Electronic journals in academic libraries : a literature review

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ABSTRACT

An important function of academic libraries today is to provide information in electronic format. The management, development and delivery of e-journal services are the major current challenges for university libraries and information services. This study provides a brief review of some of the key issues facing information professionals working in academic libraries. Articles on e-journals in academic libraries are reviewed. The aspects being reviewed are the technical services and processing, promotion, evaluation and library services. The e-journal access and usage issues, users' acceptance and perception of e-journals, selection, acquisition, pricing, advantages and disadvantages of e-journals and archiving are also discussed. It also examined some of the concepts and problems, which an academic library must consider in order to align its collection development activities with the changing environment of digital librarianship in the electronic age. Also identified are issues that still need to be addressed such as the license agreement and archiving of e-journals.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

An increasingly important function of academic libraries today is the provision of information in electronic formats. Today libraries are providing electronic access to a wide variety of resources, including indexes, full-text articles, complete journals and Internet / Web resources. Universities continue to be wired to take advantage of telecommunications advances, and libraries continue to provide increased access to products and services available through these networks, especially the Internet. In fact, libraries have been moving towards an electronic environment, in which sufficient computers are necessary for patrons to access information.

In recent years, many more journals have been converted for digitizing, a necessary process for turning a paper journal into an electronic one. In addition, a considerable number of journals are now published only electronically, which significantly enlarges the size of the e-journal pool. Among all the users of e-journals, academic libraries especially are concerned about how they should deal with those publications because they are the major subscribers of scholarly journals (CHU, 2000). Because of this, academic libraries and librarians must play important roles in designing and supporting a new paradigm of scholarly communication that will benefit the institutions, the users and the research process itself. They also must know and understand that for the foreseeable future they will be working primarily with electronic journals that look and act like print journals, with some minor differences and major challenges in providing access to them.