

## Librarians' Building a digital footprint

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***Abstract-** The rate of digital development and evolution of technologies have brought about tremendous changes in communication and information seeking pattern. As a result of this, the need for librarians to create a digital footprint becomes imperative. The prospects and steps of creating digital footprint were discussed in this paper with the overriding interest of producing librarians that are resilient in terms of being able to cope with innovative and destructive technologies while catering for the needs of library users and non-users alike needing information and allied services.*

***Keywords:** Digital Footprint; Online Presence; Librarians; Library and Information Science; Scholarly Communication.*

### **Introduction:**

Technology will guide us through this exciting times. The adoption will make best use of the resources we have, in order to reach new audiences through new platforms, and to share our collections and knowledge in new and innovative ways as professionals (National Library of Wales, 2019). Due to the massive surge of new digital technologies over the past decades, the ways consumers interact with brands have also changed. The digital realm connects librarians to their users and vice versa. With social media, information spreads instantly and we can create librarian- users moment and footprint.

The creation of a digital presence – an interactive, personalised platform – is a critical issue, foisting on librarians the urgent need to reflect, assess and revamp. It is time to reflect on informed use of social media presence which has become an essential part of our daily activities to creatively connect and satisfy our community of users. Over the years the library social media voice is that of its staff and the communication with patrons should encompass a sense of camaraderie, individuality and creativity. According to Robinson (2017) “your potential customers are active on social media and it is essential to keep yourself at the forefront of their minds”. Penetrate their cognitive screen with information and knowledge that will make the desirable differences in their lives and world views for a better humanity.

### **What is Digital footprint**

From the literatures, different authors have seen digital footprint as the entire ecosystem built from our online connectivity. Digital footprint is anything that is about you or put out by you online. It includes your information that is being scrapped from more passive online activities to active activities. Digital footprint is data that is created through your activities and communication online. It is said that everything placed online- texts or images have the potential to be available online forever. Being online forever requires that one leaves a digital footprint on the sand of time and promote professionalism. Librarians cannot afford to be stagnated or the profession shut to the degrading sideline. If societies are building smart schools, smart cities, we must evolve smart libraries for smart users of tomorrow.

### **Steps in building digital presence**

1. make sure your digital footprint represent you and your professional identity
2. Showcase your personality.
3. Show your passion e.g. proudly librarian, elite bookworm, polymath, etc
4. Create your content.
5. Choose your associates.
6. Use all networks wisely.
7. Share with your users: attached your social media accounts to your profile so that they can interact with you even off library period.

How is digital footprint used?

- (1) To obtain information about a person such as personal information
- (2) To reach your audience with customized ads.
- (3) It is also used by current and prospective employers of labour to assess their staff
- (4) Create visibility for yourself as librarian and by extension, a desirable image for the profession.
- (5) Contribute to the ranking of your institution or organization.

### **How to manage your digital footprint**

- Google yourself. Find out what is out for you through goggle, and what other persons have access to concerning you.
- Set up goggle alerts
- Protect your personal data
- Think before you post
- Watch your image

### **How to keep your users community as librarian**

- Sharing your page with people you know or people in your organization – likeminded people.
- Share it with existing users by email
- Join relevant facebook groups and share page content
- On sites with tags (like in Twitter and instagram) adding useful tags will help you get discovered
- Post consistently: your library activities should be posted on your page
- Look good when goggle: use search engine optimization (SEO) which is about getting your site ranked in goggle searches, librarians should make good use of this.
- Be creative in adoption and use.

### **Benefits to your professionalism**

It provides great first impression about your personality

It provides career asset

### **Some Social media to use for building digital footprint**

1. LinkedIn: is incredibly useful to set out professional profile, build a network of connections, join groups for insider knowledge
2. Instagram: the new way to connect with students
3. Twitter: to connect with Faculty
4. Facebook
5. Pinterest



Example of digital footprint (adapted from [www.bluetreeapps.com](http://www.bluetreeapps.com))

#### **Tips for creating effective online presence**

- (1) Harness and share your library's voice
- (2) The user or target audience informs all things. How to assess your audience in formal or information ways should be our aim.
- (3) Optimizing your discoverability : goggle yourself often.
- (4) Establishing a social media presence make you meet your users expectation

#### **Conclusion**

Developing and maintaining a strong online presence is very important for all librarians/information professionals, it is time consuming and it requires dedication but it is worth it. Creating a digital footprint is now a reality of life because most of our today's users are digital naïve and have more presence online, in order to provide effective and efficient services to meet their information needs. If you want to do anything big in the world amidst technological evolution, take advantage of this social media platform to present yourself in a good light and show off your profession without compromising your security.

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