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## Social Media Benefits for Education: A Study of Generation Z's Preferences

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**How to cite this article:** Rajiv Kumar, Jatinder Kumar (2024) Social Media Benefits for Education: A Study of Generation Z's Preferences. *Library Progress International*, 44(3), 10662-10670.

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### ABSTRACT

The current study examines how social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and others can be valuable tools for knowledge transfer and raising awareness among IIT Ropar and IIT Mandi library users. Because social media is user-centric and features social networking, its emphasis on online collaboration and sharing is its most significant feature. A questionnaire was randomly distributed to IIT Ropar and IIT Mandi library users to gather data. The current article details a survey conducted among IIT Ropar and IIT Mandi library users to raise knowledge about social media. Library users will benefit from the analysis of the advantages of social media.

**Keywords:** IIT Library, Facebook, Twitter, Social Media, and Social Networking

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### 1. Introduction

To make their library services more well-liked and accessible, academic libraries and information centres are implementing new technology and trends. Current perceptions of libraries as significant locations where people may obtain information are rapidly evolving to more closely resemble social media platforms where people can connect, exchange information, and add to existing resources. Social media involves community, dialogue, audience connection, and relationship development. It serves as more than simply a broadcast medium. Time and place restrictions are removed by social media sites like Facebook and Instagram, increasing the possibilities for contact overall. These platforms enable users to converse more freely and simultaneously with several recipients, which can enhance other communication methods (Tammisalo, K., Danielsbacka, M., Tanskanen, A. O., & Arpino, B., 2024). Due to its many communicative affordances above traditional means of communication, social media may also satisfy various exclusive requirements (Taipale S., 2019). Some academics have examined social media's potential to improve people's well-being since it can promote communication in intimate relationships through mobile phones (Rosenberg, D., & Taipale, S., 2022). The open-access protocols provided by the new technology's potential allow unrestricted access, engagement, communication, and knowledge contribution. With contemporary technology, library services can provide new, intuitive tools and ongoing modification, adaptability, and assessment. They also promote user posting, sharing, collaboration, communication, and personalization. Posting upcoming events or book exhibitions is helpful. These postings rise quickly when individuals share content with their friends via social networking sites. This is an excellent chance to advertise library programs and services. Various methods are available on a social network for inviting a user group to interact with others online and offer feedback.

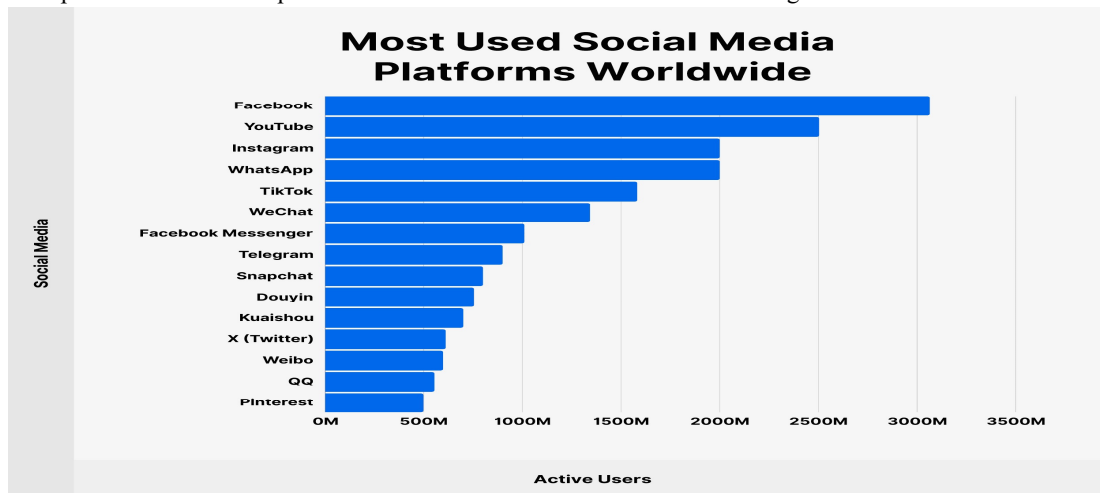
**Table 1. Ranking of Top Five social media Platforms**

