

## Know What's up in the Library, Using WhatsApp: A proposed Model for Current Awareness Service

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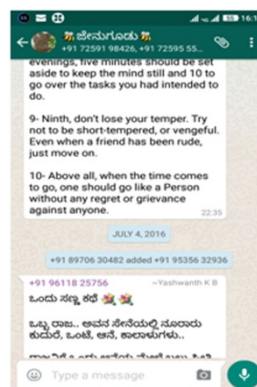
**Abstract** - The present decade can be termed as a mobile apps decade, from 2010 onwards tremendous technological changes have been noticed. Developments of mobile apps are one among the major technological areas which touched all most all the general and academic activities of the world. Present paper made an attempt to elaborate, how the Library and Information centres can make use of such mobile apps with special reference to WhatsApp instant messaging app. in the effective rendering of information service to users. The authors also tried to elucidate the practical implementation of WhatsApp instant messaging app in the effective rendering of current awareness service in the Library and Information Centres.

**Key words:** WhatsApp, Facebook, Current awareness service, ILL, Library and information centres. BlueStacks

### 1. Introduction:

Library and Information Centres are always running behind their users to meet their expectations as per the Dr. S.R. Rabganathan's second and fourth laws of library science "Every reader his/her book and Save the time of the reader". Development of App based technology had given the tremendous opportunities to the Library and Information Centres in meeting the user's expectations effectively. Evolution of WhatsApp instant messaging application is one among such application which can be used in effective rendering of library services such as Document Delivery Service (DDS), Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), Current Awareness Service (CAS), Newspaper Clippings Service, Library Notices etc. to the user community without any financial commitment<sup>1</sup>. The public libraries can give wide publicity to the Library extension activities such as Book Fair and Exhibition, Celebration of Festival and Events and Arranging Cultural Programs, Meeting, Public Lectures and Talks, Forming Friends of the Library Group and Reading Circle, Study Circle, Announcement of Library Orientation / Library Tour and Library Bulletin, to keep their users updated by posting the current activities of the library in the Library users WhatsApp group.<sup>2</sup>

### 2. WhatsApp Messenger:



**Fig-1: WhatsApp. Screenshot**

WhatsApp Messenger is a proprietary cross-platform, cross-country, encrypted, instant messaging client application for smartphones. It is written in the Erlang programming language and it uses the Internet to send or receive text messages, documents, images, videos, user location and audio messages to other users using standard cellular mobile numbers. The App was originally developed by Jan Koum and Brian Acton both were rejected from Facebook incorporation. The application was launched in November 2009 exclusively on the App Store for the iPhone. As of now the application is available for all most all mobile phone operating systems wise Symbian OS, Android OS, Samsung's Tizen OS, BlackBerry smartphones, non-smartphone OS Series 40 Windows Phone, etc. As of February 2016, WhatsApp had a user base of one billion, making it the most popular messaging application. WhatsApp Inc., based in Mountain View, California, United States, was acquired by Facebook Inc. on February 19, 2014, for approximately US\$19.3 billion<sup>2</sup>.

### 3. Android emulator for windows:

Android emulators are the software which facilitates to run the mobile apps on other operating systems like windows, linux, Mac OS etc. The application or apps which are designed and developed for mobile phone Android operating system won't run directly on other operating systems to run such applications or apps on windows, user has to install android emulators. The What's App is an instant messenger app runs on android OS and user has to install the android emulator to run the What's App on windows. However latest version of the WhatsApp comes with a feature called "WhatsApp Web" which can be used on any internet browser but this service not facilitates all the features of What'sApp App. Currently more than 15 android emulators are available over the internet but the scope of the present study is limited to two android emulators however the table 1 listed the largely used Android emulators.

**Table-1: List of largely used Android Emulators**

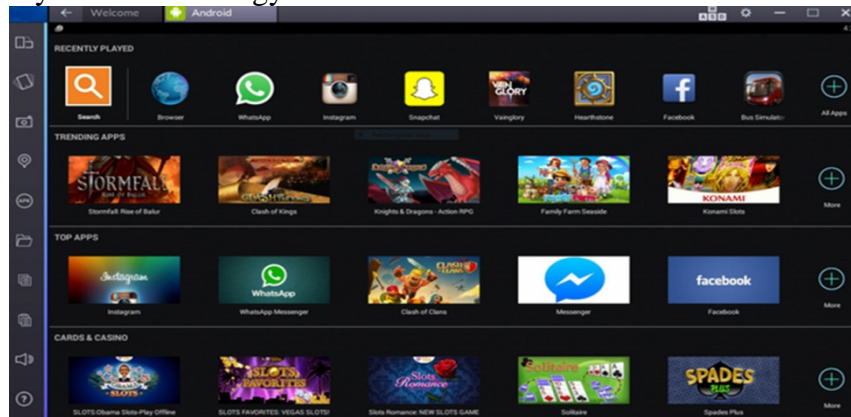
Sl. No.	Android Emulator	Supported Operating system
01	BlueStacks	Windows, Mac
02	KoPlayer	Windows
03	MEmu	Windows
04	Droid4X	Windows, Mac
05	AMI DuOS	Windows
06	YouWave	Windows
07	Andy	Windows, Mac
08	Genymotion	Windows, Mac, Linux
09	Android x86	Multi-platform
10	Android Emulator (AVD)	Windows
11	Anbox	Linux
12	Nox App Player	Windows
13	XePlayer	Windows

