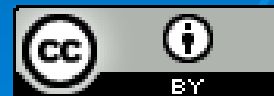# LIBRARIES IN INTERNET ERA

SRIDHAR IYER

and

GARGI BANERJEE

DEPT. OF COMPUTER SCIENCE & ENGG

I.I.T. BOMBAY

Definitions

➢ 2 broad categories of Indian libraries:

- Public library : "local gateway to knowledge [and] lifelong learning of the individual and social groups".(UNESCO,2004)

- Academic Library : subsets of parent institution catering to more restricted group of users

➢ In both cases, definition of a library is changing from:
- 'a collection of books' to
- 'collection of useful materials' in print, electronic, multimedia, and other formats.
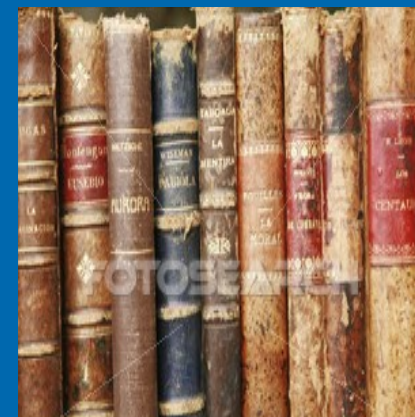
Some key challenges faced by libraries today

➤ Decreasing footfalls

➤ Internet vs. Print media

➤ Catering to the SMS generation whose patience level is quite low

  ➤ Anecdote: As told by the Assistant Librarian, IIT Bombay.
    A B.Tech student came to the library for the first time only in his final year. When asked, he replied that he did not feel any need to visit the library in all this time!

  Problem of user antipathy faced by libraries in the Internet era!
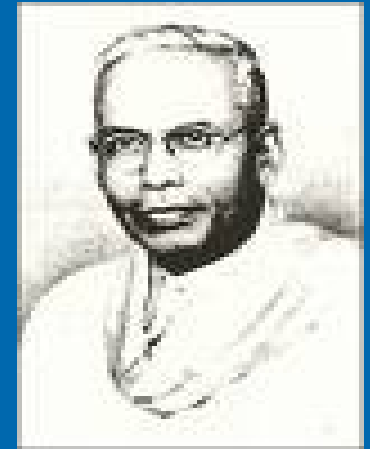
  ➤ **Interesting to apply Dr. Ranganathan's Laws of Library Science proposed in 1931 to Libraries in Internet era.**
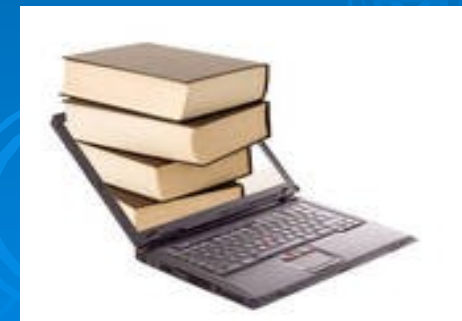
THE 5 LAWS OF LIBRARY SCIENCE

--- Dr S R Ranganathan

(Father of Library Science in India)

1. Books are for use.
2. Every reader his/her book.
3. Every book its reader.
4. Save the time of the User.
5. The library is a growing organism.

THE FIRST LAW : BOOKS ARE FOR USE

INFERENCE: Making a book accessible to readers is the primary goal.

❖ Application of Dr. Ranganathan's law in INTERNET era :

➢ Provide multiple modes of access to user by exploiting technologies. Books on handhelds.

➢Library automation systems like OPAC making bibliographical search accessible from anywhere.

➢ Library Resource Sharing: Multiple libraries pool in their acquisitions, technical processing, storage and delivery of service.

➢ Find ways to satisfy the tech-savvy clientele; SMS-interface?

➢ Internet and other local/national networks promotes inter-library co-operation with formation of Library Consortia like INDEST consortium (http://indest.iiita.ac.in/)

First law extension: Exploit digitized content

- ➤ All significant works of science, literature, arts are being digitally preserved

- ➤ Collection of digitized material in libraries accessible from any part of the globe.

- ➤ Case in point : Digital Library of India, hosted by IISc., Bangalore (http://www.new.dli.ernet.in/)

- ➤ 30,000 free e-books available at Project Gutenberg (http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main_Page)

- ➤ User can download these free e-books into their Palm organizer or smart-phones

Summary: a. Book form is changing

b. Libraries have to cater to new forms

also to increase accessibility

THE SECOND LAW: EVERY READER HIS/HER BOOK

INFERENCE: Library collection should be such as to interest every part of the community it is meant to serve.

