



## University Libraries and Social Media Policies

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#### ABSTRACT

Nowadays changing technology and changing user profile have impelled libraries to resort to different methods in order to communicate with the people they serve. The libraries which are the meeting place of people who investigate, question, want to have a good time, and who want to socialize need a good promotion regardless of types. Libraries use second-generation internet services to take constructive and developer steps in the field of services marketing, presenting and public relations. University libraries use social media effectively today that social media is an integral part of human life, mobile technology facilitates the operations. Social media has strengthened communication and cooperation of persons and libraries with each other, and has increased the expectations and requirements of each other. Therefore, university libraries have begun to create their own social media policy. In this study, when the university libraries use social media effectively, policies and objectives needed to be established are focused on.

**Keywords:** Social media, Social media tools, Social media policy, University libraries, Public relations.

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### I. Introduction

University libraries are an integral part of the education concept. These libraries are regarded as "the heart of the schools, universities and social life". Libraries serve for user groups with various information needs and research skills. Nowadays, due to the variety of services and changes in technology libraries have begun to alter the way. "Digital libraries", "hybrid library" concepts have been mentioned frequently. The user profile changes have been added to physical changes in the libraries. Libraries are designed as a user-driven and offer their services in this direction.

In terms of explanation of services, solving problems and reaching many more people, public relations is also important in libraries as well as in other institutions. Public relations is "a method that institutions employ in order to make more effective communication with the audience that they served, and is an art for making institutions to be loved and respected by related persons and to convince people to adopt a particular attitude" (Eryılmaz, 2014).

Public relations are the difference between being ordinary and being important. At the same time, in order to give a positive image to the institutions they are bound,

the institutions are planned activities for determination of the necessary promotion policies, directing the institutions in this direction, ensuring the flow of information between groups and reaching the intended results by providing the necessary efficiency for the flow of information (Eryılmaz, 2014).

In the university library having many stakeholders, public relations practices have contributions to education and research, to the increase of the library's reputation against the user and to the increased use of the library:

- It provides the introduction of resources and services of library to the target audience (users) and increases the services.
- It allows the library which is a public space to establish healthy communication with institution's stakeholders (top management, users, etc..).
- It provides consulting, based on the understanding of the behavior of user / reader.
- It gives the opportunity to research on public preferences, trends and expectations and advice on necessary events as a result of these.
- It allows to analyze future trends and to predict the results.
- It allows to avoid disputes and misunderstandings and in doing so, to be active in cooperation with other organizational functions in terms of legal,

human resources, finance, manufacturing, engineering and etc.

- It raises the reputation of the library and profession of librarianship.
- It provides in-house training (orientation).
- It provides social benefit (Yenikurtuluş, 2003).

Today conventional library services have been replaced by a modern understanding of librarianship. Users who need instant access the information sought as soon as possible, from anywhere without the limits of time and space are using social media tools effectively. Therefore, the libraries, document-information centers, archives and etc. institutions benefit from second-generation internet services to communicate with users, in marketing and in presenting of services (Biçen Aras and Çolaklar, 2013).

## II. Brief History of the Development of Internet

The Internet is not a network at all, but a vast collection of different networks that use certain common protocols and provide certain common services. It is an unusual system in that it was not planned by anyone and is not controlled by anyone (Tanenbaum, 2002).

The important dates in the development of the internet (Cohen-Almagor, 2011):

- In 1972, TELNET became the first Public Packet Data Service.
- In 1973, File transfer Protocol (FTP) came into existence and worked using a Client Server Architecture.
- In 1973, first e-mail program was written.
- In 1974, Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) and the Internet Protocol (IP) were developed.
- In 1975, first message group was created on networks.
- In 1979, USENET (connection between personal computers and university networks) was created.
- In 1982, Networks connected to each other.
- In 1983, Universities and networks connected to all over the world.
- In 1987, Number of hosts reached 10.000.
- In 1988, Number of hosts over the 100.000.
- In 1989, www and http became a standard.
- In 1989, countries started to connect Internet.
- In 1991, Internet society was formed.
- In 1992, number of hosts reached over the 1.000.000.
- In 1992, 50 web pages.
- In 1995, Telecom companies announced Internet Services and more than 30.000 sites were in operation.
- In 1996, the first version of Google was released.
- In 1998, there were approximately 150 million Netusers in more than 60 countries.
- In 2003 Myspace was founded.
- In 2004 Facebook was founded.
- In 2005 YouTube was founded.
- In 2006, there were more than 100 million MySpace users.
- In 2006 Twitter was founded.
- In 2010, there were 500 million Facebook users.

