

# SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS APPLICATION OF LIBRARY SERVICES IN INDIA

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**Abstract** *Social media tools are important in each and every discipline now days. The Library and its services are mostly dependable on social media in this internet age. It acts as a media between the library resources and its users. This paper basically highlights the availability of different types of social media tools, Social networking sites like Facebooks, Twitter, Myspace, LinkedIn, YouTube, Ning, Library thing, Wikis and Blogs etc. The advantages and disadvantages and the importance of social media tools in Library. Also briefs the use and its application in library services. This paper aims to give a brief overview of the social media tools in particular to library activities.*

**Keyword:** *Social Media, Social Media tools, Social Networking Sites, Facebooks, Wikis*

## INTRODUCTION

With the advent of ICT (Information communication and technology), Social media is gaining momentum day by day and is very popular among the people now a days. ICT has revolutionarily changed the field of Library information science from the growth of Library Management Software to its application and services. The concept of library has fully changed with impact of ICT. In initial stage Library was a store house of Documents/Books and other material. But when we talk about 21<sup>st</sup> century libraries, it has fully changed the old concept. The present libraries covers all the digital collections like E journals, E books, E-Database, CDs and DVDs, Scanner, Computer, Kewos etc. Online services and database are the buzz word of the day for the users and library using the latest tools & technology. So also the users are well connected with social media like LinkedIn, Myspace, Twitter and Facebook. To satisfy the users many Libraries are providing service through different social media like Facebooks, Twitter, and Myspace during the last couple of year. Libraries have their own Facebook page and connected to other social networking & academic sites. Social media are used by the people to connect themselves with their friends and relatives and groups through the different social media. Similarly the Libraries connect with the users, professionals, organisations, classes, and others using the Social media /Social networking sites / web 2.0.

## BACKGROUND STUDY

(Mishra, 2008) in his paper states that Social networking may be a scheme that allows the user to move and work

collaboratively with alternative users, as well as the power to browse, search, invite friends to attach and move with internet world. (Ayiah & Kumah, 2011) viewed that SNS are major technology that offers library to connect with its clients. (N. & Jagadish, 2012) mentioned the uses of social media in academic libraries are increasing to benefit the users in rendering online information services on account of the changes in various activities like adopting technologies, social interaction, service context, procurement of information resources. (Alonge, 2012) expressed their views that the social and communication pattern of our society are being shifted by the arrival of social media and the use of this products directly change the various aspect of the library services begin from the finding information to reach out to client. (Jadhav, 2014) described that the Uses of SNS services like Facebook and Twitter is very popular and integral part of everyday communication in India. Fundamentally, the people are social beings, both in our private life and in our professional interactions. (Gupta et al., 2014) opined that to promote the library services and highlights the resources, patrons use of social media are increase in Academic Libraries. (Smeaton & Davis, 2014) said the uses of social media are increasing in Public Libraries to meet users in their own spaces. Social Media are used optimally to generate a participatory library service emphasising engagement with users. (Sahib, 2015) Social media is raising new challenges to LIS professionals in the internet based surroundings to enhance the amount of social media tools, users, and social networking sites.

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## SOCIAL MEDIA: THE CONCEPT

According to Wikipedia “Social media are computer-mediated tools that allow people, companies and other organizations to create, share, or exchange information, career interests, ideas, and pictures / videos in virtual communities and networks”. Definition by ( Young Adult Library Services Association, 2011) says “It is a term commonly used to refer to a variety of web-based tools used to connect, collaborate, and create web content and experiences. Websites that allow visitors to send email, post comments, build web content or take part in live audio or video chats are all considered to be social media sites”.

(Neti, 2011) has define term ‘social media’ can be derived from two words which constitute it. Media generally refers to advertising and the communication of ideas or information through publications / channels. Social implies the interaction of individuals within a group or community. Taken together, social media simply refers to communication / publication platforms which are generated and sustained by the interpersonal interaction of individuals through the specific medium or tool.