Ranking	Social Media Network	Monthly Active Users
1	Facebook	3.06 Billion
2	Youtube	2.70 Billion
3	Whatsapp	2.40 Billion
4	Instagram	2.35 Billion
5	TikTok	1.67 Billion

Source: <https://explodingtopics.com/blog/top-social-media-platforms>

Table 1. shows that Facebook is the most popular and extensively utilized social networking platform globally. With 3.06 billion monthly active users, Facebook is used by 37% of global users at least once a month. YouTube is the second most popular social network, with 2.7 billion users. Today's top five social media platforms have over 2 billion active users.

Fig. 1 shows that most widely used social media platform and tool is Facebook, the world's largest social network. Users create a personal profile, add other users as friends, and exchange messages, including status updates. Brands create pages, and Facebook users can "like" brands' pages. X/Twitter is a social networking/micro-blogging platform that allows groups and individuals to stay connected by exchanging short status messages (280-character limit). Instagram is a free photo and video-sharing app that allows users to apply digital filters, frames and special effects to their photos and share them on various social networking sites.

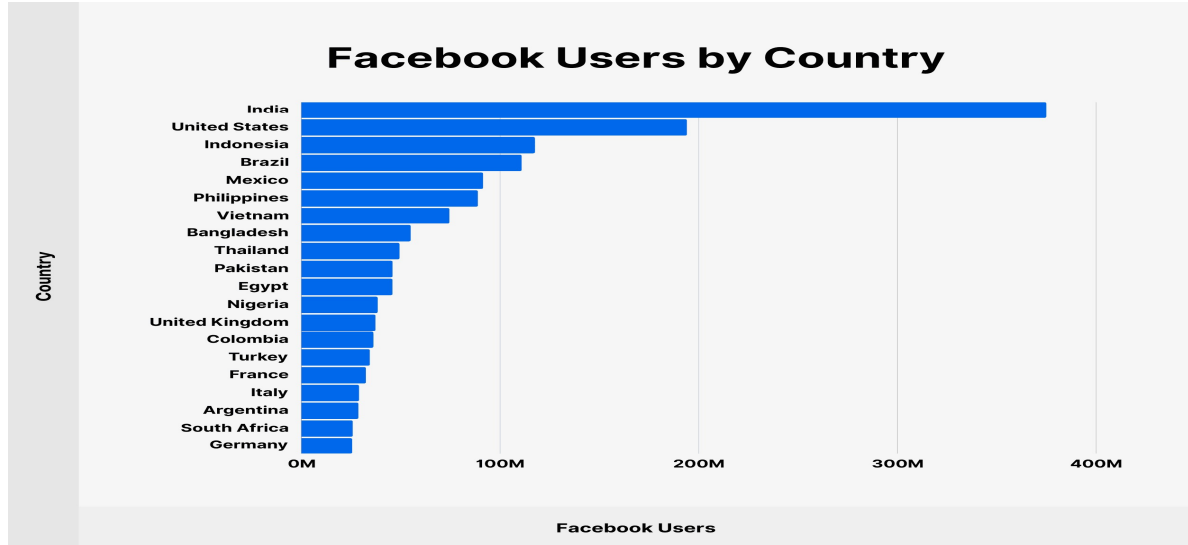


Source: Statista (2024), **Fig 1. Most used social media platforms worldwide**

LinkedIn is a place where groups of professionals with similar areas of interest can share information and participate in a conversation. YouTube/Vimeo is a Video hosting and watching website, and Blogs are a platform for casual dialogue and discussions on a specific topic or opinion. These days, using social networking sites is a craze. Some individuals will only consider you to exist if you have a digital presence. Youth are significantly impacted by the increasing demand to be active on social networking sites and have an impressive profile. The more time students spend on social media each day, the higher the rate of social media addiction (Parlak Sert, H., & Başkale, H., 2023).

