

Mobile technologies enhancing Information Access for All and pursuing the millennium development goals

Singapore has experienced explosive growth in terms of mobile usage, with mobile phone population penetration skyrocketing to more than 150%. This shift of Singaporeans towards a mobile and on-the-go lifestyle is a key impetus in our outreach strategy into the mobile space.

NLB saw the opportunities provided by the ubiquitous mobile device back in 2008 and developed the Library in Your Pocket service (LiYP). LiYP brings quick, easy, convenient and on-demand access to library services to mobile users. Popular library services like searching the library catalogue, checking loan status and downloading short stories can be accessed from the mobile device anytime, anywhere. The mobile web application was first released in 2009 and received an overwhelming response. In 2010, NLB further enhanced the LiYP service with improved rich user interface for popular smartphone models. LiYP successfully met its primary objectives to leverage on the new 'always-on' channel to meet heightened customer expectations. LiYP set out to engage young, mobile-savvy members who are highly attuned to information seeking and performing transactions via the mobile device.

Subsequent to that, NLB has also successfully launched the MobileRead mobile application at the 2011 READ! Singapore programme, a nation-wide reading initiative to encourage Singaporeans to read fiction, including local creative literature. Commuters and book lovers can download and read some of their favourite local short stories on their mobile phones regardless of time and place, without the hassle of carrying a big or heavy book.

Mobile technologies have opened up tremendous opportunities to reach out to the library patrons with a connected lifestyle, demanding accesses to information via different devices anytime, anywhere. We will share our experiences in this area and the strategies, future plan and approach that we have adopted to meet these needs.