❖ Application of Dr. Ranganathan's law in Internet era:

➢ Diversify with different types of E- content, without straining the budget.

➢ Faculty lectures of world renowned institutes like I.I.Ts , IISc.,MIT etc. are available free on the Internet.


IIT Bombay

Second law extension: Diversify the content modes

➤ Open souce courseware animations repository

➤ Part of MHRD's National Mission on ICT for education.

➤ Open-source animations from school level upwards avaiable at http://oscar.iitb.ac.in/oscarHome.do

➤ Animations are being created to support the online video lectures of IIT /IISC. faculties that are available through CDEEP

(http://vod.cdeep.iitb.ac.in/index.html) and NPTEL (http://nptel.iitm.ac.in/index.php).

IIT Bombay

PROJECT OSCAR

➤ Teaching aid animations for important concepts in Science and Technology

➤ Simplifying concepts otherwise difficult to comprehend.

➤ Available free to all students and teachers across India

➤ Source code available for programmer community to improvise

➤ Libraries can freely access the OSCAR being built at IIT Bombay
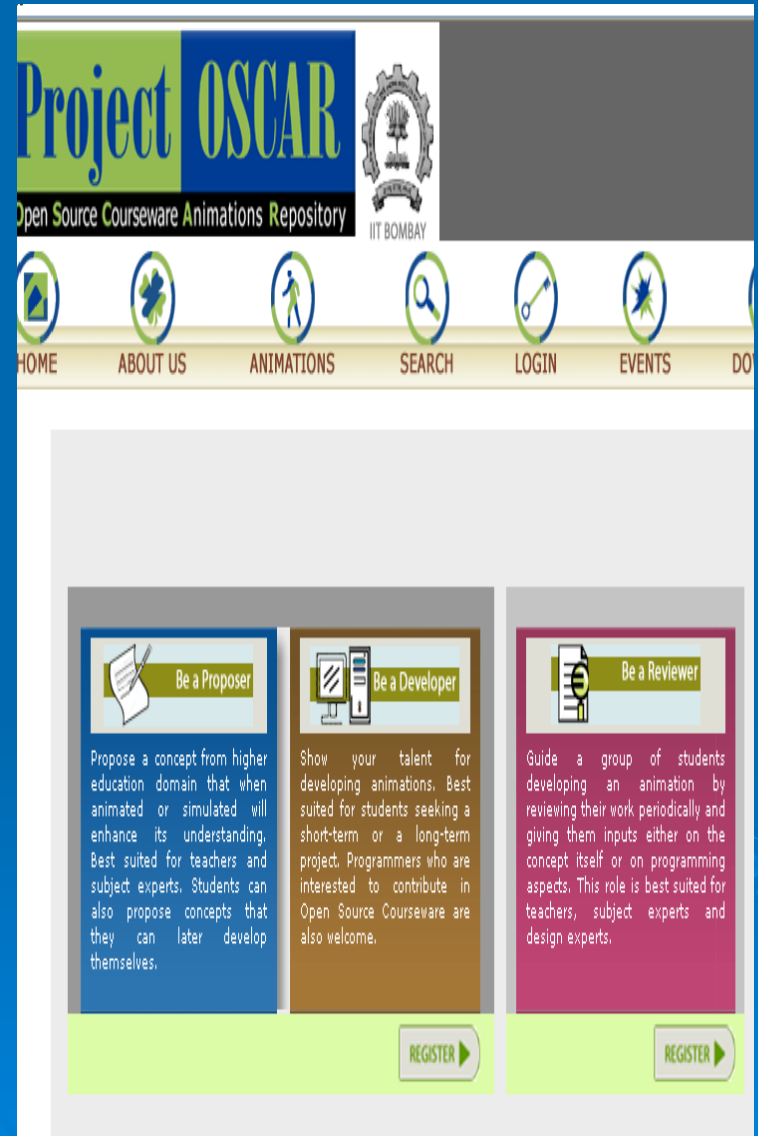
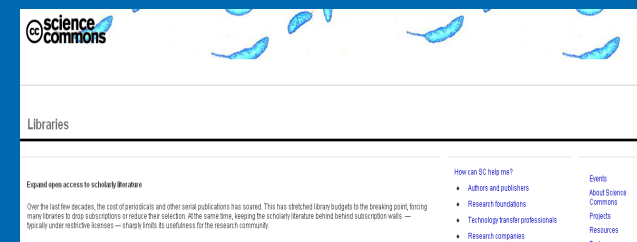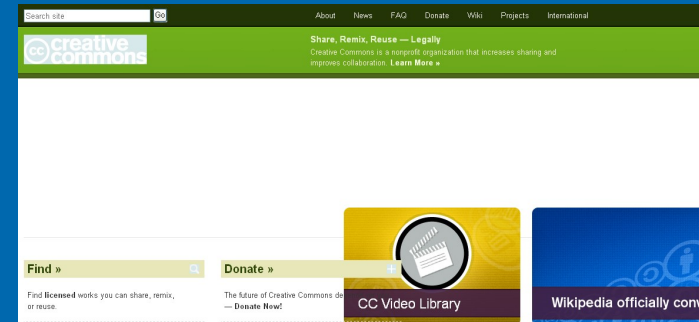# More examples of free e-Content on the Internet

