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Integration of Google Tools with Koha LMS for Enhancing Library Services: Case Study at St. Xavier's College Central Library

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1.0 Introduction

Google offers various applications for designing different types of work through Google Docs, Sheets and Slides. Using Google calendar, libraries can maintain their daily work schedule and time management. Cloud storage platforms like Google Drive, social networking site like Orkut and Google+ are very much popular among library professionals. For instant message and chat services librarian use Google Talk and organizing library photos librarian use Google Photos. This paper discusses various types of Google tools which can be applied for the improvement of library services and how these products can be integrated with open source LMS KOHA for enhancing library services

2.0 Application of Google tools in library services

Google products play a vital role in improving the effectiveness of library services. Now a day's most of the libraries use online ICT based applications to fulfill user's versatile demands. Using various Google apps, librarians can attract users in the virtual world and provide digital reference services. Librarian can enhance their service quality by applying various Google tools. Google provides following web based services which can easily be incorporated with our library services.

➢ Google Search: Using Google search engine, librarian can easily verify latest information of any books, information about other institutions. It acts as a ready reference tool for reference librarians.

➢ Google Maps: Webpage developer can integrate the library location with the Google Maps so that novice user can easily find out the library location.

➢ Google Translate: Google translate is an interface which provides translation service in more than 100 languages.

➢ Google Photos: All images related to library activities and programmes can be easily organized in the Google photos for future reference.

➢ Google Forms: Google forms helps to organize any survey related to library activities i.e. library feedback, new membership registration, new books requisition etc.

➢ Google Drive: It provides around 15 GB free storage space which is very much helpful for archiving important library documents, photos, scanned copies etc.

➢ Google Scholar: Google scholar is a gateway for scholarly literature which helps the librarian for offering ready reference service.

➢ Google Pay: Google pay is a digital wallet for online payment. Library users can easily pay their membership fees, renewal fees, library fines etc., using Google pay instantly.

➢ Google News: Google news is an aggregator which combines news from various channels. It helps in providing current awareness service.

➢ Google Mail: Using separate library Gmail account, librarian can easily send official documents, photos, videos, books quotation to vendors. It can also used for sending daily transaction reports like issues, returns, over dues, fines etc.

➢ Google Contacts: Using Google contacts, librarian can easily organize contact numbers of vendors, institution contact no in a systematic way.

➢ Google Calendar: Using Google calendar, we can organizes libraries' day to day activities like library orientation, database demonstration, books exhibition, seminar, conference, and webinar.

➢ Google Talk: Mainly used for virtual reference service and web conferencing.

2.1 Advantages of Google tools in library services

➢ Freely available i.e. zero cost; ideal for novice users.

➢ No need of prior knowledge of programming language or database skills.

➢ No middleware software installation requires.

➢ Software developer can use Google apps anywhere any time.

➢ Since API code is auto generated, integration of Google Apps with other software very easy.

3.0 Integration of Google tools with KOHA LMS at St. Xavier's College Central Library

Koha is the open source and most popular library management software. Google tools have been integrated with koha for enhanced library services for the user community which are as follows:

- Google Custom Search Engine is an online platform which acts as a single window search platform to retrieve subscribed as well as open access resources. St. Xavier's College has subscribed INFLIBNET-NLIST, DELNET, NDL, Down To Earth, Economist etc. Apart from these, several open access resources like Indian Academy of Sciences are also available in their platform. As a result, end users are facing problems during retrieval of resources as they need to move from one platform to another. These problems can be dissolved by using Google Custom Search Engine
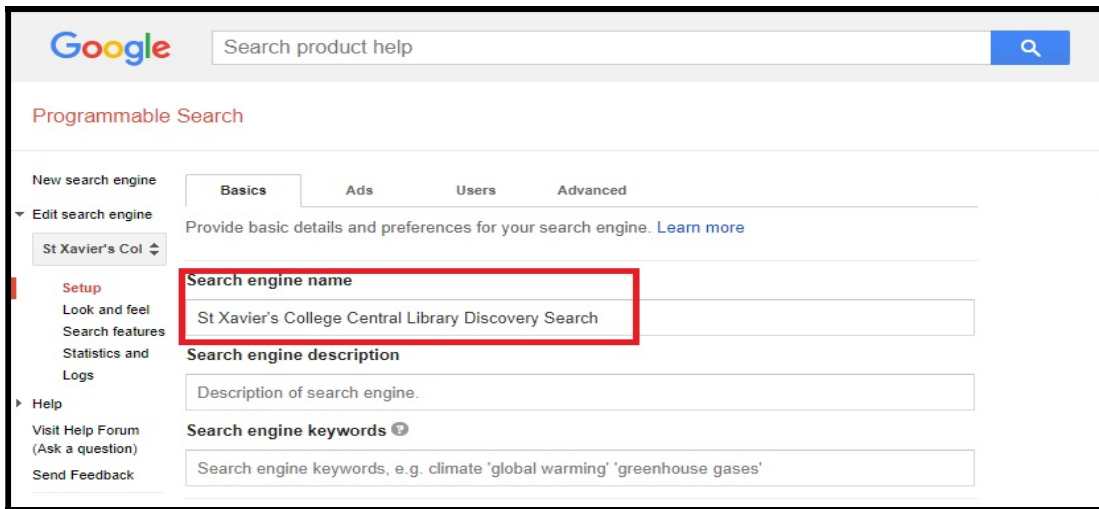