- In 2010, there were more than 100 million Twitter users.

The needs of individuals and institutions, advances in technology bring to us in the current position of the Internet world.

When we evaluated the development of Internet around the World, 3 periods emerge: these are respectively the Web 1.0, Web 2.0, and Web 3.0.

- **Web 1.0:** It emerges with features such as key words, portals (pages offering a whole range of services: for example, via the same portal Yahoo provides search, mail, news services), sideburns (to register the required web address for storing). Not updated static web pages, e-mails, forums, chats, low bandwidth (slow access) and limited hardware define Web 1.0.
- **Web 2.0:** Search engines, space, social media, dynamic web pages continuously updated, Wiki ( it is a software which allows the users to create new pages freely, to make arrangements in page, and to interconnect this page the best-known wiki is Wikipedia), RSS (rich site summary, to get information by connecting to the page simply, to ensure the new content easily to be followed (<http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/rss>, Accessed 1 February 2014), to read the content easily with an RSS reader application and to achieve content), podcasting (uploading audio, video and text containing publications to personal computer, cellphone, MP3 player, video player, or portable devices like laptops to watch after a time of broadcast), blogging (web journal or diary-like website, web + log = weblogging), microblogging (areas that people transferred their thoughts with limited characters, today best known micro blog is Twitter), social network (community of people who bond with each other for one or several reason such as sex, job, etc. disease), video, high bandwidth (fast access) and cheap computing define Web 2.0.
- **Web 3.0:** In summary, it is you, us. The semantic web (meaningful website is to offer adapted personal content/advertising based on behavioural observations rather than crowds to individuals by using search and preferences made by users. It includes the idea of producing local results for geographic regions as a result of web search) (<http://ecrimeexpertblog.wordpress.com/2011/10/03/web-3-0-and-privacy/>, Accessed 2 February 2014). It is utopian, communities (a certain group; engineers, librarians, etc.), small networks (communication networks covering for the company) and cloud computing define Web 3.0. In short, Web 3.0 is personal applications.

In the beginning Internet was used in the military and universities to send e-mail, communication, remote control and file transfer. With personal computers, Internet became popular. Internet through our lives easier and allows share information faster than ever. All around the world Internet is used to communication between peoples, shopping, share ideas and file transfer. Nowadays, peoples and organizations are using the Internet as a tool.

### III. What is Social Media?

Web 2.0 define second-generation internet services - the social networking sites, wikis, communication tools, folksonomies – i.e. the system created by Internet users jointly and by sharing (http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web\_2.0, Accessed 27 January 2014). Social media is a growing phenomenon being connected to the information in areas and widens (Stoekel and Sinkinson, 2013). Persons share their thoughts by supporting with photos and videos in these areas independently of each other.

According to another definition, social media is a set of internet-based applications that allows the user-centric production and development of ideological and technological contents and embodiments on Web 2.0 (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). It is a digital platform where the sharing of information captured simultaneously by the user-friendliness brought by new generation web technologies and communication speed is followed (Tezgüler, 2013). Although the social media tools include different technologies, the goals are the same; to promote communication.

Social media platforms help you to create your new networks (LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.), to make your promotion (YouTube, blogs, etc.) and to share easily (Digg, Delicious, etc.) (Turner, 2010). The best known social media tools are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Foursquare, Tumblr, Flickr, Vimeo, Pinterest, Wikipedia, Instagram, Soundcloud, and etc. These social media tools have used for the promotion of their library services by university libraries with the potential benefits and challenges (Kemrajh, 2013).

Social network tools allow you to teach library staff new technologies related to their profession, to follow the activities, and to keep resources up to date. As a result, students, researchers rely more on university libraries keeping pace with technology (Chu and Du, 2013).

Social networks also help in finding new user and colleagues to collaborate to librarians and disclose promotion of libraries and the importance of library services to social communities (Buono and Kordeliski, 2013).

