

Интернет-портал «Литовские публичные библиотеки»

The Internet Portal «Lithuanian Public Libraries»

Интернет портал «Публічні бібліотеки Литви»

Лайма Лапиниене

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Лайма Лапінієне

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В начале 2006 г. был принят и представлен общественности проект создания интерактивного Интернет-портала литовских публичных библиотек (www.bibliotekos.lt / www.libraries.lt), функционирующего на базе системы управления содержанием.

Портал служит для справочных, коммерческих и коммуникационных целей. Он ориентирован на то, чтобы сделать ценные фонды литовских публичных библиотек доступными широкому читателю; повысить осведомленность граждан о работе и услугах публичных библиотек; довести до пользователей, библиотекарей, партнеров и спонсоров актуальную интересующую их информацию; предоставить сотрудникам библиотек возможность общаться друг с другом и с пользователями, т.е. задавать вопросы, выражать свое мнение, принимать участие в дискуссиях и составлять обзоры.

Создание портала осуществлено при поддержке Министерства культуры Литвы. Партнерами по проекту выступили Ассоциация муниципальных публичных библиотек Литвы, Литовская библиотечная ассоциация и Литовская ассоциация уездных публичных библиотек.

Early in 2006, the project was implemented and introduced to the public that resulted in the creation of interactive Internet portal Lithuanian Public Libraries (www.bibliotekos.lt / www.libraries.lt) functioning on the basis of content management system.

The portal is for reference, marketing and communication purposes. It is aimed at introducing the values of the Lithuanian public libraries to the public, raising the citizens awareness of the activities and services of public libraries, posting the latest information of interest to users, librarians, partners and sponsors, providing the possibility for library employees to communicate with each other and with users: to ask questions, to express opinions, to take part in discussions, to perform surveys.

The creation of the Lithuanian Public Libraries portal was supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania.

Project partners: Lithuanian Municipal Public Library Association, Lithuanian Librarians' Association, Lithuanian County Public Library Association.

На початку 2006 року проект було введено в дію і представлено громадськості, результатом чого стало створення інтерактивного Інтернет порталу Публічні бібліотеки Литви (www.bibliotekos.lt / www.libraries.lt), який функціонує на базі системи управління контентом.

Портал створений з довідковою, маркетинговою та комунікаційною метою. Він спрямований на представлення громадськості значення публічних бібліотек Литви, збільшення знань громадян про діяльність публічних бібліотек та послуги, які вони надають, повідомлення найновішої інформації користувачам, бібліотекарям, партнерам та спонсорам, надання можливості працівникам бібліотек спілкуватися один з одним та з користувачами: ставити запитання, висловлювати думки, брати участь в дискусіях, проводити опитування.

Міністерство Культури Республіки Литва підтримало створення порталу Публічні бібліотеки Литви.

Партнерами проекту є: Асоціація міських публічних бібліотек Литви, Асоціація бібліотекарів Литви, Асоціація окружних публічних бібліотек Литви.

Modernization of the Lithuanian public libraries has been started in 1997 and still continues. Today all of 65 county and municipal libraries already have computerized workplaces, Internet access, and a strengthening position of the local centres involved in up-to-date activities. The difference between the services provided to the users in the largest Lithuanian libraries and in the ones in peripheries is diminishing. The last years witness a new stage in the activities of the Lithuanian public libraries when an increas-

ing attention is paid not only to improvement of service of readers coming to the libraries but to development of digital content and virtual services as well.

Now public libraries are extremely popular in Lithuania and their employees are extremely busy. The new experience changes the qualifications of the employees of the public libraries and their attitude towards work. They are becoming more active, willing to take part in discussions of issues of interest to the library society, striving not only to professionally perform their direct duties but to contribute to the image of their libraries, willing to communicate, to change themselves and the attitude of the society towards them and to destroy existing stereotypes that does not correspond the reality anymore. Step-by-step the community of employees of the libraries is developing where the most active ones join in.

Still, there are barriers hindering these positive changes.

Due to the lack of funds not all the librarians are able to frequently participate in competitions, meet their colleagues and join discussions. Most of them could successfully accept and implement the developments; still, there is a lack of information on the experience of other libraries and good practices.

The key prerequisite for a strong community is information and communication, thus the network of public libraries must be created, consolidated and extended in pursuance of a spanning progress of public libraries involving more and more libraries and their employees, especially from the smaller peripheral libraries; also, relations with the environment must be maintained, positive image must be developed and support of the society must be ensured.

Understanding this, the librarians are communicating with the media and paying attention to advertising of services. Librarians themselves make the advertising material using the equipment present at the library and due to the lack of funds the material is usually not of a very high quality, hardly catching eye of contemporary user who is used to high-quality advertising.

