The Digital Library,
An experience of access to Information.

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Summary

The author proposes the need to define The Digital Library in relation to the elements that constitute it, its attributes, services and the experience of access to information that it offers to its users.

Key Words
Digital Library, digital users, access to information.

Introduction

Google as gateway to the digital information.

The access to digital information is an event marked by the connectivity and technology and the relation of both with the user.
For this transaction to take place is necessary a clear vision in what doors must be knocked in the digital word. This factor will determine the success or failure of our information search.
Google, is the most common gateway of access to information and it is a place where different types of information converged. This variety can be limited by various parameters that help to find the information.

Google has a searcher that helps to establish the results of first importance in the first result page. Currently, the results delivery is not only delimited by the key words in the searcher, but also by idiomatic and territorial criteria, and under the previous search or preferences related to the email account.

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Several users can get their need of information satisfied in this first gateway to the world of digital information. But, other people must go to different specialized information platforms and search in a different way to get the information back.

These other gateways are as diverse as the existent digital information. Therefore, the reduction and filtration of information is easier than ever. This, because of the transformation in the boolean operators in the menus of iconic design. They allow the intuition in the restriction of results and a proper information delivery under formal parameters. In this different platform from Google it is where the Digital Libraries exist.

The Digital Library

There are different events for the development of Digital Libraries to occur. The most common ones are the Academic events which offer services to a community associated with an educational institution. Usually, they can be mixed or hybrids, that is to say, they have a physical component that is reflected in a digital platform.

Other Digital Libraries are purely in an online format, and they supply access to the information that only exists at a digital level. Most of the times, they are created from repositories or exclusive information from the Sponsor Institution.

Several digital libraries define themselves as specialized or multimedial. In this way they provide varied information technologies for the recovery of digital information.

Moreover, these platforms offer options of access to the information via purchase, subscription, membership or Open Access. Being this a way to leave in the user's hands the choice of how to access to digital information or to collections of a Digital Library.

Through the analysis of different existent digital libraries we can identify the elements that constitute them:

1.) **Digital aspect:** We refer to the way and via in which the interaction between users and knowledge occurs. Specifically, to the way that characterize the access to information nowadays.
2.) **Platform of access to information:** It is the basis that provides access to the Digital Library through an electronic address or application that allows the access to the digital information system.
3.) **Digital Information System:** Multidisciplinary equipment responsible for the setting up of the accesses to digital collections.
4.) **Digital Collections:** Collections are grouped under various characteristics as of topics and access. Most of the times the Digital Library will provide access to its own information, either compiled or digitalized by the Sponsor Institution. In the same way, collections with information technologies collected from the web and separated under the compilation platform policies will be developed. In other occasions, it will buy varied database

from suppliers of digital information that will provide access under the security conditions associated with federated access technologies that will allow a specific development of collections either in an annual subscription or other variation. This restriction of the access is one of the main challenges that Digital Libraries must face. This is because they must arrange diverse ways of access to information between its Platform and the validation of users creating federated identities for the access to services.

5.) **System of digital reference**: Unit dedicated to provide the most possible autonomy to the user in order to develop himself in the platform of access to information. The reference in the digital library accomplishes the connection role because of successful reference services if they can connect the user from anywhere and anytime with the required information.

6.) **Digital User:** Digital users go to the information via the access platforms because of the need of specific information that must be fulfilled in the fastest way possible. For this purpose, the user has an endless quantity of digital devices that provide access to the digital surroundings. These information technologies gather each other and reach the total connectivity through internet connections.

Also, there are other factors that made a digital user closer to the Digital Library. We cannot forget that the user had walked a long way either physical or digital to access an online information service. Thus, we must take into account that the user has a personality, an environment and a job. These characteristics plus his purchasing and connectivity power made him digitally independent, so he can access to digital files without need of an intermediary.

It exists other factor that determines the user digital independency that corresponds to the fact that digital libraries does not have files with unique access, so it is possible to find a digital document without even entering to the library that has it.

So, the user that access to the digital library is the one who has a specific need of information that big search and references motors cannot satisfy.

These six elements are the basis for the construction of digital libraries. They can construct a service access to the information if they gather all together under different parameters.

The analysis of these elements will help us to understand what the current situation of the Digital Libraries is by means of the services they offer.

Finding information.

Once the user enters to the Digital Library, he/ will connect with a series of different digital elements offered in the Access Platform to the information via the Information System. From there, the user will interact with the diverse digital collections. Probably, this interaction will be developed through a search box where the related results will be unfold with the proposed descriptions by the user.
This type of search for the information access belongs to a primary role and will probably satisfy immediately the need of information of any user that has clarity in his search.
This explicit event requires information repositories to have data previously analyzed and with high quality standards. Then, the technique processes will proportion quality to the data allowing the information delivery to occur with the highest quality standards.