With social media, sharing and the use of information, Implementation of this information obtained is very easy. Over the Internet without the need for tools people can share. Therefore, it shows differences from traditional media such as social media, newspapers, television and movies. Generally, while needing to specific resources in order to publish traditional media information, social media is a relatively inexpensive to publish information or access information and access tools are open to everyone To make investment in a printing press or TV broadcasting, compulsory license is not needed. The common feature of social media and traditional media is to reach small or large masses. For example, a blog post as well as a television show may reach zero people and also reach millions of people well. The features that will help identify difference between social media and traditional media may vary according to the method used.

Millions of people are actively using social media. The most important reason of that people can be able to express themselves without hindrance by combining

technology and social media. When people want to search or to give information about something the social media is the first place that is looking on the Internet. With mobile technologies, communication is never cut of at home, work or on the travel.

### IV. Differences of Social Media from Traditional Media

Differences of social media from traditional media can be summarized as follows:

- **Access:** Both traditional media and social media technologies allow everyone to reach a general audience.
- **Accessibility:** To produce for traditional media is often owned by private companies and government; in general, social media tools can be used by anyone with little or no cost.
- **Usability:** Traditional media production often requires specialized skills and training. This is not true for most social media or in some cases the ability is completely changed and new, so everyone can be found in production.
- **Innovation:** The time difference occurring in traditional media communications (days, weeks, or even months) can be longer (the time range of responses is decided by the participants) when compared with social media with immediate effect and response. Traditional media is adapting to social media applications, therefore, these differences will disappear anytime soon.
- **Permanency:** Traditional media cannot be changed after it is created (after a magazine article have been printed and distributed, changes cannot be made on the same article) whereas social media can be changed instantly by comments or realignment.
- **Freedom:** Perhaps the most important difference between traditional media and social media is freedom. Traditional media is under pressure of governments and advertisers and unable to broadcast freely. Social media is easily accessible, interventions may be by everyone on an equal level, and as it is a global platform, it is much freer.

Social media and traditional media have many similar things. However, there are some differences in these two media in the implementation phase. There are some solid rules and limits in the traditional media. But people are able to feel freely in social media. They can express their thoughts easily. You can share any information, messages, photos and videos easily and also you can update all of them in any time that you want. With lot of free social sites and personal blogs, people always are in social media and Internet by their personal computers.

### V. What is information?

John Naisbitt clearly emphasizes future importance of the information for societies by saying that "... the new power supply is not money in the hands of a minority, but is the information in the hands of the majority". Because the information has been accepted in all sectors of public life whether social, economic, and technological (Sağsan,

2001; Naisbitt, 1982). Chistobal Cobo discloses the importance of information once again by saying "Public Information is the energy of the 21st century" (Moravec, 2008).

Information is a collection of data recorded on paper or other media, that can be transmitted and can be understood or is the real and imaginary products of the ideas transmitted, recorded, published as formal or informal in any form of mind (Sağsan, 2001).

Today, the importance of information is related to how often and in which areas it is used. Through the developing technologies and tools, information emerges in every field from education, to production. The institutions or persons who uses the information correct have taken place always one step ahead. When we consider in terms of research and development, in the step of investigation, obtaining and presenting of information correctly, the university libraries have a great responsibility. For continuing and promoting education, the university libraries closely follow and use every technology which contains information, facilitates the exchange. Social media tools are used by university libraries for the promotion of education, sharing of information and directing the users correctly.

## **VI. What Happens on the Internet in a Minute?**

Today everything that we see, we hear, we read, we watch is the source of knowledge. The importance of that how and in whose hands information obtained with different methods is used is increasing. Therefore, in our world that the Internet is used in a way that busy and active that is important what happened in 60 seconds. "What happens on the Internet in 60 seconds?". The internet in 60 seconds; 2.024.423 Google searcher, 156.849.621 emails sent, 909 new web users, 47.231 app downloads, 818 new websites are created, 200.743 people are watching a porno, 2.544 new file uploads on mega.co.nz, \$ 376,507 money spent on web shopping, \$76.688 revenues from products sold (Amazon), 441 new blog posts (WordPress), 734.137.115 GB of global IP data transferred, 2.350.687 new Facebook likes, 209.377 new photos uploaded on Facebook, 364.647 new tweets, 161 hours of video uploaded on YouTube, 2.250.815 YouTube video views, 33.005 photos uploaded on Instagram, 409.553 likes on Instagram, 3.865 new photos uploads on Flickr, 25.654.600 Flickr photos views (<http://www.whathappensontheinternetin60seconds.com/>, Accessed 10 February 2014).

