BOBCATSSS 2010 @ Parma, Italy

Dates: Monday 25th, Tuesday 26th, Wednesday 27th January, 2010

Bridging the digital divide:

libraries providing access for all?
Intranet for making the life of library staff easier: the case of Lithuanian academic libraries

Julija Zemcova
Institute of Communication and Information
Faculty of Communication
Vilnius University
Vilnius, Lithuania
julija.zemcova@kf.stud.vu.lt

Edvaldas Baltrūnas
Institute of Library and Information Science
Faculty of Communication
Vilnius University
Vilnius, Lithuania
edvaldas.baltrunas@gmail.com

Zinaida Manžuch
Institute of Library and Information Science
Faculty of Communication
Vilnius University
Vilnius, Lithuania
zinaida.manzuch@mb.vu.lt

Jurgita Rudžionienė
Institute of Library and Information Science
Faculty of Communication
Vilnius University
Vilnius, Lithuania
jurgita.rudzioniene@kf.vu.lt

ABSTRACT

The successful information flow and communication are the key tasks for a library of any type. Academic libraries operate in the information intensive environment, where timely and efficient communication between library staff impacts the quality of information services, ensures creative decisions and effective teamwork. However, to manage internal information flows an efficient information sharing infrastructure is crucial. For these purposes intranet, a technology which is widely applied for managing information sharing in business and also employed in libraries, can be used. Intranet offers a variety of tools that enable timely and convenient creation, sharing, communication and management of the internal information in academic libraries. The aim of this paper is to explore the potential of Intranet as an infrastructure for managing internal communication and information sharing in the Lithuanian academic libraries. For this purpose a theoretical grounding of intranet application for information sharing and communication in academic libraries was developed. It allowed creating the framework for evaluation of Intranet potential in the Lithuanian academic libraries. Interviews with managers of the Lithuanian academic libraries were carried out to determine a strategic approach to Intranet application and development. The survey of the personnel of academic libraries, applying this tool, was performed to explore the
nature of utilisation of this technology. The findings revealed that the library managers recognised the importance of Intranet functions. However, Intranet systems of the academic libraries were mostly oriented to one-way informing practices. Similarly, the staff of the surveyed academic libraries acknowledged the value of Intranet for their work but employed it mostly for efficient discovery and work with organisational documents. Finally, conclusions about the necessity of expansion of Intranet application in academic libraries and considering strategic, human and technical success factors while developing the system, were made. This paper is based on the findings of the Julija Zemcova’s bachelor thesis “The role of Intranet in managing internal information sharing in the Lithuanian academic libraries” (2009).

**KEYWORDS:** Intranet, academic libraries, information and communication management, information sharing

**Introduction**

Contemporary academic libraries aiming to perform in a more effective manner, often utilize the business experience in the field of information management and technologies. Academic libraries exploit these principles and experience both in for the provision of information services to the academic community as well as for managing the library itself. This paper is focused on the application of Intranet technology for managing internal information sharing in academic libraries. In order to take the best decisions and accomplish daily functions library personnel constantly creates, uses and shares information resources. Effective management and dissemination of information resources can simplify the implementation of the academic library tasks and facilitate reaching its goals. The analysis of practical Intranet application in academic libraries in professional and scholarly publications (Meythaler, 2006; Murray-Smith, 2003) shows the interest in the use of this system for the purposes of the library internal information sharing. However, there is still a lack of research focusing on the issues of Intranet application in the library sector, and in academic libraries, in particular. Only few researchers have explored (e.g. Gunjal, Bhojaraju (2003) for the analysis of application of Intranet in libraries as well as its advantages and drawbacks) the topic. The experience of application of Intranet in the Lithuanian academic libraries has never been researched. The aim of this paper is to determine and critically evaluate the role of Intranet for managing internal information sharing in the Lithuanian academic libraries. In order to achieve this objective, interviews of the personnel responsible for the technological development of Intranet in the Lithuanian academic libraries were performed. Additionally, the questionnaire survey of library personnel was carried out. The research enabled to determine the opinion about strategic role of Intranet in the academic libraries and assess the nature of its usage.

