

## Information Commons : Opportunity and Challenges for University Libraries

Xinyu WANG<sup>1, a</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Library, Jilin Agricultural University, Changchun, 130118, China

<sup>a</sup>email:wangxinyu8303@126.com

**Keywords:** university library; information commons; service mode: construction

**Abstract.** Information commons belong to a pattern of highly integrated information services, suitable for modern people's needs for learning and communications. Information commons are very popular in foreign countries, especially in university libraries, while they just emerged in the last two years in China. The authors think that information commons can be used for searching information, learning, developing information literacy, promoting social recognition of libraries and promoting the development of knowledge cities. They recommend that libraries should transform themselves and development information commons.

### Introduction

With people's increasing demands for information and their increasing use of it, the library begins to attach greater and greater importance to its information services. In order to secure a firm position in the modern society where knowledge is highly prized, the library makes it a must to reconsider its future plan and in novate its service patterns. New technologies and fresh needs push the library continuously seek an up-to-date self-improvement. Among its many services, Information Commons (IC) has undoubtedly become one of the major goals in the service innovation of the library.

Since the concept of IC was introduced more than a decade ago, IC has gained a fast development. Many university libraries have established IC with their own characteristics, and in consequence their service qualities have also been improved. The thesis writer studies the construction patterns of IC, in hope of providing the university libraries in China with theoretical consultants and models. Therefore, the libraries can learn from each other, seek common developments and finally build IC. The construction of IC should respect the practical situation of the Chinese universities, meet people's needs and improve services of the library as well.

### The Connotation of Information Commons

Information Commons(IC)is a new information service model arisen from libraries in North America at the late 20th century and become an important trend in the development of libraries. IC makes the concept of library services undergone a qualitative change and makes the passive service become the active services, dynamic service .It not only improves the library as a service organization of service quality and efficiency, and enhances the content of the service .IC also enhances the library's core competitiveness and strengthens competitive advantage in the face of competing with the modern information society. The construction of IC has become a symbol of a high level of the new century university library public service platform and management services .After that, Europe and the United States set off an upsurge of a IC library theoretical research and practical exploration .The research for IC also move into high gear in recent years at home .Library managers hope to innovative model of library services and the service concept through the IC.

Information Commons is a learning environment which is composed of physical space and virtual space. It provides one-stop service and collaboration. It integrates the Internet, computer software and hardware facilities, as well as the rich content of the knowledge base resources. With

the help of the computer experts, the computer experts, the experts and the guidance experts, the skilled Library of the skilled library helps to cultivate the readers' information literacy and promote the readers' learning, communication, collaboration and research.

### **Significance of the Construction of Information Commons in University Libraries**

Library Information Commons Service Model to meet the user's information needs

The original intention of IC is to provide users with a new type of dynamic service model. Will all the library resources and services are integrated in the new service model together, not only can save a lot of time and energy for users, but also greatly improves the efficiency and quality of library information service, to meet the information needs of users of Modern University Library.

Library Information Commons environment to adapt to the needs of the user's learning

IC is the communication space of academic experts, technical experts, librarians, and rich information resources. In IC, the user can communicate with the experts, but also can communicate with the librarians, enjoy the information they provide services or to put forward their own views and suggestions. This is conducive to the timely grasp of the needs of users of the user's needs, through the adjustment of services to enhance the efficiency of services.

IC is a comprehensive resource environment. There are the traditional books and periodicals, database, plenty of cyber source and especially for small user resource library construction. Such spaces conform to the learning needs of modern university library users. It will be subject to a warm welcome by the user, thus improving the status of the University Library.

Library Information Commons enhance the educational function of the library

University libraries can make use of their own advantages of service and powerful information resources to provide a powerful support for the University's teaching tasks. University Library's education is more specific and emphasis on research. In addition to the teaching work of the secondary school, we can also explore the ways and means to cultivate the ability of user information and information literacy through cooperation with the school education department.

### **The Design and Operation of Information Commons in University Library**

Design physical space

Service area is the most basic content of the whole IC. Service area incorporates the traditional library services, such as lending, consulting, etc.. The service area provides the basic information about the service projects, resources and functions of the IC, and guides the user to the relevant area to meet the needs of the users. When the user's demand is more complex, the staff can be transferred to other members of the librarian or a certain aspect of the experts to answer. incorporates. The staff answer the user's problems, responsible for the maintenance of equipment. Service success or not depends on whether the equipment is advanced, the key lies in the quality of service personnel. Whether it is a reference librarian, computer experts, or multimedia workers must continue to learn, do complex talent, to be competent for the work of the service area.

