**Module 8**

**Web Technology and Libraries**

**Unit 2**

**Social Media for Libraries**

**Learning objectives**

* To understand the various social media platforms and their importance in providing library services
* To demonstrate how to develop social media platforms for the B.Ed college libraries and integrate them on the library website

**Introduction**

In the previous Unit, we have learnt about the Web, the most powerful platform on the Internet. The present generation of the Web is commonly known as Web 2.0. While the previous generation of the Web attracted the users with its hypertext facility and user-friendly nature, the present generation, i.e. Web 2.0 is noted for its interactivity and effortless content creation by the users. Social Media, the web-based online applications or tools which facilitate interactive information sharing and collaboration among the users is an example for Web 2.0. On social media a user is able to: (1)create content by himself also in collaboration with others, (2) edit the content of what he created or other’s content with permission, (3) rate the quality and usefulness of the content, (4) comment or give feedback, (5) start a discuss on the content or join an already started discussion, (6) tag and organize content as per convenience, (7) mix the content with others, (8) personalize the content and (8) share the content across the web.

In this Unit, we will learn about a few popular social media tools and their application in providing library and information services. Also, we will learn how to integrate these social media tools on the Educational Institution Library Website that we already developed as a part of previous Unit.

**Role of Social Media in Library Services**

The term Web 2.0 was coined by Tim O'Reilly and Dale Dougherty at the O'Reilly Media Web 2.0 Conference in 2004 to refers to the emerging pattern and trend in using the Web, rather than a formal upgrade of Web technologies.

The majority of the academic library members will most likely be on social media. Hence. there is no doubt that Social Media is one of the most effective and best platforms on the Internet for getting connected with the users of the library and information centres and share the information. The rapid growth of smart phones in recent years provides us with a good reason to use social media for library services as the library members will be using them multiple times a day. We don’t have to wait for our members to sit in front of a computer to read a communication; they can see them anytime, anywhere. Thus, the social media can be powerful information dissemination tools and offer a way for libraries to promote their activities, resources and services while allowing a two-way dialogue with the users. The specific library applications of social media include: publicizing of library resources and services, improving the organizational image, identity and reputation, enhancing the user engagement, creation of user community, reaching out potential users, dissemination of library news and press release, providing of quick updates to users, building discussion groups and collaborative work , spreading news and service alerts.

**Popular social media tools useful for Library Services**

The most popular social media tool which can be used for the library services are:

* Facebook
* Twitter
* YouTube
* LinkedIn
* Pinterest

**Facebook**

Facebook is a social networking website on which we can create our personal or business profile for free, contact our friends and colleagues, and work with people online. Using Facebook, we can share documents, articles, videos, pictures and music, discuss various issues with others, share our opinions and thoughts.

 Facebook was started as a web service for the students of the Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts on 4 February 2004 by 19-year-old Mark Zuckerberg, who himself was a Harvard University student. He developed and operated the Facebook from a computer in his organization. He was joined by four more student friends, Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz, Andrew McCollum and Chris Hughes. The Facebook enabled the Harvard students to create a profile page and maintain contact with each other. All the students with more than 18 years age and having a ‘harvard.edu’ e-mail id was given the Facebook account. The Facebook mentioned itself as an online directory that connects people through social networks at colleges and universities. Organisations and businesses were not allowed to create a profile. Soon after launching of the service, students of other American Universities were permitted to join it followed by school students, and then to the educational institutions outside the U.S. In 2006 the Facebook was opened to the persons outside the education field. Also, a lot of new features were added to it.

Zuckerberg first launched Facebook from his dormitory at Harvard University

The Facebook facilitates personal, social, academic and career development. Today, it is the most popular social platform in the world and one of the most demanding online service. The major facilities and functionalities of it include getting connected with people, sharing information with friends, family, and official associates, searching for people, creating online groups based on various activities, tastes and interests, organization of different events.