Social media is web based communication media which a user can interact with other user in terms of social life, professional life, and educational purpose. It is just like a communication channel that all wows user communicate among them. The social media are web based applications, user generated information, user creates their own profile, manage them and share with other users, same circle of pictures, personal ideas, text, videos other content. Basic feature like enable many and may interactions, User generated contents.

## TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media can be categories based on their characteristics. Social media are 8 types. These are as follows:

### SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Social networking sites facilitates the users to create own profile, manage and share it. It also having the privileges to add friends, find friend from other sites, creating a group id with linking the people having common interest. Connect with various group of people like friends, family members & relatives, professional colleagues etc. with like minded people is the basic purpose of the social networking sites. Examples of the social media are Facebook, LinkedIn, Myspace, Ning, Google+ etc.

## MICROBLOGGING

It is a web based interface application which allows the user or subscriber to get update the short form of message like text, video link from other user that they have already subscribed and can post a short piece of digital content such as text, video, or image. Twitter is one of the popular example of microblogging. It gives instant short message to the users. According to Wikipedia Twitter has 320,000,000 users till date worldwide (Wikipedia, n.d.).

## BLOGS

It is a platform of personal thoughts, ideas, in a single place on the web. Basically it is the platform shared by an Individual for his/her thoughts, ideas, opinions, news and other contents and messages arranged in reverse chronological order. Hence the most recent post will be displayed on the top. Some of the examples are Probblogger.net, Libercafe, Infolibrarian, Lislinks, Library Soup, and India Libraries etc. Librarian can use this tools can share the topic, ideas related to library services and share information like job posting, training and seminar etc. to its member.

## WIKIS

It is a webpage which allow anyone to edit, modify, write the text and edit other contents. It is a web based platform for user to share their knowledge and skills with others. It is a collaborative work of an individual or a group of person using a simple markup language and a web browser. Examples are Wikipedia, Appropedia and Library success etc.

## PODCASTS

According to Wikipedia “a podcast is a form of digital media that consists of an episodic series of audio, video, digital radio, PDF, or ePub files subscribed to and downloaded automatically through web syndication or streamed online to a computer or mobile device”. Examples of podcast are voice from the valley, Radiolab, Buzz out loud etc.

## FORUMS

It is an online discussion platform where a group of like minded people having equal level of respect and interest can discuss on any topic and respond there on to foster the knowledge. It is one of the best platform to share and discuss the thoughts on the topics and to organize the information ensuring a proper checks and balance. Also one of the oldest social media tools which allows user to communicate, share

his/her opinion. It is often found on specific topics and interests, the example are reddit, Quora, Digg, NMLIS, LIS forum etc.

## MEDIA SHARING

This type of social media tools allow the users specially to upload and share the multimedia files like video, images, songs over the internet. These types of social media are very popular now-a-days among the people. Some of the examples of media sharing are YouTube and Flickr. The users can view, download and make the comments to the uploaded content.

## BOOKMARKING SITES

It is allow user to save and organize links to any number of online resources and websites. According to wiki “a social book marking service is a centralized online service which enables users to add, annotate, edit, and share bookmarks of web documents”. The popular social book marking sites are Delicious having 1,500,000 Approximate Unique Monthly Visitors and Stumble Upon 28,000,000-estimated Unique Monthly Visitors as on July, 2016 (Ebizmba Inc, n.d.).

