

# Information Repackaging Services and Products: A Study with Special Reference to Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL)

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(Received 15 March 2018; Revised 14 April 2018; Accepted 3 May 2018; Available online 12 May 2018)

**Abstract** - Information repackaging services encompass analysis, consolidation and packaging of information to present ideas or concepts in a more attractive and understandable way to the end users. It include specialized information services focusing on collecting, analyzing, restructuring, reformatting, organizing and consolidating information from various sources in accordance with the needs of specific target group of users. The applications of the concept of information repackaging in NPOL, a kochi based research & development laboratory coming under Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO), Ministry of Defence, Government of India are discussed in the paper. The basic aim of the study is to examine the salient features and types of information repackaging services and products available in the organization. It presents the analysis and findings of a study on IR services provided there. It also examines the important repackaged products in the organization focusing on the perception and preferences of users on IR services. The results of the study shows that many useful IR products in various forms for different applications are developed in the laboratory and information seekers are very much interested in these types of services. The study envisages that library can assume a prominent role in the development and dissemination of IR products. It can be used as a reference model for introducing and refining IR services in other research institutions also.

**Keywords:** Information repackaging services, Information services, NPOL, Naval research information services, Repackaging of information

## I. INTRODUCTION

The field of Library and Information Science (LIS) is blessed with the adoption of new and refined concepts, methods, technologies for the organization and dissemination of information. The paradigm shift which occurred in LIS due to the impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) applications provided a facelift to the facilities and services of modern libraries. As a consequence, use of integrated library management systems, initiatives on the development of digital libraries, institutional repositories, library portal and library consortia have been introduced in many libraries. The popularity of Internet, online information resources and a shift from the traditional methods of library services to web based information services have changed the very nature of user expectations about library and information services.

Consequently, new facilities and user-oriented services like digital libraries, library portals, and library consortia were unleashed in the recent past. In this context, specialized information services like IR orientated towards specific user needs also has a significant role in promoting effective information services in libraries. IR includes identification, collection, restructuring and consolidation of information in a more acceptable and understandable form in accordance with the needs of the user or user group. The examples include state of the art reports, trend analysis reports, brochures and leaflets on products or technologies developed in an organization. The paper discusses the concept of IR and its applications in R & D institution libraries, focusing on the initiatives of NPOL in this arena. The study will be useful for understanding the features of IR, its applications and advantages of providing this kind of services in other R & D institutions also.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The significance of information repackaging and its applications are discussed in the LIS literature. IR may include interpretation of a search result that is “extraction of meaning from the information sources discovered, rewording it, perhaps summarizing it, and re-presenting it in a form easily assimilable by the user” [1]. Tripathy advocated that creating knowledge by filtering consolidating and repackaging information was one of the methods to leverage knowledge management in an organization [2]. According to Iwhiwhu, repackaging could save time, labour and costs to the users, since it helped them avoid the problems created by information overload in the present information age [3]. Schvetz considered repackaging as an important element of the knowledge management process in R & D, due to the significance in the use of research results by different target users [4]. Okoroma was of the view that wider access to relevant, reliable and usable information was possible by information repackaging to meet the needs of a user group [5]. Ugwuogu advocated Information repackaging as the provision of information to different categories of users in an encapsulated form based on team approach or needs assessment [6]. IR can be considered as a systematic

approach to the design and provision of information services [7].

### III. NAVAL PHYSICAL AND OCEANOGRAPHIC LABORATORY

NPOL is an ISO 9001:2008 certified R&D establishment coming under the umbrella of Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO), Ministry of Defence, Govt. of India. Originally it was formed as an in-house laboratory of Indian Navy - Indian Naval Physical Laboratory (INPL) in 1952 at Kochi, Kerala, as per the advice of Dr. J. E. Keyston of the Royal Naval Scientific Service, UK for meeting the requirement of a scientific organization to provide support to the naval forces. In 1958, DRDO was formed and INPL became a part of it. Later, INPL was renamed as NPOL in 1969, considering oceanography as one of the important research areas of the Laboratory. NPOL has contributed to the design and development of technologies and systems for underwater surveillance as support to the needs of Indian Navy. NPOL is a 'System Laboratory' of DRDO engaged in the development of SONAR (Sound Navigation And Ranging) and allied technologies [8]. Different types of information repackaging products are developed in accordance with the user needs in the organization. Some of the examples are Newsletters, Brochures, Leaflets, Guidebooks, Monographs, Coffee Table Book and informative videos. Technical Information Resource Centre (TIRC) of NPOL has a significant role in the content development and publishing of these products.

### IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The basic aim of the study is to examine the salient features and types of information repackaging services and products useful for the organization. The major objectives are as follows:

1. To know the availability of repackaging services in NPOL
2. To evaluate the repackaged products with respect to their purpose and usefulness.
3. To understand the needs and attitude of users towards IR products.
4. To formulate recommendations for effective repackaging services in the organization.

### V. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The population chosen for the study included scientists working in various disciplines at NPOL

### VI. METHODOLOGY

A structured interview schedule was adopted as a methodology for collecting quantitative data from the scientists. Data collection was made using random sampling technique. Out of the 234 scientists, a sampling population consisting of 50% of them are considered for the study. Also the researcher made an attempt to examine the

products of repackaging with respect to their contents, application areas and usefulness to the organization.

### VII. ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data collected from the users and features of the products of IR were analyzed based on the following parameters: (a) Need for information repackaging (b) Refinement of existing IR practices in the organization (c) User expectations for the IR services (d) Various forms of repackaged information available to users

#### A. Types of IR Products

TABLE I IR PRODUCTS –CONTENTS AND FORMAT

Sl No.	IR Products	Content Type	Available Format
1	Newsletters	Mainly general events	Print and electronic
2	Coffee Table Book	Photographs and descriptions	Print
3	Guide Books	Technical Info	Print and electronic
4	Brochures/Booklets	Facilities/Technologies Scientific and technical	Print
5	Leaflets	Systems/products	Print
6	Technical Monographs	Technical know-how /Scientific and Technical info	Print
7	Users Handbook	Mainly technical info	Print
8	Strategic Reports	Analysis/Consolidation info	Print
9	Annual Report	All major activities – Technical & Non-technical	Print/ Electronic
10	Video/Short Film	General awareness	Electronic

#### B. Medium of IR Products

The following diagram indicates the various IR products accessible to users in different media. 60% of the products are available in Print form; 30% in Print and Electronic and 10% only in electronic form.

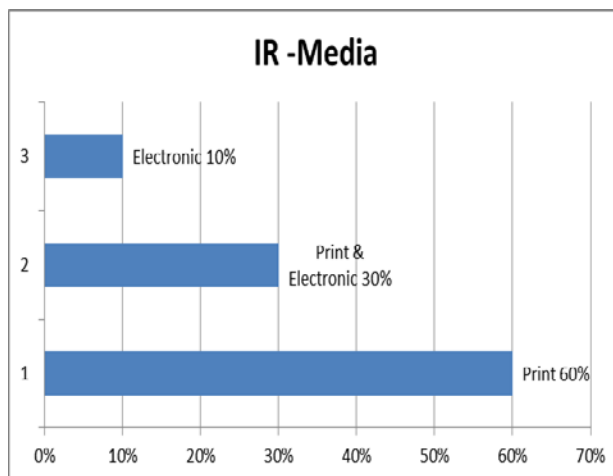


Fig.1 Medium of IR Products

*C. Nature of Content in IR Products*

The contents of the IR products usually include Technical (T), Non-Technical (NT) and combination of both (NT + T). The percentage of products with reference to the content type is given in the following pie chart.

