SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND THEIR WIDESPREAD APPLICATIONS IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Yadwinder Singh,
Bhai Gurdas Library,
Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (Punjab),
E-mail: yadasingh79@gmail.com

Karanbir Singh,
Bhai Gurdas Library,
Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (Punjab),
E-mail: gill.karanbir7@gmail.com

Abstract

Social Networking Sites is the prominent component of Web 2.0 technologies, which is the most popular medium of interactive communication, sharing information and providing collaborative environment among the people of common interest on the Web. These sites are divers in their nature and provide innovative features and applications in various fields of the study. The present study is an attempt to describe the general features of social networking sites and their widespread applications in academic libraries.

Keywords: Web 2.0, Library 2.0, SNSs, Social Media, Libraries.

1.0 Introduction

The World Wide Web (WWW) is the most remarkable and magnificent service of the Internet which can be regarded most innovative services of the twenty first century. It was based on the client-server model or simply hyperlinking the information, which is known as first generation of Web, which is regarded as static Web providing non-interactive environment or one-way communication. The current Web has moved in a relatively new direction which provides interactive and collaborative environment and developed the contents of Web through the feedback of the users. It is known as second generation of Web which facilitates users by providing interactive, information sharing, user oriented and collaborative environment on the Web. The Web 1.0 allowed the users only to read or view the content of web sites or facilitates one way communication whereas the Web 2.0 permits the user to read, view, edit and produce the contents on Web and assist in two way communications. Web 2.0 also assists the users to interact with the content creator, sharing views with colleagues, friends and professionals in a collaborative manner.

When an innovative technology is invented, it brings new dimensions in their respective domains and, similarly the invention of the Web 2.0 brings various useful tools and applications for the common people. The most significant tools of Web 2.0 are blogs, wikis, social networking sites, RSS (Really Simple Syndication), social bookmarking sites, tagging and mashup for the purpose of mass communication, exchange and sharing of all kinds of information on Internet. While SNSs is considered as the most prominent and popular service of Web 2.0 technologies.

2.0 Social Networking Sites (SNSs)

Social networking sites are a vital part of the Web 2.0 technology. These are Internet based virtual space of different categories of people having common interests regardless of their caste, religion, location, age and gender. These sites are means of online interaction which help the users to instant communication, providing information sharing and collaborative environment and facilitate to create user oriented atmosphere. In the present times, there are approximately 750 social networking sites available on the Internet such as Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, YouTube, LinkedIn, Orkut, Google+, Flickr, Twitter and Ning as collaborative tools for sharing and exchanging information.

According to Boyd and Ellison defines Social networking sites as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system; (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection; and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site. While OCLC report defines social networking sites as "web sites primarily designed to facilitate interaction between users who share interests, attitudes and activities, such as Facebook, Mixi and MySpace. Similarly, Cheryl L. Coyle and Heather Vaughn define it as "A social network is a configuration of people connected to one another through interpersonal means, such as friendship, common interests, or ideas".

In nutshell, SNSs are the new mode of e-communication to the mass people for two way communication of exchange, interactions and sharing all kinds of information seamlessly. It is an integral part of academic community for exchange and share their latest happening, develop professional network, hold conversation in a real time for quick responses and awareness.

2.1 Salient Features
The following are the most common function of SNSs:

- **Profile:** SNSs provide features to create new profiles which are filled by biographical details, photos or videos, add favourite music and their areas of interest.

- **Upload videos/photos:** These sites facilitate uploading of photos, videos and sharing with others. The users can promote their own personal video by using this media.

- **Creating and advertising event:** The Events creating or joining features of SNSs permit to publicize parties, workshops, conferences or gathering that will be hosted. For example numerous users create events regarding attendance of the particular conference or seminar by the members.

- **Specific Groups:** People can search various types of groups related to numerous fields and to join them that are related to their interest. There are various types of groups available on SNSs, such as, professional related, social based, fashion related, technology, news, library related, cultural associations, human rights, shopping, marketing, education, sports and tourism.

- **Friend searching/adding:** It also facilitates to search particular friends and send friends requests to be added in the friends list.

- **Message post:** This is the most convenient way to communicate with friends through post and send messages across.

- **Chatting:** SNSs offer the facility of messaging and video based chatting with their friends.

