

# Information Repackaging For Information Users

Chukwudebelu Izuchukwu V  
Assemblies Of God Apapa District  
Lagos State Nigeria

---

## **Abstract**

Seeing the growing and increasing speed and the need of information, this paper therefore examines repackaging of information in libraries, Media, Internet among others for the attention and acceptance of information users in this age. The study will further acquaint information professionals with the need to be dynamic and explore new ways of providing service to information users. The purpose of this study is to unfold the importance of information repackaging as it relates to information users, establish and equally buttress the essence of repackaging information to information users. It highlights the methodology for information repackaging that shall benefit information users, reviews and compares Bunch's and Agada's information repackaging service model as it concerns information users. The study shows the functionality of information repackaging advantages to information users, suggestions on why information should be repackaged for information users and draws attention to the workable steps for repackaging information that could be embraced by information users. Finally, it looks at repackaging information products to address specific needs of information users, getting down the repackaging business and discusses the requirements for repackaging information that shall be of interest to information users.

**Keywords:** Information Repackaging, Information Users, Media Services

---

Date of Submission: 19-06-2024

Date of Acceptance: 29-06-2024

---

## **I. Introduction**

Library and Media services including the repackaging of information have been provided in Nigeria for many decades. Technological advancement has posed challenges which call for changes in library, media, internet and other services. Information is a driving force in contemporary society. Libraries exist to serve as many people as possible, disseminating information, preserving culture, and contributing to intellectual and social life. Library media and other services tend to focus on means rather than ends (Buckland, 1992). This may cause confusion and reduce satisfaction for users. With several alternative sources of information, many library users have turned their backs on the library. For information professionals, the focus must shift from the information provider to the information consumer (clientele). Consumers' needs must guide organizational strategy (Kunneke, 2001). Libraries in higher education in Nigeria must complete migration from traditional library services to electronic formats and remote access. Electronic library materials differ significantly from traditional media. In particular, unlike paper and microform, it is possible to make electronic media available so that they

- Can be used from a distance,
- Can be used by more than one person at a time, and
- Can be used in more different ways.

Repackaging is not a new idea, but changes in information technology have enhanced the process, creating the potential for better serve.

## **Explanation of Concepts**

### **Information Repackaging**

Information Repackaging in simple words, is to package information again or transfer from one form to another in a more attractive package.

Repackaging services are the result of attempts to cope with the information explosion and the competition for fast, reliable, convenient and efficient information support for corporate decision making. Bunch (1984), in his book,

Gift-Wrapped Anew: 'Repackaging Information does the Trick' describes information repackaging (IR) as a form of information service which emphasizes on the following steps:

#### From Raw Materials to End Product

- Selecting the appropriate materials.
- Re-processing the information in a form that can be readily understood by the user.
- Packaging information.
- Arranging all these materials in a way that is appropriate to the user.

#### **Information User**

Information user is a person who uses intellectual product, or information property communicated or received concerning a particular fact or circumstance. In the words of Rogers (2010), Users are rethinking about what's valuable. There are rising expectations for online experiences. Providing information is not enough anymore, you need to provide a well-rounded experience (tagging, commenting, and interaction in general). There is also a morphing definition of authority – there is a dislike for peer-reviewed content. Users expect to be able to get academic and professional data on their mobile devices more than ever before. This all adds up to users have very different value filters than they used to have. Users now value things like usability, fun and sophistication. I can (and you know you can to) think of plenty of these research products that I'd rather stay very far away from simply because of the usability and/or interface design. Another key value we are used to hearing about is the desire to aggregate content – mix free and fee content together because users do not want to be searchers – they want all their content in one place. That said, users still value quality control and authoritative/trusted sources – however users do not want to hear that someone or some product is a trusted source – they want to figure that out for themselves. They do not want to see any editorial control being applied – that makes them think about what might have been edited out – what might be out there that they are not seeing.

Along the same lines as having fun and sophisticated sites, users are expecting research sites to work the same way that other consumer products work. A great quote Roger shared was 'Facebook can do it... why can't you?' Another site he said users wanted us to emulate was Amazon. They do not know why if it is on the open web why can't it be in the products our libraries are paying for? Roger next showed us some data to back up these comments. One of the most interesting charts he showed was the one that focused on what handheld devices people are using – iPod is the top product on the list and there are more Blackberry users out there than i-Phone users – at first that seemed surprising to me, but then I thought about it and Blackberry has been around longer and seems to be the standard in businesses.

