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# Library Virtual Tour @ Bharathidasan University: A Case Study

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## Abstract

*The intervention of technology makes the library service in a better place. A technology which takes us to the reality without spending a bug and time, also makes us to feel live when we see is nothing but the virtual reality or it can be said like virtual tour, so there is a need for a virtual tour service as a part of library web based services. By keep in mind the present study aims at designing a Virtual Tour for Bharathidasan University Library. The title is "Library Virtual Tour @ Bharathidasan University: A Case Study". The Bharathidasan University Library Virtual Tour includes nearly thirty Photo Galleries, some virtual views, and a variety of floor plans and takes approximately ten to twenty minutes for Web visitors to complete. There are relevant links within the tour to other pages on the Library Website detailing additional information about courses and workshops, facilities, and resources. The last page of the tour includes a form for user input and contact information if users wish to request physical tours of the library.*

**Keywords:** Bharathidasan university library, Virtual tour.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the World Wide Web (WWW) and the Internet as a new media of information storage and delivery provide an unparalleled media for delivery of information with greater speed and economy. The web technology and the Internet have changed the way of information that is stored, retrieved and communicated in the libraries. As more libraries move towards providing their services in a digital environment, the improved access to remote library collections is making the use of electronic information resources more realistic and more attractive. Libraries are trying to give innovative services to satisfy the patrons in all ages like from traditional age to technical age, but on the patrons side they always look for something new, such kind of new services will attract the users towards the library. One of such services is the virtual tour. When people start to think beyond their imagination, a new form of innovation will evolve which is not only in their mind but also in their real life. In this way, television was born, radio was born, all because of their fine imagination. Fine imagination leads to a better innovation. Virtual tour is also one of the fine imaginations by (some) a person, which turned as a better innovation and a technique to attract people for a particular place.

## 2. VIRTUAL TOUR MEANING

The word virtual has been derived from Medieval Latin "virtualis" and the word tour taken from the French word "tourner". Virtual tour is otherwise called

panoramic tour. It is a simulation of a real life tour. It contains a collection of panoramic photos constituting a virtual tour which will be played accordingly with a sequence with background voice which explains the nature of the tour and the particular place which has been selected for the virtual tour sequence along with that some descriptions and text effects. Normally, it has the 3D effects which makes us feel like we are in that tour.

### 2.1 Definition of Virtual Tour

According to Dictionary of Library and Information Science "An online tour of a library's facilities usually available over the internet".

## 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives are selected for the purpose of the present study:

- i. To bring together Library Patrons and Virtual Tour Service
- ii. To staffing for Virtual Reference Services
- iii. To create a Portal for Virtual tour and updating the e-content
- iv. To build a virtual community
- v. To provide wider access to the user

## 4. METHODOLOGY

Developing a Website for Virtual Tour Service is an information consolidation work. The major steps which

have to be followed for designing a Website are as follows:

#### Planning and designing of a website

- i. Identification of Online supporting tools in Internet using various search engines
- ii. Selection of tools and customization
- iii. Evaluation of the selected resources by set parameters
- iv. Categorization and Organization of knowledge based Information Resources

- v. Finally presentation of Resources i.e. website designed with the help of webs.com online free website builder

#### 5. LIBRARY VIRTUAL TOUR @ BHARATHIDASAN UNIVERSITY

The Library Virtual Tour takes user on a walk around the Central Library of Bharathidasan University. Along the way, user will visit the buildings and various sections of the Library and be able to read about their history, resources that are available and view some photographs and videos. These options will help the user find his/her way through the tour and learn more about each location.



<http://bdulibraryvirtualtour.webs.com/>

Bharathidasan University Library Virtual Tour is an Online Library providing access to a variety of Web based services available on Internet and Intranet. These services are selected and evaluated by the Faculty,

Department of Library and Information Science. It provides a way of organizing information from a variety of sources.

