



OPEN SOURCE FOR DIGITAL CONTENT CURATION: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT Social media tools are being extensively-used now-a-days. Modern day library users too are extensively using such tools and platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr etc. Of late Pinterest, an image sharing platform, has acquired a lot of popularity and is growing at great rates. This platform offers a good opportunity for libraries to curate digital content in the form of images, photographs, short videos, graphics etc. This article explores how Pinterest could be used for curative purposes of such resources.

KEYWORDS : Pinterest, Social Media Tools, Social Media

INTRODUCTION

Digital content is one of the many formats of information dealt by librarians. Now- a-days it is this form of information most sought by the users. This necessitates special treatment for digital content in the form of curation. Curation forms one of the core competencies of library professionals who have done this all through the ages in one or more ways. Digital content is available in huge quantities online and it is essential that a modern day librarian knows some tools to handle curation of this content as Libraries are implementing new technologies for serving their users. Of late creation of visual content in the form of images is gaining prevalence due to the fact that human brain is more accustomed to assimilate information in the form of visuals or images. This calls for acquiring a special skill of curating images. Pinterest, a website specialized in handling images is examined here as an online tool for curating images.

DIGITAL CURATION

"Digital curation refers to the actions people take to maintain and add value to digital information over its lifecycle, including the processes used when creating digital content" (Walters & Skinner, 2011).

"Digital curation involves maintaining, preserving and adding value to digital research data throughout its lifecycle". ("What is digital curation?," n.d.) By a successful curative action, life of digital content can be enhanced, it can be made available indefinitely, its quality and utility can be increased. The term 'curation' is predominantly used in the area related to museums. But of late it is being increasingly applied to refined treatment of social media content.

WHAT IS PINTEREST AND WHAT TO DO WITH IT?

Pinterest (www.pinterest.com) is a social image sharing website which is free to access. Within this website one can create multiple boards and pin images on those boards. Boards can be organized by several themes and various topics.

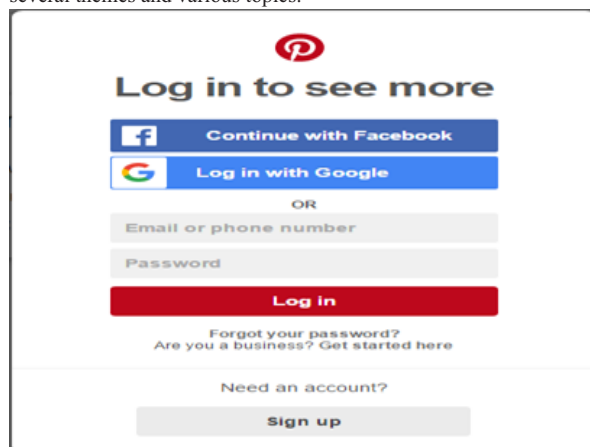


Figure 1: Login Page Of Pinterest.

One can join Pinterest through one's Facebook, phone number or email account including gmail. Upon joining, Pinterest asks to click a few images so as to personalize one's account according to one's interest. To create a board, one has to go to one's profile page wherein a rectangular space with a "Create a board" button is provided. Upon clicking it, a box will pop up asking information as to the name for the board, a description of the board and a category for it. These are however optional. Images or 'pins', can be added directly from the Pinterest website which itself is a source of images wherein images already pinned by other users on to their boards can be found by searching the Pinterest website and repined on to one's boards with the help of a 'Repin' button that appears when mouse cursor is placed over the image. For pinning images found on the Internet, Pinterest provides 'The Pin It' button which is available at <https://about.pinterest.com/en/browser-button>. The Pin It button can be added to a browser which makes it easy to collect the things found on the web just by clicking on it. Images can also be uploaded from the local drives of the computer. Figure 2 shows primary activities that are concerned with a Pinterest account.



Figure 2. Primary Activities On Pinterest

The scope of the Pinterest and the activities that takes place on it, are summed up by Agozzino (2015) as follows:

"Pinterest was designed to be a digital bulletin board. The premise of the social media tool is to share images. Users can "pin" images to their virtual boards for sharing with others. Pinterest allows users to organize boards by categories by naming each board individually. Others may follow as many individual boards as they like or may follow the entire account and all of the pins within that account. Additionally already existing pins can be "liked," "commented on," or "repined" by other users".

PINTEREST AND LIBRARIES

"Pinterest combines the annotating features of tagging websites with the collecting and describing features of photo sharing and blogging websites" (Zarro & Hall 2012). It provides a cutting-edge means for librarians to manage images like any digital resource. In fact several activities that take place on Pinterest are similar to many library operations. Table 1, below, from Zarro and Hall (2012) provides an excellent analogy of a librarian's actions and traditional information science conventions:

Table 1. Pinterest Activity Compared To Library Services

Pinterest Activity	Library Service
Create and name pinboard	Taxonomy development
Assign pinboard to top-level category	Cataloging

Select a website with images suitable for pinning	Collection Development
Select image to pin	Surrogate and Representing
Pin item to pinboard and comment	Indexing and Abstracting

Zarro and Hall (2012) sum up services of Pinterest as “Pinterest allows members to “pin” items or images found on the Internet to a “pinboard,” which can then be easily shared through an e-mail link or by following the creator. The boards are publicly viewable so no login is required, and the boards can be constantly updated. This type of tool lends itself very well to sharing information to visual learners and traditionalists alike, and can be maintained by library staff quickly and easily”.

