

BEST PRACTICES 2021-22

1. Title of the Practice: **Development and implementation of ALIVE, our own virtual classroom platform built and integrated with Institute ERP for effective curriculum delivery, assessment and monitoring**

2. **Objectives of the Practice:** The world witnessed the requirement for delivering the curriculum content in a virtual mode, owing to the pandemic situation.

We at Acharya Institute of Technology designed and developed our own virtual classroom platform (ALIVE) for effective online delivery of curriculum content.

The best feature of Alive is that the platform can be customized to suit needs. Alive – Virtual online classroom platform is

- USER FRIENDLY: Use seamlessly across all platforms including Desktop, Laptop and other Mobile Devices.
- BUILT FOR ACADEMIA: Tested positive for awesomeness with over 15,000 students and over 2000 staffs.
- FLEXIBILITY: Customize the software to the needs of each individual in your organization.

Further, the functionalities of ALIVE were enhanced by integrating the same with the Institute ERP to monitor/review the curriculum delivery by higher authorities and the attendance of the students.

We also conducted web proctored internal assessment (CIE) for effective assessment of students' performance, through ALIVE integrated with ERP.

3. **The Context:** Today there are several Software and virtual platforms that are used to deliver online classes. The truth is most of these Software are neither school nor colleges/university friendly and flexible to meet the needs of universities/colleges. Alive is a Learning Management System (LMS) that can transform the future of learning in academic institutions. If you are looking to shift from or add to your traditional training methods to providing e-learning courses through a reliable Learning Management System (LMS), Alive could be the platform for you.

4. **The Practice:** The Alive LMS has been reviewed by several faculty members as being more advanced and user friendly compared to the other online webinar platforms and e-learning services. This virtual classroom tool can also be used to conduct live webinars and in the current scenario used for social learning and meetings, Making Alive the best solution to the modern-day education problems.

One of the key features of Alive is the ability to audit live classes. Auditing takes place across various levels. Alive can be used to give special privileges as required by the institution.

The platform is designed to

- Work on all operating systems seamlessly unlike most of the conventional webinar platforms.
- Alive can be integrated with any existing ERP and attendance is taken in real-time making the learning experience more user friendly.
- Designed for interactive sessions rather than one-way delivery
- From teaching to assignments & assessments on one platform

- Clearly defined roles give appropriate access and control of the platform from students to the Chancellor / Principal.
- Acharya Institute of Technology framed a standard operating procedure (SOP) clearly explaining the procedures to be followed for delivery and monitoring of curriculum content, monitoring of students' attendance and conduction of web proctored CIE for online sessions.
- A provision is provided for the students to register their feedback after every session.

5. **Evidence of Success:** The Acharya Alive virtual classroom platform has enabled an easy transition during the time of CoViD as it has helped not just in setting up an online infrastructure for classes but also to effectively track the progress made by each individual. With Alive's LMS features you will also be able to share learning materials, conduct training programs, create courses and deliver, engage in social learning and do much more. The system has also passed a test run in one of India's largest universities with 15,000 students. Since mid of 2020 we have conducted online courses, live streaming classes and live events on Alive platform successfully.
6. **Problems Encountered and Resources Required:** To come up with relevant modules that would work seamlessly across all platforms for a campus of 15,000 was the first challenge. A team of experts were given the problem and were assigned to develop a method to make the entry/retrieval of data easy, with emphasis on conveying information relevant to each user. It also was important to ensure that access was given need based and hence division of privileges had to be made according to each department within the campus. The next problem was the potential risk of having a surge of users, this was dealt with upgrading to a more stable server. For students it was important to create an application as the number of mobile users are on the higher end.

1. Title: **Learning Resource Centre (LRC) For New Generation Users**

2. Objectives: To provide the required space to the users on their desks and mobile gadgets, the 'Study Space', in the libraries to access physical and digital resources, quality of services and staff, specific learning needs and other facilities in order to excel in teaching, learning and research.

3. The Context: It is observed that there is a considerable decline in circulation of print materials, reduced use of reference services, falling gate counts in libraries and the New generation users want libraries, a place meant for group interaction/learning, hold meetings, study in groups, use mobiles/laptops/other learning devices, hold discussions over a cup of tea/coffee and a silent place for self-study. Librarians are concerned now how physical libraries increasingly serve an important role as a 'social space', reflecting the changing nature of teaching/learning. Thus there is a need for a more "social" approach in academic libraries by expanding group study spaces and developing 'Information Commons' 'Makerspaces' 'Academic Commons' 'Knowledge Commons' 'Creative Commons' space for 'Ideators, Tinkerers and Makers' 'Collaborative Work Spaces' 'Learning Commons' etc.

4. The Practice: To meet the changing needs of the users and learning attitudes the Learning Resource Centre considered introducing following four important spaces. Social space for Interaction and Knowledge exchange. Quiet space for contemplation. Makerspace for Innovation. Neutral and trusted space for use and a peaceful place for insightful work. After deliberations a few following unique best practices/facilities of Social Spaces have been introduced. Makerspaces, Information Commons, Study Carrel, Creative Commons, Collaborative Workspace to turn the knowledge into action. Group interaction space for social, creativity, brain storming, problem solving, idea generation etc. Internet, Wi-Fi, Power plugs points provided in study carrels, reading/study zones. Support material required for project work, classroom assignments, demos, presentations etc. Multiple User Spaces to explore, learn, and use tools, materials both physical and virtual to develop scientific temper and creativity. Discussion Rooms converted into Ideators, Tinkerers, Makers etc. Users allowed to carry personal Laptops, Cell phones, iPads, Kindle e-readers, Tabs and other gadgets inside the library. Coffee/Tea/Snacks Bar, Relax/Comfort/Casual Reading areas with Newspaper and Magazine zone, separated from main reading/study area to facilitate more social interaction. Library Users can relax, rejuvenate and use their cell phones in this area. 'Ask-the-Librarian – eQuestion Point Service' a complete e-reference management system for increased use of library resources, borrowing, visits to the Library by the users and greater participation in development. Virtual Learning Resource Lab for independent, interactive and self-learning. Facilities for data analysis, software for RD, MOOCS, and Audio/Video lessons have been established. One hundred apple computers have been installed in Virtual Learning Resource Lab, a unique facility as a social space for group learning and independent/interactive learning. Reading Room tables and chairs are specially designed to break monotonousness of continuous sitting. Seating arrangements and Sound Masking in reading hall provide privacy for small group discussions/interactions and possible distractions.

5. Evidence of Success: The Best Practice has largely contributed in attracting more demanding complex users and offering them new experiences, empathy, learning, activity, contemplation, seriousness in reading/reference etc. The visitors count at the Gate has drastically increased and the Library has emerged as first stop contact point for information and one of the prime learning centres on campus. These new approaches and Best Practice adopted have resulted in receiving LibTech Award - 2019 for Best Technology Enabled Library and TCSiON EdTech Review - Best Use of Technology in Higher Education Award – 2019.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required: While planning the new facilities following aspects were considered to ensure increased efficiency and greater impact.

- Reasons for decreasing trend of less of library dependence/usage and identify issues by conducting a survey.
- Introducing multipurpose facilities without losing core focus of information and knowledge provider/delivery. Separate space for Internet Wi-Fi, power plug points and informal sitting facilities.
- Attractive interior design, amenities, improved ambiance etc. New designs and congenial atmosphere to new breed of users who are impatient, creative, expressive and social. Providing social spaces and information in the format that the users community needs.