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Digital Reading Ecosystem: An Innovative Model of Cooperation Among District Information and Library Centers

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Abstract. Digital transformation creates new opportunities for developing library services, using electronic resources, and engaging with readers. However, equipment, internet connectivity, digital content, and staff capacity vary across institutions. This article examines a digital reading ecosystem based on cooperation among district information and library centers and other libraries in the area. Using a conceptual and analytical approach, it proposes a model combining a shared list of electronic resources, coordinated reading activities, information literacy development, professional exchange, and the advisory role of librarians. The model also considers settings with limited internet access and allows selected resources to be used offline in compliance with copyright and licensing requirements. The article argues that a sustainable digital reading environment depends not only on technology but also on regular, purposeful cooperation among libraries.

Keywords: digital reading, district libraries, information and library centers, interlibrary cooperation, information literacy, electronic resources, reading culture.

Introduction

The development of digital technologies has expanded the ways people discover, access, and share information. Electronic catalogues, digital collections, audiobooks, and remote services are becoming important elements of contemporary library work. At the same time, institutions may differ in their equipment, internet connectivity, access to digital content, and staff capacity. In this context, cooperation among libraries at district level offers a practical way to use resources efficiently and improve service quality.

Libraries have traditionally supported the educational and cultural life of communities by providing access to collections, promoting reading, and helping users find information. In a digital environment, these functions take on new forms. A district information and library center can coordinate resource sharing, methodological guidance, and professional exchange among partner libraries. Participating libraries, in turn, can share insights into readers' interests, user needs, and local conditions, helping improve services collaboratively.

The concept of a digital reading ecosystem

A digital reading ecosystem can be understood as an interconnected system of print and electronic resources, coordinated services, reader participation, and professional support. It should not be reduced to a website or a collection of electronic books. Rather, it involves regular

communication among libraries, shared goals, exchange of experience, and the development of services that respond to users' needs.

A key component is a shared, regularly updated list of electronic resources. Partner libraries can compile and exchange thematic selections of e-books, audiobooks, bibliographic materials, digital exhibitions, and recommendations for readers of different ages. This can reduce duplicated effort, broaden the use of available materials, and offer readers a wider choice. Where internet access is limited, selected materials may be made available through local computers or other offline formats, subject to copyright and licensing requirements.

A second component is the joint organization of reading-promotion activities. Libraries can plan reading weeks, book presentations, literary discussions, quizzes, reader-review competitions, and themed exhibitions together. A coordinated calendar and the exchange of successful practices can expand the capacity of each institution. Electronic catalogues and digital descriptions can enrich printed exhibitions, while remaining complementary to direct communication with librarians.

A third component is information literacy. The availability of digital information does not automatically mean that users can evaluate it critically. Readers need to learn how to identify authorship, distinguish facts from opinions, verify publication details, and use sources ethically. Through interlibrary cooperation, institutions can organize practical sessions on search strategies, source evaluation, digital safety, and the responsible use of artificial intelligence.

The librarian's role and implementation

The librarian remains an important professional guide within a digital reading ecosystem. Automated systems can support searching, organizing, and recommending materials, but readers may still need human advice to clarify their interests, compare sources, and select suitable reading. Communication among librarians also helps share effective practices, improve workflows, and develop joint responses to common challenges.

Implementation should be gradual. First, partner libraries, available equipment, electronic resources, and internet access should be mapped. Next, the institutions can prepare a shared resource list, agree on a process for exchanging recommendations, and establish a coordinated calendar of activities. A later stage may include professional exchange meetings and short training sessions to strengthen library staff's digital skills. If digital records of reader engagement are introduced, personal data must be handled appropriately.

Evaluation should not rely solely on the number of digital files or devices. Possible indicators include the number of joint activities, reader participation, use of recommended resources, user feedback, resource sharing, and continuity of cooperation. However, increased recorded activity alone does not demonstrate improved reading skills or educational outcomes; such conclusions require a separate study and appropriate evidence.

Conclusion

The digital reading ecosystem can be viewed as an organizational model that connects the resources of district information and library centers with those of other libraries. Its practical value lies in combining access to electronic materials with professional guidance, exchange of experience, and regular reading-promotion activities. Technology can broaden the possibilities of library

services, but their continuity and quality depend on sustained cooperation among libraries, attention to local circumstances, and the active involvement of staff and readers.

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