#### 5.1 Entrance of the Central Library



The University Central Library is the heart of any University. The Bharathidasan University Library was established in February 1982. The present magnificent library building has started functioning since 29 May 1997 with a carpet area of 6215.56 Sq meters. The building is used to accommodate sections such as Stack, Reference, Circulation, Periodicals, Technical section, Digital Library, Audio Visual Centre and Reprography. At present, the library has in its stock about 95,000 volumes

of Books and back volumes and subscribes 204 current journals at national and international levels as print copies to cover a wide range of subjects to facilitate users to access current academic and research literature. It also has on-line access to more than 8000 journals in full text and a few databases of abstracting and Indexing journals and also 8500 Springer E-books on various subjects with perpetual access procured to enhance the quality of teaching and research activities.



<http://bdulibraryvirtualtour.webs.com/library-virtual-tour>

## 5.2 Acquisition and Technical Section

Compilation of requirements from the departments, ordering of books, Accessioning, Classification, Indexing

and processing of books is the responsibility of this unit. It also develops bibliographic database of books and other resources (Figure.1).



Fig.1 Technical Section

## 5.3 Circulation Section

Registration of membership, Issue of bar-code ID cards, Issue and Return of books to the members, Reservation of documents, Overdue reminders, No Dues, Due charges if any will be taken care by this unit.

Circulation process is fully automated with barcode technology and web enabled OPAC.(Figure.2).

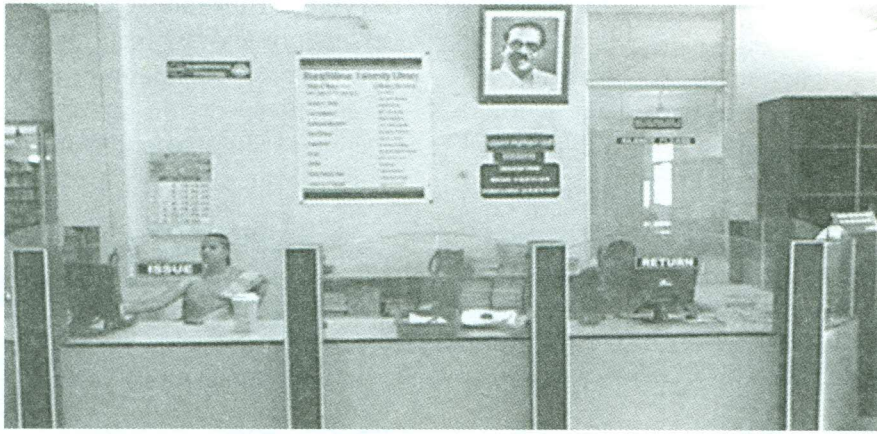


Fig.2 Circulation counter

#### 5.4 Periodicals Section

It maintains 196 subscribed periodicals of which 127 are national and 69 are international which cover all

domains of research knowledge. Apart from these, more than 8025 e-journals can be accessed on-line through INFLIBNET e-resource consortium (UGC- INFONET) (Figure 3).



Fig.3 Periodicals section

#### 5.5 Stack Room

The Library Stack room is located on the right side on the ground floor that facilitates lending of books to the

users. The stack has been well organized, maintained and arranged by using Dewey Decimal Classification for easy retrieval.

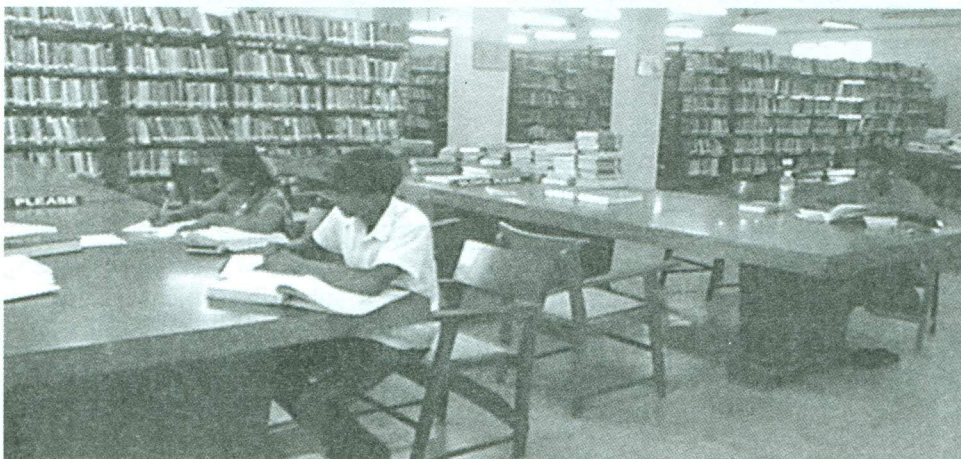


Fig. 5.5 Stack room

## 5.6 Reference Section

The reference section contains general reference like Dictionaries, Encyclopedia's, Year Books, Directories, Gazetteers, Handbooks, Manuals and Subject reference books. Books on Competitive, Civil