1. Intranet application for managing internal information sharing in organizations

In contemporary society information is considered the key pre-requisite for effective management and operation of any organization. According to information management theoretician Chun Wei Choo (2002), information sharing is “the process by which the organization disseminates and shares information obtained from various sources”. Dissemination of information is a pre-condition of learning in any organization. It facilitates information search, generation of new information, an effective communication and collaborative work. Information sharing helps employees to develop new insights, better understanding of the problems or the various situations faced by the organization.
Intranet is regarded as a tool supporting information sharing in organizations. It is an organizational computer network of limited access which is usually restricted to personnel. Intranet is based on internet and web technologies and standards such as TCP/IP protocol, web server, web browser and HTML. The purpose of Intranet is to increase the productivity and quality of work by organizing and filtering data in an efficient manner, linking staff members, including those working in remote (distributed) departments to necessary information (Bottazzo, 2002). Intranets allow integrating software aimed at support of various tasks and processes (e.g. collaborative software provides tools for the joint work on common tasks). Due to its characteristics this system ensures information sharing between different levels of organizational structure.

In general Intranet helps to manage diverse types of information flows, covering the bottom-up, top-down and horizontal information sharing (see Figure 1).

![Intranet Flow Diagram](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

**Figure 1. Flows of information sharing in an organization supported by Intranets**

As Figure 1 shows information can be shared from the bottom to the top (bottom-up) and ensure the flow of information from employees to executives in organization. Such information exchange allows employees presenting their own ideas, expressing requests and reacting to the decisions of the managers. The top-down information sharing encompasses the flow from managers (directors, heads of structural units) to employees and allows reaching the staff working in the structural units of an organization and informing about changes, new rules, decisions, etc. Horizontal information sharing takes place at the same level of organizational structure. It is an important mean for implementing collaborative work on specific tasks or projects.

Due to effective support of information sharing and other reasons, an Intranet is widely used in many business enterprises. In addition to providing effective information sharing the Intranet has many other advantages, such as, for instance, efficient organization of work processes. Usually scholars (e.g. see Mphidi & Snyman, 2004, Zalieckaite & Mikalauskiene, 2007) list the following main advantages of Intranet:
• Consistency – Intranet information is available to each member of staff in the organization.
• Interactivity – application of Web technologies in Intranets allows access to communication tools that encourage various modes of communication and feedback from members of staff working on common tasks or making decisions.
• Ease and low cost of content update – Intranet offers quick and easy ways to update the content of the system, e. g., adding news, articles, organizational document etc.
• Centralization – all information is stored in one place, so it is easy to work with it.
• Simplicity in creation and maintenance – Intranet development and maintenance does not require any specific IT knowledge.
• Improved information provision services for employees – staff members get timely and personalized information meeting their demands.
• Faster dissemination speed. Access to information on Intranet is quick and easy; less time is needed to find a necessary document.
• Ease of accessing and publishing information. Each employee may submit their views, studies, articles and make them available to others online.
• Accuracy. Information on an Intranet can be verified and accurate.
• Limited access – opportunities to control access to information. System administrator or any other person responsible for the security of the system can determine the levels of access to information. It is possible to control the dissemination of information and ensure that information available for some employees is not accessible to others.
• Effectiveness and efficiency. Intranet usage enables staff to review and assess the working practices in the organization. All information is gathered into one place, so it is not difficult to compare the results and indicators of the organization performance. Moreover, it speeds up the identification and elimination of the performance gaps.
• Personal e-learning – Intranet can be used as a training medium for professional development of organization staff. Training materials can be published on Intranet to enable distance learning, which allows employees to improve their skills without leaving the workplace (Gunjal, Bhojaraju, 2003).

In general Intranet is applied to implement two functions – communication and informing. The informing function covers the systematic and timely provision of information to the staff. Communication function embraces ensuring the communication among the organization’s staff by the use of various instruments and tools that enable collaboration and exchange of views during the implementation of the common task. The main difference between those functions is that informing does not include any direct answer or feedback and communication requires active involvement of all participants.

