

WEB BASED LIBRARY ALERT SERVICE: A STUDY

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Abstract:

Alert services benefits growing rapidly in the research arena across the various faculties, numerous types of alert services gaining momentum in the field of library science. This study proposes to understand different kinds of alert services available like citation alert, web alert, search alerts, publication alerts etc. this study also makes modest attempt in providing brief awareness to researchers and other stakeholders. Finally this work analyses pros and cons of these alert services in the last leg of this paper.

Key words: *E-Publishers, Alert Service, Library Services, RSS (Really Simple Syndication), web pages.*

1. Introduction:

The primary aim of any library is to provide timely and quality services to its users. Advent of new technologies has made it imperative for libraries to absorb, adopt, and to provide IT-based services to the users. Libraries are now providing customized web-based services at the users' desktops. Users, particularly, scientists, who are engaged in time-bound research and development projects, need to be alerted about the nascent literature in their

respective fields. Librarians are providing current awareness services to meet these requirements. A few libraries and many e-publishers are providing alert services to keep the users informed about the latest additions to their collections and other information relating to the users' areas of interest¹ (**Hariharan et.al.2007**).

Electronic alerting services can help users to keep up to date with current news and newly published literature on a particular topic. Many

library websites and online databases and publications offer electronic alerting tools. Once user have set up an electronic alert, the method of running it at specific intervals and delivering the new results is handled automatically; user will be notified although new contents (e.g. an online journal article, electronic table of content of a new journal issue, a new blog entry, etc.) becomes available².(<http://libguides.usc.edu/content.php?pid=288957&sid=3657495>).

2. The Concept of Alert Services:

Generally defined web alert services refer to features included with scholarly databases or made available by journal publishers that allow to be notified by email or text message when something of interest to library or user has been added to a database or published about newly published resources on a specific topic or when new articles are published in a journal².

Librarians regularly flipped through new faculty by listing areas of interest and typing up bibliographies of potential matches. Now a day alerting services can provide such lists of databases automatically or a third party that combines these sources. Alerting services also called as a current awareness services².

3. Types of Alert Services:

The Libraries subscribe to a number of databases that make electronic alert services

available to users. There are several kinds of alert services they are as follows:

a) Table of Contents:

Table of Contents service is commonly known as TOC's. TOC's service allows user to keeping up-to-date with newly published scholarly material by receiving the table of contents of newly published journals they have selected, often with the links to the articles. These are regularly available well before the print issue is published. EBSCO, ProQuest and ISI Web of Science are the examples of email TOC's services provided by the publisher databases. Table of Content service can be provided through frequent email alerts. Email alert frequencies vary depending on the publisher's database updates.

b) Search alerts:

Search alert service is one of the library services. I t is also called as Saved Search Alerts or Keyword Alerts. Library periodically re-runs the user created search to match with recent updates and send the alerts.

c) Citation Alert:

Citation alert service is one of the web based library service. User can track when a specified article or author is cited in newly published articles with citation alerts. Most the publisher sites limit results to citations appearing within

their journals, while databases can provide citations from many sources.

d) New publication alerts:

This alert service provides notification of new publications (other than journal issues) from a publisher or professional organization. This alerting service could include books, proceedings, newsletters, standards etc. Annual Reviews, BioOne, EBSCO host, Engineering Village, Google Scholar, IEEE Xplore, and PubMed etc...are the publisher databases which provide alert service to the registered users. . Libraries can make use of this service and create alerts for their users depending on their research topic. Library off campus user need to sign in to the publisher's website to access the content and check the print or online availability of the publication.

e) RSS:

Really Simple Syndication is popularly known as RSS. RSS is one of the Web 2.0 technology, which is applicable in sharing and delivering information hence, can be adopted in the library alert services. Many publishers and databases provide RSS feed alerts to issues or contents. Now a day many library web pages or blogs offer RSS alert services. It will save time of the user by subscribing to many feeds and instead of visiting being website, find links to any or all new content in one place⁶.

f) New book alerts:

User may also want to be alerted even though new books on a topic are published or added to the Library's collection. If user find a newly published book, user can suggest an item for purchase or request to borrow it through inter library loan. This alert service will help in attracting the users to the library.

g) Webpage alerts:

This alert service provides alerting for new publications on the web. Google Alerts and The Scout Report are the examples of online webpage alerts. By subscribing to these alerts libraries can offer alerts of web resources of interest to the researchers and educators of the institution.

h) Conference alerts:

Conference alert service provides complete information about the conferences available information to be held in library webpage. Libraries will offer this service to its user depending on the research interest.

The conference alert must also meet the following needs.

- ❖ The website should be complete contain relevant conference details and be publically accessible.

- ❖ The website should clearly state the conference name, types (state/national/international), date, place and contact information etc.

4. Importance of Alert Service:

In this digital age, technology is playing a major role for engineering and dissemination of information in the network environment. Due to information explosion libraries are marching towards digital libraries by providing electronic services to the users on their desktop. Most of the traditional library has given much emphasized on information access with in physical boundaries of the library. But today web based library alert services have got the much popular among the libraries, because of the development of the web based library. Now a day researchers and academicians are very much busy in their research and development

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activities and don't have time to visit the library. Hence, web based library alert services will provide a timely services to them on one click at one place.

5. Conclusion:

The role of the library has considerably changed with the advancement of information. Now in this age of Internet, libraries should put consistent efforts to provide web based alert services to their users. There is an urgent need to develop dynamic websites with direct hyperlink to the different library Webpages. Training about the importance and significance of web based library alerts should be given to the users and take serious steps to provide them.