Services, Entrance Exams, Career Development, Personality Development and CD/DVD resources are also parts of the reference collection. The books are mainly meant for in-house academic reference. The reference section compiles and disseminates the current academic and research information.



Fig. 5.6 Reference section

## 5.7 Theses Section

A collection of 5700 theses are organized and the access is made available to the users. A list of theses

with subject classification is available for reference. These are only for in-house reference.



Fig. 5.7 Thesis section

## 5.8 Book Bank

A collection of recent text books is available for circulation to the SC/ST students to meet their examination needs. The books will be issued based on the recommendation of the Heads of the Departments for a semester. Students, who fail to clear their examination even after two attempts are not eligible for book bank scheme.

## 5.9 Digital Library

Digital Library is being developed by using GSDL by harvesting current open e-books on different subjects linking to the scholarly journal publications, theses and dissertations and other e-resources. Efforts are being made to subscribe subject specific e-books and e-journal databases. Institutional Repository using DSpace will also be developed as a part of Digital Library. E-journal consortia, springer e-books and EBSCO collections enable campus wide access of 8025+ journals and 10000 e-books.



Fig. 5.8 Book bank



Fig. 5.9 Digital Library

### 5.10 Server Room

The library maintains five servers for various applications like Library Automation, Digital Library,

Institutional Repository, Remote Access and Course Management System.



Fig. 5.10 Server room

### 5.11 Centre for Innovation in Information Services

The Centre for Innovation in Information Services (CIIS) is a new research centre, created late 2012, which pulls together the individual strands of excellence in research into Library and Information that previously existed. The Centre carries out research and consultancy for a range of funders, and has expertise in Information

Literacy, Social Media, Information Resources, Open Access, libraries and learning spaces, library and computing data, Information Technology (IT) in Higher Education, mobile technologies and many other themes related to library and computing services. For more information contact us via: [bdulib@gmail.com](mailto:bdulib@gmail.com).

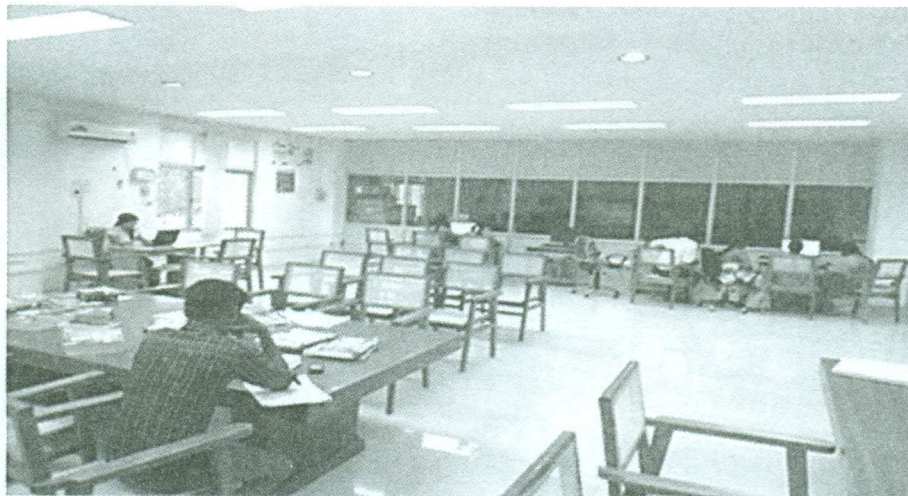


Fig.5.11 Innovative center

### 5.12 Digital Talking Library

Digital Talking Library for differently abled person was established in Bharathidasan University Library exclusively for the welfare of differently abled persons

in the academic year 2011. Digital Talking Library provides access to a variety of web based resources available on the internet. It provides way of organizing information from a variety of sources.



