

Information for All with Reference to UGC - Infonet

Sanjay Kumar Singh*

Introduction

Today we are living in Information Society or, we can say, in Information Age. Necessity is the mother of invention. Changes are the continuous process of invention and it has become the spontaneous law of nature. The country has witnessed many changes in the wake of Industrial Revolution, Green Revolution and Technological Revolution. In the field of technological revolution, Information Technology (IT), now also called ICT (Information Communication Technology) has brought about major changes in the society. For ICT, information has become an important national resource for developing countries like India. Information in today's world is synonymous with power. That is why its sharing seems to be very necessary for national development. The great information revolution and proliferation have brought about drastic changes in the function and services in all types of libraries in the country during last few decades. It has absolutely changed the working of the traditional libraries. Now it is seen that the university libraries have started making maximum use of e-resources. E-resources are mushrooming with the existence of Internet. Both quantity and quality of e-resources are growing. Today most of the on-line journals are published as parallel version of their print counterparts and more and more publishers are making their journals available in electronic format. Without journals it is very difficult to ensure the growth and development of any research in any discipline.

Today academic libraries in India are facing challenges due to shrinking budgets, reduced staff, devaluation of rupee, fluctuation in conversion of foreign currencies and escalation in cost of publication. Because of these, the academic libraries are finding it difficult to

subscribe to scholarly journals and databases. This type of situation has adverse impact on the research and development programmes. Today it is not possible for libraries to procure all the documents and subscribe to core and peer-reviewed journals, which are in great demand by the users. Realizing the need and demand for scholarly journal information in teaching, learning and research, the UGC launched UGC – Infonet e-journals consortium in 2004, which is now widely known as UGC – Infonet Digital Library Consortium.

Inflibnet

The Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) is an autonomous Inter-University Centre (IUC) of UGC established in May 1996 at Gujarat University Campus, Ahmedabad. The main activities and the services of the centre are promotion of modernization of academic libraries and information centres. The major activities of the centre are to promote information transfer and access to support scholarship, learning and academic pursuits. The centre acts as a nodal agency for networking of libraries and information centres in universities, institutions of higher learning and R&D institution in India.

Salient Features UGC-Infonet

The following are some of the most important features of UGC – Infonet:

- Scaleable Architecture to grow nation-wide terrestrial backbone using fiber optic links;
- Integrated satellite WAN supporting broadband and SCPC technology;
- Comprehensive Network Management systems overall monitoring of the network;
- Linkage with other academic and research networks all over the world;
- Security for data and virus protection

*Lecturer, Department of Library & Information Science, Gauhati University.

using firewalls and intrusion detection systems;

- Dedicated Data Centre for web hosting, e-journals and mailboxes; and
- Broadband, Multimedia and Video channels for distance learning.

UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium

The UGC – Infonet Digital Library Consortium was formally launched in December 2003 by the then Honorable President of India Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam under the 10th Five-year Plan. The major aim of this consortium is to promote higher educational system, its standard quality research and bridging the digital divide amongst Indian Universities. By doing so, the centre has been able to realize its objectives by setting up a major communication network of universities and successfully interlinked 150 universities through this consortium, which has been planned, implemented and monitored by the centre. During the last few years, effective implementation and execution of this programme has made it as one of the largest and most

successful consortiums around the world. Under this programme over 5000 high quality core and peer reviewed priced full text scholarly journals in Science & Technology, Social Sciences and Humanities are provided free of cost to 125 universities through UGC Infonet infrastructure. Besides these, eight bibliographic databases from twenty-three publishers are also covered under this consortium. The programme is fully funded by the UGC and executed by the INFLIBNET Centre. The total annual cost is about Rs. 30 crores. The centre has developed a website of UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium. Users can get information about the UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium, e-resources, and details of member universities, user help guides and usage statistics, etc. The consortium also plans to launch its “Associate Membership Programme” when private universities and other research organizations would be welcomed to join the Consortium for selected e-resources.

E-resources at UGC-Infonet

Out of 5000 e-journals and 8 bibliographic databases, some of the most wanted e-journals are given below:

Full Text Electronic Journals

S.No.	E-resources	Descriptions	Websites
1.	American Chemical Society	35 journals and one bibliographic database with access to all back files	http://www.pubs.acs.org/
2.	American Institute of Physics	18 journals with access from 1968 onwards	http://www.aip.org/
3.	American Physical Society	10 journals with access from 1997 onwards	http://www.aps.org/
4.	Annual Reviews	33 journals with access for last ten years	http://arjournals.annualreviews.org
5.	Blackwell	797 journals with access from 1997 onwards	http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/
6.	Cambridge University Press	224 journals with access from 1997 onwards	http://journals.cambridge.org/
7.	Elsevier Science	34 journals with access from 1995 onwards	http://www.sciencedirect.com
8.	Emerald	29 journals with access from 2001 onwards	http://www.emeraldinsight.com

9.	Project Euclid	21 journals with access from 2002 onwards
10.	Institute of Physics	46 journals with access to all volumes
11.	J-Stor	1046 journals with access to all volumes
12.	Nature	1 journal with access from 1997 onwards
13.	Oxford University Press	202 journals with access from 1996 onwards
14.	Portland Press	8 journals with access from 1996 onwards
15.	Project Muse	389 journals with access from 1999 onwards
16.	Royal Society of Chemistry	29 journals and 6 databases with access from 2002 onwards
17.	Society for Industrial & Applied Mathematics (SIAM)	14 journals with access from 1997 onwards
18.	Springer Link (Springer & Kluwer)	1200+ journals with access from 1997 onwards
19.	Taylor & Francis	1076 journals with access from 1998 onwards

Bibliographic Databases

S.No.	Name of Databases	Websites
1.	MatSciNet	http://www.ams.org/mathscinet
2.	SciFinder Scholar (CAS)	http://www.cas.org/products/sfacad/index.html
3.	RSC Databases	http://www.rsc.org/

For further information regarding UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium one can log on to INFLIBNET's web site <http://inflibnet.ac.in>

Conclusion

It can be rightly said that information has become the fifth need of human beings after Air, Water, Food and Shelter. Successful implementation of UGC-Infonet Digital Library

Consortium in universities under the purview of the UGC has led to the demand for extension of the consortia activities to universities that are not under the jurisdiction of UGC. To conclude, we can say that by the use of GUC-Infonet consortium cost savings and instant availability of information make a huge difference to the learned society.