This type of knowledge is explicit [2] and it is delivered to the users as digital documents of pre-established characteristics in the platforms of access to information that must permit its access, compatibility and visualization under different digital devices.

The found digital devices must be relevant to the user's need of information. In this sense, many Digital Libraries tend to the specialization of their collections and their vision of Library.

This connection between the development of a collection, the searcher and the user interaction indicate us that the main service of a digital library is to provide access to information.

From the definition of the service we can observe that the user is an important factor in the Digital Library.

The Library is the users, not the collections.

About the digital, we can access to the collections with a high intellectual and monetary value but if the use is not proper or if the statistics are zero the development in collections neither will work nor our investment. Thus, the factor that decides the success of a Digital Library is the user. And all services must be focused in satisfying his need of information.

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[2] de la Puente, Marcelo *Gestión del conocimiento y minería de datos.*, 2010 UNSPECIFIED. [Other]. pp.8

Autonomy in the access to information:

Currently, the Digital Libraries try to keep a synchronic conversation with the user through the development of tools that allow their complete independence in the access platform to information.

The information technologies permit the creation of digital tools that can be incorporated to the Access Platform to the Information in a simple way and can be focused in guiding the user with the requirements from the Digital Library for the access to the information. All of this is a reflection of the Digital Reference Service that facilitates the connection between the user and the accesses to information.

About the Digital

About the digital, the information is as wide as the quantity of users that get connected. For this, a Digital Library will never end its development in new collections, security parameters, or the addition of new technologies.
In the same way, due to the quantity of information available users can find a document that will perfectly fit with their investigation just by adjusting the search parameters.

The digital user can directly access to the subscription in a scientific magazine without the need of an institution to get the information.

A Digital Native is completely autonomous in the usage of the web. So, he has the capacity to choose and to pay if necessary.

So, the Digital Libraries are now in the moment when their main concern is to keep the connection between their service and their users. Meanwhile, they must worry about the integration and development of the collections in the unified platforms of information access. Additionally, it is possible to see the incorporation of new devices that provide autonomy and confort to the user in the Access and use of information that they found in the Digital Library.

The access to information is given by the diverse possibilities of discovery provided by the different electronic devices that supply immediate access to information. This feature of immediacy encourages the discovery of information associated to the Tactic Knowledge, this type of knowledge is not related to metadata, or to database subscribed to the Digital Library, but to the User.[3]

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[3] It is the personal or implicit knowledge, kept in the brains of the organization staff hard to regularize, register and articulate. It is developed by means of a process of testing and mistake and it approves an individual's knowledge about different topics.
de la Puente, Marcelo *Gestión del conocimiento y minería de datos.*, 2010 UNSPECIFIED. [Other] pp.7

The User is information, thus, is where the Digital Libraries go to.

The need to catch the User's attention has given characteristics of specificity and personalization of the Digital Library. Through the grouping of digital resources the Information System can provide and visualize in an immediate way all information, collections and users.

The Digital Libraries go to the extraction of information from the User because of the following:

- The privilege of a new user cannot be wasted because his entrance in the Digital Library will transform it in its most important valuation rate.

- - The Digital Library will look forward to know the need of information from its user. For this purpose, it will use personalization and integration tools proper for the user, as social networks.

- The active integration of social networks will permit to go through community features to the Digital Library.

- The Digital Library must be capable to protect and integrate to their collections new knowledge provided by the users. Accordingly, it must know who the members that turn to its service are.

- The users must be capable to visualize the diverse profiles of the users of the Digital Library in order to promote the transfer of tacit knowledge.

- The Digital Library must encourage the user's stay through the services to measure the impact that it produces in the platform of access to information.

To define what a Digital Library is we must go first from its base for its construction that implies several factors as technologic, systematic, human and informational. These factors are essential in the development of a Digital Library and they allow its construction but not its definition. This is because the factors are variable in time and not the end of a Digital Library. Therefore we cannot define the concept from there, but for doing it we must see it as an ENTITY that involves those factors.

To visualize the Digital Library from the outside help us when saying that it is in a constant growing and that interact in a very personalized way with each user. Thus, the Digital Library is its users and not the collections, the user is the main CORE and from there is where we must define the Digital Library.

It is important to highlight that the Digital Library is observed as an entity capable to support and provide the necessary channels for the development of

communication spaces that permit the transfer of information and knowledge between its users. The relevance of this is that it defines the last aim of the Digital Library which is to provide access to information and to know what the need of information from the users is. And this is becomes the main challenge for a Digital Library.

In the same way, it is important to include the factor of success or failure in the Digital Library. And this factor is given by the user's experience in the satisfaction of the need of information. For this reason we can only define the Library in relation to the user's experience in the access to it.

For this cause, we can define the Digital Library as an experience in the access to information.

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