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ILS 655 Assignment-Digital Library Project Review Paper 01
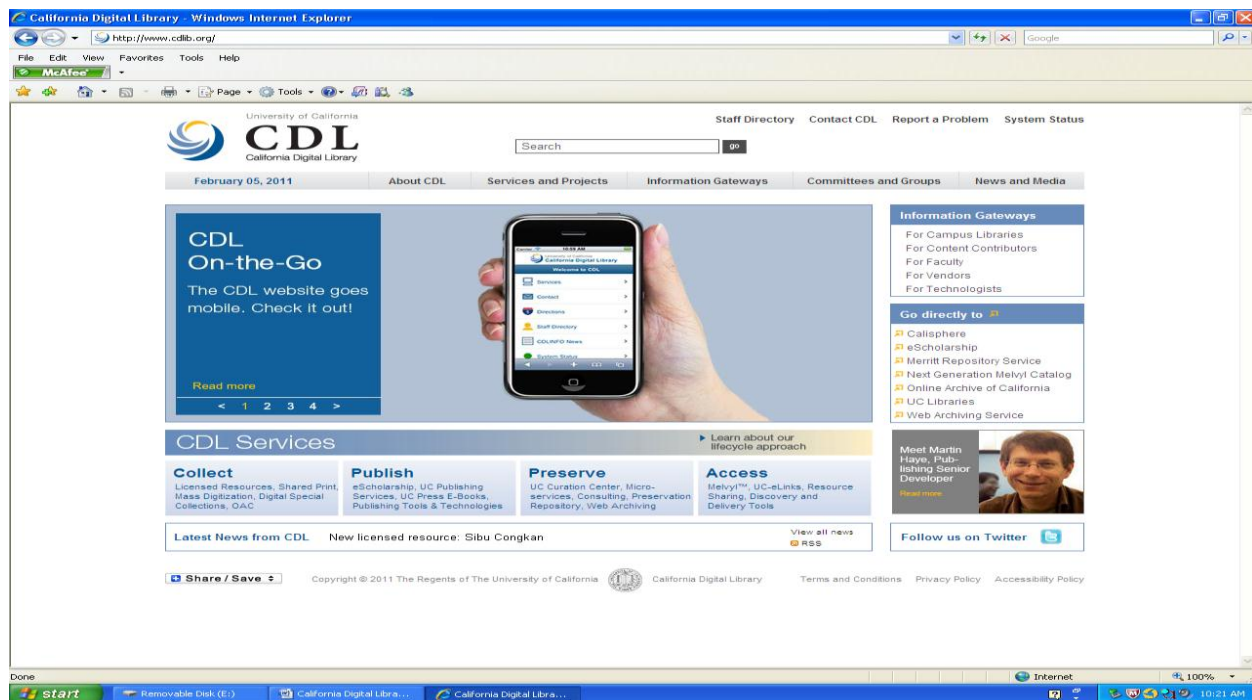
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California Digital Library

The purpose of the assignment was to review a selected digital library and extend knowledge about its background, organization of resources stored in digital formats and accessible by computers, service features, and implicated technologies. Therefore, in order to complete this assignment, I browsed through the given list of digital libraries and decided to analyze and evaluate the California Digital Library (CDL).

Project Background

A Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the CDL is http://www.cdlib.org. The CDL website can be accessed from any location with an internet-connected computer and a web browser. The following screen shot presents the CDL homepage and can be accessed by opening the URL mentioned above.

Figure 1. CALIFORNIA DIGITAL LIBRARY

The California Digital Library was established by the University of California in 1997. According to the California Digital Library's strategic plan which contains the library background and describes efforts in realizing the library mission, "The CDL was established under the premise that collaborative efforts to acquire collections and provide services would create substantial savings, it has been a fundamental part of CDL's approach" (California Digital Library).

The mission of this digital library is to "support the University of California community's pursuit of scholarship and to extend the University's public service mission" (California Digital Library). In order to effectively support its community, the library tries to harness technology and innovation, and continues to provide access to resources and information available in different formats. In addition, "through partnership and alliances, CDL will elevate services to the network level for maximum impact" (California Digital Library). Moreover, in order to meet the expectation of its users and positively influence digital library developments, the California Digital Library relies on "innovation, collaboration, openness, sharing, privacy, and learning" (California Digital Library).

