

Development of a Departmental Blog for Library and Information Science (LIS), S.V. University, Tirupati

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Abstract

The information and communication technology has dramatically changed the way of communication over the past two decades. The e-mail, Internet and the World Wide Web have changed the communication and learning habits of the society. Web 2.0 tools and technologies such as Blogs, Flickr, Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn and Twitter help in communication and information sharing. Among the various Web 2.0 technologies tools mentioned, weblog or blog is an important tool for information sharing and communication. It provides value added services to the library and information centers. This paper discusses the blog designed for Department of Library and Information Science (DLIS), S.V. University (SVU), Tirupati, A.P. using blogger, their features and applications of other Google tools to enhance the blog services.

Keywords: Blog, Weblog, Blogger, DLIS, S.V. University, Departmental Blog, Web 2.0

Introduction

The information and communication technology has dramatically changed the way of communication over the past two decades. The e-mail, Internet and the World Wide Web have changed the communication and learning habits of the society¹. Web 2.0 tools and technologies such as blogs, Flickr, Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn and Twitter help in communication and information sharing. These tools are open to everyone.

Among the various Web 2.0 technologies tools mentioned, weblog or blog is an important tool for information sharing and communication. It provides value added to the services library and information centers. Utility and popularity of blogs increases due to the adoptability, low cost, flexibility and applicability. This technology, undoubtedly, is considered as a state-of-art facility for

libraries. Thus, blogging is one of the most important and interesting tools for information sharing and communication on the Web Blogging software (Blogger, WordPress etc.), which makes it easier for people to create blogs.

Blogs or weblogs are not only a sharing tool for information and communication but also a working tool for promotion and publicity of library services. They are playing a dynamic and significant role in today's social, cultural, civil and economic spheres of the society. The success of the weblogs depends on blogger's inspiration, motivation, dedication and ability. It is going to be a powerful communicating and information sharing tool in library and information services in near future².

Now-a-days, Library and Information Science (LIS) Education is constantly changing with the information and communications technology (ICT). As ICTs are more and more integrated in LIS education and research, LIS Departments must provide these technologies to their students/scholars with relevant and contemporary experiences, which prepare them for practical life after their course work. Techno savvy library professionals have already identified that the blog is a media to market library services to their users around the clock.

Need of Creating Blog

Webpages of Department of Library Information Science (DLIS), currently, incorporated with their respective schools at the University websites. However, these sites provide little information about courses, teachers, and research and operations or obsolete information due to various reasons, such as space limits, the permission of higher authorities, technical problems, etc. There are lots of differences in LIS courses and their syllabus, duration of courses, announcements of programmes, etc., among

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universities. They provide very little information about the department and its research.

There is also a question mark even today in case of updating the standard procedure, formats, rules and regulations of the departments in their university web sites. The exclusive blog created for the department, the department will fill these gaps and this type of blogs enable and create scope for change in education and research in LIS. These blogs help existing professionals to meet the updated LIS education scenario and these are useful for professionals aspiring to complete their degree, and also create awareness among the public concern about the LIS profession³.

There are many ways in which blogs can be used in the academic library environment to promote and market library services and resources to the faculty as well as to the students.

Department of LIS, S.V. University Blog

Department of Library and Information Science (DLIS), S.V. University blog is created to communicate information to their users, for publicity and promotional purposes. It was started in 2016. It was designed using Google blogger. Blogger is Google's free blog-hosting site.

Objectives

The main objectives to create a blog for DLIS are:

- to publicise the history, activities, and courses offered by the department.
- To increase awareness among the students and scholars to use technological advances to meet the changing information needs of diverse society.
- To disseminate information about trends in LIS.
- To Show contributions, research and the strength of the faculty.
- To provide video tutorials on various automation, digital and content management software.
- To create awareness among students about open access journals in the field.
- To Connect LIS alumni with the new students.
- To create an active online platform among LIS professionals and prospective professionals.

Content of the Blog

The blog provide customized services in various categories of LIS to meet the needs of the students and faculty of the department. It can be visited at <http://www.svudlis.blogspot.in>.

