

## University Best Practices

- i) Application of RFID Technology in Central Library of Vidyasagar University
- ii) Adivasi Museum in Teaching-Learning Process

### Best Practices – I

#### Title - Application of RFID Technology in Central Library of Vidyasagar University

**Introduction:** Application of information technology in libraries has always been a boon to enhance the quality and delivery of information services to the users. One such technology is the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology. RFID is a blend of radio frequency based technology and microchip technology in which information are contained on a microchip in the form of tags which are fixed to books and are read using radio frequency technology regardless of book orientation or arrangement. It does not require a line of sight or a fixed place to read tags, as traditional theft detection systems do. Simply RFID is an identification technology that does the same job as barcodes do, but provides potentially a lot more benefits. In other words, RFID is the detection technology that performs the same tasks as barcodes; however, it offers many advantages. A library has to look for creative solutions to remain relevant to the needs of users and RFID is rapidly becoming popular for efficient management in large libraries. Significantly, the use of RFID reduces the time required for circulation and inventory control operations. Larger the collection a library possesses, the more worthwhile it is to install RFID.

**Objectives:** The basic objectives are –

- (i) To assess the usage and effectiveness of RFID implementation in Vidyasagar University Library
- (ii) To maintain up to date membership records as well as the latest status of the collection meant for circulation
- (iii) To maintain bibliographic data in suitable transponders (generally known as ‘Tags’) and to retrieve data, by machine readable means, at a suitable time and place
- (iv) To find out the solution of manpower problem by using self check-in/out machines as against manual circulation
- (v) To reduce the amount of time required to perform circulation operations to give relief to the users for not standing in a long que
- (vi) To provide facilities to generate bibliographies, current awareness service and SDI (selective dissemination of information)
- (vii) To determine library users’ satisfaction with RFID implementation.

**Context:** Using RFID in libraries saves library staff’s time by automating their tasks. An establishment that uses RFID library management saves previous time for book reader, precious time that he/ she would have spent, waiting for his/her turn in a que for borrowing or returning a book. Taking care of books and making them available to the readers are important tasks. Most of the library staff’s time is spent in recording information of incoming and outgoing books. Borrowing and returning of books can be fully automatized with the help of self check-in / check-out systems. This system involves installation of special software. A person using this system to borrow books, is presented with options on a computer screen. The person has to identify himself with a code, which is preferably a personal identification number, or any form of unique identity code. Books selected by the

person are identified by the system's built-in RFID reader and the surveillance bit in the book's tag is deactivated by the system. When a book is returned, the check-in/out system activates the surveillance bit.

**The Practice:** Steps for running RFID systems in university central library -

**1. Pasting and activating the RFID Tags:** RFID Tag is the most important link in any RFID system. It has the ability to store information relating to the specific item to which they are attached, rewrite again without any requirement for contact or line of sight. Data within a tag may provide identification for an item, proof of ownership, original storage location, loan status and history. RFID tags have been specifically designed to be affixed into library media, including books, CDs, DVDs, etc.

**2. Working with the Staff Work Station:** It is a staff assisted station on services such as loan, return, tagging, sorting and etc. It is loaded with arming/disarming module, tagging module and sorting module. Arming/Disarming module allows EAS (Electronic Article Surveillance) bit inside the tag of the library material to be set/reset so as to trigger/not trigger the alarm of the EAS gate.

**3. Borrowing through Self Check-in / out Kiosk:** It is basically a computer with a touch screen and a built-in RFID reader, plus special software for personal identification, book and other media handling and circulation. After identifying the patron with a library ID card, a barcode card, or his personal ID number (PIN), the patron is asked to choose the next action (check-out of one or several books). After choosing check-out, the patron puts the book(s) on the platform of the RFID reader and the display will show the book title and its ID number which have been checked out.

**4. Installation of Anti-Theft Detection Gate:** RFID EAS Antenna Gate is the anti-theft part of the Library RFID Management System using the same RFID tags embedded in the library items. Each lane is able to track items of about 1 meter and would trigger the alarm system when an un-borrowed item passes through them. The alarm will sound and lights on the gate will flash as a patron passes through the un-borrowed library material.

**5. Management of Shelf arrangement:** This solution makes locating and identifying items on the shelves an easy task for librarians. It comprises basically a portable scanner and a base station. The solution is designed to cover three main requirements, such as *Search for individual books requested; Inventory check of the whole library stock; and Search for books which are mis-shelved.*

## Best Practices – II

### Title - Adivasi Museum in Teaching-Learning Process

**Introduction:** Several departments of this university, like English, Santhali, Anthropology, Bengali and Sociology, have a pronounced bent towards cultural studies. The study of the life and culture of the tribes in and around Midnapore has been the primary focus of this study group. The departments have tailored their curriculum in a manner that fosters research aptitudes in this field among prospective researchers. One of the best ways in which this design is effected is through the development of an adivasi museum in the campus. The growing collection of the museum of adivasi cultural artifacts like musical instruments, paintings, articles related to religious practices and everyday life etc provide a ready referential archive for the students of cultural studies across several disciplines.

**Context:** Midnapore and its adjoining districts like Purulia, Bankura, Jhargram and Birbhum have rich concentrations of adivasi people. Their everyday life and cultures are changing due to the influence of globalization expanding from the cities to the villages. The distinctive identities of the indigenous people are melting away so fast that within another half a century the country's cultural diversity and its non-western specificities will be threatened with extinction. The hegemonic role of the mainstream cultural and racial practices of the country and that of the west-centred advances of globalization are inimical to the sustenance of the ethnic peculiarities of several indigenous communities. The Adivasi Museum in the campus and its contribution to the revival of adivasi cultural studies is extremely relevant in this context in an academic set-up which is built up in the middle of the tribal world.

**The Practice:** Students in the departments mentioned above pursue a compulsory core course in their second and third semesters that are dedicated to field research. The students form into groups and study different categories of articles conserved in the museum and write project reports on the history, utility and other nuances of the said articles. The cultural histories of the articles are then related to the necessary identitorean concerns of the respective communities. The reports are also based on interviews and lectures of the experts from the communities. As part of the same course they have to digitize their findings in the university's cultural studies archive called JANALIPI. For their term papers having 2 credits each they perform two tasks related to the museum and its allied open air theatrical space surrounded by a pristine wooded space comparable to actual tribal habitats. They go out in tribal villages to do outreach social service and in search of rare articles for scientific preservation in the museum and also participate in workshops with theatre groups to cast ethnic and canonical texts in adivasi forms for performance in the open air theatrical space. The artifacts of the museum are used as costume and décor for these performances. Students earn credit points for these activities.