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**Transmitting information through digital signage technology to enable communication between users and staff: an overview of Panjab University Library, Chandigarh**

Sunaina Khanna,  
Assistant Librarian  
A.C. Joshi Library  
Panjab University, Chandigarh

\*Seema Sood,  
Assistant Librarian  
A.C. Joshi Library,  
Panjab University, Chandigarh

Deepika Tewari  
Library Assistant  
A.C. Joshi Library  
Panjab University, Chandigarh

*\*Corresponding author*

**Abstract**

The introduction of information communication technology (ICTs) has empowered each and every facet in society, including libraries. The functions that libraries perform and services that are rendered to the user community are provided through the application of ICTs. In the last decade, libraries have introduced various advancements including automation, digital libraries, Web-OPAC, RFID implementation, and Wi-Fi facility etc. Digital signage is one of the telecommunication technologies that are widely accepted these days. To meet the changing information seeking behaviour of the users, dissemination of information through digital signage has become very essential. Digital signage is being introduced in libraries because of the benefits that can be derived from its usage. This paper discusses the concept of digital signage and its benefits in the digital era. It also highlights the benefits of digital signage for the faculty and user's community in Panjab University Library, Chandigarh.

**Keywords:** Information communication technology, University Libraries, Panjab University Library, Digital signage, Information seeking behaviour, Information dissemination

**1. Introduction**

With the introduction of ICTs, various technologies have evolved like information networks, satellites, computers, software applications and video conferencing, etc. These days digital signage is one of the technologies that have become an effective way to inform and communicate specific



messages to the clients. Sitting in front of the TV and fast utilization of PCs has made the general public constant to take a glance at screens for data, so digital signage has been acknowledged broadly to reach large audiences. Digital signage is found everywhere including transportation systems, stadiums, hospitals, hotels, restaurants, shopping malls, educational institutes and offices etc. and hence libraries are no exception. The libraries have always looked to move from the monotonous static system of the past to a communicative system that is more dynamic and interactive. The libraries are excellent venues for providing information to the user community and it becomes more strengthening, if dissemination is more impressive.

Digital signage is also known as dynamic signage, which is a particular type of silver casting in which video or sight and sound substance is displayed in public places for enlightening or promoting purposes. A digital sign usually consists of a PC or playback gadget associated with a huge, splendid computerized screen, for example, a LCD or plasma show. Digital signs utilize technologies such as LCD, LED and projection to display content computerized pictures, videos, streaming media.

Business dictionary defines Digital Signage as: “Display of text and/or images, shown in digital formats over the internet or on television. Digital signage is commonly used to advertise products or services as they can offer more animations to entice consumers.” Richard Turner defines it as “Digital signage is a great technology to allow the treasures of the library to become more evident to patrons”.

## **2. Benefits of Digital Signage:**

Till the times immemorial, the use of posters and flyers has been being used. Making poster is time consuming, difficult to update and wasteful in terms of stationary and human resources, and moreover they are static also. There arises need of some technology which can provide dynamism in communication and solve the problems that are faced in traditional communication system. Digital signage network is the ideal answer. Digital signage is increasingly common, and more and more campuses, government organizations and companies, including libraries are getting benefits from this increasingly affordable innovation. The system for a digital signage is controlled at a focal area and the information is conveyed as messages, pictures and videos and so on, is streamed to remote locations. It offers the capacity to communicate important, ongoing messages and current data in an appealing way. All the individual end-focuses can show diverse information, simultaneously and give splendid, enlivened and intuitive pictures. It can reduce the burden placed on the information desk through display in real time by timely information and answering



frequently asked questions. It provides centralized content control tools which helps manage the content.

- No poster, anyway very much composed, can attract the attention by movement. The dynamic digital signage reflects messages and images that can move and much more eye catching. The movement that catches the eye is especially well suited to the viewers.
- Digital signage systems give significant flexibility, as different information can be conveyed to numerous areas and the data can likewise be produced in extensive variety of configurations.
- Digital signage provides instant and reliable information through creative presentation, which can be changed instantly if necessary. The messages can be refreshed or resigned continuously.
- It helps in cost savings over traditional system by eliminating design, printing and distribution costs.
- Changes can be made quickly without significant disruption to display. Reminder can pop up on the digital signage a short time before the event will take place.
- It's also better than printed posters, and bulletin boards because:
  - Real-time breaking news can be delivered
  - Bright screens and motion display is another benefit
  - Multiple things can be viewed on a screen at once
  - better than print for green reasons