Researches on the use of the Internet at different times for 1 minute show us that the Internet and social media users have not changed their habits and that similar results are obtained (Daily Mail, 2014).

So intensively used social media tools and rapid development in technology have influenced the lives of communities, institutions, individuals and have led them to make planning in parallel. With the development of social media, innovations in the field of education have become imperative. Studies were performed for use technology in all fields of education (Moravec, 2008). The libraries which are an integral part of education and research have begun to use social media.

## **VII. Younger Generations**

Habits and developments of young people around the changing world have been kept forefront and are called X, Y, Z generations under 3 groups. Generation X born between the years of 1966-77 is defined as a generation that is sceptical, law-abiding, strong sense of belonging, respectful of authority, loyal, emphasis on hardworking. Generation Y who was born between the years of 1977-1994 is a generation that is independent, freedom-loving, has less organizational commitment, change a lot of work and has low brand loyalty. Z generation born between the years of 1995-2014 loves using the Internet and mobile technologies. Today, common smart phones, i-pad or tablet computers are active in all areas. Especially, by means of the internet, they prefer to socialize (Tutgun Ünal, 2013; Schroer, 2004). In a study conducted in the United States by Kaiser Family Foundation in 2004, the following findings related to Z generations are mentioned:

- They can deal with many things at a time.
- They spend their time with traditional media as much as new technology. So selecting one does not mean give up the others.
- 73% of children aged 8-18 reads at least 43 minutes in a day. They can deal with many things at a time (Mengi, 2013).

Briefly Z generation is a generation free, unique (different personal characteristics), giving attention to detail, caring environment, fun loving, collaborative and fast (they think fast, learn fast).

In a survey conducted it is seen that social networks are used effectively among university students. With this study, it has been questioned if university students are using social networks for educational purposes. Accordingly, the students use the social networks by 71.9% "to do research on school project / homework's" and by 81.3 % for "examination of educational groups and events". According to the data obtained from the students, the use of social network is to reach 89% for "looking up current, different information and ideas" (Akyazı and Tutgun Ünal, 2013).

To provide better service for this generation that uses technology in every area of their lives, university libraries use the various tools of social media and develop social media policy.

## **VIII. Objectives of Libraries in Using Social Media**

Objectives of university libraries in actively use social media are as follows:

- To promote the library services, workshops and the events (to increase the library use)
- To provide better access to information
- To be where the users are
- To get feedback from users
- To highlight specific features of the library
- To create Collaboration (other librarians and the users)
- To announce the library news (Mathews, 2011).

Libraries are using social media to establish good communication with users, to understand the issues and find solutions. By using social media, libraries wants to

give a message to their users about they are innovative and solution oriented.

### **IX. Media Policy and University Libraries' Policy Examples**

Social media policy (social network policy) is a corporate code of conduct that provides guidelines for employees who wish to publish content on the Internet as a part of their work or a private person. The goal of social media policy is to avoid any behaviour of an employee that would expose the institution any legal issues by their post. The institutions include directives and recommendations explaining what kind of information can be shared by institutions employees in charge of social network (Rouse, 2011).

University libraries create social media policies for social media accounts to be used correctly by researchers, students, academics and other stakeholders in the framework of certain rules. A social media policy is needed for the libraries to use one or several of the social media tools; and to continue the operations in this area. ([http://commons.gc.cuny.edu/wiki/index.php/Best\\_Practices\\_in\\_Social\\_Media\\_for\\_Academic\\_Libraries](http://commons.gc.cuny.edu/wiki/index.php/Best_Practices_in_Social_Media_for_Academic_Libraries), Accessed 29 January 2014).

When creating social media policies, it is necessary to act according to universal values, personality rights, copyrights, and the organization's vision, mission. Accuracy and reliability and privacy of any information shared are important. It should be considered that any positive or negative criticism and opinions can come via social media and an unprofessional attitude should be showed in these situations. By moving in this direction, social media policy of the university libraries should be created.

