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Library Consortia : A Tool of Information Resource Sharing

*Library and information profession (LIS) is a service oriented discipline. Library play a very important role in this fast changing e-environment of publishing. The goal of any library is to meet the resetafeh and other information needs of the user. In the new trends the online databases, e-journah facilitate formation of the consortia has prove to be one of the major solutions to the existing problem of budget crunches among the libraries and information centers. Author also discussed few important academic consortia in this paper. **Keywords** : Electronic Resources, Library Consortia. e publishing, Information Communication Technology.*

VINAY B. PATIL

Introuction :

We are living in an information society powered by the digital dynamics. The Changing social condition and environment have lot of implications on the service of a modern library. In the present Information Society or Knowledge Society information /knowledge is the essential socio-economic element and the libraries are vested with the responsibility of meeting the complex information needs of the members of the society. The library is a global virtual library and is also called as network of electronic lib^raries. Information communication Technology has improved the way information is generated, created, assembled, combined, stored, retrieved, manipulated, enhanced, harvested, used and communicated in every walk of life. ICT is now enabling a level of cooperation that is much broader and deeper than ever before. Technology provides the solution for a problem now to have same information resource easily accessible to users of each member of the consortium without incurring the expense of duplication. The consortia can play important role in acquiring licenses and sharing electronic resources by acting as a platform for promoting activities and programmers' and in the area of electronic resource sharing. Electronic resources have become one of the most important aspects of a digital library.

Shared subscription or consortia based subscription to electronic resources through consortia of libraries, on the one hand, permit successful deployment and desktop access to electronic resources at a highly discounted rates, on the other hand, it meets with the increasing pressures of diminishing budget, increased user's demand and rising cost of journals and books. The library consortia, on the basis of

sheer strength of number of institutions, offer healthy business growth opportunities to the electronic publishers and thus attract the best possible price and terms of agreement. With this welcome change, the libraries all over the world are forming consortia.

Meaning of Library Consortia :

Library consortia is a group of libraries that have agreed to cooperate with each other in order to fulfill certain similar need:, usually resource sharing. The aim of consortia is to achieve what the members of the group cannot achieve individually.

According to Dictionary.com " a cooperative agreement among groups or Institutions"

The Oxford English Dictionary defined " a consortium is a community of two or more information agencies, which have formally agreed to coordinate, cooperate or consolidate certain functions" to achieve mutual objectives.

The Random House dictionary has a general definition of the term consortium, as the combination of financial institutions for a common end requiring large resources of capital.

A consortium is said to be " a cooperative arrangement among group institutions or an association or society". Consortia are commonly formed to increase the purchasing power of the collaborating institutions to expand the resource availability and to offer automated services.

Need of Consortia :

The following few factors that necessitate the need for building library consortia.

(a) Growth of knowledge in different subjects posed challenges for libraries in acquisition and dissemination in

Librarian, A.D.P. Mandals, Women's College of Arts, Commerce and Home Science, Jalgaon (Maharashtra)

- accordance with growing information needs of clientele
- (b) Shrinkage of budgets.
 - (c) Better sharing of existing resources and jointly acquiring new resources at greater savings.
 - (d) Recent trends and development in the area of ICT. And changing demands caused by the developing technology.
 - (e) Reducing in the staff strength cost savings for library budget.
 - (f) To exert pressure on information providers to reduce the rate of skylight the cost of purchasing information.

Objectives of Consortia :

Some of the core objectives of Library Consortia are as:

- (a) To provide morccoverage of collections and facilities to provide wider access to users.
- (b) To avoid duplication in resources among libraries of interest.
- (c) Jointly develop the resource databases.
- (d) Better selectivity in collection development.
- (e) To meet the users need due to rapid growth of population.

Consortia Approach :

- (a) Identification of libraries interested in participating and agreeing to common terms and conditions.
- (b) Negotiating with publisher to get a commonly acceptable and affordable price.
- (c) Documentation and training to staff.
- (d) Source of funding to meet the subscription cost.
- (e) Identification selection of databases to be acquired.

Requirements for Consortia :

- (a) Computerization of college libraries.
- (b) Networking Infrastructure and Internet connection.
- (c) Agreement to establish funding sources for the consortia.
- (d) Organizational structure of consortia with a central office and a dedicated staff.
- (e) Mutual understanding between the participating libraries.
- (f) Hardware and software selection of all participating libraries should be compatible.