## SOCIAL MEDIA IN INDIA

Indian people are very active with social media. They share their thoughts, ideas, using social media tools. Social media like Facebook, Twitter, Google plus and LinkedIn

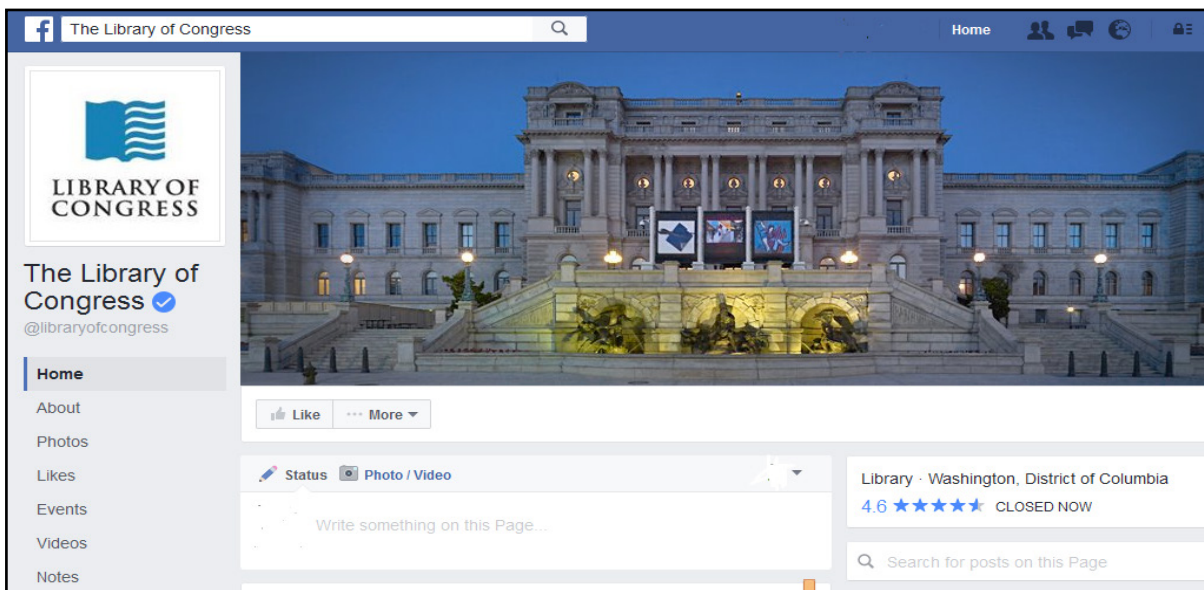
are dominating in India. A report reveals that Facebook is leading social media uses a percentage of 96 of urban people in India, whereas Google Plus (61 per cent), Twitter (43 per cent) and LinkedIn (24 per cent) (Bhargava, 2015). Another report entitled “Digital, Social & Mobile in India in 2015” identify that in India the Social Media Users: 134 million, up 26% in the past year and Mobile Social Media Users: 97 million, up 5% since July 2014 (Kemp, 2015). Social media and its uses are increasing day by day.

## SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (SNS) IN LIBRARY SERVICES

There are lot of SNS used in Library services namely Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Blogger, Google+, Flickr, MySpace, Twitter etc.

## FACEBOOK

It is one of the popular social sites that are used by millions of peoples worldwide. Now its active users are around 1.65 billion monthly (Wikipedia.com, 2016.). In recent few years many of the Library has its own library page and offers different kind of services using the Facebook. The concerned libraries use this social media to provide the information on new Databases, New arrivals of Books & Other resources, Opening Hours, Book Exhibitions, to provide reference services, about upcoming workshops / training programme of Library. It facilitates the user to get instant messages and reference services.



**Fig. 1: Snapshot of Library of Congress using Facebook**

## TWITTER

Twitter is another popular social networking site among the social media it can be used by the libraries for marketing of library services like reference services and alert services. It is a free microblogging site developed in the year 2006. It has

310 million active users by March, 2016 (Wikipedia, 2016.). Most of the Libraries are using this tools for promoting library services like new arrivals, event information, news announcements, new database etc. Some of notable Libraries that are actively using the Twitter accounts are Library of Congress having 817k Follower, 10.5 K tweets and National Library of Australia has more than 34 k Followers 9,245 tweets as on 28 July, 2016.