➢ Creative Commons

➢(http://creativecommons.org/), a non-profit organization that makes lots of scientific and literary works available under relaxed copyright rules.

➢ CClearn, Creative Commons division dedicated to realizing the full potential of the internet to support open learning and open educational resources.

➢ Science Commons helps libraries access published research papers at no extra cost.

➢ Connexions (http://cnx.org/): a place to view and share educational material that can be organized as courses, books, reports, *etc*. Anyone may view or contribute for free.
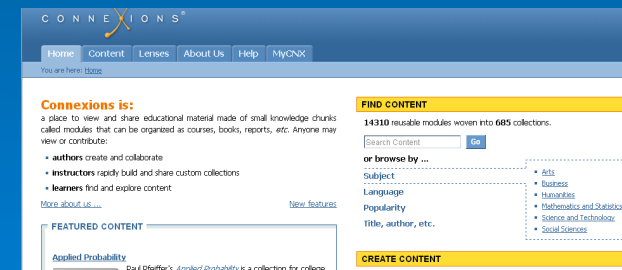
More examples of e-Content sites

➢ Other such sites are :

- World e-book fair (http://worldebookfair.org/)
- Flat World Knowledge (http://www.flatworldknowledge.com/)
- Directory of open access journals (http://www.doaj.org/)
- California open source textbook project (http://www.opensourcetext.org/)
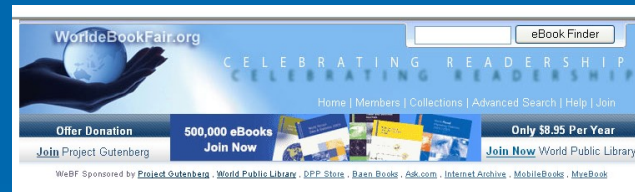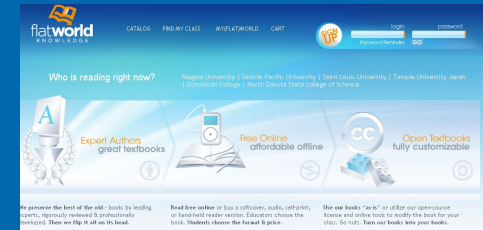
Summary: a. Lots of free content available on the Web.

b. Library has to disseminate this information to its users in a systematic manner.

THE THIRD LAW : EVERY BOOK ITS READER

INFERENCE: If a book is not being used often, it needs exposure to groups of readers who will find it useful

❖ Application of Dr. Ranganathan's law in Internet era:

- Metasearching : allows search of multiple databases at once.

- Maximizes opportunity to find citations on your topic.

- Product knowledge management software very useful.

- List books not in demand on Amazon.com to increase its visibility.

Third law extension: Exploit Internet for exposure

➢ Innovate:
www.librarywala.com
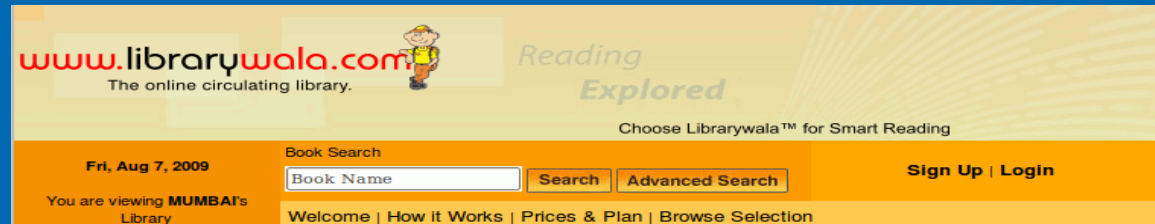
➢ Librarians can also find lot of useful material on the Internet for their users
- Use search, catalog and indexing techniques to weed out the irrelevant and present authentic material to the user.