As per Fig. 2 with more than 375 million active users as of September 2024, Facebook is highly popular in India. As a result, India now has more Facebook users worldwide. Facebook has also updated its site to appeal to Gen Z members. Because they spend much time on these social media platforms (Dobre, C., Milovan, A. M., Duřu, C., Preda, G., & Agapie, A., 2021). Utilising social media opens up new avenues for you to contact niche audiences, establish connections with them, and provide them with an opportunity to interact with your library. Social media gives you new ways to connect with your community, reach niche markets, and offer them a way to engage with your library (Harrison, A., Burrell, R., Velasquez, S., & Schreiner, L., 2017). Communication is

exchanging ideas, messages, or information by gestures, writing, speaking, or behavior (Trenholm, S., 2020).



Source: Statista (2024)

**Fig 2. Facebook Users by country**

Information and communication technology gives library personnel additional advantages in the modern environment. The development of the Internet and the World Wide Web has changed communication and revolutionized the world. The fundamental goal of libraries is to link people with information, this is what social media is all about (Harmon, C., & Messina, M. (Eds.), 2013). Social media fosters communication with our communities and makes vital information easily accessible. In India, social media was accessed by more than 50 per cent of the population in 2020. By 2025, 67% of the population is predicted to have social media access (Tanushree, 2022). 95.15% of villages had 3G or 4G mobile connectivity as of April 2024, enabling internet access. Between March 2014 and March 2024, the total number of internet users climbed from 251.59 million to 954.40 million (Pib.gov.in, 2024).

**2. Background of the Study**

The combination of technological breakthroughs and widespread adoption of online e-learning platforms in today's institutions has resulted in revolutionary changes in students' preferred modes of communication. Among a sample of 3,000 college students in the United States, 90% report using Facebook and 37% report using Twitter to share academic books (Elkaseh et al., 2016). Libraries are changing their offerings to accommodate digital communication platforms and encourage this new kind of interaction. Social media's objective is to deliver pertinent and helpful information on resources, services, and events and initiatives aimed at engaging the local community. Building a stronger and more knowledgeable learning community is the goal of the academic library's use of social media (Sumadevi & Kumbar, 2019). Social networking sites are especially popular among younger users, according to research. They have been accustomed to relying on social media for conversation, knowledge sharing, and communication due to their upbringing in the contemporary information technology era. Bart (2010) looked into the usage of social media by college professors. Eighty per cent of the polled people had at least one social networking account. They made use of it for work-related reasons. More than 90% of faculty members say the most recognisable names are Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Using Facebook, LinkedIn, Skype, and YouTube, teachers were found to be communicating with students and peers. Reports state that social scientists and humanities scholars use social media more than math, science, business, and economics scholars. According to research by Ntaka (2017), educators, lecturers, and students use social networks as a communication medium. Many students are making extensive use of this technology. Teachers, lecturers, and professors use this app to upload quizzes, assignments, and assessments during class discussions. Social networking sites facilitate improved communication between parents and teachers. According to Hendrix and Zafron (2009), the main objective of Facebook's use in libraries is to promote the organisation and notify patrons about events relevant to marketing objectives. To stay active on social media, libraries post images and provide chat reference services.

**3. Problem of the Statement**

Libraries have jumped on board with the growing use of social media tools by users around the world to better manage their collections, making it possible to share important notices and updates with other members of the university community as well as to frame library users in a broader academic context. However, there is a need to study the extent to which Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) libraries offer library information resources and services to library users. By increasing user awareness, the Library's resources and services will see an increase in use. Marketing is critical in ensuring that the Library is utilised by the community. Resources in electronic formats necessitate more promotion and evaluation than is currently taking place. The library's sources and facilities will be used more frequently due to ongoing marketing and promotion efforts. Furthermore, sound marketing strategies play a significant role in the success or failure of e-resource services. It is imperative that librarians take a more proactive approach to market their knowledge products, information, and services in order to better meet and serve the users' needs. Hence, this study attempts to adjudge and understand various factors that impact library users' awareness of Social Media Marketing and ascertain major social media marketing strategies used by librarians to make users more aware

As technology advances, libraries face new opportunities and challenges in developing, promoting, distributing, and storing knowledge. As a result, many institutional libraries are changing to keep up with technological advancements. In addition to providing a new platform for individuals to communicate, social networking sites offer businesses new ways to collaborate and communicate with their user base. Users can share information and engage with a global audience. Libraries face additional challenges in preserving their reputation among the community members who work in virtual environments due to the increasing popularity of social media among Internet users.