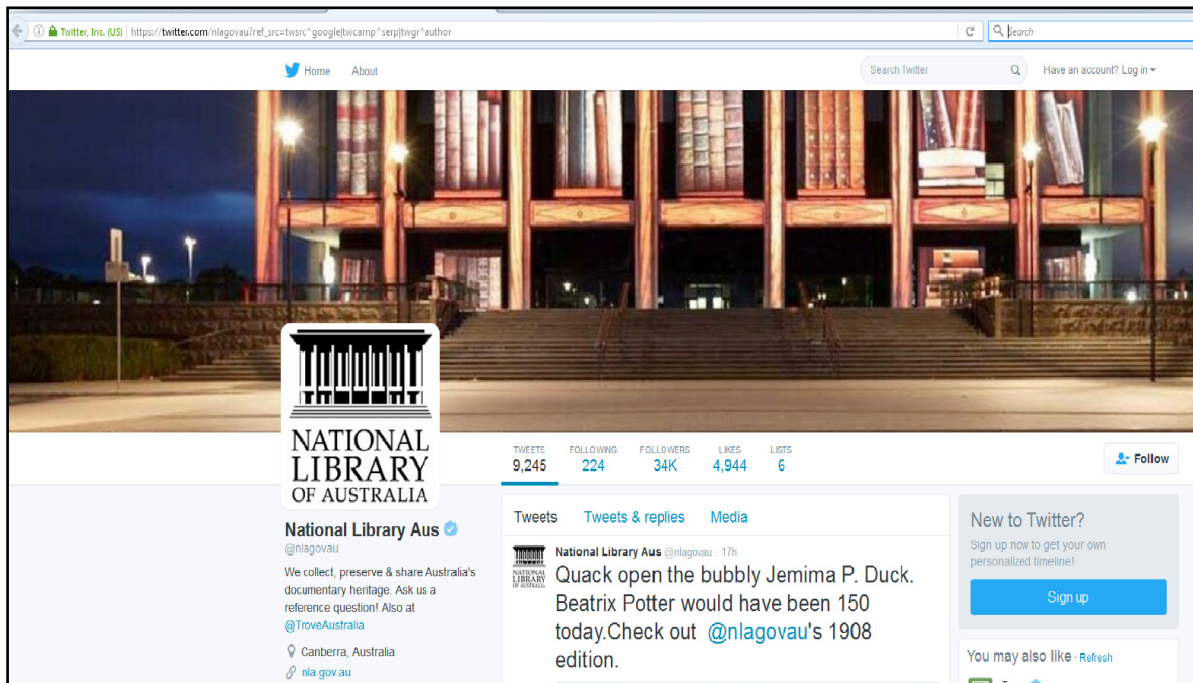


Fig. 2: Snapshot of Library of National Library of Australia using Twitter

## MYSPACE

Many a Libraries are active with Myspace site. Like Facebook, MySpace a popular social networking sites allows the user to create their profile with aim to provide better services by way of making friends, groups, sharing views, images and videos etc. Libraries are providing services and receiving feedback from the user related to the services offered by them. The examples are Birmingham public library (<https://myspace.com/birminghampubliclibrary>), and Schwarzwald library (<https://myspace.com/schwarzwaldlibrary>).

## YOUTUBE

This is one of the important social media site widely used by the libraries in and around the world. This helps the Libraries for marketing the information products; share their programs, conferences, and workshops instructional videos of the methods and steps for the use of database, books, E-books etc. Application of YouTube in library improve the services through tutorial and other video mode. Some of the

examples of the institute using YouTube are FedUniLibrary by Federation University Australia and Library of Congress.

## NING

It is a web based service that facilitates users to create their own profile on social networks and to join and participate in other networks. Librarian uses these tools to connect with the user, the Library Association and with other people for sharing the information to user about the library services.

## LINKEDIN

It is one of the prime social media platforms that allow the user to connect with the like minded people and same interest. This site is basically a professional social networking sites. Application of this site can increase the professional's network with other librarians; Professional's share their expertise knowledge, ideas with others. Also it is useful to the Library for marketing their services.