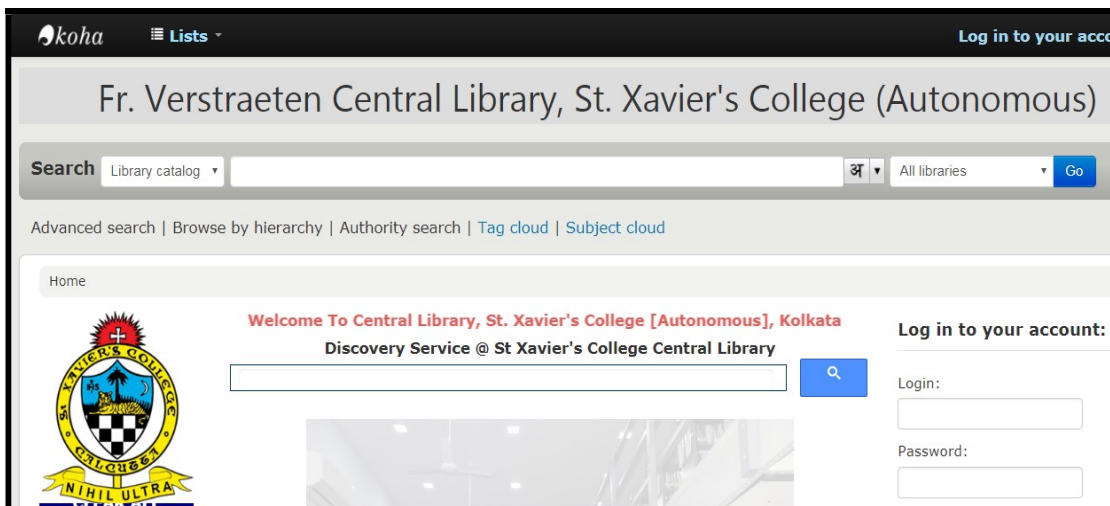Figure 1: St Xavier's College Central Library Discovery Search

Figure 2: Discovery Service Interface @ St. Xavier's College Library Web OPAC

Figure 3: Search Result of Single Window Google Custom Search Engine

➢ **Library location on OPAC using Google Map:** The library can register for its location on Google Map, so that new user can easily find out the direction and location of the library. The location of the library can be embedded on OPAC interface. Novice user can easily find out the location of the library using Google Maps [Fig.4] app in their mobile.
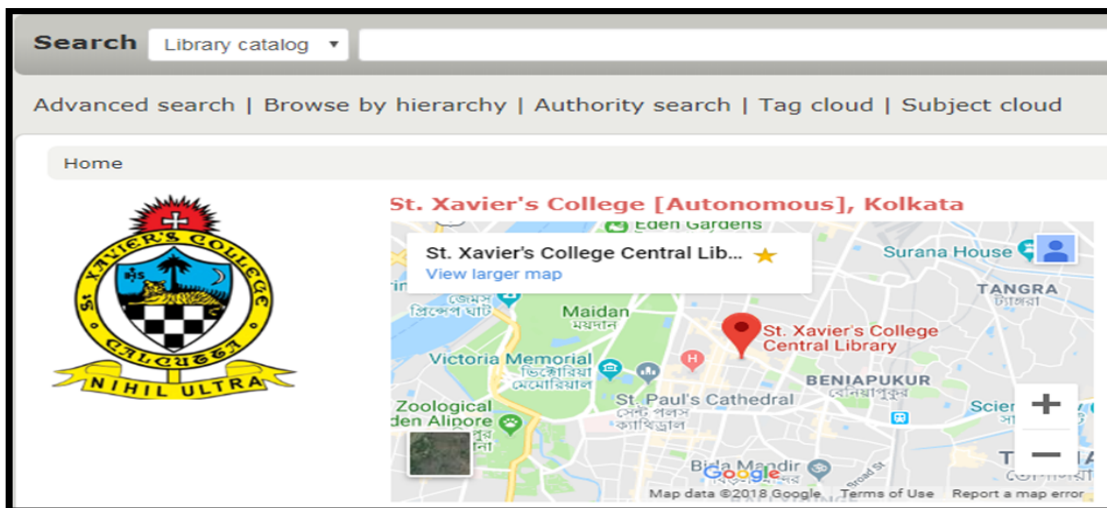

