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Roving and Roaming strategies to lead a successful Information Literacy intervention at the University of Fort Hare

Due to the exponential increase in information available online, libraries are arguably experiencing reduced patronage. In most universities, students and other library users have easy access to a network of computers connected to the Internet from which they can also access the virtual library. In addition, some of the users can now access the Internet through their cellular phones thereby reducing library patronage except in cases where they want to browse print sources of information such as books and journals. Libraries are however responding positively to these developments by ensuring that users have also access to the Internet in the library through the establishment of learning commons and related space. There is great concern though about the quality of information and the ability of users to evaluate the information they find on the Internet. How then should Instruction Librarians ensure that once again users turn to them for guidance on which sources of information to use? What are the challenges faced by Instruction Librarians in trying to reach out to students scattered around the university network of computers? This paper seeks to present the concepts of roving and roaming as perfect options to reach students and other users in the comfort of their offices and other study areas. Instruction librarians at the University of Fort Hare (UFH) are going to be surveyed to gather their views on the 'rove' and 'roam' strategies which the University library adopted in pursuit of its motto "convenience". The paper will shed some light on success stories and challenges that these strategies present.

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