When asking users where they want content, 51% says Facebook and 28% LinkedIn — only 7% says Twitter. Then when asked which they use for personal versus professional uses, LinkedIn and Ning are at the top of the list for professional use, which is interesting to me because I use Twitter and Facebook more for those uses – in that they are where I get much of my information from colleagues. When asked about the value of free versus purchased content and 39% said that free content is higher quality than purchased – and this was not limited to the millenials, in fact the millenials put the value of purchased content as higher.

#### **Objectives**

The objectives of this paper are:

1. To unfold the importance of information repackaging as it relates to information users.
2. To establish and equally buttress the essence of repackaging information to information users.
3. To highlight the methodology for information repackaging that shall benefit information users.
4. To review and compare Bunch's and Agada's information repackaging service model as it concerns information users.
5. To look at repackaging information products to address specific needs of information users
6. To show the functionality of information repackaging advantages to information users.
7. To draw attention to the workable steps for repackaging information that could be embraced by information users.
8. To discuss the requirements for repackaging information that shall be of interest to information users.
9. To suggest why information should be repackaged for information users.

#### **Overview of Information Repackaging for Information users**

Information repackaging is a library and information service which customises information to meet specific needs of users. The purpose of an information repackaging service is to locate, retrieve, evaluate, interpret and repackage information on a particular subject to save the user time. Information repackaging is a way of improving library services, particularly in this era of electronic information. Librarians must give critical thought to this phenomenon with the intent of implementing it in routine library services to users. The effort is considerable, but the long-term benefits outweigh the disadvantage of not providing it. In the information age, information overload can occur. Information repackaging can save time, labour, and costs to the user. It is a

systematic process of adding value to information services (Greer, Agada and Grover, 1994). This is in line with the shift from documents to their contents and from collections to their users.

Repackaging can take many forms. Popular theatre is a familiar form that is connected with popular culture and indigenous knowledge systems. Drama, storytelling and the use of songs are examples suggested by Rosenberg (1987). The present technology of integrated text, graphics and media facilitates this kind of repackaging. Rosenberg discusses this kind of repackaging in providing information to illiterate or semi-literate people in the southern Sudan. She states that librarians have long been involved in repackaging information for their clients and that the measurement of a library's effectiveness is the extent to which its collection has been put to use. Boadi (1987), notes abstracting and indexing, SDI, translation services, bibliographies, special bulletins, and other current awareness services, are all attempts to provide information in a usable format. Stilwell (2001), notes that the meaning of repackaging information or information repackaging (IR) is unclear. Packaging of information is a physical recording, arrangement and presentation of information on a given medium and in a given form. Repackaging of information is rearrangement of physical media in which information has been presented, which is tailored to the requirements of a specific clientele. In other words, repackaging of information refers to the presentation of information in more understandable, readable, acceptable and usable forms. The aim of repackaging is to enhance the acceptance and use of information products and the assimilation and recall of their contents.

Saracevic and Woods (1981), and Bunch (1984), were the first to use the term in their publications in describing how an information service selects appropriate materials, reprocessing and packaging the information, and arranging materials in a way that is appropriate to the user. Based on this knowledge, packaging can add value or services that are not readily available elsewhere. Person-to-person communication is one important form of repackaging. Sturges and Neill (1998), argue that people prefer personal contact as means of acquiring practical information. Aboyade (1984), advocates oral transfer of information supported by a variety of media. Namponya (1986), and Aina (1991), suggest that illiteracy hampers the delivery of information to some users, and so information providers should be willing to interpret, repackage, and apply information to the user's situation and help communities act on the information they have received. This means that library service could effectively shift from the exploitation of print towards the repackaging of information for transmission in oral and other forms. Information technology aids this process. Monageng (1987), notes that information must be interpreted and converted into a form that the user can understand and assimilate. A number of information repackaging efforts have focused on rural development. Otsyina and Rosenberg (1997), emphasize the role played by the traditions, values, and aspirations of rural people.

The process of repackaging depends on the availability of materials, from research institutes, government sources, online services and networks and indigenous knowledge. Gray literature is important in repackaging, although it may be unattractive and hard to access. (Sturges and Chimsen, 1996). Information repackaging can also be seen as part of a process of information consolidation. The process begins with the selection of information and the evaluation of content. Restructuring (condensation, rewriting, and so on.) repackaging can follow. Information consolidation is part of library marketing, in identifying user needs and identifying and closing gaps. Actually, information repackaging is not a new concept for library and information work, and it is parallel to abstracting and indexing work, selective dissemination of information, bulletins and current awareness services. They repackage the information to customize the information on user needs. Information needs a professional or students will vary with the degree of users because they need different information. The impact of information explosion is getting wider when Tim Berners-Lee introduced the World Wide Web in 1989, and completed by Internet browser, such as Mosaic introduced by Mark Andreesen 1992. In Libraries and Information Science, the explosion of information refers to mounting number of publications. The explosion is the increase in the number of a sudden. Derek (1983), in some of his works describes the development of scientific publication is a classic work of literature growth and the 'information explosion'.