Informing function is crucial for every academic library because it usually has documents that circulate within the organization and determine the library policies, work instructions, the functions of librarians, etc. To operate efficiently, academic libraries must ensure smooth and efficient implementation of informing function. Each employee can publish and update information within the area of his own competences. Although information is published independently, it is organized in the same system altogether. Contrary to Internet information, the Intranet information is structured, classified, systematized, so, if necessary, each employee can find specific information by using search tools. Intranet can provide a storage place for all documents related to library activities or services (e. g., library regulatory documents, annual reports, blanks and templates).

In academic libraries Intranet communication function is fulfilled by using collaboration tools dedicated for communication needs of a group of librarians engaged in the same projects or teams and having the same duties at the same time. These tools facilitate the exchange of
information, tracking the progress of continuous work, as well as the coordination of the work. Examples of tools supporting collaborative work include knowledge blogs, wikis and forums.

To summarize, Intranets, providing a timely information access and user-friendly information sharing environment, allows making decisions quicker and more effectively. Moreover, the decisions become more sound, since they are taken on the basis of relevant and objective information.

2. Intranet application trends in academic libraries

The articles analyzing the Intranet implementation experience in academic libraries, mainly deal with knowledge blogs, wikis and forum integration into Intranets and their usage for ensuring the communication function. Therefore, these three tools are briefly presented below:

- **Knowledge Management Blog** (also known as k-log) – is a system designed utilizing blog technology. K-logs are intended for the employees of organization, i.e. each person working in the library can create his own blog dedicated to professional subjects, which will be available to all other employees of the organization (Robertson, 2004).

- **Wiki** is server software based on open access that allows users to publish information on the Internet or Intranet by using simple mark-up language or common text editor interface. Wiki is designed to create new information resources collaboratively. It enables users to see the new amendments and comment on them, as well as correct mistakes made by other persons (Robertson, 2004). An example of wiki application for the academic library work is North Carolina University Library which uses wiki for collaborative development documents, reports, etc. since 2003 (Chang, 2004). Wiki is also used for building common library databases.

- **Forum** is one of the academic library community communication tools that can be used on an Intranet. It is an online discussion board that originated from the bulletin boards. Forum enables users to publicize specific issues, willing to obtain information from other users. North Carolina University Library integrated this feature into their Intranet system as well. It created a space for library personnel communication about job, professional and project activity topics (Chang, 2004).

Additionally, there are examples of application of content management systems in the academic library Intranet systems. Content management software simplifies the creation and management of information resources. It allows ensuring the smooth group work for many users” (Zalieckaite & Mikalauskiene, 2007). Content management systems advantage is that all information is available online; it is dynamic and can be quickly updated. Another advantage of this system is that “once the Intranet page is updated, the information reaches all at no additional cost for printing” (Morant, 1996). Open University Library has created an Intranet for the library staff. Library utilized ZOPE Content Management Framework – CMF, and created favorable conditions for storage and dissemination of documents inside of the library system. CMF allows storing information in various formats, including PDF, HTML, DOC, and XML. Intranet tool allows to classify and group information according to media and content, as well as to perform a search for documents (Stoddart, 2001).

By summarizing opinions of various scholars, Hamilton Mphidi and Retha Snyman has proposed a list of tools should be integrated into Intranets (Mphidi & Snyman, 2004). These tools cover news, address book, budget, reports, contracts, archive, documentation, templates, information for managers, learning materials, electronic journals, blanks, discussion rooms, bulletin boards, and personalized information.
To sum up it is observed that the academic libraries seeking effective internal information sharing, implement Intranet tools to ensure communication and informing in the library.

3. Success factors of Intranet application in academic libraries

Intranet installation in the academic library is a costly and time consuming project. Therefore, it is important to treat the development of an Intranet as an initiative that requires planning, setting objectives, establishing performance evaluation criteria.

Many factors can impact whether the library staff usage the Intranet and if it allows the library to achieve its objectives. Several success factors determining the success of Intranet’s usage can be grouped in the following way:

1. Strategic success factors.
3. Technological success factors.

Strategic factors are related to the organization’s goals, vision and requirements for the Intranet. Before installing the Intranet, each academic library must understand the system’s role in its activities. Although the Intranet is a combination of specific tools, it is extremely difficult to find two similar Intranets. In order to use the Intranet effectively, the library has to determine the Intranet’s purposes, functions that it will perform in the organization and the results that should be achieved. These decisions depend on library structure, size, nature and needs. Before the introduction of the Intranet, a clear vision and a concept must be developed, the system requirements defined, and the strategic role of the Intranet in the library conceptualized.