## LIBRARYTHING

It is an online web application specially designed for the library activities. It facilitates the user for cataloguing of books, Share it and connects with related people. Many libraries now connect with Library Thing. It is also used for copy cataloguing. Users can catalogue up to two hundred books. It enriches the library OPAC and the Librarians can use current publications of university and send it to the user. It is largely used by the Libraries, Publishers, Authors and Individuals.

## FLICKR

It is a social media basically used for sharing of bulk photos with unlimited storage space. Library can share the poster, brochures, information bulletin and other library photos to the library patrons. Flickr is created and manage by Yahoo.

## SECOND LIFE

Second Life is a social media used as an online virtual service for sharing of the videos, voice records, 3D images etc. The libraries are using this service to invite the users by way of streamed media, discussions, classes etc.

## GOOGLE+

It is one of the social media tool like Facebook which allow the usersto add, invite, post, edit, upload videos feature with the help of this tool library can share the information service with the member group for the services like News & events, New services, Video Tutorial etc.

## TEACHER TUBE

It is a video sharing website similar to YouTube that allow users to share videos and designed for educational purpose. Librarians can use this tool to provide various educational related contents for library users and also useful for teachers in adding teaching content for the students.

## WIKI

It is a very important and powerful tool which act as knowledge management tool. This tool helps the library to share the information about its holdings like Library resources, Reference sources and also different section of library can connect with the library patrons.

## PINTEREST

It is a free web based tool which allow sharing content like images, videos and other objects. Pinterest provides great

platform to market the library resources. A library can make its own profile and create boards, pinning photos and video showcasing of the library (Jain, 2013).

## APPLICATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN LIBRARIES

- Social media can be used for survey purpose for feedback from the user related to the Library services,
- Library can promote library resources using this social media for Ex.: -Orientation programme of the database, EBooks, Journals etc.
- Library can create book discussions group using social media.
- New arrival of Books, E-resources and other materials.
- Instructional videos for new database and its use.
- Library can link to article, database and other resources.
- Library can provide reference services through the social media.
- Online quiz for Library resources and services.
- Provide research tips.
- Library can also communicate to other library and share their library services to other library.
- Library can provide entertainment or amusement for users as well as the learning tips using the social media.

## ADVANTAGES

The important advantages of the social media are:

- Most of the social media are freely available on internet.
- Library can easily share, connect with other libraries and its members free of cost.
- Social media is easy to find the information and sharing purpose.
- It is accessible 24X7 on internet. There is no time limit to aces the information.
- Social media are very user friendly and simple to use and it needs no extra training.
- It facilitates the user to connect with other people worldwide over the internet. Create the network globally and built professional link.

## Accessing News in Real Time

Promotion of library services using social media is very easy.

It increase the uses of library services & resources and interaction with library patrons.

It facilitate to collect feedback suggestion from user to enhance the library services.

It increase the communication between library and other section.

## LIMITATIONS

Some of the limitations and disadvantages of social media are:

- Opens up the possibility for hackers to commit fraud and launch spam and virus attacks.
- Potentially results in negative comments from employees about the institute and library.
- Too many social media tools to learn.
- Users spending much more time on social media than required.
- Privacy decrease and identity theft.
- Lack of validity of information.
- Lack of knowledge how to use it.
- Lack of interest among the majority of librarian for using social media.
- Inadequate training opportunities for library staff.
- Need uninterrupted internet connectivity and electricity connection.
- Slow speed of Internet hamper the services.

## CONCLUSION

The social media tools are gaining its importance day by day. In the field of library science and library it is one of the most important and powerful tool for disseminating the library services. Library professional are using these tools for the purpose of the promoting library services and resource. But in India due to the lack of IT knowledge, awareness among the LIS professionals so also the internet connectivity problem, it is seen only used by the modern IT savvy people and modern libraries. There are different kinds of social media tools available globally but it is the librarians responsibility to make it use and choose a best available among them.

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