CURATION ACTIONS USING PINTEREST

Content curation is a skill to be learnt and practiced. It essentially involves finding a content that relates to a particular subject and that might be of interest to the user community, followed by building additional information around it such as adding annotations, comments, original source etc. and finally sharing the same among user community, usually through social media platforms.

Mihailidis & Cohen (2013) found that “an abundance of free, easy-to-use, and well-designed curation tools including Pinterest exist on the web today”. Now many tools and services, both free and paid, are available just for image curation. Of all these, Pinterest should be of first choice for the following reasons:

- Pinterest reportedly had 300 million monthly active users worldwide by the end of September 2019
- Pinterest had 175 billion pins by September 2018.
- There was a 75% increase in pins during 2017- 2018, indicating increased activities by its users.

Pinterest should be among librarians' arsenal of content curation because it has abundant image resources, aided by a powerful internal search engine which can efficiently fetch related images around a central topic and finally of course it is free to access and use.

In a study, Scolere & Humphreys (2016) found that “professional designers on Pinterest create value by curating not creating content for Pinterest. Despite not pinning images of their own design work, participants in their study used meta-composition as a means of creating larger visual meaning across pins and boards”. This explains the importance of curation in enhancing the quality and reach of images found across the Internet.

The basic functions to be performed to curate images on Pinterest are given in figure 3 below:

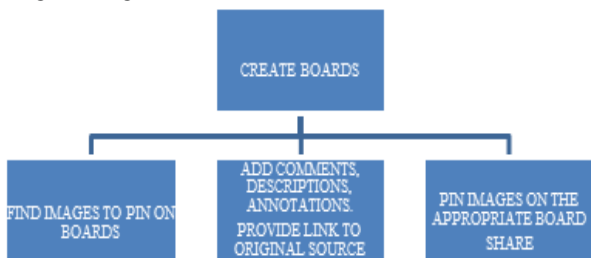


Figure 3: Basic Activities In Curating Images

Creating Boards, Each Assigned To A Particular Topic

Boards are display tools for organizing pins under various categories such as theme, idea, purpose or users. As pinterest is also a search engine *per se* board names are important to figure them out in search results. Therefore a clear, self revealing, meaningful title with relevant keywords that users might use should be assigned to a board.

A board description if provided helps users to know what kind of information is contained in that board. This also helps in search discovery. Again use of keywords is of importance here.

A typical collection of boards is shown in Figure 4:

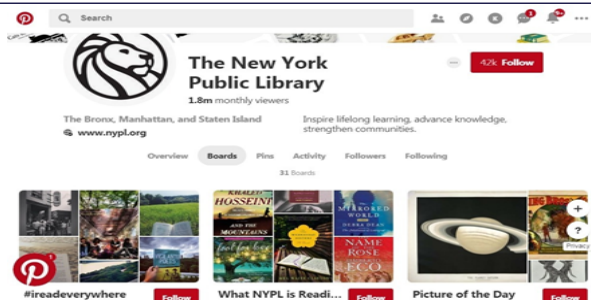


Figure 4: Boards Of The New York Public Library

Finding Images To Pin

Pinterest allows to pin images, photos, graphics and even short duration videos. These could be uploaded from locally held resources, borrowed from other boards(re-pinning), getting directly from websites with the help of pinterest booklet tool installed as a browser extension,

Creating Of An Effective, Attractive Pin

This actually what a curative work is. A quality pin has the following qualities; it is visually pleasant, sharp, high quality and bright with good resolution, has a good description, and finally has a link to reliable source/original domain such as a website of repute, social media site, repositories, etc.

A representative 'pin' is shown in Figure 5.

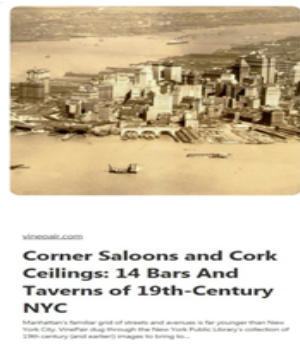


Figure 5: A Typical Image Pinned On Pinterest Board.

Pin Images To Appropriate Board

Curated pins should be pinned under previously created boards. This is of utmost importance. If pins could not be immediately put under any board, they could be put under a private board for later use. They can also be shared across other social media sites.

Figure 6 shows similar pins under a board 'Open Access'.

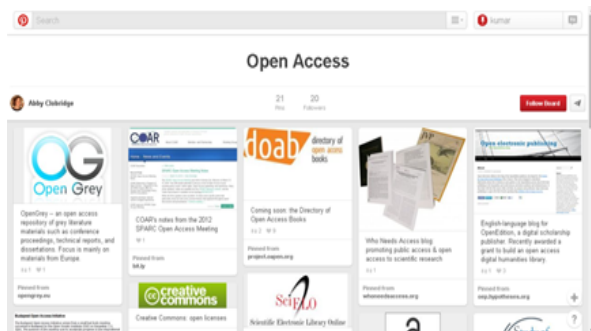


Figure 6: A Board And Its Pins

CONCLUSION

Pinterest is not the only image curation tool at the disposal of librarians; but it stands as a good choice for image curation. Pinterest provides an excellent means of image curation, which involves categorising and organising collections of images and storage for later retrieval and usage by “pinning” them onto so-called “pinboards” Libraries could make use of this facility and actively involve in curation of images.

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