

Bulgarian, Croatian, French and Turkish public libraries on Facebook : students' contributions

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BULGARIAN, CROATIAN, FRENCH AND TURKISH PUBLIC LIBRARIES ON FACEBOOK

Students' contributions

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National student teams, participants of 2012 Erasmus Intensive Program 'Library, Information and Cultural Management – Academic Summer School' in Zagreb*

Abstract

National teams of students who participated in 2012 Erasmus Intensive Program 'Library, Information and Cultural Management – Academic Summer School' were asked to do researches on public libraries on Facebook in their countries. In the paper some of the results are presented and discussed.

Key words: *Bulgarian public libraries on Facebook, Croatian public libraries on Facebook, French public libraries on Facebook, Turkish public libraries on Facebook, metrics*

Introduction

National teams of students, who participated in 2012 Erasmus Intensive Program 'Library, Information and Cultural Management – Academic Summer School' were asked to do researches on public libraries on Facebook in their countries. In the paper some of the results will be presented and discussed.

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Before the beginning of 2012 Erasmus Intensive Program ‘Library, Information and Cultural Management – Academic Summer School’ (IP Lib-CMASS) students (7 from Bulgaria, 7 from Croatia, 4 from France and 7 from Turkey) were given guidelines how to make research and presentations about public libraries on Facebook in their countries. Firstly, they had to make lists of public libraries they will analyze. The sample was not defined in advance – they had to decide whether they wanted to search for all the libraries on Facebook or analyse smaller sample. Secondly, they had to analyze the following data for each library:

1. Type of presence on Facebook (page, profile or group)
2. Usage of walls or timelines
3. Metrics (like, talking about this, were here, or number of friends or group members) - data about metrics should be collected within the same week, students should choose the dates
4. Number of features (e. g. photos, video, events, links, notes...)
5. How old is the last post on the wall or on the timeline, is it possible to comment on posts, is it possible for fans or friends to post to the library’s wall or timeline
6. How many photos each library has published
7. How many videos each library has published
8. How many events are announced by each library
9. How many notes each library has published
10. Is there enough information about the library (name, location, opening hours, web site, contact information)

Students were given examples of charts and tables and each national team was supposed to prepare a 15-20 minute presentation.

Each team had its own approach and they chose different samples. That is the main reason why some results are not comparable on an international level, but all of them are very interesting on national levels. In this paper highlights from the four presentations will be given.

Bulgarian public libraries on Facebook

Facebook is a social networking site made for connecting people by joining groups, adding friends, commenting on posts, sharing information, photos, videos etc. Libraries need social networking sites to be a part of their everyday life. This research will give some information about Facebook and public libraries in Bulgaria. 27 public libraries were analyzed and 16 of them have some kind of Facebook presence. Thirteen libraries use Facebook pages and three libraries use Facebook profiles or groups.

Table 1. Metrics for Bulgarian public libraries on Facebook

Metrics	Total no.
Friends	1732
Members	402
Fans	10727
Talking about this	295
Were here	35

Table 1 shows metrics for Bulgarian public libraries on Facebook – they have 1732 friends (if they use Facebook profiles), 402 members (if they use Facebook groups), 10727 fans (if they use Facebook pages) and at the moment of the research (summer 2012) the number of Talking about this was 295 and the number of Were here was 35.

Nine of 16 libraries joined Facebook in 2010, four in 2011, two in 2012 and for one library the year of joining Facebook is unknown. All the libraries have general information (opening hours, location, contacts). Fifteen libraries upload photos in the photo feature, nine libraries announce events, 6 publish notes and 5 publish videos. Table 2 shows total number of items in the four features, average number, minimum and maximum.

Table 2. Number of items in four most popular features for Bulgarian public libraries

Feature	Total number	Average	Minimum	Maximum
photos	11134	695.9	0	3709
videos	26	2	0	15
events	162	10.1	0	48
notes	243	15.2	0	140

Some libraries update their Facebook presences regularly – their last posts are only one day old, but some do not do that – the oldest last post is 49 days old. Average age of the last posts for Bulgarian libraries is 12.3 days.

All the 16 libraries allow users to comment on posts and 14 libraries allow users to post on the libraries' walls or timelines.

Some libraries need to work more on their Facebook presences. In Bulgaria there are some good and bad examples of libraries' Facebook presences, but important thing is that the libraries are trying to improve them.

Croatian public libraries on Facebook

On the Portal of public libraries 216 libraries were found and analysed. 53 of them (24.5%) are on Facebook. 35 libraries (47%) have Facebook pages, 24 libraries (45%) have Facebook profiles and 4 libraries (8%) have Facebook groups. They have 14024 friends (on profiles) and 609 members (on groups). On Facebook pages Croatian public libraries have 14859 fans, 11520 Talking about this and 291 Were here (Table 3).

Total number of items in four features (photos, videos, events, notes), average number, minimum and maximum are shown in the Table 4.

