

Linking the Globe: Cooperative Collection Development

Colleen E. Smith

c.e.smith@eagles.usm.edu

Dr. Theresa Welsh

LIS 557: Computer Applications in Libraries

University of Southern Mississippi

1 December 2013



Introduction

The ideal library admits readers and researchers to uncover and to take full benefit of information that is globally accessible and communally preserved; additionally, the picturesque library would have audited collections of digitized text that permits patrons to obtain and to borrow preserved resources through consortia funded entities and administered repository and archiving systems. Visions of the ideal library is achieved by “the combination of the decades of experiences of resource sharing and collection collaborations together with the foresight that enables the library community to predict the future based on this experience and on current trends in electronic information” (Kieft & Payne, 2012, p.138). Libraries, mainly academic libraries, progressively are turning their interest to the idea of cooperative collection development.

“Sharing responsibilities among two or more libraries for the process of acquiring materials, developing collections, and managing the growth and maintenance of collections in a way that benefits users and leverages investments” is called cooperative collection development (Johnson, 2009, p. 373). In today’s society of constricted funds and restricted space, libraries must store collections cooperatively. Participating cooperative libraries recognized the need to attain “a more systematic view” of resources so that collection management assessments and resource sharing interests are “accomplished within the broadest possible context” (Kieft & Payne, 2012, p. 145). Leveraging funds via cooperative purchasing and sharing storage facilities are effective strengthens in providing library patrons access to the world’s immense information resources in the modern age of technology. For cooperative collection development to be successful, it is necessary to have efficient resource sharing, easy bibliographic access to

collections elsewhere, and coordinated collection development and management (Johnson, 2009).

Three Components of Cooperative Collection Development

Resource Sharing

Resource sharing, "a system making request and providing delivery of information," was the initial method of library cooperation, mainly through interlibrary loan (ILL), the common lending and borrowing of resources between libraries (Johnson, 2009, p. 293). Interlibrary loan controls resources "that must be returned to the lender and photocopies or digital transmissions"; this is supported by members of a consortium to accelerate service, to charge members no ILL fees, or to authorize on-site use of collections by patrons (Johnson, 2009, p. 267). Essentially, interlibrary loan incorporates a protocol for creating requests and acceptable procedures of delivery.

Effective and speedy delivery is central to the success of resource sharing. Ross Atkinson (1993) explicates the value of time when accessing resources. Patrons want speedy access to library resources because the patron's time is a valuable commodity (Atkinson, 1993). In both transmissions and delivery, advancements in telecommunications have had a considerable influence on access of materials. For example, the OCLC ILLiad Resource Sharing Management software computerizes "routine ILL functions through a single Windows-based interface" and sustains a preset ILL subsystem "that transmits requests to OCLC members" and to others (Johnson, 2009, p.268). OCLC ILLiad is a tool that lets library staff manage all of the library's borrowing and lending along with documenting delivery; in addition, it allows patrons to serve themselves via the Web. Furthermore, OCLC ILLiad increases the server tools required

“to serve high-volume, resource-sharing libraries, smoothly integrates with WorldCAT Resource Sharing, plugging the library into the world’s largest collection of shared resources” (OCLC ILLiad, 2013, para. 2).

Another OCLA service is VDX, which is specifically proposed for usage by networks of libraries with numerous library systems (Johnson, 2009). VDX manages ILL activities and advances groups that need better “control of resource sharing with tight integration to contrasting local library systems” (OCLC VDX, 2013, para. 1). Joan Conger (2004) explains that VDX is an addition the basis of OCLC’s current services that include resource sharing, cataloging, reference, and digitization services. By means of systematizing the request and supply of journal articles and books, VDX increases the advantages of OCLC group catalogs. “It uses a single web interface for searching across multiple resources and monitoring requests. VDX can automatically locate potential lenders based on availability and service preferences” (OCLC VDX, 2013, para. 2).

Resource sharing is changing as a result of evolving technologies. Society can discover, ascertain, and recover many resources immediately online and circumvent the library. “Unmediated ILL, through which a user directly requests the lending of an item from one library to their home library, is a growing trend” (Johnson, 2009, p. 268). The progressively accessible of e-journal articles via “individual library subscriptions, consortia purchase agreements, and state and regional programs are reducing ILL requests” for items that are nonreturnable; at the same time, simple access to shared catalogs is escalating the request for items that are returnable (Johnson, 2009, p. 269). For cooperative collection to be fully effective, resource sharing cannot be the only factor; bibliographic access must also be evaluated.

Bibliographic Access

Another critical component to cooperative collection development is bibliographic access, which is “knowing what is available from other sites through online catalogs, printed and microform catalogs, or bibliographic utilities” (Johnson, 2009, P. 269). For many years, libraries depended on the tedious task of resourcing printed holdings information in the *National Union Catalog*, individual libraries printed book catalogs, and union serials holdings lists. The advent of bibliographic utilities, “multi-institutional, state, and regional online shared catalogs,” and internet access to online catalogs has been an impressive advancement in bibliographic access for library patrons and staff.

Some states have statewide catalogs that allow users to search holdings and enter unmediated ILL requests regardless of the holding library’s location. For example, MnLINK is “a virtual catalog linked to online catalogs from more than twenty Minnesota library systems representing some 480 libraries” (Johnson, 2009, p. 269). Another example is SUNLINK, a Florida shared statewide catalog for K—12 public school library media centers. The member participate in resource sharing within the guidelines of the local and district restriction, and the member participate in the SUNLINK database maintenance procedure to ensure that the union database accurately reflects their changing local collection.

Agreeing to keep catalog records current is essential to effective sharing. Since bibliographic access is so essential, the OCLC Users Council implemented a motion in 1999. It emphasizes the necessity for member libraries to participate to OCLC promptly all existing bibliographic information signifying cataloged materials in their collections and to produce bibliographic records at the completest point in order to “to promote shared use records and

library resources” (OCLC Members Council, 1999). With bibliographic access being essential to resource sharing and to the cooperative collection development in libraries, another aspect is needed – coordinated collection development and management.

Coordinated Collection Development and Management

References

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