ELECTRONIC SERVICES OF THE SABANCI UNIVERSITY INFORMATION CENTER

Emel Sokullu
Sabancı University Information Center
Tuzla, Istanbul - TURKEY
emels@sabanciuniv.edu
Tel: 90 216 483 9150
Fax: 90 216 483 9225

Sabanci University is a recently established private, non-profit university, which was set up by one of Turkey's leading family-run foundations. It is located on a central campus in Istanbul and accepted its first students in 1999. The University has three faculties; the Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at undergraduate and graduate levels plus the Graduate School of Management. This bilingual university aims to be a "world university" with the philosophy of "creating and developing together."

The University, which has been planned for a maximum of 3,000 students currently has 1471. The first step taken in the creation of Sabanci University was to determine "what kind of a university Turkey needed". This aim was fulfilled by a "Search Conference", and the structure of Sabanci University was based on the outcomes of this conference.

The Sabanci University Information Center (IC) aims to support the educational programs, meet the information needs of its academic as well as administrative staff and students, and collaborate with the other similar institutions at the local, national and international levels.

During the planning of IC, elements such as the modernity of the building and physical layout, technical infrastructure, user-oriented pro-active information system, and high quality staff were taken into consideration.

8,000 Internet access points throughout the university and 480 within the Information Center exist. The University has been a pioneer in Turkey by providing all students with laptops.

Included in all these efforts, one of the emerging elements is the digital collection. Presently, 36.12 % of the collection is digital.

This presentation is a short story of use of the digital collections and virtual user services in the Sabanci University Information Center.

DIGITAL COLLECTIONS AND USE

The following digital collection applications have been planned and are in operation in the IC:
E-journal, E-book, E-thesis, E-lit, E-Reserve, Video recordings, Sound recordings, Digital Album of University Construction Photos, Slide Collection, Newspaper Clipping of University History Collection and Table of Contents of Books.

The common features of these applications are as follows:

- All these collections are accessible through OPAC and additional search functions.

- The issue of "**Copyright**" is given priority and taken into consideration at all times.

- Off-campus access to all of the digital collections is provided to all Sabanci University personnel and students.

- Announcements are made when new digital collections are organized and opened to use.

- All these collections are introduced to users through orientation and continuous education programs.

- The development of the Digital Collections is reconsidered and revised in accordance with user demands and recommendations.

E-Journal

Periodicals are divided into four groups: Print Only, Electronic Only, Print & Electronic, and Aggregator Database Holdings

The first three of these are catalogued and classified and they are accessible through OPAC. The fourth, Aggregator Database Holdings, have not been catalogued and classified.

Instead, in order to cover all of the periodicals, including Aggregator Database Holdings, a new database has been created which is accessible by **"Periodicals"** button on the IC Web Site. In this database, each item has: Journal name, Holding, Format and Location. Additionally, this database allows searches to be conducted through Journal Title or Keyword.

E-Books

The reference librarians decide on the free individual e-books and free e-book databases that are to be included to the collection. These items are organized and accessible through OPAC. In addition to OPAC, selected free e-book databases are accessible by the **"I-Resources/E-Book"** button on the IC Web Site.

Since 2003, however, Ebrary and Safari e-book databases have been added to the collection. Users can separately access these e-books.

E-Thesis

Sabanci University Masters Theses and Dissertations have been organized in the **"SU E-Thesis"**. Access to the full text of theses and dissertations is limited to the IC search terminals. The full text of these can neither be kept nor downloaded. Off-campus access is limited to the abstract, table of contents, and bibliography. The print version is available at the IC University History Archive Collection.

E-Lit

A database has been created and developed to cover Sabanci University preprints, lecture notes, and research papers.

Items to be included in this database are sent by faculty members. IC makes the database available for use with the **"E-Lit"** button. This function allows users to search by author, title, keyword, and subject heading. Users can also find the full list of E-literature and list of articles by faculties and type of activities, such as preprint, lecture notes and research papers.

E-Reserve

The aim of this application is to organize a collection to support the educational programs of the University. The faculty members select items on E-Reserve collection and the use of the application is limited to students.

These items can be searched by **Faculty Member** or **Course Name**. The full text version is password-protected.

Videorecording and Soundrecording

Since the Sabanci University Campus is located outside the city and most of the students are resident on campus, a large video and audio collection has been developed and made available on the OPAC.

The **"Search only in Video Recordings"** function allows users to see items by type: DVD, Videocassette, and VCD. When users click on the type of item, they access several lists: alphabetical by title, genre, language, and subtitle. All the items on the lists have review, poster, fragment, and region information.

The **"Search only in Sound Recordings"** function allows users to see items by type: "Music CD" and "Cassette". However, only poster information is available for these materials.

Digital Album of Construction Photos

In order to have a photo album of the Campus Construction including the name of the buildings and date of the pictures, a database has been developed. Users can see a step-by-step construction of the buildings in these digital albums. The print copies of photos are kept in the albums, which are organized and available to use through OPAC.

Newspaper Clipping of University History Collection

All kinds of information about the University and its members have been compiled in this database. Newspaper clippings, which are included in this collection organized and made electronically available on the OPAC.

Slide Collection

In order to support course materials, a Slide Collection has been developed to organize slides, and make them available for searching, previewing, and borrowing.

Slides are mostly used by Academic staff therefore the system has been designed enable the users to borrow slides without coming to IC. To facilitate this system, an in-house program has been developed to allow images in thumbnail to users.

This program, which works in connection with OPAC enable users to view thumbnails of slides and make selections. After selection, users create their profiles and depending on these, form their personal file which they can keep in their own computers. Users may change the order of the slides, create an unlimited number of files, and use them to display in their classes.

