

## **Subject Plus: An Information Management Tool for Developing Research Guides in Academic Libraries**

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Library professionals must play a dynamic role in promoting library collection to educate researchers and convince them of the benefit of using resources for their academic and research activities. In recent years, information is generated from every sector of human society. However, managing these huge amounts of information is turning out to be very difficult by the day. The Recent trend amongst information seekers is becoming very specific and they require pin-pointed information. Along with this information explosion, the academic libraries are split into various sections to manage various kinds of information resources such as the reader section, periodical section, automation section, electronic section, digital section, research support section, etc. For the management of all subdivisions of the libraries, the information professionals are using several library management software, management tools, and new technological services as well. Hence, the main aim of this paper was to discuss the experience of creating and managing online subject guides or research guides at the Eastern University, Sri Lanka (EUSL). Subject Plus is a free and open-source tool that enables libraries to create and manage online research guides. And this tool maps to the library resources while simultaneously helping the researchers to find the right information at the right time. This Subject Plus tool can be downloaded from <http://www.subjectsplus.com> and installed with prerequisite free software such as PHP, MySQL Apache Web Server, and JavaScript along with Windows or Linux operating systems. The installation part is quite the same as other Content Management System (Joomla, WordPress, Drupal) tools but, the customization is quite tailored and lengthy. The EUSL Library has implemented an online Subject Guide project along with the already available Ubuntu server. And this was customized according to the requirements of the University researchers using the available commercialized and open-access information resources. Consequently, the developed online Subject Guide served as a beneficial tool for researchers for On and Off-campus access, resource access through the subjects or topics, A-Z list of databases access, subject librarian collaboration with faculty staff, etc. As described, Subject Guides/Research Guides create awareness about various digital resources and enhance the information-based services in the academic libraries. Collectively, these implementation and efforts create awareness among all other Sri Lankan university information professionals to adopt Subject Plus open-source tools for their information management services.

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