The above technological advances have been foreseen by Marshall McLuhan who estimated the sociological impact of repackaging information technology by using the term 'global village' to describe the sociological impact of electronic technology that connect us. He estimated that the event in one place is experienced in other parts of the world almost simultaneously. The news about what happened at the corner of the world will immediately repackage, via satellite or news on the Internet, and communicated to all over the globe. Internet and hypertext provide alternative ideas that differ from the printed media such as books, magazines or newspapers. For example, in traditional media, we are forced to think that we read one page to the next page, following the logic. If a printed manuscript was read linearly, and logically, it will be meaningless (it could only happen on the work of experimental or advantaged literary work). Printed media require privacy and reflective thinking, while the electronic media to provide flexibility to the reader to think jumping up and down, thanks to the benefits of the link.

In today's modern life, repackaging information becomes important activity, because millions of people every minute produce information supported by advances in computer technology and telecommunications, even

with repackaged information, a library clientele can understand the abundant information. Repackaging of information provides effective way of selecting useful information effectively. Generally special libraries in Indonesia provide repackaging information services such as posters, leaflets, booklets, annotated bibliography, current awareness services among others. The work is usually working team, in association subject specialist or the expert in the field. Information repackaging is a systematic approach to the design and provision of information services, particularly in the corporate environment. This paper analyzes the processes involved in repackaging using the Systematic Instructional Design (ISD) model. It contends that, until empirical data is available on information repackaging, the ISD model could be adapted as the Systematic Information Repackaging (SIR) model to give structure to its elements. The team approach to service design and provision is also advocated for SIR.

### **The importance of Information Repackaging as it relates to information users.**

- Information repackaging entails a systematic process of adding value to information services.
- These value added components would include but are not limited to information analysis, synthesis, editing, translating and transmitting its symbolic and media formats.
- It ensures currency, accuracy, pertinence, comprehensiveness, ease of comprehension and convenience of use.

### **The essence of repackaging Information to information users**

- a. To customize information to user needs.
- b. To facilitate dissemination, organization, and for communication.
- c. To simplify -i.e. an annotated bibliography is like a map in the world of information overload.
- d. To facilitate interactivity between user, knowledge base, and technology.

## **II. Methodology For Information Repackaging That Shall Benefit Information Users**

1. **Preparation of the first brief:**-The first brief contains selected information prepared by information professionals. The repackaged product should give adequate description on the required information and communicate to the target audience.
2. **Analysis of the brief:** The first brief is analyzed with reference to the target audience, the information content, the budget of the message carrier as well as the life cycle of the carrier.
3. **Design criteria for the message carrier:** The message carrier should be such that it attracts the reader.
4. **Selection of the message carrier:** The message carrier should be designed with several shapes and sizes.
5. **Production of the message carrier:** The message carrier should be well designed before producing.
6. **Feedback system planning:** It is important to design a feedback system to judge the success of the repackaged information. Information Repackaging involves selecting, analyzing and processing information with a view of communicating a message in a convenient and effective form to a target audience defined for the purpose. It is very essential to have a true knowledge of the target audience, the message and the message carrier.

There is a need to delineate the essential features of IR to guide practitioners.

Most libraries however are unequipped to render the full range of service implied in IR. The services provided by IR challenges librarians to re-invent their institutions and services to remain competitive in the emerging information area. Come to think of it, the concept of IR is not entirely new, as this type of information service is being rendered universally by information professionals even before the Internet boom. The process involved to make this service work adheres to the same objective of helping library users identify sources of information in response to a particular question, interest, assignment or problem. (Cassell and Hiremath, 2006). The needs-based approach remains the same. Hence, the term IR service. However, what makes IR service a novelty is the transformation that happens to it once it gets with the present day technology. In light of the recent developments in the Web, information services must adapt, evolve and go with the ebb and flow of things. With information and communication technologies now acting as means to get to everywhere, customizing knowledge to cater to the specific needs of the target users has now become an advocacy of every information professional. Further employing Web 2.0 applications – the second generation/shareable content Internet – opened the floodgates in making information dissemination borderless, therefore reaching out to more and more users. Repackaging information adds value to classic information service, as we know it (Agada, 1995).

