Chapter 5

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The revolutionary innovations of internet technologies have changed the ways in which people think, communicate and search current information quickly. The technology is similar in concept to the traditional Current Awareness Service (CAS) and Selective Dissemination of Information Service (SDI) offered by the librarian of yesteryears. Already the technology is used in different sectors including libraries.

The users can get different type of services from libraries at their place, over the past decade; libraries have undergone greater change than in any previous decade these changes were spurred by new technologies, which continue to create new opportunities for libraries and changes to the traditional ways that libraries do business. Librarians must be innovative, creative, and willing to take risks to try different things in order to provide value-added services to their patrons. As RSS becomes more popular as a tool of distribution and syndication of information, more librarians will learn how to publish their own feeds on their Web sites and will explore RSS and new technologies to provide state of the art services to their target users.

RSS is the outcome of the advances in communication, this development is going to increase, as RSS provides the facility to communicate in a convenient way. The concept of RSS emerged in 1997 and the first version of RDF Site Summary (RSS) emerged in 1999. In this time there are at least seven different versions and two different formats of RSS that are available. Some of these are considered informal specifications, such as RSS 1.0 and RSS 2.0.

An RSS feed is a page of text surrounded by a lot of coding. In the same way that a Web page is a file that uses HTML coding to determine how the page is displayed, RSS is a file that uses XML to encode headlines, titles and text so that they can be read by an RSS reader.

In this study we found that RSS feeds are powerful tools for receiving or distributing information. Librarians can use them to manage current awareness sources more efficiently and to distribute information to their library users.
RSS feeds are now available from many publishers and content aggregators to provide customized information based on a user’s research or topical interests. Just as in the recent past when libraries provided Table of Contents alert services, RSS feeds can expand the research services available to the individual. At the same time that libraries promote new electronic resources via their feeds, they can also inform users that direct feeds may be available from the publisher or aggregator site with additional customization alternatives. RSS feeds are used to quickly scan contents from dozens of Web sites to select appropriate contents for assignments. Without RSS, users must check needed sites daily for updates. An RSS feed can check sites using an RSS aggregator. Since RSS data is small and fast loading, it can easily be used with services like cell phones or PDAs.

The libraries are using RSS application on a large scale, they want to provide more and easy accessible services like library blog, new acquisition, list of new books, announcements about workshop and exhibition, list of e-journals, library events, cataloguing, reference service, bibliographic service, bulletin board service and new databases.

The tools of RSS such as online aggregator, desktop aggregator and plug-in aggregator have great implementation in teaching, learning and in communication.

Due to growth in information, the application of RSS offers libraries a great and many opportunities to interact with their patrons and vice versa. These new web applications provide the means to quickly and easily create valuable resources, discover new ones, collaborate, keep current, build relationship, and promote programs. Through these applications libraries are able to reach out to their users and enable them to create, contribute, and connect to the global community.

The Librarian understands the power of RSS. Librarians connect users to experts discussions and to communities of practice. RSS tool can be very useful to provide library services. Library science is also as a discipline uses RSS for library and information science education and research purpose in the following

It can be easily used to deliver audio content, video content and even PowerPoint presentations and PDF files. By adopting good feed practices, LIS Professionals can reap the benefits of having an RSS feed. RSS is potentially "one of the most important developments in the distribution of media content in last few years" RSS has become one of the major elements of the Internet, along with e-mail and web page. Increasing numbers of information services utilize the value of it, and new resources incorporate it into the way that they work automatically.

Towards the end of this study it was realized that personal and professional uses of RSS application and tools is the need of the hour. As the present fraternity is charged with the responsibility of training the future librarians in information technology such that they can distinguish between the technologies to be known about, technology to be skilled in and technology to be implemented for enhancing library services. We can never overlook the basic fact that the libraries are service institutions and all activities library professionals undertake are meant to satisfy the users, hence whether RSS or anything beyond it, technology will always be a means to that end called user satisfaction.

However it was seen during the course of this study that RSS is more popular in libraries outside India. But now it is catch up in Indian libraries. It is possible for Indian libraries to apply the tools and techniques of RSS to enhance their services, uses and for the distance approach. Thus it is clear that the RSS 'movement' demands of libraries simply cannot be ignored. The response to these challenges is not straight forward. RSS developments are compelling and necessarily a leap forward. However, all libraries now need to evolve an RSS strategy, and follow that strategy skilfully but thoughtfully. Overall, it can be said that RSS plays an important role for the development of libraries as well as for user development. It makes easy use of library services with the help of www or internet.