**Videos are the most-shared content type on Facebook.** On average, videos receive 89.5 shares per video, significantly higher share counts than photos or text-based posts.

The Facebook plays a major role in today’s academic environment by promoting student-teacher interaction, language development, interpersonal communication, group collaboration and development of ICT skills**.**

**Facebook for Library and Information Services:** Facebook is an effective platform for the Library and Information Centres of all types  to connect with the user community. Through updates on Facebook, libraries can inform the users about the library’s programmes and services. They can invite students to attend training sessions, post practical information about the library’s opening times, link to new and existing print and online resources, and update the patrons about any new developments. The patrons in turn can engage with the library by commenting on posts and sharing them with their friends. In order to maximise their Facebook page usage, the libraries have to market it via email and official website, and by distributing posters and fliers among the patrons. They can plan the content schedule in advance to make best use of student engagement. Based on the academic calendar relevant posts can be prepared and posted. E.g. During holidays, information regarding remote access to e-resources, during exams about how to find a study area and during admission the new patrons can be invited to join library training courses. Also, the library staff have to actively participate in commenting on posts and making the page dynamic.

**Twitter**

Twitter is a popular, web-based social media platform for communicating messages among “friends, family and co-workers”. The messages on twitter are known as “tweets” and these can be text, photos, videos, and links. The twitter like Facebook is a free social media platform with more than 2 billion active account holders. Twitter was invented by Jack Dorsey, an American computer programmer in 2006. It was originally conceived as an SMS-based communication platform as smart phones were relatively new at that time. Jack Dorsey presented the project of Twitter as “system where you could send a text to another number and it would be broadcasted out to all your desired contacts” at Odeo, the Web Designing company where he was employed. The company approved the project and in July 2006, the Twitter service was released to the public. In the beginning, the Twitter was known as ‘twtrr’ . At that time the common trend was to drop vowels from a regular word of a brand name for stylization. The name was given by Noah Glass , the owner of Odeo Company.

Jack Dorsey left Odeo and established Twitter as a company officially along with Evan Williams and Biz Stone in April 2007.

Today, Twitter is considered as the best social media platform on the web for timely communication of concise messages to the target audience. It is very easy to create a Twitter account and start tweeting. It requires no specialised tools and techniques. As per the 3rd quarter of the financial results announced by Twitter, it has more than 145 million daily active users, 330 million monthly users and a total of 130 billion accounts.

The highest followed Twitter account in the world as on today is that of Katy Pery, the famous American singer, song writer and television judge. Mr. Barak Obama, the former American President has the second top followers.

**Twitter for Library and Information Services:** Twitter is an effective social media platform for providing a variety of Library and Information services. Twitter facilitates an excellent platform for connecting the libraries with their member communities. The libraries will be able to use Twitter to promote programs and services related to the libraries and their parent organization. Twitter is an excellent platform to learn what the patrons are thinking about the library, to build dialogues with them and address their concerns, in addition to advocating the library-related programs and services.The libraries have to market their resources and services on Twitter with enticing content so that patrons will stop and click through.

 Twitter logo bird is known as ‘**Larry’** . It is named after Larry J. Bird, a former American Basketball player who played the Boston Celtics, the home-state basketball team of Biz Stone, one of the Twitter co-founders.

**LinkedIn**

LinkedIn is the social media platform exclusively for the professionals with approximately 660+ million users in spread across 200 countries and territories across the world. The LinkedIn aims to connect the world’s professionals to make them more productive and successful. It was founded by Reid Hoffman, an American entrepreneur, product strategist and investor in 2002 and officially launched on May 5, 2003. The software giant Microsoft acquired the LinkedIn in 2016. Over the last 16 years the LinkedIn has been successfully catering to the professional and business requirements of millions of its members.

The facilities on the LinkedIn include creation of connections, exporting connections, delete, manage and edit skills & endorsement, creation of LinkedIn showcase pages, saving of searches, adding media files to the profile, sending a message without making a connection and maintaining a LinkedIn relationship note.