- **Games:** They provide multiple types of gaming facilities. Anyone can become a member and access facility on their respective page.

- **Format:** Users can create their choice based appearances of individual web pages on these sites. They can also customize their content on sites before presenting it to others.

- **Social Tagging:** It is the process of providing keyword to specific content to describe it according to own abilities and share it with others. The users can tag specific information to their friends.

- **Apps (Applications):** It is a small program which is created by the users for various purposes.

2.3 SNSs Applications in Libraries

Libraries worldwide using the SNSs for communication, dissemination and sharing the effective information to their users. Basically libraries are using social networking services for marketing their library services, promotion of events, new announcements, providing multimedia information and facilitating reference, etc. In the present time, majority of the universities and other academic institutions utilizing the social networking services in their library websites. There are various features of social networking sites that are incorporated by the libraries in common to reach out to their users in following manner:

- Informed about new subscribed resources and services to their end users.
- Posted and share links of various web resources.
- Posted relevant articles and book reviews.
- To hold conversation through online chatting on particular aspects.
- To provide helps in scholarly communication among librarians and users.
- Promoting and marketing library products and services.
- Tagging particular items and asked to join specific events online.
- Taking the feedback of users online to improve LIS services.
- To post photograph of events, library building, seminar, annual function, etc.
- To provide video links to guided tour of the library.
- Participate in online discussion forum.

On the other hand, the some prominent social networking sites have been cited which embraced their widespread applications in libraries:

2.3.1 Facebook: The following Facebook page has been created by Princeton University Library for assisting users by providing online services and reference utility. It also includes notifications of new items, published latest books and other materials, details of upcoming events, share photographs of different occasions, post videos, users post their queries, which is immediately resolved by the concerned administrator and sometimes post job advertisements for professionals**.**
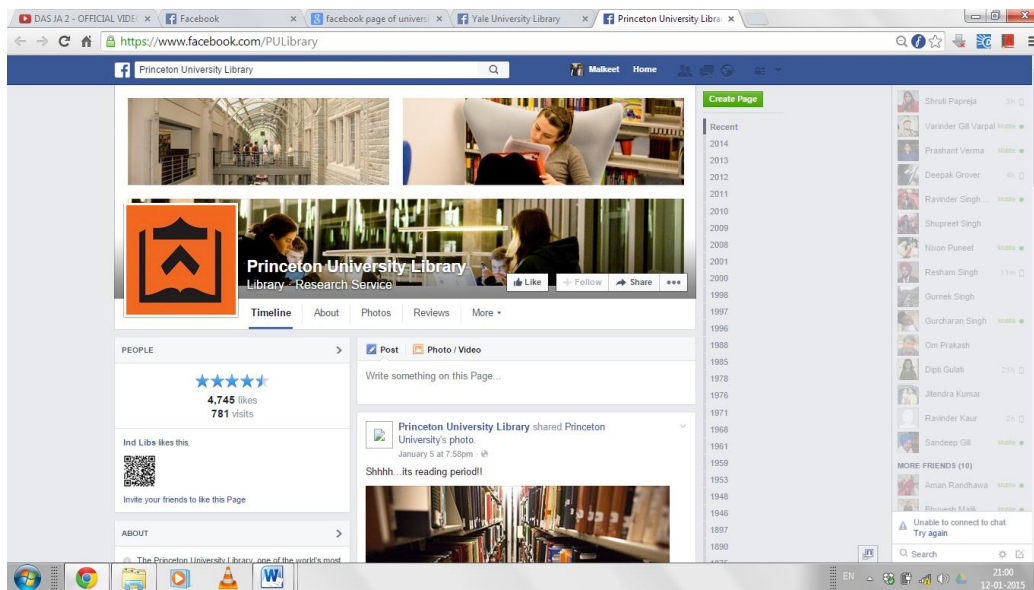

Fig. 1: Facebook profile of Princeton University Library
(Source: https://www.facebook.com/PULibrary)

