CHANGES IN THE WORLD OF LIBRARY SERVICES:
EVOLUTION OF E-SERVICES INTO M-SERVICES

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Abstract

This paper gives classification of existing m-services in world’s famous libraries according to review of the recent literature and also a brief research about users review on m-services in Croatian libraries. Information revolution is currently focused on information access through mobile platforms. Namely, because of rapid development of mobile technology in this wireless wired world it is crucial to bring information to user’s palm not only into user’s home. According to literature review libraries in the world assure wide range of m-services such as SMS alerts (about working hours, news, events etc.), m-tutorials, mobile audio/virtual tour of building, mobile/virtual clips (podcasts), m-GPS (Global Positioning System), mobile online catalog (MOPAC), mobile databases, m-service ‘Ask a librarian!’, m-services for reservation, mobile Skype etc. Although development of m-services is very expensive in that way libraries could promote existing services or even use opportunities of mobile technology to offer new and innovative services and attract new users. Difficulties in development of library m-services are mostly gathered around interoperability and usability issues. Fragmentation of mobile platforms, mobile operative systems and browsers cause interoperability problems while problems dealing usability concern limits as small size of mobile phone, resolution or possibilities of user’s data input. Croatian libraries have not yet recognized the value of m-services, so the research in a brief survey sought to examine the users opinion on this type of library services and implementation capabilities in local libraries.

Keywords: mobile technology, mobile platforms, m-services, Croatian libraries
Content of the contribution

Introduction

The information revolution is at the moment of focusing on the mobility. At the height of the popularity of mobile telephony, where on each residence come nearly two mobile devices, of which an increasing proportion are smartphones, no wonder libraries have recognized the importance of implementation different mobile services to their users.

Some of the most popular library mobile services in the world are searching online library catalogs, searching specialized databases, searching the collections of e-journals and e-book collections, options search by title, subject or format, mobile service Ask a librarian, a mobile virtual reference services, mobile book reservation and many others.

The poster will show some of the most famous examples of mobile services in libraries such as The District of Columbia Public Library, the Overdrive service, Duke University, Ball State University Library, The New York Public Library, The Medical Library of Boston, Thomas Ford Memorial Library, EndNote, Factiva, PubMed mobile, Simmons College Library, and others.

However, in Croatia mobile services in libraries are still unrecognized, so the goal of this study was to examine the opinions of the users of the City and University Library of Osijek about the possibility of introducing different mobile services in the library.

Results of the survey

The survey was conducted using an online poll on users of City and University Library of Osijek. The poll included two sets of questions: demographic information and opinion on the implementation of certain m- services in the library. Total of N=100 respondents completed the survey. Most respondents were female (70%), aged between 19 and 24 (79%) completed secondary level education (58%) and current student status (80%). 41% of respondents are active members of the City and University Library of Osijek, while 21% of respondents have a card of another public library even 38% of respondents do not possess a library membership card. 49% of respondents possess a smartphone device (such as Apple, Android, Windows Phone, Symbian devices, etc.) and most of them intend to get one any time soon.

Respondents partially agreed with the implementation of mobile library services in their library – online catalog search (58%), specialized collections search (43,4%), collections of e-journals search (50%), collections of e-books search (57%), collections search by title (60%), collections search by subject (53,1%), collections search by format (39,4%), m-service Ask a librarian (48%), mobile virtual reference services (50,5%), mobile reservation services (61%).

Interest of the respondents with regard to other mobile services decreases - SMS notifications (for example on working time, the news and events, etc.; 36%), mobile manuals / instructions (28%), mobile virtual tour of the library (31,3%), mobile promotional audio / video clips (podcasts; 27,3%), mobile GPS service (46%), mobile Skype (34%).

Findings

Although m-services in libraries are very much present in the world, and their number continues to increase every day, Croatian libraries do not even consider introducing such services in their facilities. Research has shown that users have also divided opinions about m-services. Therefore, libraries should not just think about the implementation of such services, but also to inform and train users for their usage. The future of libraries is certainly in the flexibility and mobility, and mobile services are an integral part of that progress.

References and Citations


Curriculum Vitae

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