Summary : a. Attract Users through
Web and innovative
delivery modes.
b. Increase access of
books using Creative
Commons Model
(Computer Masti)
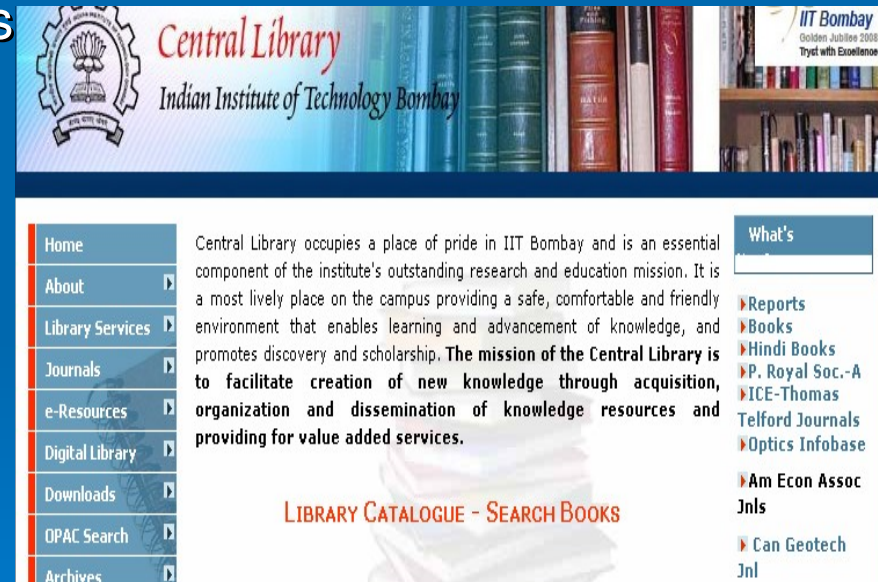
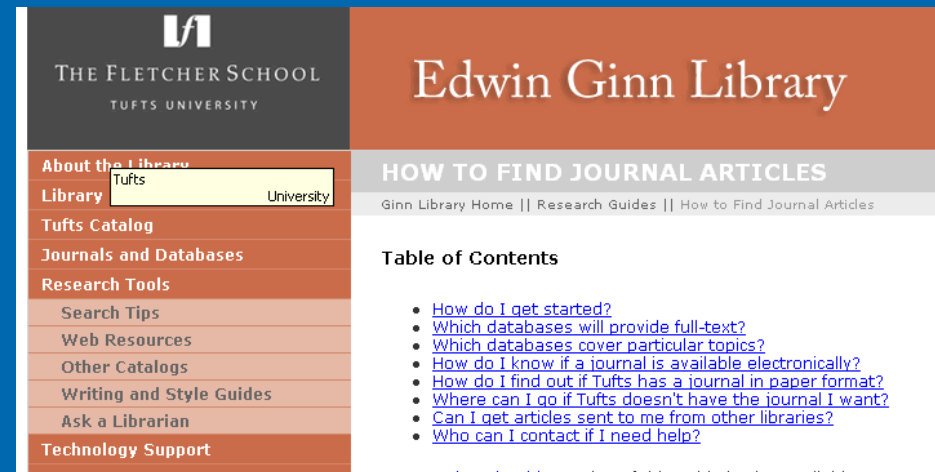# THE FOURTH LAW : SAVE THE TIME OF THE READER

INFERENCE: If users finds what s/he is looking for in a timely manner, they will be more satisfied