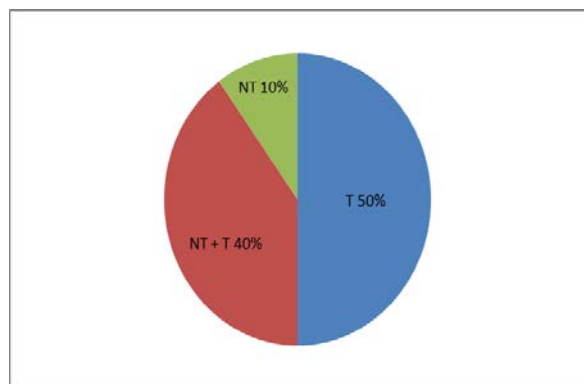


Fig. 2 Content Nature in IR Products

*D.Applications of Different IR Products*

TABLE II IR PRODUCTS-APPLICATIONS

Sl No.	IR Products	Applications/Purpose
1	Newsletters	Awareness/Image building/Visibility
2	Coffee Table Book	Visibility/Knowledge management/
3	Guide Books	Guidance and updating of knowledge in general/ technical arena
4	Brochures/Booklets	Awareness on facilities/technologies/products
5	Leaflets	Brief awareness on products/processes/technologies
6	Technical Monographs	Knowledge management/Updating in domain field
7	Users Handbook	Operating manuals/Decision making
8	Strategic Reports	Strategic decision making
9	Annual Report	Retrospection of events/achievements
10	Video/Short Film	Visibility/Image building

*E. User Perception on Need for IR Products*

The need for IR products are emphasized by all the respondents. Eighty percent of the users expressed the need for more IR products.

*F. Users Preferred Medium for Repackaged Information*

The following table reveals that 70 percent of users preferred repackaged information in print format, 20 % preferred electronic format and the remaining 10 percent preferred availability of the product in both the formats.

TABLE III PREFERRED MEDIUM

Sl No	Medium	Preference (Numbers)	Preference (%)
1	Print	88	70
2	Electronic	25	20
3	Print + Electronic	12	10

*G. Concept of Awareness*

80% of users are familiar with the concept of IR. 20% partially know about the concept.

**VIII. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The findings of the study are summarized as follows:

1. Different types of IR products in different media with different user orientation are available in NPOL. The products are developed in various forms like print or electronic or both. Most of the products are in print form which is also preferred by majority of users.
2. The nature of contents in the examined IR products is purely technical or non-technical or both. Most of the products are either technical or a combination of both technical and non technical content.
3. The results of the analysis in the study shows that all the users of information advocate the need for repackaging products and consider this type of services as an essential factor for R & D organization like NPOL
4. NPOL library has a pivotal role in the generation and dissemination of repackaged information, as the LIS professionals involve in the data collection, restructuring, consolidation of information in accordance with the needs of the organization. (Eg. Newsletters, Brochures, Coffee Table Book etc.)
5. It is found that many scientists in the laboratory are users as well as contributors for IR services provided in NPOL.

**IX. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. More initiatives on the generation of user interested IR products are essential to satisfy the various information requirements of NPOL.
2. NPOL Library Portal serves as a single interface to access the resources and services available in the library. It can also be used as a main source for accessing the details of repackaged materials or the repackaged products In the electronic form.
3. Effective repackaging requires synergy between library professionals and subject specialists or scientists working in the specific field. The scope, format and depth of information targeted for a repackaged product in a specific subject field, can be decided in consultation with the subject specialists in the concerned field.

## X. CONCLUSION

The present study shows that information repackaging services are provided in NPOL to meet the goals of the organization. Multifarious organizational needs and commitments like image building of the organization, R & D collaboration with other institutions, strategic planning for export of products, user training for systems and products developed by the laboratory are some of the important factors which make IR services and products more relevant in the organization. In addition to this, multidimensional nature of many science and technology projects and design and development of new systems and facilities also need the requirement of various products of information repackaging. All these requirements are applicable to many R & D institutions also. In the present age of global competition, rapid advancements in science and technology and information explosion, the provision of relevant information at the right time in a consolidated form has a pivotal role in R & D institutions. The advantages of ICT tools and techniques can be used for enriching the content as well as accessing the repackaged information. For example, multimedia software can be used for content creation and different platforms like library website or library blogs can be used for effective dissemination of repackaged information. There is ample scope for the libraries to take proactive and positive role in the area of information repackaging. The services of NPOL in this direction can be taken as a reference model for libraries in other R & D organizations also.

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