Universities have been randomly selected from the university library with a social media policy: Baltimore Langsdale University Library, University of Chicago Library and University of Utah Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library, Middle East Technical University Library. Examples of social media policy of these libraries are as follows:

- **University of Baltimore The Library of Langsdale Social Media Policy:** Librarians and library staff need to consider ALA Code of Ethics when using social media. It is noted that the interactions in the social media should be in accordance with privacy and copyright (<http://langsdale.ubalt.edu/uploads/documents/langsdale-library-social-media-policy.pdf>, Accessed 20 January 2014).
- **University of Chicago Library Social Media Policy:** All comments related to attitudes and behaviours against the U.S. laws on social media pages of the library such as Facebook, and comments for site promotion irrelevant to the subject except for the main purpose of the pages are deleted (<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/about/socialmediacommments.html>, Accessed 11 February 2014).
- **University of Utah Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library Social Media Policy:** Profanity,

insults or hate speech, copyright, trademark, or other intellectual property rights violations, spam or commercial advertising shares and off-topic comments are not allowed ([http://library.med.utah.edu/lib/EHSL\\_SocialMediaPolicy.pdf](http://library.med.utah.edu/lib/EHSL_SocialMediaPolicy.pdf), Accessed 11 February 2014).

- **Middle East Technical University Library Social Media Policy:** METU Library actively uses the social media as a means of communication. The services provided by our library are being announced through social networks as well as our website. Furthermore, we cautiously follow and overview the user's feedbacks on the social media (<http://lib.metu.edu.tr/more->, Accessed 14 April 2014)

When we examine the university library that has social media policies, it is seen that there are common rules. The rules contained in social media policy of the university libraries are as follows:

- In their own content; obscene, racist, derogatory comments or other objectionable items cannot be shared.
- Personal attacks, insults or threatening language should not be used.
- Slander statements cannot be included.
- Sharing information stolen or contrary to copyright law is not permitted.
- Commercial promotions or spams cannot be shared
- While the libraries are promoting people to share information, discuss or for self-expression, it is desirable to carry out them with respect and courtesy. If you can not comply with these rules, library reserves the right to delete anything objectionable.

To create a social media presence of the university libraries is quick and easy. For this purpose, very little technical skills are sufficient. The more difficult part is to provide value for users with interesting content and to keep it up to date and is to establish links with other services. In a sense, the use of social media has a role as a tool in order to enable communication with the strategy behind (Benn and McLoughlin, 2013).

### **X. Social Media Tools Used in Libraries**

In research conducted, it is seen that social media tools most used in the libraries are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Flickr, Blog. With these tools often used, users and librarians transfer thoughts, the issues they want to take care via photos, reviews and videos. The university libraries should be attentive while sharing anything on their social media accounts. They shall not share any opinion meaningless, of which accuracy is unknown or not connected with the subject. Then "What the libraries should share in social media?". Libraries must share;

- Library news and events,
- New additions to the collection,
- Articles, videos, links, etc.,
- Data community,
- Ask for feedback,
- Respond to people,

- Photos,
- and more (Burkhardt, 2010).

Any information shared by acting by the strategies developed in accordance with certain rules will provide an effective acceptance of social media presence of the university libraries.

## XI. Marketing the Library Being to Your Users / Readers

What can be done for sharing messages with useful and interesting content, for many users/readers to be aware of the existence of social media for libraries? To market social media presence, university libraries necessarily need to have a strategy:

- Sharing the links,
- Talking to people,
- Library using trainings,
- Print advertising,
- Web ads,
- Build links via incidental friends,
- Follow and watch in return for follow-up,
- To respite (Burkhardt, 2010).

Libraries are open to innovation. To be keep strong communication with their users, they always share interesting and enjoyable activity. User satisfaction is the most important factor in the increased use of the library. Therefore, any method can be created and used by the type of library and the user of this library.

## XII. Conclusion

Library is the most important department that reflects the university. Education and training universities providing services within the framework of policies set targets to achieve their strategies and policies are written. Therefore, university libraries cannot act independently when creating their social media policy. They should determine their own rules to better service by corporate identity. And they can work together with experts of public relations and marketing experts.

University libraries should follow social media closely to develop themselves and move with the times. For this libraries are needed to be good in social media and technology.

A universal social media policy should be created in order to effectively support the training of university libraries, to increase the number of the users, and to ensure the adoption of its presence on social media. University libraries should have an accessible web page.

Social media policy should be discussed on library web pages coinciding with and supporting the University's corporate identity of the university libraries, under the directory. Also in the university libraries, it would be useful for the persons who manage these accounts to receive training on public relations, social media and marketing issues in order to use social media more effectively and efficiently.

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