### **Getting Down the Repackaging Business**

Building finding tools is a classic reference strategy that has been tried, tested and established in terms of usability and effectiveness for the longest time. The presence of a pathfinder as an index finger for all users of information is still very much applicable these days, only made even better as it transitions toward electronic/digitized media. Today, the pathfinder has evolved to become what the field now calls a Webliography – a web -based finding tool of carefully evaluated links organized by topics, made available to all users 24/7,

anytime, anywhere. (Cassell & Hiremath, 2006). Subject resource guide is a type of webliography. Users of this specialized information product at the International Labour Organization have proven its value to their work and functions in the Office. Consequently, the ILO Library has been proactive in their role in information dissemination by coming up with resources that their users can access anytime they need it. The idea is to always deliver the information needs, first to the ILO officials and members, and then extends to its worldwide clientele. This long-term goal challenges the information professional to develop information resources that will be essentially helpful to his users.

The ILO Library started producing online subject resource guides in 2006, and continues to provide this information service through. The need for an online resource guide on labour inspection, one of the major areas of concentration of the ILO, was identified this time around.

To begin with, a webliography is a knowledge retrieval tool, i.e. a finding aid. Already processed relevant information about the chosen topic (in this case, labour inspection) found on in-house and subscription based databases and other secondary web sources are culled out, 'reprocessed' or examined for accuracy and currency, packaged or tailored to fit accordingly into the organizational system, and then ultimately, the final product comes out in a format that suits best the users of information. Gulati and Raina (2000), laid some pointers that an information professional must take into account when consolidating sources of information, in varying formats, from the global information environment.

When developing an information product, the consolidator should:

- a) Understand the organization of materials in libraries and use locally produced location guides.
- b) Understand how to use classification systems and rationale for their existence.
- c) Use location information in the bibliographic record to retrieve locally-owned resources.
- d) Use local resources to locate information sources in the global information environment.
- e) Understand that libraries have developed methods for locating and sharing resources not owned locally and use the appropriate resource sharing system, such as interlibrary loan or document delivery, to retrieve information.
- f) Understand that the Internet may be a useful resource for locating, retrieving and transferring information electronically.

#### **Comparing Bunch's and Agada's Information Repackaging Service Model as it concerns information users**

Bunch (1984)

- a. Selecting the appropriate materials.
- b. Re-processing the information.
- c. Packaging information.
- d. Arranging all these materials in a way that is appropriate to the user.

Agada (1995)

- a. Information analysis.
- b. Synthesis.
- c. Editing.
- d. Translating and transforming information in the format that best accommodates the manager.

Saracevic and Woods (1981), and Bunch (1984), use the term information repackaging to refer to the way an information service selects appropriate materials, reprocesses and packages the material according to user specifications. Repackaging can be done through various forms for example, popular theatre, drama, storytelling and the use of songs. Modern technology makes it much easier to repackage information through integration of text and graphics and texts. Information technology assists in repackaging information into oral form, for example, the use of podcasts in rural areas to record oral history and songs. The use of tape recorders also assists in capturing a fading memory with regards to traditional knowledge in agriculture. Repackaging of information help in locating, retrieval, evaluation, interpretation and repackaging of information on a particular subject area.

Modern technology is important in repackaging information because Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's) are free from the fetters of time and space. Libraries need to utilize modern technology to promote access to indigenous knowledge with regards to promoting a culture of knowledge sharing amongst farmers. Tsiko (2004), suggests an alternative to the repackaging of indigenous knowledge through documentation. The author states that this is critical at a time when traditional knowledge is being marginalized by high culture resulting in assimilation and cultural genocide. With due consideration to intellectual property rights, it is imperative to document this knowledge that has practical uses in agriculture, forestry, health and sustainable development. Libraries need to be proactive and promote community publishing, so that communities are able to document their experiences and market as well as share with others. Programmes to repackage

traditional knowledge will also help to integrate Western and indigenous knowledge to generate knowledge to tackle the environmental challenges with regards to land management. Community libraries working with communities and other stakeholders can encourage research, recording and documentation and use of hereditary knowledge system to showcase how these can be used in managing natural and cultural elements, for example, Public libraries use of storytelling sessions helps to unlock the great potential encapsulated in indigenous knowledge systems. Information repackaging refers to putting together information gathered from different sources and condensing it. Information Repackaging (IR) is a library and information service which customizes information to meet the specific needs of users.

### **Repackaging to address specific needs**

In the words of Iwhiwhu (2008), packaging is the bundling of products and services to address specific needs. It can be done by:

Reformatting and synthesizing raw information.

Combining expertise or consulting on a subject with access to relevant information sources.

Providing training or assistance to a user in accessing an information product.