Figure 4: Integration of Google Map with Library Homepage

➢ **Google Analytics with KOHA:** Google Analytics is a web analytics service freely available from Google. It is mailnly used to track website acitivity such as no of users accessing the website, session duration, pages per session view, bounce rate, if any, etc., of individual user during their librry site use time[Fig.5 and Fig.6]. It also provides infromation about source of the traffic. It can be easily integrated with KOHA LMS, to know the usage statistics of OPAC daily, weekly or monthly. It helps website developer to redesign the webpage as per user demand.
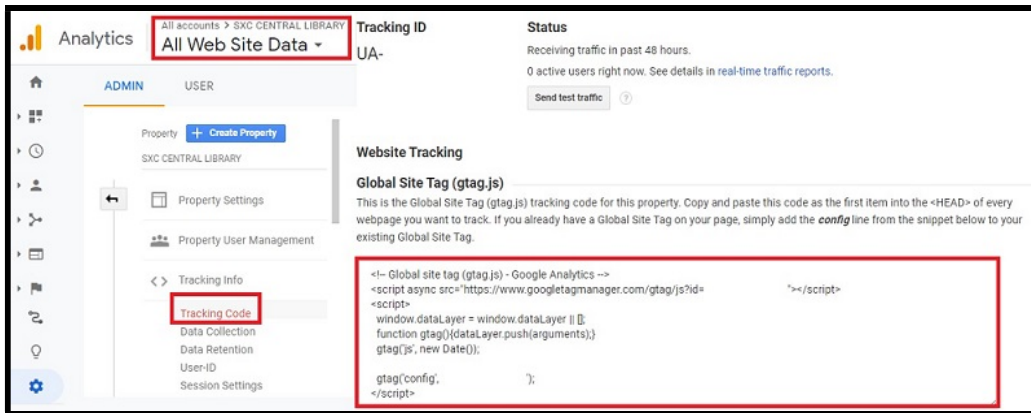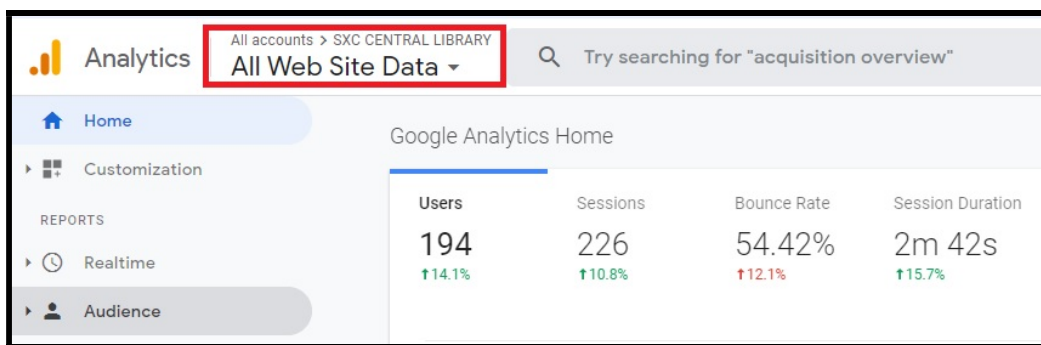
Figure 5: Google Analytics