Table 3. Metrics for Croatian public libraries on Facebook

Metrics	Total no.
Friends	14024
Members	609
Fans	14859
Talking about this	11520
Were here	291

Table 4. Number of items in four most popular features for Croatian public libraries

Feature	Total number	Average	Minimum	Maximum
photos	61002	301.9	1	3030
videos	16	0.3	1	12
events	414	7.8	1	79
notes	259	4.9	1	105

Chart 1. When did Croatian public libraries join Facebook?

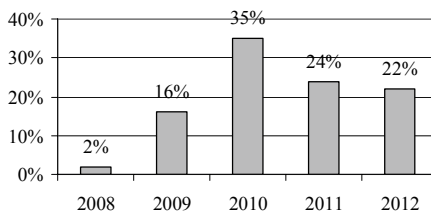
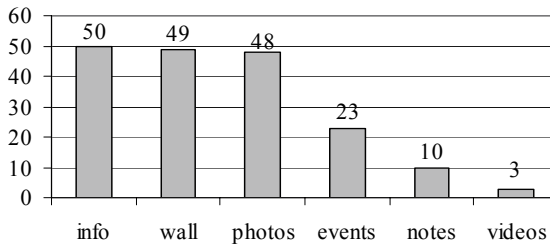


Chart 1 shows that 2% of libraries have recognized potential advantages of Facebook back in 2008, but the majority of them started using Facebook in 2010 or later. It is important to notice that the research was taken in summer 2012 so it is possible that more libraries will join Facebook until the end of the year.

Chart 2 shows number of libraries with each feature (info, wall, photos, events, notes and videos). The most popular feature is info (50 libraries, or 94.3%) and the least popular are videos (3 libraries, or 5.7%).

49 Croatian public libraries allow users to comment on posts, 49 allow users to like post and 48 libraries allow users to post on the libraries' walls or timelines.

Chart 2. Number of Croatian public libraries with most popular features



French public libraries on Facebook

There are 2968 libraries in France. The study covers 20 public libraries – 5 from Paris, 5 from suburbs of Paris and 10 from other French cities. Two of them use Facebook profiles and 18 use Facebook pages. They have 4735 friends, 1642 fans, and at the moment of the research the number of *Talking about this* was 38 and the number of *Were here* 390 (Table 5).

The majority of libraries have started using Facebook during the last two years – 6 libraries in 2012 and 7 libraries in 2011. Four libraries joined Facebook in 2010 and 3 in 2008.

Table 6 shows total number of items in four features (photos, videos, events, and notes), average number, minimum and maximum.

Table 5. Metrics for French public libraries on Facebook

Metrics	Total no.
Friends	4735
Members	0
Fans	1642
Talking about this	38
Were here	390

Table 6. Number of items in four most popular features for French public libraries

Feature	Total number	Average	Minimum	Maximum
photos	3552	118	2	1951
videos	16	0.8	0	8
events	116	5.8	2	65
notes	228	11.4	1	144

Some libraries update their Facebook presences regularly – their last posts are one day old, but some do not do that – the oldest last post is 128 days old. Average age of the last posts for French libraries is 11 days. All the libraries allow their users to comment on the posts but 6 libraries do not allow the users to post on their walls or timelines.

Turkish public libraries on Facebook

The purpose of the study is to find out how many public libraries in Turkey use Facebook. The study was done between 20th of June and 13th of August 2012.

In Turkey, there are 1066 public libraries and 95 of them use Facebook. 44 libraries (or 46.3%) use Facebook pages, 38 libraries (or 40%) use Facebook profiles and 13 libraries (or 13.7%) use Facebook groups. Out of 95 Turkish libraries, 55 (or 57.9%) use walls and 40 (or 42.1%) use timelines.

Table 7. Number of items in four most popular features for Turkish public libraries

Feature	Total number	Average	Minimum	Maximum
photos	6942	73.1	1	3812
videos	13	0.1	0	2
events	50	0.5	2	29
notes	18	0.2	0	6

Table 7 shows total number of items in four features (photos, videos, events, and notes), average number, minimum and maximum.

Usage of Facebook is common in Turkey, but not so common in public libraries. Current usage of Facebook pages is not sufficient and up to date. Many reasons for such a situation can be found, such as insufficient technical infrastructure, personnel, education etc.

Conclusion

Regardless of different samples, it can be concluded that public libraries in all four countries use Facebook to communicate with their users. Some of them do that in appropriate way – they use Facebook pages, update their statuses regularly, upload photos, announce events and put general information such as opening hours, location and contacts. Significant increase of the number of libraries on Facebook in all the four countries began in the year 2010. Quantitative analysis is important when concluding about Facebook activity (metrics, number of comments, number of likes and shares, number of items in features...) but content analysis would also be very interesting and significant (e. g. what libraries post, which pages they like and recommend to their fans, which events they announce, what others post to libraries' walls or timelines...). At the moment, Facebook is the most popular social networking site in the world and it is important for libraries to be on Facebook if they think it is the best way to communicate with their users and to promote their activities. Results described in this paper can be the basis for more detailed studies of libraries on Facebook in the four countries.