### **3. Digital signage usage in Panjab University Library**

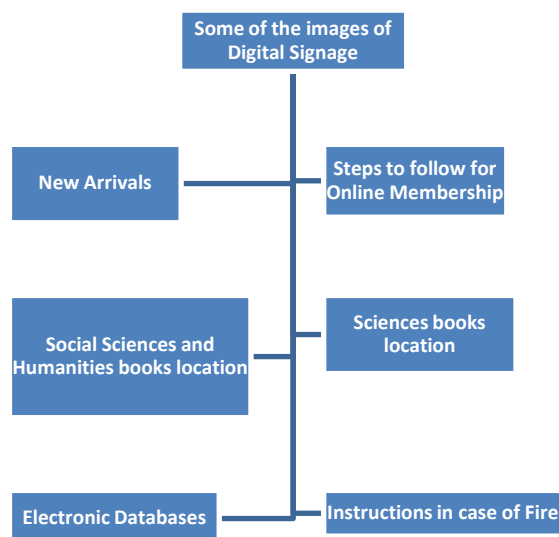
The Panjab University Library officially known as A.C. Joshi Library is housed in five storey building. The library has approximately 7.5 lakh volumes that include books, theses/dissertations, rare books, bound volumes of periodicals, government publications, back files of newspapers and manuscripts. It is subscribing approximately 547 current periodicals. The library provides facilities like Internet, CD-ROM databases, photocopy, digital library, Web-OPAC, RFID, free Wi-Fi facility and digital signage etc.

The Library has an abundance of information available that can reach the users through digital signage. The library introduced digital signage with the objectives to provide timely information about new arrivals of books, significant developments, resources, services and activities to its

valued users. Library staff creates images that informs students and faculty about library information resources, display library services, new books, and future events etc. This technology has promoted for quick dissemination of information to the users and to communicate with user community. It is also used for viewing the CCTV cameras installed in the library and has been placed at different locations within the library to cover all the floor areas.

Following information is transmitted through digital signage technology:

- It is for informing and providing specific message to the users
- Digital signage showcases the availability of newly acquired books, post image of new titles with pictures for display
- Rules and regulations of library
- Created images that informed students and faculty about library resources
- Operating hours and holidays etc.
- Display of important days and about upcoming events i.e. National Days, International women's day, festivals and conferences/ seminars etc.
- Directing users to the different sections to locate the books they're looking for.
- Live telecast of election results and PU convocation
- Competitive exams alert, Job alerts
- PU faculty achievements





#### **4. User's opinion on usability of Digital Signage in A.C. Joshi Library**

In order to understand the usability of digital signage in the library, faculty and students were asked to give their opinion through discussion. A vast majority of users felt that digital signage facility has proved to be very beneficial for them and has helped in satisfying their information needs in the present digital era. They say that the data flashed on digital signage gives a catchy look when they enter the library premises.

#### **5. Findings**

- New entrants are of the view that they sometimes hesitate to interact with library staff about any kind of information regarding library, so digital signage has proved a boon for them.
- Users believe that digital signage offers all kinds of basic information regarding library rules and regulations, operating hours and holidays, updates on activities to be organized in the library etc.
- Users argue that they are updated with respect to the latest collection of books and e-resources through digital signage, thus reducing their search effort, saving time and energy.
- Regarding the information on valuable contributions of distinguished alumni of Panjab University who have made tremendous contributions in their respective fields and nation building, the students hold the opinion that more information should be highlighted on such eminent scholars as it gives motivation to students to achieve excellence in their life and carrier.
- Users gain information flashed on digital signage about distinct nation's - topography, population, language, capital & cities, currency, climate, places to visit, cuisines and so forth, adds to their existing information about the respective place.
- Inspirational and motivational quotes communicated through digital signage, as the users think are unique and invoke positivity among them.

Overall the user says that they see the information frequently and they feel in an advantaged position as they get information instantly through digital signage. User's are of the view that they get digital signage facility at various places, hotels, restaurants and educational institutes etc. and they personally feel that A.C. Joshi Library is one of the main libraries that is providing digital signage facility.

#### **6. Conclusion**

Digital signage has completely revolutionized the concept of providing information in a different way in this transformed technological era, well suited to meet the users ' behavior seeking information. It is a new way for marketing the library services and resources. Digital signage, the communication channel of the present age, is quick making strides in universities, colleges and other higher educational institutions. Panjab University library is exploring the use of digital



signage for enabling communication between users and staff to promote services like recently procured books, data with respect to working hours, holidays, guiding readers to the diverse segments to find the books, upcoming programs or events and important announcements. Digital signage has open avenues for communication, learning, and engagement among campus community and has become an essential component of the library's educational, research, and service missions. In the ever-changing technological era, digital signage is appreciated and viewed as a successful means of communication.

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