As the number of Internet user grows, the Internet provides increasing opportunities for the development of internal and external relations for any institution. It is a broadly-recognized and highly-effective too for development of public relations providing unlimited possibilities for dissemination of information, improvement of image and advertising of services. The libraries attempt to use the potential of the Internet through the development of their web-sites. Web-sites of the libraries are very different. Some of them provide only the necessary information: library history, structure, service description and contact information. The majority are not interactive or suitable for internal or external communication. Their possibilities are also limited due to the lack of employees able to develop a high-quality web-site, and services of web-site development professionals or companies are too costly for the libraries.

In such situation, the development of one but rich with possibilities, high-quality, attractive and interactive public library web-site was found to be the best resort where unlimited number of libraries with limited resources could provide their information without considerable efforts and additional funds.

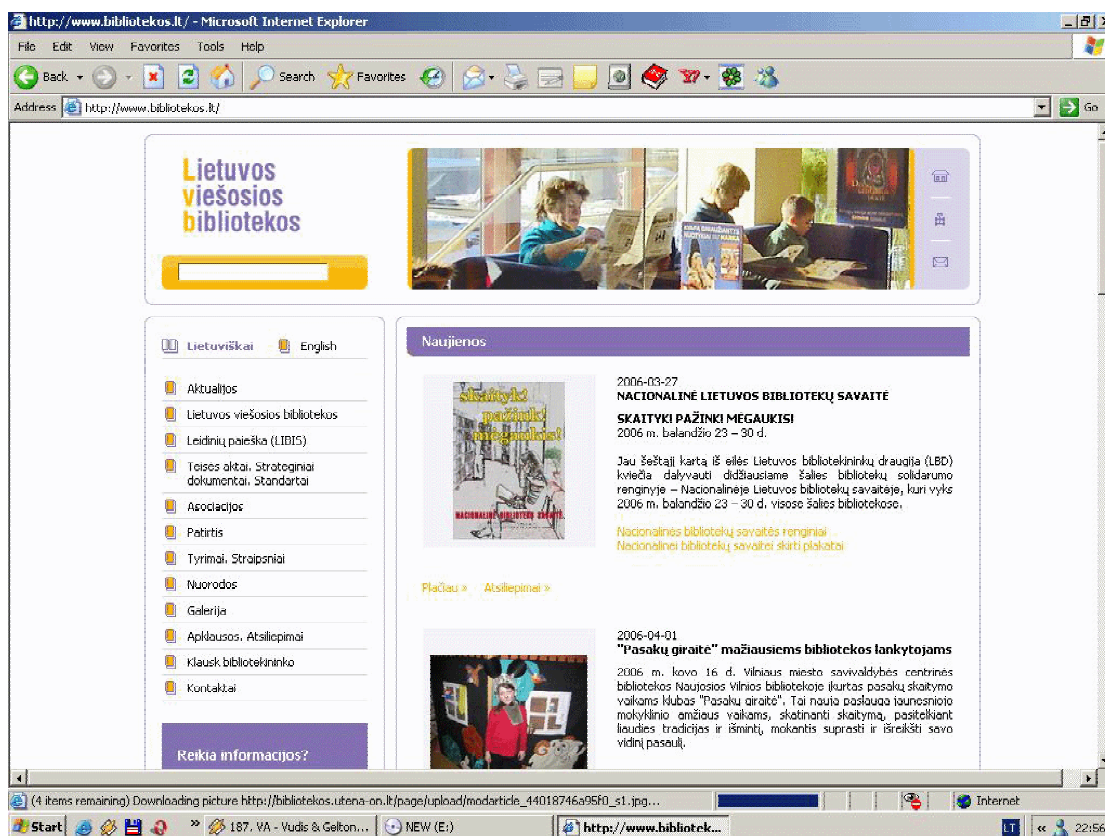
At the end of 2004, the project was drafted that received a support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania. The project was implemented in 2005.

The project was initiated by the Lithuanian Librarians Association having as partners Lithuanian County Public Libraries Association and Lithuanian Municipal Public Library Association.

The objectives of the project are marketing-, information- and communication-targeted:

1. Marketing: to introduce to the public the values of the Lithuanian public libraries; to boost and improve their image; to increase visibility and interest of the users in the library services and encourage their use.
2. Information: to raise the citizens awareness of activities, experience and services of the public libraries. To publish the latest information of interest to users, librarians, partners and sponsors.
3. Communication: to provide library employees with the possibility of mutual communication and communication with the users – to ask questions, to express opinions, to take part in discussions, to perform the surveys.

With implementation of the project its key objective was reached – the portal of Lithuanian public libraries (www.bibliotekos.lt / www.libraries.lt) was developed serving reference and representation purposes and based on the ‘all-in-one’ approach.



Lithuanian Public Library Portal (www.bibliotekos.lt / www.libraries.lt)

Now all the interested are able to quickly and easily find comprehensive information about the Lithuanian public libraries and receive consulting on the issues of interest.