Libraries use modern trends to promote their collection and information products and services for their remote customers in nations with sophisticated education and library systems.

#### 4. Objectives of the Study

The following objectives are the focus of this study:

1. To identify the major social media platforms used by the IIT Libraries to market library information sources and services.
2. To evaluate the acquaintance of the users with the social media platforms used by the IIT Libraries.
3. To Examine the purpose and ease of use of social media platforms used by the IIT Libraries.

#### 5. Research Methodology

A survey research method was employed in the study. A thorough literature analysis was conducted utilising several search engines, websites, and blogs. Data was gathered using a questionnaire that was prepared based on the literature. Their feedback was sent to the peer reviewers to get their feedback. After receiving feedback from both reviewers, it was further altered. The sample of one hundred twenty-three respondents was used for a pilot test to eliminate any ambiguity on the part of the respondents. A librarian and students from IIT Ropar in Punjab and IIT Mandi, India, participated in the study as respondents.

#### 6. Results and Discussions

##### 6.1 Distribution of respondents in the IITs

In this study, sixty-five respondents (52.64%) who participated in the survey were from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Ropar, India, and 58 (47.16%) respondents from IIT Mandi. Hence, 123 respondents from two Universities participated in the study.

**Table 2. Distribution of respondents in the IITs**

Name of the Institution	Total no. of Respondents	% of Respondents
IIT Ropar	65	52.64%
IIT Mandi	58	47.16%
<b>Total</b>	123	100 %

Table 2. presents data on the total number of respondents from two institutions, IIT Ropar and IIT Mandi, along with their respective percentages of the total sample. The data is fairly balanced, with IIT Ropar contributing slightly more respondents than IIT Mandi, but the difference is minimal. This balance in respondents allows for a more comprehensive analysis of the use of social media in promoting library and information services across the two institutions, ensuring that perspectives from both locations are well-represented.

### 6.2 Distribution of the respondents on the basis of education

Table 3 provides data on the distribution of respondents based on their program/course (Undergraduate, Postgraduate, and Research Scholar) and the percentage each group represents of the total respondents.

**Table 3. Distribution of the respondents on the basis of education**

Program/Course	Total No of Respondents	Respondents
UG	82	66.66%
PG	24	19.51%
Research Scholar	17	13.83 %
Total	123	100%

Though undergraduates dominate the sample with 66%, there is still a significant presence of postgraduate and research scholars, ensuring that different academic levels are represented. This is crucial for comprehensively analyzing social media's role in promoting library services. This distribution indicates that most users engaging with library services may be undergraduate students, but including postgraduate and research scholars ensures that the analysis captures a broad spectrum of perspectives.

### 6.3 Distribution of respondents on the basis of gender.

Table. 4 presents the gender distribution of the 123 respondents, showing the number and percentage of male and female respondents in the study. The total number of respondents is 123, split between males and females. Male respondents comprise the majority of the sample, representing over three-quarters (78.05%) of the total respondents.

**Table 4. Distribution of respondents on the basis of gender**

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Male	96	78.05 %
Female	27	21.95%
Total	123	100%

Female respondents constitute only 21.95% of the sample, making them the minority group. However, their responses are still critical for understanding gender-based variations in the use or perception of social media for library promotion.

### 6.4 Time Spent on Social Media Platforms on daily basis

Table 5 provides data on how much time respondents spend on social media daily and the percentage of total respondents in each time category. The total number of respondents is 123, and the table categorizes them based on the hours spent on social media daily.

**Table 5. Time Spent on Social Media Platforms on daily basis**

Time Spent	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1 -3 Hours	19	15.44%
4 -6 Hours	72	58.53%
7 -9 Hours	26	21.16%
10 or More Hours	06	04.87%
Total	123	100%

Most respondents (58.53%) spend 4-6 hours on social media daily. It demonstrates their profound engagement with these social media networks. This illustrates how important social media is to their daily life, be it for business, pleasure, communication or content creation. This highlights the importance of targeting promotions on platforms where users spend significant time. For academic libraries, understanding this time distribution can help tailor the frequency and type of social media content to maximise engagement with different user groups.