2.3.2 YouTube is a video hosting site used for marketing library service, introducing new library resources, virtual tour of library, to provide library orientation programmes and post interviews of prominent personalities. The YouTube account of The University of Chicago Library provides link of videos for tutorial, learning and accessing library resources and services such as request for rare books, find article, searching catalog, requesting article through ILL, download e-books, etc. It also accompanied the link of four official channels of UCL.
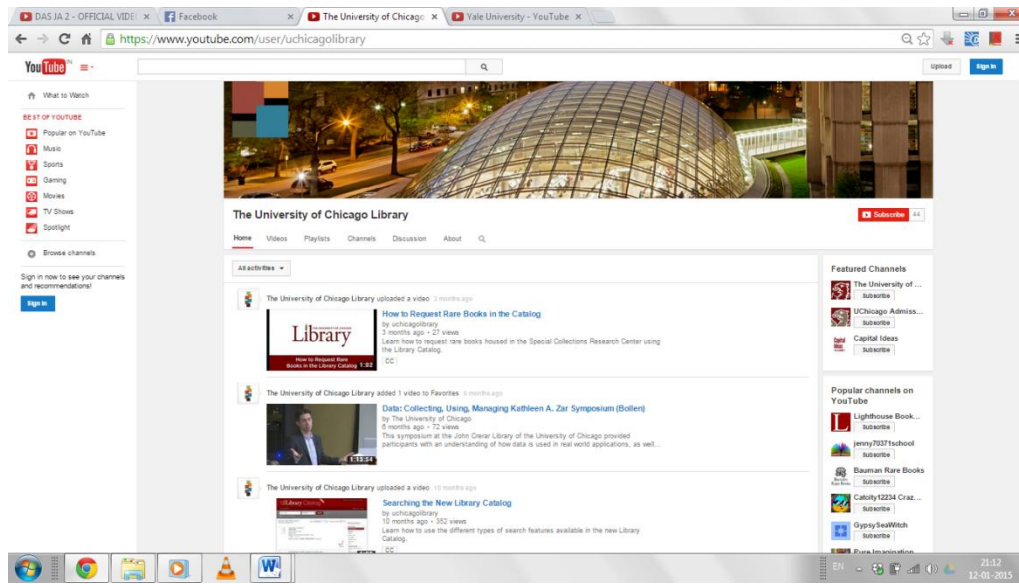
Fig. 2: YouTube account of The University of Chicago Library
(Source: https://www.youtube.com/user/uchicagolibrary/feed0)

2.3.3 Flickr is being extensively used for promotion of library collection and services, annual contest, record, arrange and share pictures of library events, posted historic photos of library, to offer a virtual tour of library through photographs. Some libraries are advertising their library, tagged specific information and maintain interest of user community. The Flickr page of Binghamton University Libraries provide the compendium of images on special collections of library, complete tour of the central library and video tours and present the collections of other subject libraries.
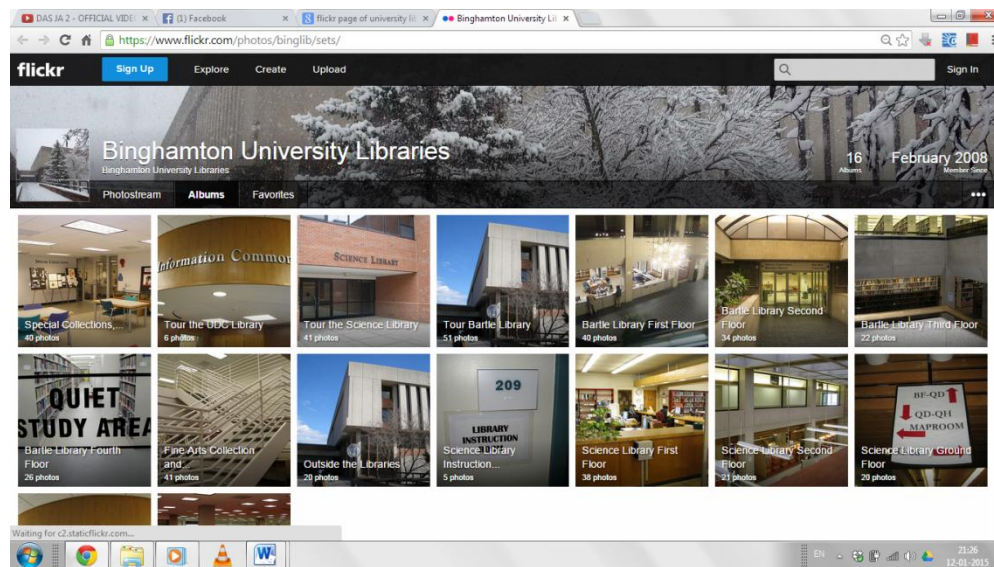

