Facilities Booking System

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The National Institute of Education's (NIE) new, sprawling campus at Yunnan Garden abounds in lecture theatres, tutorial rooms, meeting rooms and other facilities. However, booking of these facilities could be tedious and sometimes resulted in errors. A better and more efficient system of managing the bookings for facilities was needed.

Facility Booking System (FBS) is a web-based system designed to better manage NIE’s campus facilities. These include lecture theatres, tutorial rooms and meeting rooms as well as equipment within the facilities. FBS provides intuitive online searching tools so that NIE staff can look for suitable rooms with the equipment (projectors, computers, etc.) that best fits their needs. Approvals are done online and bookings are routed automatically to the Approving Officers within the same department. The system does away with long phone calls and provides a paperless means of managing facility bookings.

FBS offers a one-stop web application for NIE staff to monitor their room bookings. Staff will receive all details, e.g. notifications, approvals (and rejections), expiry dates, etc., via the email system. The system will also display booking information summaries from other staff, the Foundation Programme (FP) Office, Development and Estate Department (DED), etc.

Online booking information keeps NIE staff, security officer, contractors, DED and CUS (Centre for User Support) well-informed about the availability of NIE facilities and makes for better co-ordination and transparency of facility management.

FBS will be integrated with the upcoming staff portal to enable users to access facility information on the portal itself.

Community Involvement Programme (CIP) Cum Library Training

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In line with LIBRIS’ Strategic Goals and NIE’s Key Performance Indicators, LIBRIS has embarked on outreach programmes to schools. The first programme was held at LIBRIS, from 11-13 Nov 2003. A total of seven student librarians took part in the programme, three from Kent Ridge Secondary School and four from Shuqun Secondary School. They were accompanied by a teacher from each school.

The objectives of the programme were to provide the students with the opportunity to:

1) work in an established library
2) learn library skills from professional librarians
3) serve the community

During the 3-day programme, the students were briefed on the following topics:

- functions of various types of libraries (e.g. national libraries, academic libraries, school libraries, etc.)
- library classification systems
- cataloguing work and physical processing of library materials
- serials work
- shelf reading and shelving of books/periodicals
- circulation duties
- information searching and quick reference tools

The students found the briefing and the quiz on information searching and quick reference tools particularly beneficial as the knowledge/skills gained could be applied if they need to do research for their projects.

The students were also assigned shelving duties and simple physical processing work. This provided them with the opportunity to put into practice what they had been taught and to reinforce what they had learnt.

Besides the Library, the participants were also taken on a quick tour of some parts of the campus, e.g. the Art Gallery and the Butterfly Garden.

All in all, the programme was a success for both LIBRIS and the schools involved. It will certainly pave the way for similar programmes to be extended to other schools as well.