FIL NEWSLETTER
Forum for Interlending

Issue No 8 - December 1991

The impact of CD-ROMs on libraries

The number of commercially available CD-ROMs is doubling each year, according to "CD-ROMs in print 1991: an international guide". This year there are 1400 titles available, in 1990 there were 600 and in 1989 less than 300. Subjects which are covered range from the Bible to the British Library Catalogue, business news to maps, tyre catalogues to journal abstracts.

The implications of this new technology are very far-reaching. Sources of information which were only previously available through online searching or long, painstaking scanning of printed abstracts are suddenly accessible to the reader at the press of a return key. What is more, the reader is positively encouraged to use the CD-ROM once the library has made the initial outlay for its purchase, as long periods of use will help to justify the expense.

However, it is once the reader has printed or downloaded his list of references that the library's problems begin. Many of the databases which are available on CD-ROM will have been compiled from international sources and will contain references to journals which even the largest libraries will not have in stock. It is often possible to highlight the library's holdings on the CD-ROM but it is still probable that the reader will find many other references which he would like to see.

At this stage there seem to be three courses of action open to the reader. He can try to obtain a reprint of the paper by writing directly to the authors, who are often pleased to supply offprints so that their work can reach a wider readership; he can apply for the papers through interlibrary loan; or he can quote direct from the abstract without taking the time and trouble to see the original paper. This last practice is probably more widespread than we would like to think and has serious implications for the quality of original research in the future. In fact, because of the delays involved in obtaining papers from their authors, the ILL option seems the most satisfactory. CD-ROMs are bound to generate more work for interlibrary loans librarians.

One to consider for your collection: "About cows" $49.95, coverage B.C. to present. An extensive collection of bovine history trivia, nostalgia and folklore. It is sprinkled with anecdotes from farmers, cheesemakers, veterinarians and others.

Gillian Hughes
Subject Librarian
University College of North Wales
Bangor

Contents

★ C D-Roms
★ Scottish Workshop
★ Charging for I.L.L.
★ News from BLDSC
★ Interlend '92
★ LIBERTAS
★ Workshop Cardiff
★ BLCMP
★ CONARLS
★ Viscount
★ FIL Committee
★ Membership

Edited by Thelma Goodman & Ann Illsley.
Printed by the British Library Document Supply Centre

Scottish Exchange of Experience Workshop

On Wednesday 23rd October, 42 participants met within the Erskine Medical Library, University of Edinburgh for the first Exchange of Experience Workshop held in Scotland. Miss Brenda Moon, Librarian of Edinburgh University, welcomed us and posed some pertinent questions including the option to purchase material for stock or obtain it on ILL. Three speakers were invited to present their ILL policies and procedures from a special, academic and public library point of view. Helen Durndell from Glasgow University Library produced healthy statistics indicating an increased demand for ILL requests from GUL readers, Marianne Smith from the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh presented an interesting talk on obtaining some material on ILL without appearing to use British Library request forms, and Ann Hunt from Edinburgh City Libraries informed us of her inherited manual procedures but indicated she hoped to purchase an automated system.

In the afternoon we divided into three groups and discussed a number of current issues, sought answers to problems and gained advice from each other regarding expensive, difficult to obtain material.

Mick Osborne from the British Library Document Supply Centre answered questions and criticisms we raised on BLDSC policy but, I am happy with the high quality of service offered by BLDSC.

The workshop was a pleasant day spent with near and distant ILL colleagues and it was encouraging to note that more than 50 librarians indicated their interest in a Scottish FIL event.

Jill Evans
Inter Library Loans,
Edinburgh University library.

Delegates and speakers at the FIL Scottish Exchange of Experience Workshop

Interlibrary loans at Glasgow University Library

Papers presented at the FIL Exchange of Experience workshop held in Edinburgh on 23rd October 1991.

The University of Glasgow was founded in 1451 and moved to its present location in 1870. Currently it has about 13000 students, including over 1000 from outside the EEC and plans to increase to 14000 by 94/95. It employs 1300 academic staff and total staff is nearly 4500. The most recent version of the planning statement states that we have the largest Faculty of Science outside London and one of the biggest Medical Schools in Europe. The first line of the mission statement reads 'The aims of the University are to maintain and enhance its international standing in scholarship through teaching and research' - and later in the planning statement - 'The University believes that high quality teaching at the degree level can be maintained only it if is conducted in an atmosphere of high quality research.' This emphasis on quality and maintaining a high research profile against a background of changing resource allocation provides the context for the provision of services within Glasgow University Library.