Figure 6: Integration of Google Analytics with KOHA OPAC

> ➤ **Google Photos:** Google photos [Fig.7] can be used as a reservoir to organize photos of various library events like seminar, workshops, library inauguration etc.
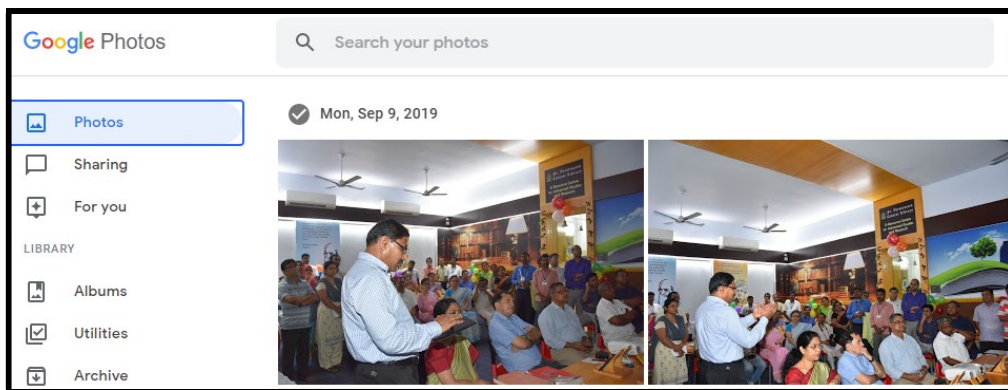

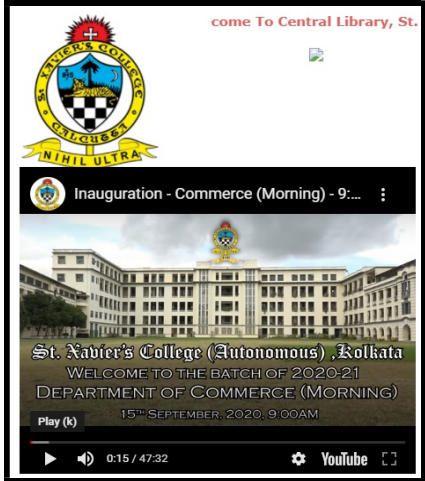Figure 7: Integration of Google Photos with Library Web Page

Figure 8: Integration of YouTube
with Library Web Page

> **YouTube:** Libraries can use YouTube [Fig.6] as a promotional tool for various library activities. Small video on library related webinars, library orientation programme, book talks, promoting reading habits, training on various library database, exhibitions can be uploaded in YouTube and integrate with OPAC for easy access. Users can also subscribe the channel for getting regular library update.

> **Google Input Tools:** Google Input Tools [Fig.9] is a Google browser extension that allows cataloguer to type in any language without installing the tool on the windows operating system. This tools is compatible with around 90 various languages.

> **Google News:** Google News [Fig.10 and Fig.11] is a news aggregator service developed by Google. It presents current / up-to-date information collected from various publishers and magazines in an organized way. This facility is very much useful for library current awareness service.
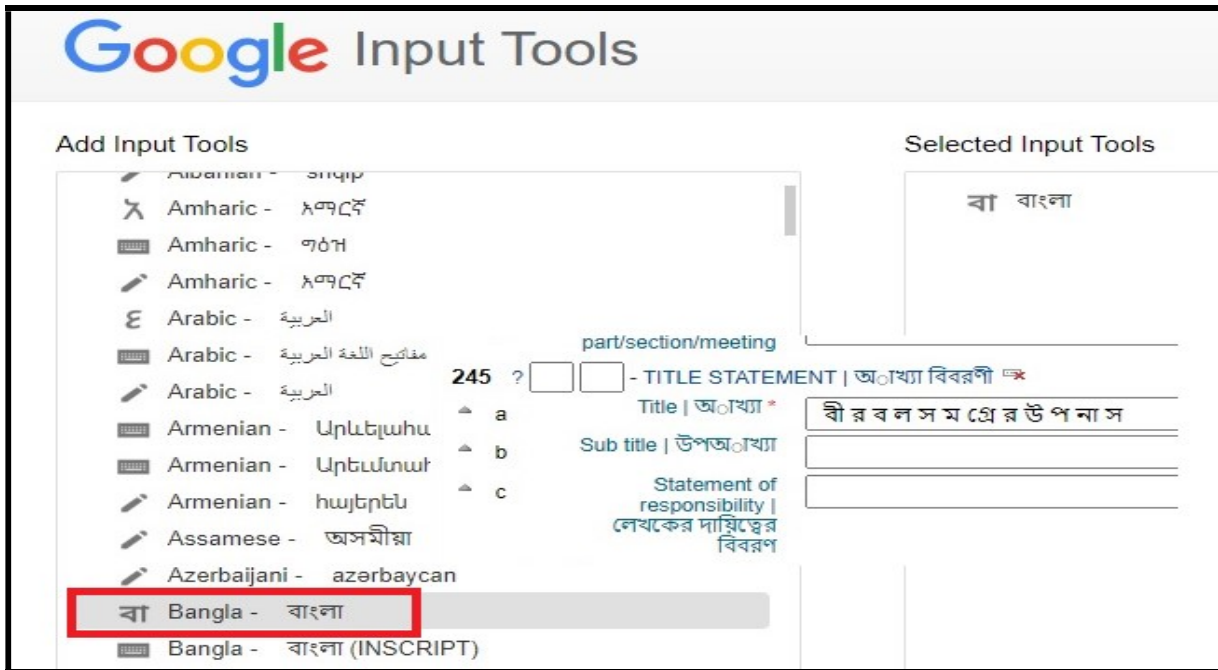

