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Task Force on Bibliographic Access and Control, Order and Materials Processing. Final Report.

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TASK FORCE ON BIBLIOGRAPHIC ACCESS AND CONTROL, ORDER AND MATERIALS PROCESSING.

FINAL REPORT

After a delayed start, the Task Force met in February and March to consider the questions raised in the charge. We reviewed, as well, the recommendations from the 1994 Priorities Committee, and have incorporated many of the specifics from that report into our own.

The Task Force reviewed the specific areas of OCLC usage and costs; the full integration of systems into the HELIN/III environment; the question of duplication of effort and the advisability of centralizing technical services routines and responsibilities; the possibilities for streamlining processes between acquisitions and cataloging, and among technical services and the branches and Government Publications Office; the possibilities of expanding our efforts within the area of outsourcing; and, the priorities which should guide us as we develop programs to improve and expand the HELIN bibliographic database. The following recommendations are made with the understanding that some can be effected immediately, others require a more gradual implementation as projects are completed freeing up staff and funds, and others will require additional funds to pay for the systems and utility fees. As time was short, the details on implementing some of these recommendations must be fleshed out in the coming months by those who have direct responsibility.

A. OCLC Costs.

The Task Force was charged with making recommendations which would reduce the overall costs of OCLC usage by 40%. Concurrent with the Task Force study on this question, Jim Barrett, Dale Mollica and Bill O'Malley attended a NELINET workshop on OCLC rates and charges, and met subsequently to decide on immediate actions which could be taken. Those actions included: MARC subscription service was canceled as of Mar. 1 [savings of approximately \$3,600/yr.]; service contracts for OCLC equipment will be transferred to our local maintenance contractor as of July 1, 1996. [savings of approx. \$7,500]; began gathering data on usage and types of usage [commissioned a report from OCLC which analyses 12 months of usage with existing equipment which gives the recommended number of terminals required. OCLC subsequently reported that we have

excess capacity by as much as 100%]; ordered a new report “PRISM Usage Report” which will begin to analyze the types of searches conducted and the on-line time involved by each authorization # within our system. New authorization #s were assigned by the second week of March, and the first reports will be coming in by mid-April.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A1. at the earliest opportunity, some OCLC access terminals be switched from dedicated to Internet access where substantial savings can be demonstrated.

A2. that with the implementation of the shelf-listing capability on HELIN, the library cease maintaining paper shelf lists. Those units now requiring paper shelf lists shall submit reports to the Director on how they will make the transition from paper to HELIN by Jan. 1, 1997. Eliminating the necessity to purchase catalog cards will result in a further reduction in costs by approximately \$1,500/yr.

A3. that in-depth training sessions be conducted on the most cost-effective searching techniques now available, beginning with the staff now doing the most on-line searches [Acq., Catalog, Ill, etc.] and continuing for all staff on a regular basis. Identifying the most direct and cheapest searches will reduce our OCLC costs and staff time.

A4. that Reference Unit use of the OCLC data base be monitored in the light of access to First Search through HELIN. If First Search becomes a primary vehicle to on-line databases in the future, then terminal and search costs can be transferred to that area of activity.

A5. that Technical Services reduce the number of multiple exports of OCLC records [first in Acq., then in Cataloging]. Exporting and the searching costs associated with exports can be streamlined. The Task Force commends the recent change designed and implemented by Amar Lahiri for the fast cataloging of the Strand shipments. This change in processing routines can be a model for future streamlining.

The Task Force believes that implementing these recommendations will reduce our continuing costs in these areas within the next one to two years. It should be noted, however, that OCLC/NELINET continuing costs go far beyond the areas identified above [ILL, document delivery through UMI and BLL, training, membership, equipment supplier, etc.] These costs will continue to increase as we increase our activities here. The

recommendations concerning the reduction of 40% which we were instructed to identify has been accomplished within this reduced sphere of OCLC activities.

B. Centralization of Services.

The Task Force reviewed this aspect of our charge within the rubric of “duplication” of effort and whether or not any economies of scale should determine future organization. Specifically, we considered the separate ordering, receiving, claiming, etc. performed in Govt. Publications Office, the CCE Library at the Providence Center, and the Pell Library. We make no specific recommendations in this area other than to observe that existing staff within these units can now handle the volume of processing required while staffing service desks. Recommendations affecting this aspect of our charge will be found in the sections C and D below. We also consider this aspect of our charge when we discuss priorities. Some of these priorities can be decentralized within the units [adding holdings records to HELIN bibliographic records by CCE and Pell, accession #s by Media or MFORM, special staff for creating holdings records, etc.].