### 6.5 Awareness of Social Media Platforms used by IIT Library

Knowledge and comprehension regarding the presence, features, and functionalities of different social media platforms are called awareness of social media platforms (SMPs). Table 6 presents data on the usage of various social media platforms among 123 respondents, showing the number and percentage of respondents using each platform. Facebook is the most widely used platform, with 95.93% of respondents using it.

**Table 6. Awareness of Social Media Platforms used by IIT Library**

Social Media Platform	Number of Respondents, N=123	Percentage of Respondents
Facebook	118	95.93%
X(Twitter)	107	86.99%
Instagram	102	82.92%
Youtube	98	79.67%
LinkedIn	88	71.54%

(Multiple Choice option)

This dominance suggests that Facebook is a crucial platform for engaging with library users. Its widespread use makes it a valuable tool for promoting library and information services, as most respondents are active on this platform. IIT Ropar has its official Facebook page, Twitter account, and Instagram page, whereas IIT Mandi has its presence on these social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn. The data indicates that academic libraries should prioritise platforms like Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, and YouTube to promote library services, given the high usage rates among respondents. Additionally, professional platforms like LinkedIn offer valuable opportunities for reaching academic and experienced users. Messaging apps like WhatsApp can be used for direct and instant communication, though their reach is more limited than other platforms. By targeting the most popular platforms, libraries can effectively engage their user base and enhance the visibility of their services.

### 6.6 Most preferred device used to access social media platforms

Table 7 presents data on the devices respondents use to access social media, showing the number and percentage of respondents using each type of device. Smartphones are the most commonly used device, with 97.56% of respondents using them to access social media.

**Table 7. Most preferred device used to access social media platforms**

Device	Number of Respondents, N=123	% of Respondents
Desktop	35	28.45%
Laptop	105	85.36%
Smart Phone	120	97.56%
iPad	45	36.58 %

(Multiple Choice option)

This overwhelming usage indicates that mobile-friendly content and social media platforms are essential for reaching most users. Libraries should ensure that their social media promotions and digital resources are optimized for mobile devices, as nearly all respondents prefer smartphones. The data highlights the critical role of mobile devices (especially smartphones) and laptops in accessing social media. For academic libraries, this suggests prioritizing mobile-first strategies in their social media marketing and service delivery to ensure that content is easily accessible and user-friendly on smartphones. At the same time, maintaining compatibility with laptops and tablets is essential for those who use them for more extensive browsing and academic activities. Desktops, while less common, still serve a role and should be supported where appropriate, especially in educational settings.

### 6.7 Preferred location use to access social media platforms

Table 8 presents the hostel data as the most common location where respondents access social media, with 92.68% of respondents using it. This high percentage suggests that hostel students are highly active on social media. Libraries aiming to promote their services and engage with students should consider creating content specifically tailored for students in hostels, such as study resources, events, and academic assistance, which are easily accessible in a hostel.

**Table 8. Preferred location use to access social media platforms**

Device	No of Respondents N=123	% of Respondents
Hostel	114	92.68 %
Library	75	60.97%
Home	108	87.80%
Department	98	79.67%
Cafe	45	36.58 %

(Multiple Choice option)

Social Media access is prevalent across multiple locations, with hostels, homes, and departments being the most popular. For academic libraries, this indicates the need for versatile social media strategies that target users in personal (home, hostel) and educational (department, library) environments. Libraries should focus on providing relevant, timely content that meets users' needs based on where they access social media.

### 6.8 Academic support provided by IIT Library on social media platforms.

The data presented in Table 9 highlights the various forms of academic support provided by the IIT Library through social media platforms (SMPs) based on responses from 123 respondents. The data reflects that IIT Library's use of SMPs is highly effective in supporting academic activities, from promoting events to facilitating communication and research.