The portal was developed by ARTOGAMA UAB, design and Internet solutions company that was chosen after a survey according to the lowest price that was corresponding to the portal and credibility requirements.

The portal type web-site was developed as such web-site is more suitable for placement of large amounts of information and comfortable navigation.

The portal is based on the WEB FOR BUSINESS content management system that functions with the help of individual web-site modules. 9 modules were developed on the bases of which various web-pages of the site are developed:

1. Text module enabling the placement of unlimited amount of textual information;
2. Forms module enabling development and placement of survey, feed-back and request forms in any page of the web-site.
3. Library digest module with the help of which the digest of all Lithuanian public libraries was developed where users may find information on various public libraries. All the libraries in the directory are grouped based on theoretical approach; the amount of the text and pictures in description of each library is not limited by the software, thus libraries may decide on which and how much information they wish and are able to place.
4. Announcements / news module. This one enables administration of the news, press briefings, announcements and specification of their starting and ending terms.
5. Request / answer module enabling the work of the 'Ask a Librarian' service.
6. Additional language (English) module. It is used for development of the English version of the web-site.
7. Web-site structure (tree) module enabling an easy navigation in the web-site.
8. Search module enabling easy search for any information in the web-site.
9. Voting and survey module.

The content management system is password protected and may be managed and administrated by several administrators. Installed content management systems allows for several portal administrators working only under their individual authorizations. They are able to individually edit information, change portal structure, develop web-pages based on templates, load Word, Exel and other application-based documents, format texts, create links, load and upload files, register users. The system facilitates web-site administration – no additional software or any special programming skills are necessary; information may be updated from any computer with access to the Internet.

Due to the content management system the structure of the web-site is very flexible and may be changed easily on demand.

At present the structure of the web-site is as follows:

1. Hot news including the latest news, information on events, new publications.
2. Public library digest where information on 65 Lithuanian public library systems consisting of the head libraries and their 1,139 branches may be found.
3. Publication search – direct link to LIBIS, integrated catalogue of Lithuanian libraries (www.libis.lt).
4. Legislative acts, strategic documents, standards.
5. Library associations.
6. Experience. Here descriptions of the best practices of the Lithuanian public libraries may be found.
7. Research, articles. Here information on research of the public library activities as well as reports and articles of employees of the libraries are published.
8. Links. Here the main links to the Internet sources related to the public library activities are provided.
9. Surveys, feedbacks – various forms and questionnaires for surveys are provided. They enable librarians and users express their opinions.
10. 'Ask a Librarian' service.

Work group for administration and maintenance of the portal was formed of the employees of the public libraries and representatives of the Lithuanian Librarians Association who are experienced in this type of work and willing to work on a voluntary basis; the group takes care of the update of information and development of the content and structure of the portal.

The portal is aimed at:

1. Existing and potential library visitors and service users. These may be people of any age already visiting or planning to visit the libraries, and those who prefer to get information via the Internet due to the lack of time or other considerations.
2. Library employees. These are the employees of Lithuanian libraries looking for the latest news and experiences of their colleagues and willing to share their own experiences as well as to discuss important issues and communicate.
3. Existing and prospective sponsors and partners. These are organisations and individuals interested in cooperation with the libraries or supporting their activities. Majority of the libraries are implementing the projects financed by various sponsors – foundations, businesses, fellow-countrymen living abroad, other private individuals. Usually they want to publicize information on the support provided and are interested to know how this is done. Activities of the public libraries in Lithuania are of interest to other Lithuanian and foreign libraries, institutions and organisations already participating in the joint projects or looking for partners for future activities.
4. Public authorities and mass media. Library activities, events, projects, statistics and services are of interest to the public authorities and representatives of the mass media, especially at the district and municipal level.
5. Other Internet users. These are the Internet users who may accidentally find comprehensively and attractively presented information on the services of the Lithuanian public libraries and may be interested in it.

We hope that implementation of the project will give positive results. Thanks to this project:

1. Library users using the Internet will be able to quickly and easily get information of interest to them that will be up-to-date as the portal will be frequently updated. Information on services provided will be available irrespective of the time or the place of residence.
2. Communication between the employees of the Lithuanian public libraries will become more active and easy. The portal will provide an arena for discussions, comments and dissemination of experience. Here librarians will find up-to-date professional news, legal and strategic documents related to their work, and links.
3. Publication of information on support provided to the libraries by the sponsors in the prestigious portal will encourage providing further support, improve the image of libraries and raise the interest of potential sponsors and partners.
4. Reports provided in the portal will serve for better information of public authorities, mass media and the public. Opportunity to find all necessary information in one place will enable comparing the achievements of different libraries and specifying statistics, contact and other information. This will improve dissemination of information about the activities and achievements of the Lithuanian public libraries.
5. Activities of the public libraries presented in an attractive and entertaining way will attract attention of the public, increase the interest and encourage the library attendance.