Technological factors cover the appropriate selection of tools to meet stated objectives. Specific tools should be installed to satisfy particular needs. It should be remembered that the Intranet tools are designed to support specific work processes, communication, ensure the faster publication and presentation for the library staff. Installed technology has to meet the requirements of the library staff.

Human factors are those that depend on human behaviour, thinking and actions. Intranet development can be meaningless if it is not used by the library staff. Assumptions why the organization staff may refuse to accept or adopt the new system were summed up by M. Schuyler (2004). They are as follows:

- Staff training.
- Staff willingness to engage in a new project and change the work routines.
- Support to the staff which is only beginning to use new technology.
- Intranet’s relevance to the needs of the library staff.
- Obtained experience and practice.
- Ensuring collaboration with other colleagues, who may also be beginners in using the new system.

This list could be considered a check-list for assessing why the reasons why employees accepted or rejected a new system (Sakalas, 2003).

4. Intranet application in the Lithuanian academic libraries
In order to determine the role of the Intranet in managing the internal information sharing in the Lithuanian academic libraries, two empirical studies have been carried out. This section discusses the research methodology and presents the results of the studies.

**Research design**

Purpose of the research is to analyze the current situation of Intranet application in the Lithuanian academic libraries for internal information sharing. To reach the goal the following objectives were formulated:

1. To analyze the strategic approach of the Lithuanian academic libraries to the roles of Intranet and its development potential.
2. To determine the nature of usage of Intranet in the academic libraries, including objectives, reasons for non-use and satisfaction of library personnel.

In order to implement stated objectives two studies were carried out. The structure of the research is generalized in Figure 2.

![Figure 2. Research design](image)

**Figure 2. Research design**

Figure 2 shows that in order to implement the first objective, the interview method was applied. It helped to clarify a strategic approach of the Lithuanian academic libraries, requirements, expectations for the Intranet, its future development plans etc. In order to achieve the second objective the questionnaire survey method was applied. It allowed clarifying the Intranet’s use / non-use characteristics and causes. Interviews and questionnaire methodology and findings are described in detail in the following sections.

Qualitative, quantitative analysis and comparative methods were used for the interpretation of the data. Qualitative analysis used for analyzing the interview responses, while quantitative
method was used for summarizing the questionnaire data. Comparative analysis was applied for analyzing the data from several academic libraries.

Only the libraries of public and private higher education schools which offer three levels of studies (including postgraduate and doctoral studies), were selected for the study. It was assumed that these libraries had more complex academic community service tasks in comparison to other academic libraries because of serving three level study programmes.

Libraries applying or planning to apply the Intranet in future participated in the interviews and those using the Intranet – in the questionnaire survey. Their experience allowed clarifying the strategic approach, as well as the peculiarities of Intranet usage.

**Interviews of librarians responsible for the Intranet development: the methodology**

First of all, the preliminary survey of the Lithuanian academic libraries was carried out in order to identify potential participants of the interview. The result of the preliminary survey was that 5 academic libraries (of 23) were implementing the Intranet system for library personnel, while one library planned to use the Intranet in the nearest future.

The academic libraries, using the Intranet, or just planning to install this system, were interviewed because they were able to explain their strategic approach to the Intranet. Four academic libraries agreed to take part in interviews:

- Library of the ISM University of Management and Economics (a private higher education school).
- Library of Kaunas University of Medicine (a public higher education school).
- Library of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (a public higher education school).
- Vilnius Pedagogical University Library (a public higher education school).

Interview template consisted of 7 questions dealing with Intranet’s benefits for the academic libraries; Intranet implementation motives, the purposes and information content of the network; Intranet expectations, faced obstacles and future prospects.