Fig. 3: Flickr page of Binghamton University Libraries
(Source: https://www.flickr.com/photos/binglib/sets/)

2.3.4 Twitter is a micro-blogging service for short communication. It has been widely used for broadcast library news, marketing of library product and services, collaboration at level of library staff and to provide reference assistance for library users. This page provides utility of library news and events from in and around Cambridge
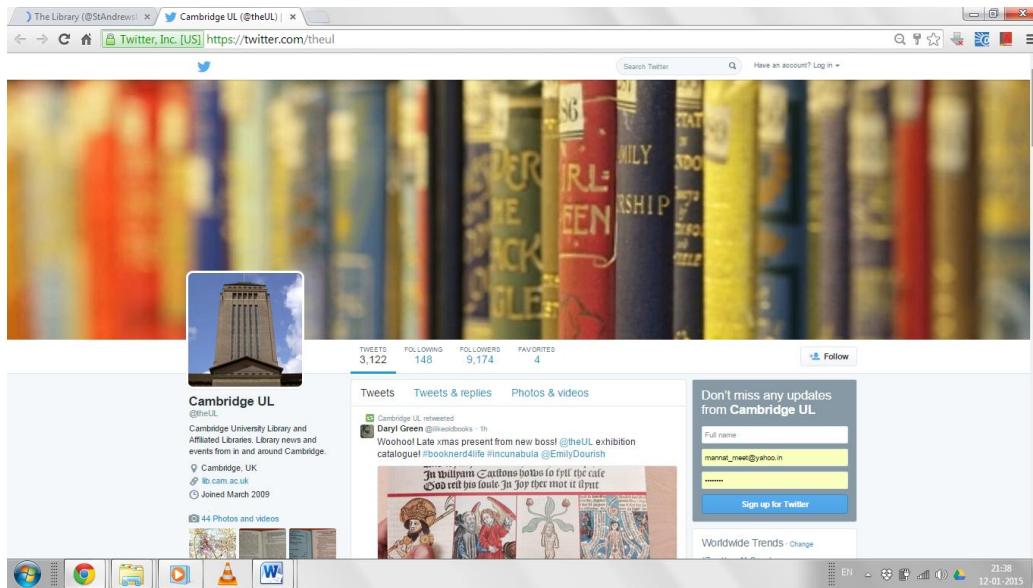
Fig. 4: Twitter account of Cambridge University Library
(Source: https://twitter.com/theul)

2.3.5 Google Plus: A prevailing social media tool is used by librarians to share photos or videos, Hangout chats and create Circles. It published latest information relevant the university, new book releases, time schedule update, job opportunities, etc.
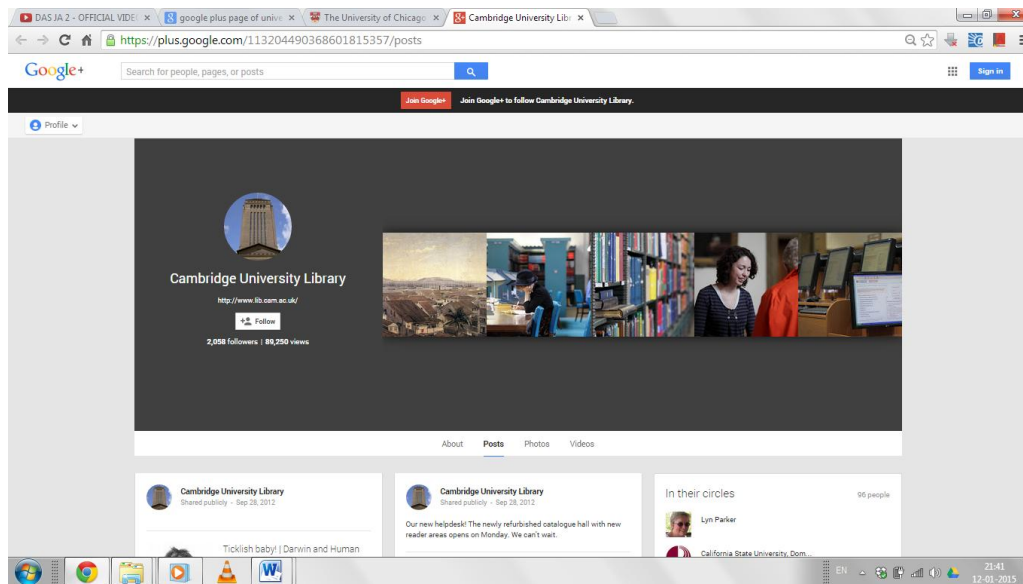