Information repackaging can be done in many ways including reformatting and synthesizing raw information, combining expertise or consulting on subject with access to relevant information sources and providing training or assistance to users in increasing an information product. However, illiteracy usually hampers the delivery of information to users in the rural areas. Therefore, information providers should always adequately interpret, repackage and apply information to the user's situation and help communities to act on the information they receive.

### **Functionality of Information Repackaging Advantages to Information Users**

The repackaging of information serves the following functions:

#### **As a saving tool**

Information users have minute use information over and above their requirements. The repackaging of information helps reduce the time farmers may otherwise have to spend on lengthy perusal and interpretation of large volumes of agro-diversity information.

#### **As a selective tool and a systematic sorter of useful information.**

Users are ensured wider access to useful information originally contained only in limited copies of publications available in libraries and documentation centres.

#### **As a translation tool**

Good materials prepared in various languages and local dialects are increasing in number. These have to be translated into a more commonly used language to ensure wide use.

#### **As an opportunity for practical application of research results**

Information users are provided a chance to correlate with the wealth of information emanating from research studies, experiments and action projects through overt policy and practical implications and recommendations.

#### **As a means for prompt delivery of relevant information**

Farmers are kept updated on the latest available agro-diversity information, a facility that is particularly made significant by the current rapid generation of new information which may sometimes invalidate information preceding it.

### **Workable steps for Repackaging Information that could be embraced by information users**

- Study of potential users, user needs and closing information gaps.
- Selection of primary information sources and the evaluation of the information content.
- Content analysis: this enables restructuring (condensing, rewriting, translating, and so on.) and packaging or repackaging of information.
- Dissemination of the packages in the various formats accompanied by feedback from users evaluation and adjustment of the material.

### **Requirements for repackaging information that shall be of interest to information users**

- The materials should be collected and organized efficiently.
- There should be the capacity to analyze their content and create new information packages from them.

□ The new products should be disseminated freely.

The writers call for the identification of good models for repackaging, which requires critical thinking for combining information from different sources, considering the accuracy, completeness, and consistency of the information. Packages must have a clear presentation, and have been tested by a range of users. Newton (1998), considers the presentation of information particularly important. The library as a service organization and a service-marketing model is appropriate. Irons (1996), describes a service-marketing triangle that represents the marketing of services.

The government funds tertiary institution's libraries in Nigeria, while research institute libraries are funded by their parent organization. Libraries have to justify their existence and make a case for why their functions should not be outsourced. This has led to budget cuts, which have effect on services to users of the library. Worse still, libraries are made to recover some or all of their costs, and administrators pay little or no attention to the library. The growth of free library services reveals that users place relatively low value on the receipt of information in Nigeria, hence users resist any fee or charge placed on library and information services. Most librarians are not equipped to provide the full range of information repackaging services. Considering the nonchalant attitude that users exhibit towards the library and alternative information sources that are available, how can libraries survive? Can strategies be developed that use modern information technology?

### **III. Suggestions On Why Information Should Be Repackaged For Information Users.**

#### **Language barrier**

Information contained in scientific and technical journals/research reports and books is in languages which make them inappropriate for use by most people. (WHO 2008). Even when the language is appropriate there are other language barriers and format considerations.

#### **Illiteracy**

Almost 50% of information users in Nigeria are illiterate. Information repackaging promotes literacy by providing information to users in the rural areas.

#### **Attitude**

As the saying goes, 'Seeing is believing' Many people would rather see for themselves than hear how best to manage their information, this is where the use of posters can be effective because situations can be illustrated and appreciated well.

#### **Lack of Funds**

Funds dictate the medium of dissemination of information. As for example if the population is big then instead of printed material, one could use the radio to communicate.

Information repackaging is a way of overcoming these obstacles. It is important in assisting the facilitation and appropriate dissemination of gathered

information. Presentation of information is crucial for it being disseminated properly. It must be understandable, readable, acceptable and usable.

### **IV. Conclusion**

Librarians and information professionals should take the leading role in repackaging information for users. Information scientists are expected to repackage information materials which have been tailored to meet the information needs of users in a language and format they would understand. Information to be repackaged could be sourced from published materials, raw data collected by research institutions, government statistical service, online information and even from peoples own corpus of indigenous knowledge. Literally, Information repackaging is to package the information again, or change from one form to another. This concept refers to transcript speech, song, chant, prayer, or mantra. It could also mean to transfer an object into graphs, drawings, poetry, or change media to other media such as paper, digital, magnetic tape, microfiche, DVD. Repackaging information could be to translate one language into another, such as translation, interpretation, and could also be the changes in functions such as revision, summary, analysis, treatises, and even annotation.