
The Strategy of Using Social Networks in the Arab National Archives: A Descriptive and Analytical Study

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Abstract:

In recent years, Archives have used large-scale social networks for multiple purposes to enhance the role of users and followers' participation by receiving their suggestions that support the development of information services and Archives' activities. Although the use of social media (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Flickr, Templer, ...) is a relatively new phenomenon in Archives compared to libraries and other information centers, National Archives have sought to adopt strategies to use social networks to increase communication and interaction with users and to identify their views in the development of information services provided, including interactive content creation and distribution of content related to archival documents.

This study aims to identify the uses of social networks in the Arab National Archives, the availability of specific and declared strategies for their use, the analysis of their characteristics (objectives, content, ...etc.), the social platforms used by archives and the training of staff who manage and update the content of National Archives on these platforms. The study relied on the analytical descriptive approach to describe the use of Arab and foreign archives for social networks and the content analysis methodology to analyze the characteristics of national archives' strategies for the use of these networks.

The study included (12) Arab National Archives; in addition to (5) Foreign Archives (USA, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom, France) to benefit from their strategies in using social networks. Among the most important proposals of the study is the need to develop a social media strategy in the Arab National Archives, to diversify the archival content on social media and to form a social media teamwork responsible for planning and implementing the Archives' strategy for social media. The study suggests also that the National Archives start an advanced strategy focused on the context, depth and quality of the use of social media. In addition, they should develop a marketing plan, focusing on a few social platforms to improve the presence of the Archive in the community and to raise awareness of its role. The social media teamwork in the Archive should ensure that the Archive updates the content of its social platforms regularly,

especially those with a large number of subscribers and followers, and participates actively in the conversations of followers and users of the Archive's social platforms. They should archive models of users' participation on what is published and shared concerning the archival content on social platforms, especially on important national events.

Keywords:

National Archives, Social networks, Social media strategy