❖ Application of Dr. Ranganathan's law
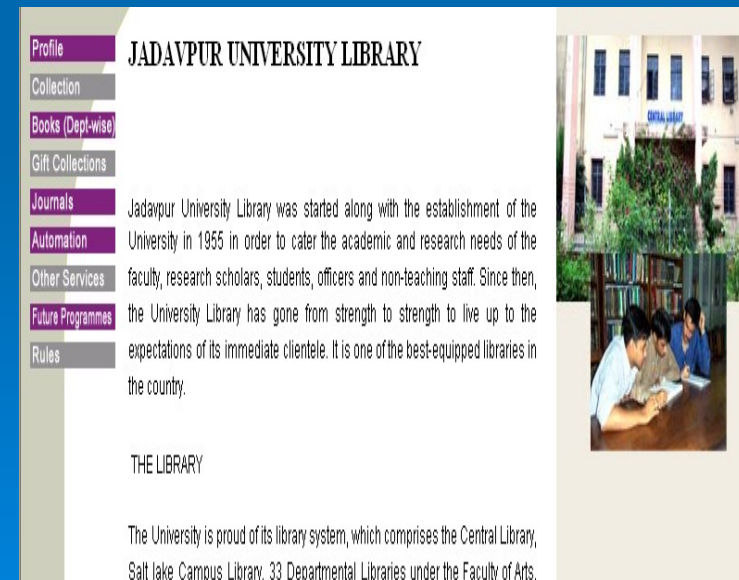
 in Internet era:

➢ Library website should be attractive enough for the user to want to explore more.

➢ Information architecture of the web page should be easily navigable.

➢ Today's users have zero tolerance for ineffective interfaces

Fourth law extension: Use the power of ICT

➢ At the back-end, library data should
  be structured to aid in quick retrieval

➢ Libraries are ideal places to offer public access
    to ICT resources as they are found in nearly
    every community

➢ Librarians help people to meet and manage their
    information needs.

➢ The public library can be the public access

  point to the "Information highway".
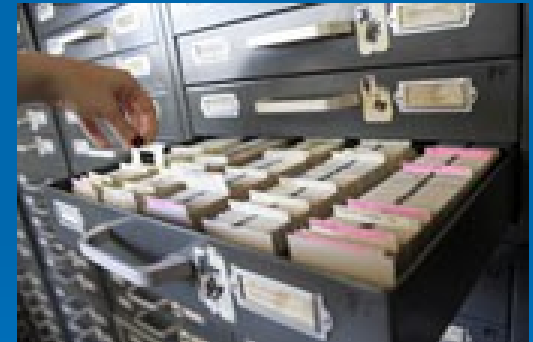
Summary: a. The library interface should be designed to give

good user experience.

b. Good user experience translates to brand loyalty.

THE FIFTH LAW : THE LIBRARY IS A GROWING ORGANISM

INFERENCE: Without the human and organizational changes that occur, the library would neither function properly, nor meet its purpose.

❖   Application of Dr. Ranganathan's law in Internet era:

➢ To keep pace with changing times, the services offered by a library has to expand.

➢ It can function as a cyber-café, specially in our hinterlands.

Fifth law extension: Bridge the digital divide

➤ With majority of public libraries situated in rural India, this is a great opportunity.

➤ Like cybercafes, government's E-governance projects can operate out of public libraries.

➤ Cases in point :

- Gyandoot: An intranet in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh that connects rural cybercafes and offers services like Landholders passbook, BPL family list etc.

- E-governance centers like the Akshaya Project (Kerala)

- Drishti Information Kiosks (Assam, Chattisgarh,Haryana): facilitates information interchange within a localized intranet between villages and a district center

LIBRARY IS A GROWING ORGANISM

➢ For the literate villager, it should be the window to the outside world

➢ For people willing to study further, it should serve as the path to higher education

➢ For children, library should be the gateway to the world of letters

➢ For the youth, specially in times of recession, library should enable them to submit online job applications or search for jobs

LIBRARY IS A GROWING ORGANISM

➤ Libraries can expand their horizons to function as career counselling centres for the youth.

➤ Librarians themselves can upgrade their expertise through continuing education programs and skill enhancement to make full use of ICT technologies.

Summary: Libraries should diversify, innovate and adapt its offerings to its users

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➤ 'Five laws of library science' , Available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five_laws_of_library_science, Date of access: August 4, 2009

➤ Guha A. (2009), "Recession brings dramatic use in public library use", Available at: http://www.wickedlocal.com/somerville/homepage/x50628480/Rec , Date of access: August 5, 2009

➤ Ghosh A. and Banerjee G. (2006), "Study of E-governance in rural India", paper presented at International Conference on E-governance (ICEG -2006) held from 15 -17th December, 2006 at IIT Delhi

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Closing

- ➤ Thank you for inviting me.
  - I got to know about Dr. Ranganathan's work!

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