Fig. 5: Google Plus account of Cambridge University Library
(Source: https://plus.google.com/113204490368601815357/posts)

2.3.6 LinkedIn is the network of professionals, alumni and job seekers. It posted the information of latest jobs and opportunities, placement news, carrier oriented news, company profile, etc.
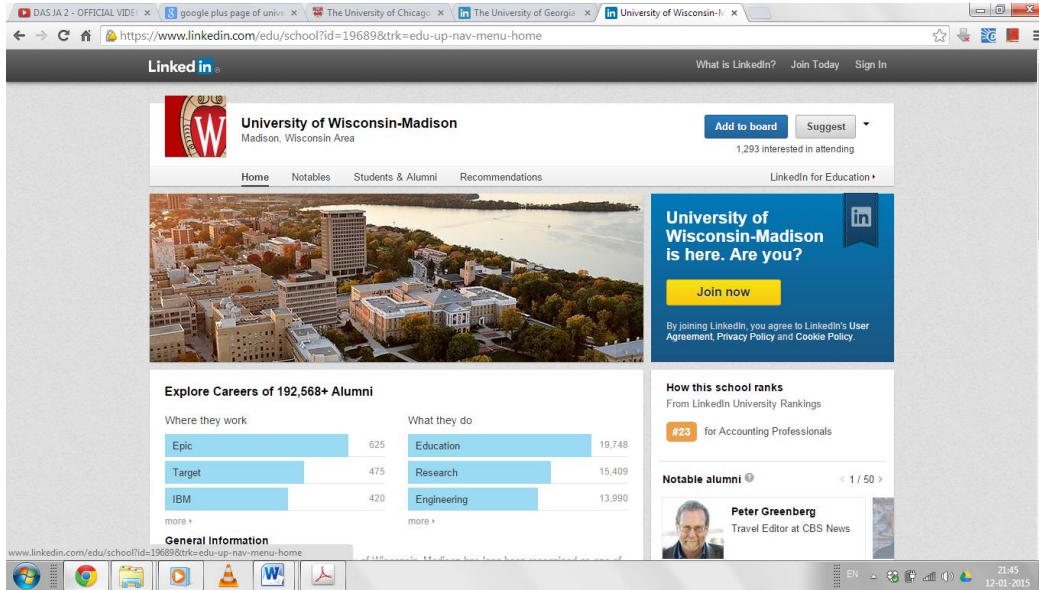
Fig. 6: LinkedIn Profile of University of Wisconsin-Madlson
(Source: https://www.linkedin.com/edu/school?id=19689&trk=edu-up-nav-menu-home)

