationship between the library and its citizens that it serves, the library should provide resources for maintenance of networking. In this respect, we talk

about dedicated staff and representative of each area of interest, specialized departments, specialized collections and special relationships with organizations and people representative of the areas of interest of the citizens. In addition, libraries can create tourist areas in compartments structure for providing community information, tourist information centers [6]. They have their own premises, staff and equipment dedicated and specialized activities. Examples are: Tourist Information Center "Gheorghe Iacomi", compartment structure of County Library "G. T. Kirileanu" from Piatra Neamț [14]; Tourist Information Centre from Botoșani County, created in a European Project and developed in partnership with the County Library from Botoșani [14]; Tourist Information Centre Măcin, developed near City Library from Măcin [15].

In terms of understanding the library as a center of communication must be taken into consideration that, beyond the role that it plays in informing its users for a better and effective networking with them, the library must assume the role of organizer host events or events organized by other institutions or groups of people in the community it serves. In this regard, in addition to traditional services, we talk about new services included in library activities. Renting space library for social or business events; creating and sustaining support groups; creating spaces to achieve all kinds of debates; establishment of clubs with specific activity (such as chess club or photographers); organizing specialized courses; organization of competitions to stimulate interest in certain areas and to develop a spirit of competitiveness are examples of this.

Another basic role of the public library is to support that it can bring to the citizens we serve in terms of needs that they have in relation to leisure or purchase of various materials in a variety of formed on entertainment topics [6]. Through such involvement library contribute to the preservation of their culture, of history and traditions of the local community, to promote them and encourage citizens to participate in cultural life. In this regard, referring to the mission that the institution should have the library, the manager of the Central University Library "Mihai Eminescu" from Iași, Alexandru Călinescu, stated: "library building was conceived as a multifunctional space where cultural activities had share at least a proper library ", stressing the need to open to the public library collections, not only documents but also by configuring it as an important cultural center [2].

Also, contemporary library should offer users access to application programs and various operating systems. The category also includes application programs online, programs accessible via the Internet, which includes and blogs, discussion forums, social applications for discussion and information exchange. In a study conducted in 1995, C. B. Lowry brings attention to the fact that, following the development of technology, libraries will survive if they focus on building a "virtual library infrastructure" [9]. Thus the library of the future will become a center of intermediation in a network environment by subsidizing access to information for the community it serves and providing technological support in this regard [9], and the librarian will become "access point" [9] and itinerant in virtual space for users of information.

4. Conclusion

During the last period libraries began to turn into important formal and informal social centers, due to technological, intellectual and social changes to which they were subjected. Libraries becomes a new public space that offers various services to citizens: from tourist information to provide services to people with special needs, from organizing activities that encourage artistic and cultural life at providing support from Virtual communication in virtual communities profile. Contemporary users have expectations and demands very different from traditional users. To accommodate them and maintain utility libraries, and therefore staff they must change their attitude, thinking and working. In addition, library services and specific techniques are constantly expanding, aiming to cover the ever-changing needs of users.

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