When users request to borrow slides from their files, they must log on with their e-mail and password. This request is automatically sent to IC and the Center staff organizes the requested slides in the requested order on a tray ready for the immediate need of users.

Table of Contents of Books

This project supports the bibliographic content of some materials such as conference proceedings and edited books. Currently, the tables of contents of items previously selected by the reference librarians are processed and made accessible through OPAC.

VIRTUAL USER SERVICES

The gradual increase in both digital information and collections has brought the need for user services on a virtual platform. Consequently, Sabanci University Information Center has created the above mentioned digital collections and several projects related to these: MyIC, E-Reference, Virtual Tour, Facts and Figures, Scout Project and E-Questionnaire.

MyIC

The change to digital format has even more accelerated the recent multiplication of information. In this regard, OPAC and Library / Information Center Web Sites cannot deal with all user needs. Information supplying instutions have been analyzing this problem and one of the solutions generated is MyLibrary.

MyLibrary is defined as a user-centered, customizable interface for the collections. In general, the aim is to create a "personal information portal".

The Sabancı University Information Center has started a '**MyIC**' project. The following steps were taken:

- MyIC team was composed of members from the Technical, Reference and Cataloging departments.
- The team decided to use MyLibrary, open source software developed by New York State University. Permission to use this software under the name MyIC instead of MyLibrary was taken.
- The team added the LDAP server module to the software as a new feature.
- The "User Template" as the main part of the portal, subject headings that are the backbone of the project and items related to the subject headings was rearranged according to the University's educational programs and user demands.
- The project was completed, announced and opened to use on a button on the Web Site.
- For evaluation purposes, face-to-face interviews will be conducted with a group generated from 50 faculty members and in this way quality feedback will be received.

MyIC will be presented as one of the crucial tools available to students in the New Academic Year Orientation Programs.

As the team from Sabanci University IC, we are committed to continuously support to the development of this software and also to provide educational backup to our users to ensure their effective use.

E-Reference

The rapid increase in the number of electronic information resources not only enhances technology but also provides remote access to IC services. In accordance, the E-reference service is designed to reply to questions of users simultaneously on an electronic platform. Studies show that it has been easier for many of users to ask the questions on electronic platform rather than face-to-face.

IC also has decided to organize an E-Reference project in line with the developments of the Reference Services. IC users having their own laptops and off campus access were two main reasons to launch this project. The following steps were taken:

- An "**E-Reference Team**" was composed of members from the Technical and Reference Departments.

- A search was conducted to find appropriate software. The software should:

    i. not require the users to install any programs.
    ii. be copied and pasted to the the active URL address
    iii. be supported by different web browsers
    iv. identify user IP resolves
    v. give usage statistics
    vi. allow log files to be saved, e-mailed, and printed
    vii. run fast
    viii. reasonably priced.

- In accordance with the criterion, "Morris Library Instant Messaging" was determined as the most appropriate program that met our requirements. This program was chosen among 50 programs that had been evaluated since 1999.

- The program was loaded on the Web Server for testing. At the initial stage, more than one connection established at the same time caused some problems and the system failed.

- Upon communication with the software developers, we learned that finding a solution to this problem might take a long time. Therefore, the E-Reference Team decided to search for a new program.

- Finally, a program, named "Rakim", developed by Miami University, was chosen.

- Project was completed, announced and opened to use on the IC Web Site.

- Subject specialists execute the Electronic Reference Service during weekdays from 10a.m. to 16p.m.

The future of the project will be determined by user demands and recommendations. The service will be introduced to students as a part of the New Academic Year Orientation Program.

Virtual Tour

A virtual tour informs users about the resources and their location without having them come to IC.

For this purpose, the following steps were taken:

- A text file showing the location of the building and collections was prepared
- Appropriate photos of locations and services were taken
- Text file and photos were matched through the Flash program.
- The project was completed, announced and made available for use on the IC Web Site.

The future development of the project will be decided in line with the demands and recommendations of users.

Facts and Figures

Statistics which is the main indicator of the resources usage guides collection development projects. The "**Facts and Figures**" button on the Information Center Web Site includes statistics of Sabanci University IC holdings and their use. For this purpose a program was developed with PERL.

The "Facts and Figures" button includes statistics on: Collections, Circulating Collections Usage, Circulation by Type of Users and Resources, E-Reserve Usage and Database Usage.

IC Scout Project

Besides the restricted-access e-resources and journals requiring memberships, there are many free Internet resources with rich content. IC executed a project in order to organize these free web resources and opened it for use by "**I-Resources**" button on the Web Site in 2000. For this purpose:

- An "E-Resources Team" was composed from the members of Technical, Cataloging and Reference Departments.
- The team generated a subject-heading list according to Sabanci University's educational programs and faculty member profile.
- Subject Specialists evaluated and organized these free Internet resources with the assistance of librarian index web sites such as Bubble, Lii, Infomine, About.com.

User demands, up to 2003, have been evaluated and it has been decided to move the "I-Resources" on to a different platform, which provides a search function. Since this "Scout Portal Kit", an open source enables Library / Information Center web sites to create a special portal and conduct searches possible, this software was found to be the most appropriate program meeting our requirements The Subject Headings List was rearranged and updated as part of the project. The listing of Internet sites, which will be located under titles, is still in progress.

E-Questionnaire

A questionnaire on the electronic platform has been developed in order to evaluate user services of the Sabanci University IC.

For this purpose, phpQuestionnaire software is used. Due to a feature of this program, results may come in CSV, XML or Excel format and statistics can be prepared.

All questions have been generated by the Reference Librarians and carried on to the electronic platform by the Technical Department.

We believe that the e-questionnaire will show us current evaluation of IC services as well as facilities and also will guide us to make our future plans in line with user demands and recommendations.