C. III Integration

The Task Force believes that the integrated system [III] should be fully utilized by all staff, all service areas, in the most effective way possible, to insure maximization of use by the university community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

C1. that CCE and Pell utilize the III Acquisitions systems as quickly as possible. Order records, receiving routines, accounting processes should be utilized. Explorations should be made to create order records for these areas either directly [will this be cost effective to purchase necessary authorization?], or by somehow entering those orders at Kingston.

C2. that holdings/checkin records should be created for all current receipts in CCE, Pell, and Gov. Publ. [see below “Priorities”].

D. Outsourcing

The Task Force reviewed our experience in this area within the past few years [particularly the OCLC Retrocon project, the initial authority work performed by BNA, and the massive data migration project which

created the HELIN database], and reviewed some possible projects for the near future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

D1. that HELIN commit itself to outsourcing the authority work to BNA on a regular and frequent basis. The continuance of this service will provide some savings in OCLC costs [searching, exporting, etc.], significant saving in staff time, and immediate improvements in the HELIN catalog.

D2. that, beginning in January 1997, the cataloging and processing of current receipts from the GPO be outsourced to Marchive. That, when we become more comfortable and familiar with this service, we review this experience and set up a systematic program to catalog our collections in this area for the years 1976 through 1996. It is assumed that at some time arrangements will be made to transfer our holdings to OCLC. It is further assumed that we will cooperate as fully as possible with HELIN to coordinate this recommendation.

D3. that we purchase cataloging for the "Major Microform Sets" from OCLC. Beginning immediately, we should purchase catalog records for the 1,700 titles in the American Periodicals Series, enter them into the HELIN catalog, and work out an efficient program for funding this activity over the next few years.

D4. that we continue to study proposals for the outsourcing of cataloging/processing of new English language books acquisitions. Some of the latest developments [Yankee/NELGU, Blackwell's, PromptCat, TechPro] show some promise, and may provide cost effective alternatives to our present approach.

D5. that we cooperate with other HELIN libraries in upgrading the bibliographic records for our State publications. We can share responsibility among the HELIN libraries that catalog their RI state publications to enhance the bibliographic records.

E. Priorities

The Task Force was charged with reviewing the workflow within Technical Services to insure that available resources were devoted to quickly processing and cataloging new receipts, and to "develop an integrated flow of bibliographic and order information through the III System." The Task Force devoted some effort in systematically determining the extent of our cataloged collections, how much of these collections are

represented in HELIN, the extent of our uncataloged collections, and the extent of other projects which would need the attention of the library in order to fully utilize the III system. The following priorities should inform the deployment of staff and funds to complete the special projects, and should be used as a constant guideline for the assignment of appropriate staff to high priority continuing and special projects, and to enable the Library to focus on the changing needs of its patrons.

RECOMMENDATIONS

E1. that all newly purchased acquisitions receive the highest priority processing and cataloging.

E2. that the HELIN database be maintained at the highest quality levels possible. Continuing to improve and enhance the records, correcting erroneous records, and the rapid updating of new records must be the highest priority.

E3. that all order requests be handled expeditiously, and ordering and receiving should be accomplished in the most efficient way possible.

These priorities above [E1-3] represent a continuing commitment by Technical Services. Other projects which divert attention from the above should only be considered when staff and resources are available. The special projects listed below are essential if we are to have a complete catalog of our collections available to all through the HELIN database.

E4. that holdings records be created for all of the serial titles now in our collections. Within the next two years, Technical Services should complete a project of adding approximately 20,000 holdings records to the HELIN database [bibliographic records already present], by transferring the holdings statements that now appear in the Serials List into the HELIN database. Special student staff can be hired for this task, or we may outsource this project as an offshoot of the CRIARL Union List project. The holdings records [approx. \$0.40 each] must be purchased from III.

E5. that the library continue to cooperate with the CRIARL Union List.

E6. that the Catalog Unit continue to identify those parts of our uncataloged collections, and make plans for adding records for these into HELIN [Special Collections, IEEE, and Pell].

E7. that we continue the Retrocon project for those parts of our collections not previously covered [Dewey collection, microform collection, and those parts of our cataloged government publications].

E8. that CCE and Pell add their holdings to the URI HELIN records, without the requirement of adding holdings to OCLC. If Kingston holds, the responsibility for ILL traffic will rest with Kingston, not the branches.

F. Conclusion.

The Task Force had very little time to adequately review the processing routines within the Technical Services, Government Publications Office and the branches, but it is confident that those directly involved within those units will look at this report and the priorities mentioned herein to continue to review its procedures and make appropriate modifications when improvements can be identified.

Respectfully submitted,

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