Fig.5.12 Digital talking library

### 5.13 New Arrivals of Books

Newly procured books are kept on display every month for 15 days. These books are not for loan during the period of display, but can be reserved. After the display

period, the books reserved from display will be loaned as per date of reservation. Library member may login to his/her account in online catalogue or email to make reservations.

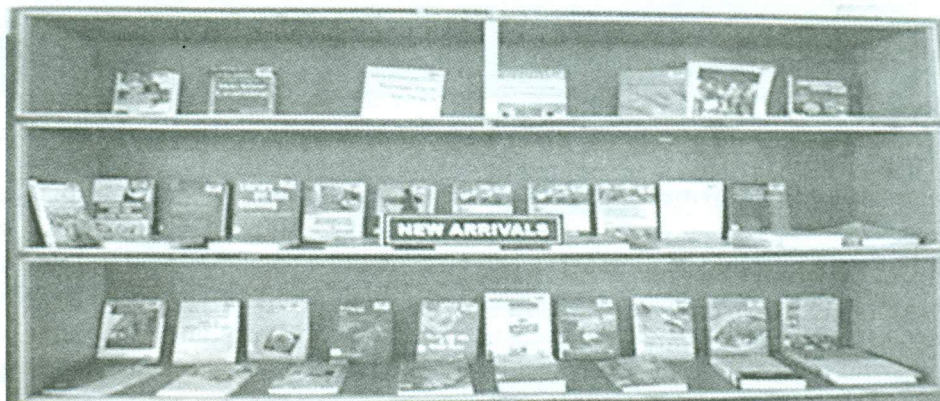


Fig. 5.13 New arrivals of books

### 5.14 Smart Classroom

Interactive learning classroom provides teacher with essential tools to manage classrooms, assess students and encourage collaboration. It is designed to easily

integrate with your existing classroom technology and our network environment. It contains smart TV, white board, LCD projector and Screen, Lifesize Video conferencing facilities with recording and so on.



Fig. 5.14 Smart class room services

## 6. CONCLUSION

The Bharathidasan University Library Virtual Tour includes nearly thirty Photo Galleries, some virtual views, and a variety of floor plans and takes approximately ten to twenty minutes for Web visitors to complete. There are relevant links within the tour to other pages on the Library Website detailing additional information about courses and workshops, facilities, and resources. The last page of the tour includes a form for user input and contact information if users wish to request physical tours of the library.

We hope to make the tour more visible to our clientele by integrating the tour in a betterment as a component of our user-education and library-orientation session and by expanding our marketing efforts. We plan to display the tour more prominently on the library's home page, feature the tour on the desktops of our reference workstations, promote the tour during meetings with faculty. We will also include the URL on library handouts and other printed documentation to promote the tour in a better way and possibly place a dedicated station at the entrance of the library. In a digital environment, the Library Virtual Tour is more important to meet the present requirements of user community.

This website not only covers the web based resources but also makes a user to avail the Institution/organization services. Bharathidasan University Library

Virtual Tour website developed based on the freely available website builder called Webs.com. Library and Information Science professionals should be aware of the recent technologies and their applications like free website and web interactive tools for web based library services. Based on this technical knowledge, we can develop our own website, subject Gateways to meet the present needs of user community and develop the research activities.

As this brief overview of virtual tours of Bharathidasan University Library suggests, the Web offers a myriad new ways interestingly and exciting to showcase a facility, a collection, or services offered. Virtual tours offer a tremendous flexibility in that they need not be restricted by the physical structure. Hyperlinks also allow virtual tours to be designed for a variety of patrons with different purposes. However, Bharathidasan University Library might be prudent to invest resources in advanced types of virtual tours, since they usually score poorly elsewhere. Maybe attractive photographs would be better: invest the money in getting a good photographer to shoot the place and not in technology." As always with good information architecture, keeping the users in the forefront is paramount. With that caveat in mind, the possibilities do seem endless for the effective use of virtual tours.

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