Learning area can be subdivided into group learning area and individual learning area. In the group learning area, students' cooperative spirit can be cultivated, collective learning and discussion needs to be met. Study similar subjects can focus groups to learn together. In the group learning area, the librarian teaches information education to the user, imparts information skills, improves the ability of information. Group learning area can also hold a variety of lectures. Individual learning area is more independent small space. Users can access the traditional information, get different information through the computer. Users can access the collection of digital resources through the computer, a variety of databases, network resources, etc.; can also design, produce and edit multimedia files. Individual learning area is a free and open environment, and each user has the space to obtain the necessary information.

Multi function area is an important part of IC, which fully reflects the information sharing. Multi functional areas have a variety of functions. Video data of the projection room for more people to watch the digital film and television works, pictures, information or other multimedia

information. Library information angle put books and periodicals, books and other commonly used books and other resources to facilitate users to access. Output area is mainly to provide users with printing, copying, scanning, burning disc and other services. In the IC, all the printers are networked, the user can set the print instructions, the printer can be printed in accordance with the instructions. Library using smart card settlement, saving manpower, convenient readers

design virtual space

The information resources construction of IC is a part of the whole library information resources construction, and should be unified with the whole library information resources construction. Because of its specific service concept and mode, so determines its particularity in the aspect of information resource construction. The construction of information resources is arduous, the goal is to establish a massive digital information resources. Include the following aspects: integrate digital resources, establish the index library; organize the network information resources, establish the resources navigation database; transform traditional information resources, t establish the database.

The propaganda of IC depends on the construction of the website. Website construction including the homepage design, the function module design and the column design and so on. Web site can focus on the construction of virtual learning module, service module and resource module. IC requires information retrieval techniques, computer skills, and professional knowledge and skills of librarians. In the IC environment, the staff need to understand the whole information technology series, familiar with the way readers use their way, good at cooperation with groups and individuals. All staff to meet the needs of users, through continuous learning and accumulation of experience to meet the needs of users.

Organization, management and security of Information Commons

The organization and management of Information Commons mainly refers to the open access of management and resources. Organization and management support, including Information Commons' personnel configuration, user training, service quality evaluation system, etc.. The establishment of information sharing space service quality evaluation system is a continuation of the information sharing space service work. Library information sharing space must have a complete evaluation system to carry out a systematic and comprehensive evaluation of the content, including service projects, service effects and user response.

## Conclusion

In the new learning environment and technical conditions, the user has a higher demand for service content and service capabilities. In order to adapt to the development of the times, the university library can only open up new service mode. As a user oriented information service mode, the information sharing space is an innovation of the service mode of university library, but also provides a good opportunity for the development of university libraries. In practice, different libraries can according to their own hardware, digital resources, services and management mechanism, personnel quality and knowledge structure, flexible integration, satisfy customer demand, promote the development of information commons.

## Acknowledgement

In this paper, the research was sponsored by Project of 2016 CALIS National Literature Information Center, named "A Study on Construction of Information Commons for Subject Service in University Library "(2016026);Jilin Province Science of Education "12th five-year" planned project "Construction and Implementation of University library Resources and Service Support Platform for Key Subjects"(GH150212); Research project for higher education scientific launched by Jilin institute of Higher education in 2015, named"A Study on Construction of Information Commons based on Featured & Leading Subjects " (JGJX2015D31);The "13th five-year" social science research project of the Education Department of Jilin Province, named" A Study on

Construction of Information Commons in University Library for Major Subject Construction”(2016019).

## References

- [1] Li Yuan, Liu Jianguo, A Study on Bottlenecks in Construction of Information Commons in University Library [J], Journal of Library Science, 2010
- [2] Guo Haiming, Library Spatial Service Under the Concept of Resources Sharing [J], Library Theory and Practice, 2011
- [3] Xie Yao. Analysis on the current situation and characteristics of the construction of Information Commons in the "211" University Libraries in China [J]. Research on Library Science, 2013(8):54-58.
- [4] Xing Yongfang. Analysis on the IC service model of high efficiency Library under the view of discipline service [J]. Journal of Hebei University of Engineering, 2014(3):55-57.
- [5] Duncan,Jim and Woods,Larry. Creating the Information Commons: Connection, Community, Collaboration[ EB/OL] .[ 2006-05 - 10] .[http://www.pace.edu/library/pages/cotul/infocommons/pacelib-creating\\_the\\_information\\_commons.pdf](http://www.pace.edu/library/pages/cotul/infocommons/pacelib-creating_the_information_commons.pdf).
- [6] Seal, Robert A. The Information Commons: New Pathways to Digital Resources and Knowledge Management[ C] .Reprint for the 3rd China/ U. S. Conference on Libraries,Shanghai , March 2005.