Source: Wikipedia

#### 3.1. BlueStacks

Purchasing of smartphones to the library itself and physical maintenance of the device is quite a clumsy thing for small or financial weaker libraries, such libraries can use the available personal computer for WhatsApp instant messenger by installing the "BlueStacks" an Android App emulator for windows based machines. BlueStacks was founded in 2011 to push the boundaries of the mobile ecosystem. Today, more than 130 million people around

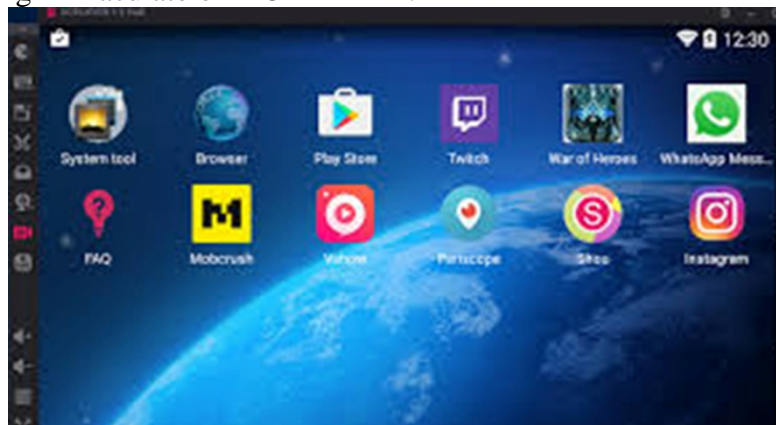
the world are using this App Player to run mobile apps and games on bigger screens using this patented Layercake technology.<sup>3</sup>



**Fig-2: BlueStack “An Android App emulator**

### 3.2. KOPLAYER:

KOPLAYER is a best and free Android Emulator for personal computers that empowers all Android amusements and applications to run easily in Windows frameworks. It based on x86 architecture, bolster propelled highlights like OpenGL and equipment increasing speed, run quicker, more steadiness and similarity than other Android Emulators. KOPLAYER Android Emulator for pc bolster numerous records, video recording, gamepad and console, and inner coordinated Google Play store to good with all applications, over 99% applications and diversions running immaculate on KOPLAYER.<sup>4</sup>



**Fig-2: KOPLAYER “An Android App emulator”**

### 4. Literature Review:

Ade R.N and Deepak G Kapde (2013)<sup>5</sup>, have made an attempt to define public libraries as the centres of social, cultural and intellectual activities of the society. The authors also pour the light on how the public libraries are putting the effort in converting the non-reader into the reader and non-user into the user, by exploring the library extension services.

Essam Mansour, (2016)<sup>6</sup> has undertaken a study to investigate the use patterns nature, purpose and ownership of smartphone apps among students at the Department of Library and Information Science (DLIS) at the South Valley. The study reveals that the main tasks performed on smartphone devices by students at SVU’s DLIS were for socializing, sending and receiving messages, following the news, chatting with friends and co-pupils, making friends, finding specific information, finding general information, making discussion groups, playing games, checking materials related to courses, seeking jobs, watching movies,

listening to music and accessing library services are important tasks accomplished by them through the use of smart devices. Google Mobile, WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Viber, Instagram, Wikipedia Mobile, Skype are highly used applications.

Navin Kumar Soni, Upender Singh Sudan and Rajeev Vij (2015)<sup>7</sup> carried out a study to examine the usage and awareness of mobile applications and technologies by LIS professional in library services. The geographical limitation of the study was North-West part of Madhya Pradesh, India. The study demonstrates that all the LIS profession of the region are aware of the usage of smart mobile applications and technologies. WhatsApp. Facebook Messenger are more used for instant messaging. By analysing the study results authors expressed their feeling as “Application of mobile technology in library services is the need of the hour

Vilas G. Jadhav (2014)<sup>8</sup> undertook an exploratory study on the application of Social Networking Services (SNS) for Library collaboration with an intention to examine academic librarians' perspectives on library collaboration using social networking services. The study indicates that participating librarians are very much aware of the use of social networking for library services namely Facebook, wiki, email, WhatsApp, are very popular tools among the LIS professionals.