2.3.7 LIS links: **An Online Community of Indian Library Professional:** It is a global platform for library and information science professionals in India. It facilitates to connect LIS professionals on a single platform, providing Open Access Journals Search Engine (OAJSE), job advertisements, to alerts upcoming events such seminars, conferences, workshops etc., to discuss contemporary issues related to their profession, new announcements of award, prizes and scholarship etc.
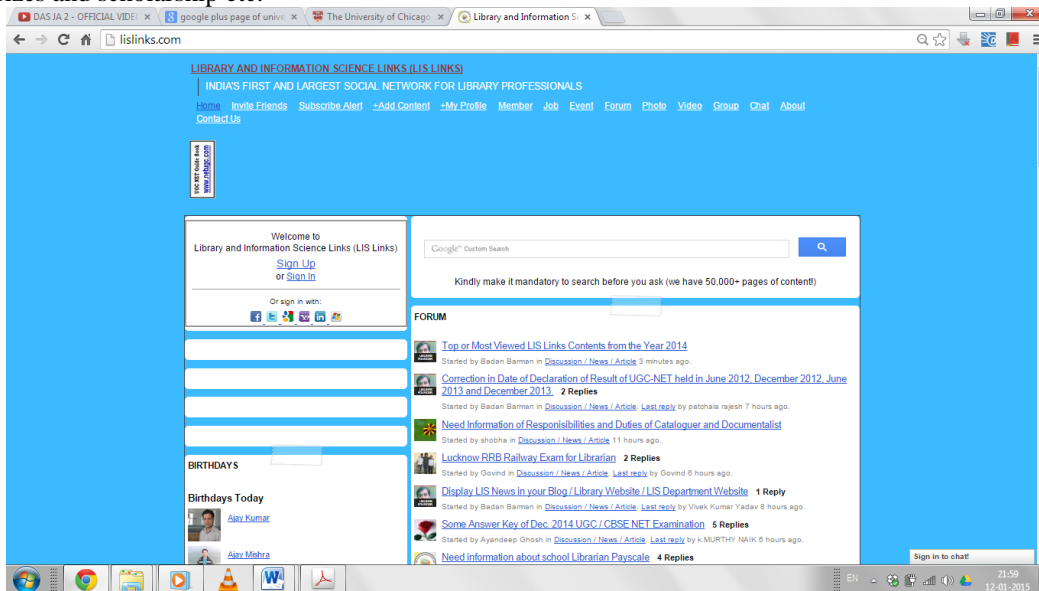

Fig. 7: LIS Links
(Source: http://lislinks.com/)

3.0 Conclusion
SNSs have become the latest phenomena among the academia in present time. It is a popular medium of interactive communication and exchange information among the people of similar interest. These sites have been used in various fields of study. While libraries are also utilizing its application for providing new and innovative services to the end users. The large numbers of SNSs are available online, in which Facebook, MySpace, Flickr, YouTube,

Twitter, Ning and Hi5 are more popular. Therefore, librarians should be implemented these sites to outreach library services and build a dynamic network of professionals to share contemporary issues.

4.0 References

1. Boyd, D. M. & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13 (1).

2. Coyle, C. L. & Vaughn, H. (2008). Social networking: Communication revolution or evolution?. *Bell Labs Technical Journal*, 13 (2), 13-18.

3. Dickson, A. & Holley, R. P. (2010). Social networking in academic libraries: The possibilities and the concerns. *New Library World*, 111 (11), 468-479.

4. Gibbons, S. (2007). *The academic library and the Net Gen student: Making the connections*. Chicago: American Library Association.

5. http://www.digizen.org/socialnetworking/what.aspx.

6. Kroski, E. (2008). *Web 2.0 for library and information professionals*. New York: Neal-Schuman.

7. Miller, R., Parsons, K. & Lifer, D. (2010). Students and social networking sites: The posting paradox. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 29 (4), 377-382.

8. OCLC (2007). Sharing, privacy and trust in our networked world. < http://www .o clc.org/reports/sharing/>.

9. O'Reilly, T. (2005). What is web 2.0: Design patterns and business models for the next generation of software. http://oreilly.com/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html.

10. Singh, K P & Gill, M. S. (2012). Use of Social Networking Sites in India: Practices, Prospectus and Problems. Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing AG & CO.KG.

OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE FOR LIBRARIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIA

Mani Bhusan Roy,
Ex-student of Department of Library and Information Science
North Bengal University
Email - manibhusanroy84@gmail.com

Dr. Naresh Kumar
Librarian, Galaxy Global Group of Institutions Dinarpur, Ambala
Email: reach4naresh@gmail.com

Abstract

The paper, while giving the introduction of the concept, describes the Open Source Software (OSS) and explains the meaning of the term OSS, giving some of the definitions, the typical terms used to explain it and also elaborates some of the important issues with reference to the explanation of the OSS. It discusses the reasons why the librarians and the libraries need the OSS model in current scenario, same. It further discusses in details, the important issues of OSS development and librarianship and Open-Source and Usability. The paper enumerates the important characteristics of the OSS and the criterion for selection of correct OSS as per the individual requirements. It describes important OSS, being presently used worldwide with special reference to the popular OSS used in Indian library environment, highlighting important characteristics/features, merits, etc. of the software's. critical issues and challenges in OSS environment are also discussed. The paper further highlights the future of the OSS and concludes with an assessment of widely used OSS.