**Findings of the interviews**

Asked about the major areas the Intranet should be used in the respondents provided diverse opinions. Half of the respondents noted that the Intranet should serve as a communication tool, while the same number of interviewees considered the Intranet to be a tool for informing. For instance, the librarian of the Information Systems department of the Vilnius Gediminas Technical University Library librarian stated that “the Intranet is not important as a communication tool, its main benefit is the opportunity to disseminate information [inform – note by the authors]”. Differently, the head of the Automation sector of the Vilnius Pedagogical University Library noted that the Intranet may be useful as a motivation tool for the purposes of managing library personnel. The next question was aimed to determine the objectives of the Intranet use in the respondents’ libraries. All respondents argued that the Intranet is used for information purposes. However, two interviewees claimed that Intranet was also used (or planned to be used) for communication purposes and as a tool for team building. Vilnius Gediminas Technical University Library framed main Intranet objectives as statistical data provision, project administration and communication maintenance between the library staff.
Another question examined the content available on the Intranet. Each respondent, except the Vilnius Gediminas Technical University library, stated that the Intranet was used for publishing current library information and documentation. The library of ISM University of Management and Economics stated that it used Intranet for introducing new library staff, as well as publishing the materials about the library projects. The Kaunas University of Medicine library utilized Intranet as a space for publishing events, professional issues, training materials and information about new employees.

Respondents were also inquired about the results their libraries achieved after starting to use the Intranet. The manager of the library of ISM University of Management and Economics pointed out that all information was available in one place. At the library of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University it was commented that because of availability of the statistical information on the Intranet, writing of reports was facilitated. Besides these advantages, the implementation of certain projects was quickened; the employees connected to the system could make changes and actively participate in projects. The library of Kaunas University of Medicine commented that the information and the dissemination of information through the Intranet, has become more convenient and faster. The Vilnius Pedagogical University Library hoped that the introduction of an Intranet will encourage a faster distribution of labour and resources, the system will allow saving time and lower costs.

Another question was to determine whether there were any barriers preventing the exploitation of all opportunities offered by the Intranet. No issues were reported by the library of ISM University of Management and Economics and the library of Kaunas University of Medicine. Vilnius Gediminas Technical University library faced with some technical problems, while Vilnius Pedagogical University library representative stated that the main obstacle, which might prevent a successful launch of the Intranet, was the lack of qualified personnel.

Finally, the last question was dedicated to future prospects of the Intranet development. All libraries were planning to expand the Intranet system. The interview results strongly suggested that the surveyed academic libraries believed that the Intranet facilitated and accelerated the dissemination of information and served as a communication and motivation tool. All interviewees were satisfied with the Intranet and anticipated its development and continuation. One of the reasons why the full capacity of the Intranet was not utilized was the unwillingness of the elderly library staff, constituting the majority of personnel members to actively use the new information technologies in their work.

Questionnaire survey of Intranet use by the academic library personnel: the methodology

Questionnaire survey was performed in order to clarify the academic library staff opinion on the use of the Intranet. Only those libraries that applied the Intranet were asked to participate in the survey. Two libraries – the library of the ISM University of Management and Economics and the library of Kaunas University of Medicine – agreed to take part in the questionnaire survey. The survey was distributed electronically to the employees of these libraries. The respondent sample was calculated on the basis of this representative sample formula (Ciceniene, 2006):

\[
    n = \frac{N}{0.0025N + 1}
\]

where \(N\) – target population; \(n\) – sample

In case of the library of ISM University of Management and Economics the representative sample constituted 5 librarians, while in the library of Kaunas University of Medicine – 29 employees. The main issues covered in the questionnaires included purposes of the Intranet use and non-use
reasons; impact of the Intranet to the everyday work; peculiarities of launch and use of the Intranet in the library; satisfaction level of employees with the Intranet.

**Questionnaire survey findings**

Questionnaire return from the library of the ISM University of Management and Economics was 100% (5 respondents), while the library of the Kaunas University of Medicine – 55% (17 respondents). The return rate suggested the reliability of the survey.