**Table 9. Academic support provided by IIT Library on social media platforms.**

Academic support provided by IIT Library	No. of Respondents n=123	% of Respondents
a. information about events/activities/competitions/ workshops, etc., available via SMPs	108	87.80%
b. Finding out about resources, including reviews and recommendations	85	69.10%
c. Awareness of new resources	78	63.41%
d. Connecting other users and sharing information	68	55.28%
e. Connect the Library resources/services	72	58.53%
f. Immediate access to information	75	60.97%
g. Facilitate Research and peer e-learning	62	50.40%
h. Improved Communication - ask a Librarian service	88	71.54%
i. Encourage research and communication activities	68	55.28%

(Multiple Choice option)

The high percentages of satisfaction in categories such as promoting events, resource discovery, and communication suggest that SMPs are a valuable tool in the academic environment, helping users stay informed, access resources quickly, and engage with peers and librarians for support. However, there is potential to enhance peer e-learning and resource connection further, as indicated by slightly lower percentages in these areas.

### 6.9 General Purpose of using social media platforms

The data presented in Table 9 highlights that the majority (92.59%) either agree or strongly agree that social media is a crucial source of communicate with friends and family, highlighting the crucial role SMPs play in interpersonal communication.

**Table 10. General Purpose of Using Social Media Platforms**

General Purpose	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
a. To get Current News/Information	4	5	8	70	20
b. Communicating with friends/family	1	2	5	65	36
c. For entertainment/recreation	3	3	12	67	15
d. Participation in polls and discussions	6	8	9	78	19
e. Join professional groups and communities	4	18	13	46	12
f. Searching products and Services	8	6	15	77	10

g. Posting News/ Information/ Photographs/ Events	4	8	12	63	32
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SD-Strongly Disagree (1), D-Disagree (2), N-Neutral (3), A-Agree (4), SA-Strongly Agree (5)

Overall, the statistics shows how social media platforms are an essential part of users' everyday lives, being used for everything from communication and entertainment to content sharing and information gathering. The most common use is still for personal communication, but there is also a lot of usage for other purposes, like product research, discussion boards, and professional networking. The wide range of ways that people use social media to fulfill their needs is reflected in the differing degrees of agreement across various purposes.

## 7. Findings and Discussion

1. In the above conducted study it was founded that 66% respondents were UG, 19% were PG and 14% were Research Scholars.
2. In the above conducted study it was founded that 78% respondents were male and 22% were female.
3. 58% of the users Spent 4-6 hours on social media on daily basis.
4. 97% of the users use smartphone as access to access social media platforms.
5. 92% of the users preferred location is hostel to access social media platforms on daily basis.
6. 87% respondents were use Social media sites for Academic support provided by Library regarding information about events/activities/competitions/ workshops, etc., available via SMPs
7. 92% respondents used Social media platform to to stay in touch with friends and family.

The findings demonstrated the importance of social media in marketing library services and resources. It offers more than just standard techniques of marketing library services. Users can create, interact, communicate, vote, and share content. Libraries can use social media to disseminate information about events taking place at other libraries. Libraries can announce newly acquired content and service notifications by using social media. Libraries can utilise various social media applications to engage their users as much as possible in creating their products and services and to get input from their patrons. Social media platforms help promote library services to younger patrons and for building user-centred libraries. Social media allows libraries to reach more users by meeting their information demands and fostering a deeper user-library relationship. Many social media tools can be helpful to promote library services within an online community. Libraries can facilitate the various activities they have coming up. Facebook is valid for libraries to announce book editions and new arrivals. Libraries can advertise reference and research services via Twitter. Professional networking platforms, such as LinkedIn, can be used by libraries to network with other professionals in the world's libraries, promote their services, and get advice and insights from them about their experiences in the field. Libraries can also use YouTube to promote their various programs, conferences, and workshops by posting videos.

## 8. Conclusion

IIT students' use of social media was the study's main topic. These Social Media Platforms are unique since they allow users to post information about everything from highly personal to intellectual interests. To measure awareness and understanding of social media's potential to transform the learning environment, the current study looks at how social media platforms affect learning environments. As far as sharing experiences and opinions and taking part in raising awareness, it has been noted that most IIT students are connected through social media sites like Facebook. This platform has become among the biggest worldwide for sharing information in real-time. Libraries can advertise its users, services, resources, events, and communication by utilizing social media. The

study comes to the conclusion that libraries must adapt to the changing requirements of its Users.

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