As I researched deeper and deeper into the successes of delivering resources available in digital formats, I realized that the CDL through collaboration with the University of California, as well as with organizations outside the university such as museums and universities, works toward library improvements and innovations. As do other digital libraries, the California Digital Library has to work with other organizations to create and maintain its collection, and to support and provide learning, research and teaching services for ten California universities.

As of today, the CDL is a member of Coalition for Networked Information, Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), COUNTER, Digital Library Federation (DLF), EDUCAUSE , Hathi Trust, International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC), National Information Standards Organization (NISO), OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Open Content Alliance, RLG Programs, Scholarly Publishing Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC). Moreover, it is worth to mention that some of California Digital Library's contributions to progress attempts include ACRL Scholarly Communications Committee, DLF Aquifer, DLF Developers Forum, ISO WARC File Format, and many more.

Organization of Resources and Service Features

According to Laverna Saunders, the author of the book The Evolving Virtual Library II: Practical and Philosophical Perspective, "Users may feel that a particular digital library is a challenge to use because it does not contain appropriate information sources in a language that can be easily read and understood" (pg. 44). For that reason, "To overcome this many institutions involved in developing digital libraries are also very active in creating appropriate content for their users in

relevant languages" (p. 44). Therefore, in order to meet users' expectations the California Digital Library is not only visually appealing, but also easy to explore and navigate. All journals are arranged and organized alphabetically and are available for users with a valid username and password. According to the terms of use, the authorized users include mostly faculty members, independent contractors, onsite users, staff, and students, UCB, UCD, UCI, UCLA, UCM, UCR, UCSB, UCSC and UCSD. However, as I searched the online catalog for resources about digital libraries and I typed the term "Digital Libraries" into the search box found in the center of the homepage I was able to easily retrieved 2,445 results in HTML and PDF formats that matched my search terms. Since I retrieved a list of different results I was able to sort my findings by date or by relevance or narrow my results to "News and Media," "Digital Special Collections Program," and much more. It is worth to mention that the retrieved resources were available in a full text document formats.

The California Digital Library homepage is divided into five categories that include 'About CDL," "Services and Projects," "Information Gateways," "Committees and Groups," and "News and Media." When I selected "Services and Projects," I was able to view additional subcategories. Since my interest was in detailed information about resources and services, I selected a category "CDL by Numbers." According to my finding, the California Digital Library has 7,200,000,000,000 bytes in Digital Preservation Repository; 422,830,202 web files captured by the Web Archiving Service; 32,937,708 records in Melvyl $25,000,000 saved yearly by Collection Development; 2,660,255 volumes digitized via mass digitization projects; 452,000 interlibrary loan requests using the Resource Sharing Service; 180,000 digital images in Calisphere; 34,400 journals licensed and linked through UC-eLinks; 29,000 papers in eScholarship; 26,800 open access journals linked through UC-eLinks: 5,837 number of feedbacks answered by the Information Services team; 2,690 number of participants interviewed by the User Experience Design team, 1,050 number of web pages supported by the Web Production team; and 67 servers managed by the Infrastructure team.

Technologies

"Digital technology has changed our concept of time because computers retrieve and process information rapidly; users expect speed in all aspects of their lives, including their transactions with the library" (p. 2). Therefore, in order to meet users' expectations and to support the University of California, the California Digital Library allows users to quickly find resources with the Next Generation Melvyl Catalog, links patrons straight to articles using UC-eLinks, and provides them with resources available from other libraries. In addition, the CDL digitalizes millions of books through collaboration with Google and Internet Archive. Moreover, in order to make access to information more convenient the California Digital Library has gone mobile and created a mobile version of the California Digital Library website.

Comments

The California Digital Library provides users with easy and convenient access to a variety of resources. The library catalog allows users to easily locate information and to retrieve the most up-to-date information. However, when I searched for articles and I did not have a user ID and password, I could not access the databases. Therefore, I realized that more emphasis has been given to authorized patrons with a user ID and password. But I think that the California Digital Library successfully supports the University of California community, and provides members with high quality research collections.

References

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