THE SETTING UP OF THE JOHOR ELECTRONIC LIBRARY AUTOMATED SYSTEM

By

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ABSTRAK

Perbadanan Perpustakaan Awam Johor memainkan peranan penting dalam perancangan pembangunan dan pelaksanaan program teknologi maklumat untuk pengguna-pengguna dalam era digital kini. Di samping pertumbuhan pesat dalam pembangunan ekonomi yang menjadi era kepada kestabilan kerajaan negeri, program pendidikan terus mendapat perhatian dan prioriti terutamanya dalam usaha untuk mewujudkan masyarakat yang berorientasi pendidikan. Adalah menjadi visi Kerajaan Negeri Johor untuk memperkukuhkan kualiti dan taraf pendidikan masyarakatnya dengan menitikberatkan kebudayaan pendidikan merangkumi bidang akademik, vokasional dan agama dengan menggunakan pelbagai teknologi dan kemudahan terkini.

INTRODUCTION

Johor is the southern gateway to the Peninsular Malaysia covers an area of 19,980 sq. km. with a population of 2.2 million. Nearly 50% of its population lives in the rural areas. It has to be developed as a southern hub for information and knowledge industries. This requires a system that will be able to deliver fast and timely information to the people of Johor as well as to support the information needs of its community.

Presently, the Johor State Library Corporation is responsible for the running of a state wide public library services. The State Library infrastructure consists of 7 branch libraries, 5 mobile libraries, 27 rural libraries and 7 bulk loan service centres distributed throughout the state.

It is generally recognised that information and library services represent a key resource in the social-economic development of the community. In this connection, the Johor State Government has embarked an aggressive plan to rapidly expand the reach of public libraries in Johor. This is in line with the present administration’s emphasis and desire for a more balanced development between the urban and rural areas, as well as to encourage and develop a more knowledgeable and learned society within the state.

CONCEPT

The concept of Johor Electronic Library Automated System (JELAS) refer to a network of electronic resources encompassing libraries resources and other corporate, government and research institutions regardless of format or location, which are all accessible electronically from one of their locations.

JELAS will be the apex of a state multimedia

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information resource system which are electronically networked, serving as vital component of the national system of information, learning, research and knowledge resources.

Therefore JELAS will have the following characteristics:

(i) Integrated multimedia library resources and services

(ii) One-stop online access point for local and global information resources;

(iii) Creation of electronic Johor indigenous information products and services;

(iv) Statewide lingkage through electronic networks;

(v) Repository of Johorian intellectual heritage;

(vi) Centre for creativity, innovation and intellectual pursuit; and

(vii) Focal points for information sharing/exchange.

NETWORK SYSTEM

JELAS network system would involve internal and external networks for the manipulation of the existing technology. The scope of this network would concentrate on the local and global networks of the library and in the implementation of library automation.

The local network would simply like the information management through central system. It enables electronic communication between the organisers and the users by means of paperless communications.

The global network enables the library to prepare access physically to the local and international databases.

IMPLEMENTATION

In the effort to create intergrated electronic library system, the Johor State Government has agreed for the construction of an impressive 5 storey State Library building.

At the same time plans are under way to construct 40 rural libraries throughout the state viz one for every state electoral constituency will be built by means of privatisation. The private sector will construct and equip the libraries with necessary equipment including furniture, the hardware and software which would be surrendered to the State Library for management and services.

All these libraries and the existing branch and rural libraries would ultimately be equipped with the latest investment in information technology which is intended enhance the library’s capability and performance.

The new State Library will have a built-up floor area of 11,000 square metres. The design is a blend of colonial and traditional Johor architecture. The rural library is designed to include the library, sport facilities such as tennis and badminton courts together with tuition and youth centres and food stalls.

Towards this end, one rural library is under construction and is expected to be completed in May or June 1998. It will become a model for rural library. Apart from that, 18 state electoral constituencies have been identified and the constructions of the libraries will commence at the end of 1997 or early 1998. All these libraries are planned to be constructed within three years at the estimated costs of US$50 million.
FACILITIES

JELAS will provide the following facilities for its users:

- online searching of knowledge and information from national and global information resources through the global information networks;
- development of local multimedia contents information resources pertaining to one's own competencies. These multimedia resources will be interactive, innovative, delightful, frequently, update, and have an international flavour;
- infortainment, edutainment and informedia resources in variety of media-online as well as in CD-ROMS;
- distance learning facilities;
- video conferencing facilities;
- information kiosk;
- incubator services for small businessmen to advertise their products and services to bigger market audiences;
- one stop secretarial services which allows library users, entrepreneurs and researchers to use computer for e-mail;
- one stop information centre for library users, tourist and visitors to obtain community news, events etc.; and
- hypermedia resource centre for children where children can view, listen, and interact for story telling sessions, produce creative writings, have colouring and graphics design sessions.

SERVICES

JELAS will provide the following services:

- entertain online reference and referral enquiries, membership registration, reservation and extension of loans;
- request for interlibrary loans can be made from remote places at any time of the day;
- provide regular IT user education programme to assist users at remote places; and
- promote IT literacy through talks, seminars, workshops and exhibitions.

CLIENTS

- Local politicians;
- Civil servants;
- Researchers and professionals;
- General public - adult, youth and children, students, housewives, special group e.g. handicapped, house bound etc.
- Business communities - entrepreneurs, investors, industrialist, financial communities etc.;
- Information technologist;
- Educationist; and
- Social workers and volunteers

CONCLUSION

This positive development has certainly given the Johor State Library the much needed boost and encouragement that it requires. With greater commitment of the State Government towards the development of public libraries within the state, is a golden opportunity to the Johor State Library to achieve better standards of services.
REFERENCE