The major benefits of joining LinkedIn include the facility for the recruiters and human resources professionals to verify profiles of job seekers, job search engine, facility to receive and endorsements and testimonials.

**LinkedIn for Library and Information Services:** The LinkedIn is an important social media channel for the library professionals. It can serve both as a tool for career development and as a platform to assist the library users. Using LinkedIn, the library professionals can create an effective professional LinkedIn profile, make use of various tools and options to address professional development, monitor emerging library trends and technologies, stay current with LIS thought leaders, identify topic experts who are willing to share their expertise, share own expertise and contributing back to the professional development of other LIS practitioners. In addition, the LinkedIn can be used for helping the library patrons to explore careers, Identify employers, and make connections,

**Pinterest**

[Pinterest](https://www.pinterest.ca/) is a social media platform for image sharing founded by Ben Silbermann, an American Internet entrepreneur in the year 2009 and official launched in 2011. Initially, it ran as an invite-only social media site. The Time Magazine selected the Pinterest as one of the 50 best websites during the year 2011. Pinterest allows a registered user to share, discover, and save his own or others posts to his profile, making it a collection. On Pinterest, the members can save and categorize their images on their Pinterest boards. Also, they can follow different profiles and boards under different categories such as art, computer, education, health and travel.

**Pinterest for Library and Information Services:** Pinterest is a popular image sharing social platform not only for the individuals. Even, the business, non-profit and state-owned organizations are taking advantage of it. The Library and Information Centres can share the ideas and information over Pinterest and connect with their community of people. Pinning book covers,showcasing historic archives, creating reading lists, sharing new acquisitions, promoting library activities,showcasing learning-related infographics**,** highlighting library staff members,running reading programs,showing pictures of the library andbuilding a community of libraries online**.**

**YouTube**

The YouTube is a US-based video-sharing social media platform with facilities for uploading, playing, sharing, rating and commending on videos. It is considered to be the second largest search engine on the web after Google and the biggest online video platform. It features a variety of user-generated and corporate media content such as music videos, TV clips, video blogs, short original videos, Let's play gaming videos, and instructional videos on everything. With its vast collection of educational resources the YouTube constitutes an excellent e-learning platform for persons of all ages. The vast majority of YouTube content is free to view, although it sometimes underlies regional restrictions for reasons such as of copyright.

The first ever YouTube video is titled *Me at the zoo*. It shows the co-founder Jawed Karim at the San Diego Zoo . The video which was uploaded on April 23, 2005, can still be viewed at https:// www. youtube.com/ watch?v=jNQXAC9IVRw

The YouTube was founded by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim in 2005. The founding members of the YouTube were former employees of PayPal, the world famous online payment company**.** Later, in 2006 they sold YouTube to Google**.**

**YouTube for Library and Information Services: The Library and Information Centres can make use YouTube for a variety of user services. They can make a video on various library services and load it onto the YouTube. Then, the link can be made available on the official website of the organization or library** for its patrons**. Also, videos can be made on how to use various library resources, searching databases and on new services introduced and new resources added. Different screen capture tools can be employed for this. In addition, various subject guides can also be prepared in video format. The** instructional videos **will be very helpful for the distant learners all the time and for the regular** students and staff when the library is unavailable. The instructional videos can be linked to the library’s Web site for more information. The fresher’s orientation videos can also be made and uploaded**.**

**Conclusion**

The emergence of social networking and Web 2.0 applications have enabled the Library and Information Centres to reach users through a variety of interactive web based interactive tools which the patrons are already using in their personal and professional personal lives, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube. In this unit we have learned a few important social media tools and how to sue them for various library services.

explores the most important social

media tools in use by libraries today. Will this

list change by next year? Very possibly—social

media is still expanding and morphing. However, there

are some tools that have matured enough to have staying

power (and the attention of your customers).

[**Practical: Integrating social media tools on the website developed by the participants**]

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