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Information Services of University Library Web Sites in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries: Evaluation Study

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Abstract:

Today, almost all university libraries have been connected to the internet and have built their web presence on World Wide Web sites as a way for remote users to access and utilize library services and information resources such as online catalogs, bibliographic and full-text databases, and other internet information resources. Therefore, the evaluation of university library web site becomes a further importance. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the content of university library web sites to determine the characteristics of the information content and to identify the range of services and information resources available for the users. The research used a checklist consisted of all the essential elements to be included in the university library web site and focused on availability of services and information resources. Sixteen university library web sites in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries were analyzed as a sample of the study. The results of the evaluation indicated poor content and lack of information in some sites, ambiguous categorization of titles, names, and text links. With regard to services, circulation was the most available, interlibrary loan, current awareness, ask the librarian, users education. As for the resources, Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) was the most available, then commercial publishers and agents resources, then electronic books, then internet resources, and Arabic electronic resources. The recommendation indicated that more attention must take place on training and qualification of librarian to manage and develop services and resources in the library web site in accordance with users needs. Finally guidelines for the profession to improve the content of university library web sites.