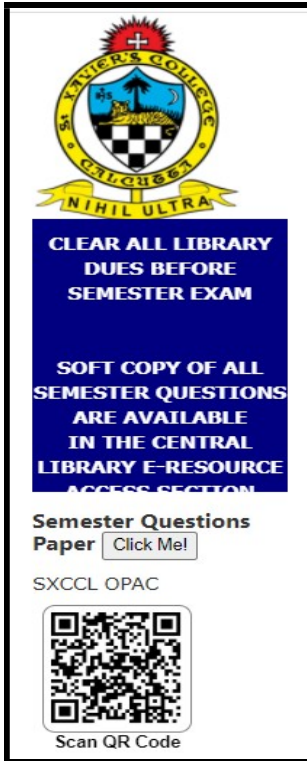Figure 9: Integration of Google Input Tools with KOHA Catalogue Module
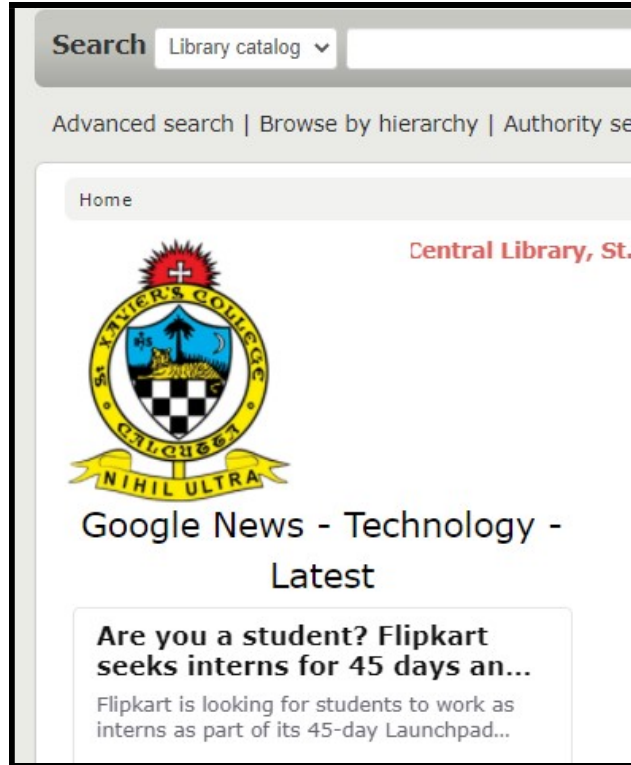
Figure 10: Integration of Android Apps

Figure 11: Integration of Google News with Web OPAC

Android Web OPAC App: The open source freely available web platform *https://www.appsgeyser.com/* allows the developer to convert any webpage in to an Android Apps [Fig.10]. It allows the users to access the catalogue anywhere and anytime in their smart phone or tablet. In our library, at the bottommost left corner of OPAC section, there is a QR code display. The users can scan the code using the QR reader apps from Google Play store and download the St. Xavier's College Web OPAC in their android device.

4.0 Conclusion:

In the new context of library reference service, main focus must be on the user demand, the nature of information and the workplace environment. Librarian must be innovative to respond in a timely and positive way, meet users demand as per their convenient time (24X7) without waiting for the users to come to the library; main focus should be on user's point of view, not on the librarian's point of view; support self-services as well as online and personal services, provide information via library web pages, blogs or online gateways. There are plenty of opportunities for libraries to enhance their library services by applying Google tools. Google provides more than 100 freely accessible tools which can be incorporated in to various library activities. Libraries can attract the potential users in to the virtual world by using various Google tools for providing ready reference service to the users. Though it is freely available, it has some drawbacks like limited functionality compared to other website builders, restriction to enough

customization, future availability of the tools etc. For example, Google Reader is a freely available RSS feed aggregator service, discontinued now by Google Inc. Library professionals need to come forward in using Google tools since it is freely available and easy to integrate into any LMS ignoring some of its inherent limitations.

Acknowledgement:

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