Limitations of Consortia :

- (a) Lack of appropriate bibliographic tools.
- (b) Problems of defining asset against payment.
- (c) Lack of awareness about consortia benefits.
- (d) Inadequate funds.
- (e) Unreliable telecom links and insufficient bandwidth.

Consortia at National Levels :

National Level : Some of important consortia are ;

- (a) **INDEST (Indian National Digital Library in Engineering, Science and Technology), New Delhi :**

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), has set-up the "INDEST Consortium" on the recommendation made by the Expert Group appointed by the ministry under the chairmanship of Prof.N.Balakrishnan in December 2002. The Ministry provides funds required for subscription to electronic resources for institutions including IISc, IITs, NiTs , IIMs and a few other centrally- funded Government

institutions through the consortium headquarters set-up at the IIT Delhi. The INDEST - AICTE Consortium is the most ambitious initiative taken so far in the country.

- Services :**
- (1) Elsevier-Science Direct.
 - (2) Academic - Ideal Library.
 - (3) Soringers.
 - (4) ASTP.
 - (5) ABI/INFORM.
 - (6)ACM Digital Library.
 - (7) Science Finder.
 - (8) Web of Science.

- (b) **UGC - INFONET (University Grant Commission - Information Network) :**

Information Communication Technology is driving force in the contemporary systems and the road of achieving success in the area of knowledge is a long way. So, UGC and ERNET India have set out on the journey of accomplishing the mission to provide relevant and quality education with enhanced access and equity through UGC-INFONET is an ambitious programme of UGC interlinks all the universities in the country with state-of-art technology. It was formally inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on 28^m December 2002.The Project is funded by the UGC with 90% capital investment and hundred percent recurring cost during the 10^m five year plan period. INFLIBNET Centre is the nodal agency for coordination of the UGC-INFONET and facilitates linkage between ERNET and the universities. UGC-INFONET has become a doom to the higher education system in several ways.

- Services :**
- (1) Full text article on line access.
 - (2) Access to e-journals Jan. 1.2004.
 - (3) All field of learning- Arts, Humanities, Social Science, Computer. Math's, Life Science, Physical & Chemical Science.
 - (4) Review and abstract database.
 - (5) e-journals on line access.

- (c) **FORSA (Formula for Resource sharing in astronomy and Astrophysics), Hyderabad :**

The astronomical research institute having common subject interest established a group in 1981 to share the need of common interest for library to cooperation, resource sharing and established common tools for information retrieval.

- Services :**
- (1) On line access of journals.
 - (2) Active participation towards sharing resources.
 - (3) Document delivery by all means of communication.
 - (4) Database merging of all libraries holding.
 - (5) Fully computerizations of all participation libraries.

- (d) **IGCAR (Indira Gandhi Center for Atomic Research, Kalpakkam) Tamilnadu :** IGCAR has 12 units and 14 field stations under one umbrella for resource sharing consortia institute has directly agreement with Elsevier journal publishers.

- Services :**
- (1) Training by Elsevier.

- (2) End users training.
(3) IGCAR has excellent IT infrastructure to benefit medium from consortium efforts.

(4) Trial access in local LAN's.

(e) CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) :

CSIR laboratories consortium has been established in April 1st 2000 to benefit for its 40 laboratories in all over India.

Services : (1) Service started in June 2000.

(2) All Laboratories to access minimum 3 years.

(3) 250 unique titles.

(4) CCMB, NCT, NCL, CDRI main beneficiaries.

Conclusion :

Unlike subscription to print based information resources and to electronic resources for single institution, subscription to electronic resources for consortium of libraries involves negotiations on pricing and term of licenses between librarian and vendors.

Now journals and many reference sources are coming on CD-ROM version along with printed or on-line version of e-journals which have lot of potential to serve the library users in a better way our libraries face resource crunch, to optimize the infrastructure and access to information through consortia. India being one of the leading IT powers in the world is quite active and sensitive to the emerging changes. It has found quite a reasonable number of library consortia at national level and at the levels of institutions belonging to field of study.

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शोध-पत्र प्रकाशन सम्बंधी सूचना

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