The web authority of department generally takes care of the blog content like history of the department, courses, admission, people, research, activities, events, resources, photographs, etc.,. The authority designs plan for content collection, sources of content, hosting content, updating blog, etc. The screenshot of home page of the blog is given in Fig. 1

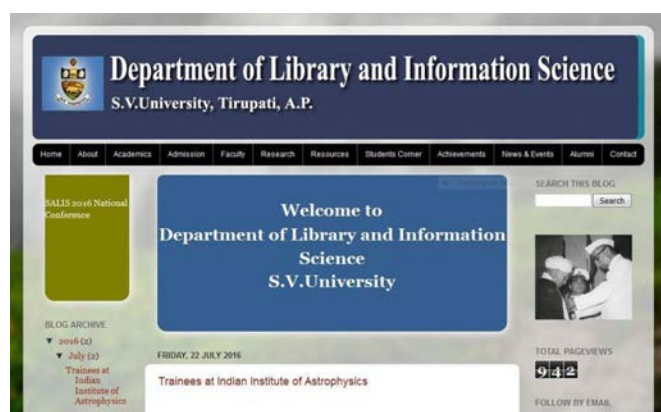


Fig. 1: Screenshot of DLIS, SVU Blog

Menus on the Blog

The pages of the blog kept under different menus and submenus, which can be linked below the header. The following are some important main menus:

- About: About the Department
- Academic: Course Structure given by the department.
- Admissions: Admission procedure of the courses.
- Faculty: About Faculty with full details like contributions, research, specialisations, etc.,
- Research: Doctorates and M.Phil. Degrees awarded and ongoing.
- Students Corner: It can provide information regarding syllabi, previous question papers, timetable etc.
- Resources: provides link to different online resources related to LIS profession like Open Access journals, video tutorials, etc.

- h) Events: forthcoming events and announcement of the department and outside department.
- i) Alumni: Provided list of alumni and their job details.
- j) Achievements: Memories and achievements with photographs either by faculty or students/scholars.

Other Features

The blog arranged slideshow, scrolling text of forthcoming events (conferences, workshops, Ph.D. viva-voce etc.), page views, hit counter, useful links and allowed the visitors to give their feedback, queries, suggestions regarding courses and activities of the department.

Application of Google Tools

Application of Google tools to enhancing the DLIS blog services.

Blogger

Free weblog publishing tool from *Google*, for sharing text, photos and video. Free templates / themes and gadgets / widgets included. The main advantage to using Blogger is that Blogger is completely free, including hosting and analytics. The blog designed using Google blogger.

The Blogger Template Designer offers many templates, making it simple to create a professional-looking blog. Choose from hundreds of background images, tens of flexible layouts and rearrange widgets through a drag and drop interface⁴.

Google Drive for Storage

Google Drive, formerly Google Docs, is a file storage and synchronization service created by Google. It allows users to store files in the cloud, share files, and edit documents, spreadsheets, and presentations with collaborators⁵.

The blog Doc files and pdf files are stored at Google Drive and they can be viewed through the blog.

YouTube for Video Sharing

YouTube allows billions of people to discover, watch and share originally-created videos. YouTube provides a forum for people to connect, inform, and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators and advertisers large and small⁶.

The blog provided software installation and learning tutorials through You Tube video sharing. The screenshot of sharing of video files from You Tube is given in Fig. 2



Fig. 2: Screenshot of Video Tutorials

Google+

Google+ (pronounced and sometimes written as Google Plus) is a social networking and identity service owned and operated by Google Inc. It is helpful for increase the traffic to the blog⁷.

When you sign up for Google+, you can see and share all of your Picasa Web albums in Google+.Google+ is the new home for your photos. Albums will be visible on your Google+ photos homepage.

Gmail

Gmail is a free, advertising-supported email service provided by Google⁸. Gmail used for the Blog feedback and users comments alert.

Google Analytics

Google analytics provides powerful digital analytics for anyone with a web presence. It is one of the most powerful digital analytic solutions available – and it is free for anyone to use. Google Analytics is now the most widely used web analytics service on the Internet⁹.

Conclusions

The LIS professionals always offer value-added services to their users at working places after their course work.

The department blog begins at the department level to provide value added service to see the credibility of the department for their existing and future professionals, and even the public. This initiation requires proper dedication, determination and collective cooperation at department level. This type of initiatives will take LIS education and research to the greater heights and will make it reach world class level. For this all LIS associations, teachers and LIS fraternity should extend support and encouragement to the LIS departments in India.

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