The major results of the questionnaire survey are summarized the Table I. Only the answers that were top-rated by the respondents were included in the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intranet use and development feature/ Respondents answers (%)</th>
<th>The Library of the ISM University of Management and Economics</th>
<th>The Library of the Kaunas University of Medicine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency of the Intranet usage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a day (60%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Once a day (59%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times a week (40%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The purposes of the Intranet usage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrieval of library documents (80%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Retrieval of library documents (71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information sharing with other colleagues (80%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The impact of the Intranet to the everyday work</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quicker implementation of tasks (60%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rapid information acquisition (76%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid information acquisition (60%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Quicker implementation of tasks (71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation of working tasks (60%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitation of working tasks (71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General positive impact to work (60%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved knowledge about the competences and current activities of colleagues (40%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Improved knowledge about the competence and current activities of colleagues (65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The process of the Intranet development and considering the personnel needs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees were informed about Intranet development (80%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Employees were informed about Intranet development (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees were involved in the process of the Intranet development (80%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Employees were involved in the process of the Intranet development (76%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees’ demands and suggestions were considered (80%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Employees’ suggestions and demands were not considered (53%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employee satisfaction with the Intranet system</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intranet should be improved (60%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Intranet should be improved (65%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table I. Summary of questionnaire answers
Questionnaire survey revealed (see Table I) that the Intranet was used quite frequently and accepted as a tool for performing library tasks. It was mainly used for document search, and information dissemination within organization. Respondents noted that the Intranet facilitated the implementation of the tasks, information was received promptly, and it also helped to understand the tasks of the colleagues. The majority of respondents noted that before installing an Intranet their wishes and suggestions were taken into account, but the analysis revealed, however, that most librarians considered the Intranet to be further improved.

5. Discussion

Lithuanian academic libraries employed Intranet for the purposes of informing and communication. Interview results have shown that the individual libraries treated those functions differently – some gave priority to informing, others – to communication. Nevertheless, both interview and questionnaire results revealed that the dominant Intranet feature, as perceived by the libraries, was informing. Informing was more obvious in the interviewees’ examples of current and future deployment of Intranet, as well as in the instances of its benefits. Questionnaire results have shown that many employees use Intranet for information retrieval, acquisition or publishing information on their activities. However, the Intranet as professional issues discussion medium was used less frequently.

Lithuanian academic libraries use Intranet for publishing library news, information on events, library documentation, information on project activities, details on the new staff, training materials, etc. Thus, it can be concluded that the Lithuanian academic libraries use a sufficient number of Intranet tools and techniques as described in H. Mphidi and R. Snyman’s (2004) recommended list for Intranet tools. This means that libraries sufficiently exploited the Intranet capabilities.

Intranet satisfies the demands of the academic libraries personnel only partially due to insufficient consideration of the strategic, human and technical success factors during implementation of the library Intranet. Although the majority of respondents of the survey reported that they were informed about the deployment of an Intranet within their organizations, as well as they discussed the purpose of the Intranet in the library, what tools will be introduced and training sessions were conducted, the majority of the library of Kaunas University of Medicine staff commented that during the introduction of an Intranet their wishes and suggestions had not been taken into account. Perhaps, in part, this was determined the factor that not all of the library staff was using the Intranet every day. Also, most of the ISM University of Management and Economics and the Kaunas University of Medicine libraries’ staff believed that the Intranet could be further improved, which means that it failed to satisfy all the needs of employees.

Conclusions

Analysis of the strategic roles of Intranet in the Lithuanian academic libraries and the nature of its usage provided a deep qualitative view on the deployment of this tool. However, due to the low involvement of the academic libraries into participation in the study, one should consider this research a case analysis, not reflecting the overall situation in Lithuania.

Research results have shown that the academic libraries need more knowledge about the role of Intranet in their organizations and particularly the importance of considering human and technical factors during the development of the system. This tendency was clear in answers of the interviewees and library staff using Intranets systems. Major benefits of Intranet were understood,
but both interviewees and especially library staff concentrated on the few most obvious advantages; library staff felt the need to improve the system and more actively participate in its development.

In summary, it can be stated that the Intranet in the Lithuanian academic libraries was mainly used for information function support. It provided all relevant and necessary information to ensure library work. An Intranet was also used (though much less) as a mean of communication. The possible reasons for less intensive usage of Intranets for communication may be not so large and distributed library staff, strong face-to-face communication traditions, and even an overall approach to communication. It was not possible to analyze all underlying reasons in this study. However, the academic libraries should explore communication role and tools of the Intranet more.

In general an empirical analysis revealed that the Intranet had a positive impact on the work of librarians; it helped get the latest information on time and do the work faster.

References