## **5. WhatsApp Messenger for Library Services:**

**5.1 Inter-library Loan:** Is a kind of library service, used for procuring the document/s, which is/are not available with the local library from other library on loan for a period of time on agreed terms, to overcome the financial crunches of the library. On receiving a request for an e-book/audio book/Journal article/Conference paper which is/are not available in the parent library the librarian of the concerned Library can broadcast the request for the same in the WhatsApp group of Librarians. A Librarian of the document ownership library can dispatch the concerned document by attaching it to the same WhatsApp group. Using WhatsApp for Inter-Library Loan (ILL) will be very effective and time-saving in comparison with the traditional way of ILL.

**5.2 Newspaper Clippings:** Newspaper clipping service is treated as one of the best practices of which an eminent library can offer. In the traditional way of offering this service is quite cumbersome because of time consumed in the scanning or photocopying of newspaper contents. The smartphones made scanning or photocopying process so simple and easy that the process will not take even a second. The library professional can send those photocopied newspaper clipping/s instantly to the library users by posting it in the Library Users WhatsApp group.

**5.3 Current Awareness Service (CAS):** CAS is an essential service of the library in keeping the users at the state of the art condition with respect to the library resources. To render this service WhatsApp application is the highly suitable media. By posting the photocopied content pages of newly arrived print Journals or books/documents and content pages with a link to full text to e-journals/e-books on the WhatsApp user group will efficaciously execute the CAS of the library. In this service, the WhatsApp application is highly useful when the number of new arrived journals / documents is/are large.

**5.4 Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI):** SDI is an idea to make the current awareness service a user-oriented one by offering it at the individual level of selected items and is restricted to every user's unique area of interest. The initial stage of SDI service is the

creation of user profile which can be done very easily in case of academic users. Whereas in the public library set up, the LIS professionals need to do some exercise to build the profile of the user and segregating them in the group of likeminded users. Once segregation is done LIS professionals can make such segregated group as WhatsApp group. By posting the highly matching document/content in the respective WhatsApp group shall serve the purpose of SDI service.

**5.5 Electronic Document Delivery Service (EDDS):** To fulfil the information needs of the end user through information/document supply is a document delivery service<sup>8</sup>. The user of the library can send a request for a book or a journal article to his library via WhatsApp application, then the library forward the same to the participating libraries to deliver the requested document/s via WhatsApp itself. The serving library can share its document by delivering it to the requesting library. If the document is in the digital format the serving library delivers the document by sharing the full-text link via WhatsApp application.

**5.6 WhatsApp a Librarian:** The users of the library can ask the general questions with respect to the library service, referral services, membership procedures, activities of the library etc. By messaging them using WhatsApp application and they can also have live chat with the librarian to get the clarity over their queries.

**5.7 Reading Circle/Study Circle:** Formation of Reading circle/Study circle is one of the successive library extension services in developing the reading habits among the public. The public libraries can utilise the WhatsApp application to provide the virtual platform to write the reviews over the read book and have a discussion on the same by forming the reading or study circle comprising the persons with the common interest of its jurisdiction. Using the WhatsApp the library can announce the time and venue for in-person meeting to discuss and exchange their views and ideas over the available library resources.

**5.10 Procurement of Books/ Recommendation of Books:** Users can directly place the recommendation for the procurement of books or journals using WhatsApp application. The user can send the bibliographic details along the cover image and URL or DOI of the documents. The recommendations received via WhatsApp application can forward to the vendors for fast procurement of the documents.

**5.11 Orientation programme:** digital virtual tours of the library sections, services, functions, Library timings, membership procedures, general rules and regulation of the library, whom to contact for what all these information can be posted in the WhatsApp group of library users. Which gives more clarity over the Library and its functions.

**5.12 Library Bulletin:** comprising a list of fresh books and some important articles published in current issues of journals, brief annotations wherever the content of new material needs, list of recent publications can be circulated among the library users incorporating the multimedia content using the WhatsApp application.

**5.13 Notices:** Library can send the notice to their patrons regarding the Meetings, Public Lectures, Talks, orientation programme, book exhibitions, holidays and other general information via WhatsApp application within a fraction of second to all the patrons free of cost.

**5.14 Publicity or marketing of information:** Nowadays WhatsApp is becoming an effective medium for marketing. The library and information centers should utilise this medium to give

the wide publicity for its offered services and procured resources. Public libraries can use WhatsApp application to give the wide publicity to its library extension services posting such programme details in the Library users WhatsApp group and with a request to forward the same to their friends and neighbours

## 6. Conclusion

As per the analysis of global research firm “eMarketer”, India will overtake the US as the second largest market for smartphones in the world by the end of 2016 as smart mobile devices become affordable. The analysis report estimates "China will continue to lead the world rankings in 2016 with 624.7 million smartphones, followed by India (204.1 million), the US (198.5 million), Russia (65.1 million) and Japan (61.2 million),”.<sup>10</sup> WhatsApp is such a flexible application which has given all the provision to render library services to the doorsteps of its patrons. Based on these facts, Library and Information Centres will achieve the success in the effective rendering of its services to their patrons using WhatsApp application.

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