

Abstract

Title : Use of online databases by Suranaree University of Technology students
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Purpose of the Study

This research aimed to study the state of the online database, problems in the use of the online database, and SUT students' recommendations concerning the online database provided by the Center for Library Resources and Educational Media.

Procedure

The data were collected through the questionnaires which were responded to by 347 undergraduate students and 260 graduate students. The obtained data from the returned questionnaires were analyzed by using the descriptive statistics, i.e. percentage, means and standard deviations.

Findings

1. A large number of the undergraduate students (89.29 %) reported using the online database at the Center for Library Resources and Educational Media. The main reasons for using this service were the variety of the databases; the content in the database served their need, and the database contained up-to-date information.
2. A small number of the students (10.71 %) reported not using the online database because they primarily did not know how to gain access to the database. Other reasons were that they did not know how to retrieve the online database, and they were familiar with using other types of information resources respectively.
3. The main purpose of using the online database was to search for information for their reports class assignments and theses.
4. Most of the students learned about the online database service from friends. Among other sources included news from the public relations section e.g. the website of the Center for Library Resources and Educational Media, SUT Daily News, email messages, and lecturers respectively.

5. Most of the students learned how to use the online database by themselves. Some reported learning how to use it from friends, and the personnel of the Center for Library and Educational Media respectively.
6. The primary use of the online database was found to be the retrieval by the students themselves. Other secondary uses were the retrieval by the librarian's assistance, and the retrieval by other authorized persons respectively.
7. The main premise for the online database use was through the computer at the Center for Library Resources and Educational Media. Other places were the computers at the office, and the laboratory.
8. Most students used the online database 3-4 times a week; others used it once or twice a week, or 2-3 times a month.
9. The most desirable result of the retrieval was found to be fulltext documents whereas lists of abstracts and lists of references respectively were found to be secondarily desirable.
10. The main use of the retrieval result was found to be printed documents. Other secondary results included storing the downloaded information in the computer, and reading on the monitor screen.
11. The computer and the computer network were found to be the major problems of the online database use (93.84 %). Other secondary problems included the online databases (90.49 %), customers, and service providers (78.69 %) respectively.
12. All of the problems put together were found to be at the low and moderate levels. The moderate level problem was the computer and the computer network ($\bar{x} = 3.11$), and the database provided for service ($\bar{x} = 2.43$). The low level problem included customers ($\bar{x} = 2.07$), and service providers ($\bar{x} = 2.07$). It is recommended that further research on lecturers' use of the online database, and students' expectations toward online database use be carried out. The research findings will be useful for the administrative management of the Center for Library Resources and Educational Media.