We have around 1.3 million books in stock and almost 10K current journal titles and yet we still have heavy interlibrary loan needs, with over 19,000 requests from our readers last year. Many of you will have visited the Library and know how it is arranged. The Reader Services department, with c.80 staff, is currently organised into 4 teams, spread over 9 floors: 3 subject groups - Science, Social Science, Arts and Humanities - and 'everything else' otherwise known as Undergraduate, Lending and Enquiry Services, for which I am responsible and which includes the interlibrary loans office. Operations such as classifying, book suggestion checking, ILL checking, reader enquiries are still largely decentralised and based on the relevant subject floor. However, things are changing as we continually search for new routes to efficiency while maintaining quality services to our readers. The impact of the reduction in local cataloguing is also still being absorbed. In Glasgow we are moving towards a situation where the professional staff in Reader Services are primarily engaged in subject liaison activities leading us to consider centralising more of the clerical work within the library, such as cataloguing, interlibrary loan and book suggestion checking, routine enquiries, shelving etc.

Turning now to the interlibrary loans section in detail, there are 3 full-time and 1 part-time term-only library assistants, plus several hours every day from a typist for the keying in of requests. In 1985 I installed the AIM (Administration of Interlending by Microcomputer) package developed by Roy Adams at Leicester Polytechnic. This was the only automated system available then and was upgraded to AIM2 running on an Amstrad in 1988. Although we have been relatively happy with AIM we have now made the decision to switch to the Lancaster University ILL system mainly because of the increasing demand for detailed, accurate, regular and easily obtained statistical data. Currently statistics are still collected manually by 5-bar gates and only give the bare outline of the service.

We ask our readers to complete and sign a form which includes the copyright declaration. This form is checked by staff on the subject floors to ensure that it is complete enough to be sent to another library (has a date etc.) and then checked to ensure that it is not in stock - no detailed bibliographic checking is done, nor any attempt made to find locations. A BLDSC number is added to the form, the data is keyed in by typists, a file is prepared by ILL staff and transmitted to BLDSC using Artel via Janet: we regularly send 100 requests per day (all on a 'Y' search) and around 93% of our requests are satisfied by BLDSC. When photocopies arrive they are checked off on the system, address labels produced and used for sending out to readers. The original forms are retrieved and stored to comply with the Copyright legislation. The arrival of books etc. is also recorded on the system, letters printed for sending to readers and the items retained in the office for collection or consultation.

Reports are received from the Replies Intray service on Artel, printed and then keyed into the system as well as recorded manually - a duplication of work that we will end with the Lancaster system. The problem at present is of getting access to the information when a reader calls since we only have one micro, as well as the increasing unreliability of our existing set-up. We are alerted to chasers, reapplications, overdues etc, by the system and can produce files for transmission via Artel or letters to readers.

All requests received from other libraries (by post, e-mail or fax) are checked in our catalogues centrally by staff based at the Main Enquiry desk and routed to the relevant area if found to be in stock. We will not deal with a request unless a BL number is supplied but of course do not at present charge for unsatisfied requests despite the staff time involved. We receive around 5000 requests per year but the number satisfied has been dropping steadily over the last 5 years, from 58% to 45%. This may be due to an increasing reluctance to lend valuable items but there is some evidence to suggest that an increasing percentage of the requests received are not held. At present we record details of

these loans manually and then issue books through our automated circulation system to the ILL office.

Finally, a brief look at the future. The installation of the Lancaster system will give us the opportunity to take a close look at our procedures and make them as efficient as possible, aided by the detailed statistical information we will be able to retrieve concerning our service. Changes on the horizon which emphasise the importance of knowing and controlling what we are doing include:- BLDSC budget accounts and the implications for payment between libraries; devolution of budgeting within the universities to departmental level which may affect funding for central services; the transfer of all research funding to the new Research Councils which means there will be no research funding provided to universities through the UFC block grant; the need to merge the potential of IT e.g. readers requesting ILL services electronically via 'menus of library services' while staying within the boundaries of the Copyright legislation.

Helen Durndell
Principal Assistant Librarian
Glasgow University Library

Inter-Library Loans at Edinburgh City Libraries

When Jill Evans of Edinburgh University phoned me to ask if I would speak to the Forum for Interlending about Edinburgh City Libraries' ILL procedure, I told her I thought she had got the wrong authority. I said our ILL procedure was fairly archaic, totally manual, and hardly to be held up in public as a shining example for others to follow. However Jill reassured me. She explained that the value of my speaking about Edinburgh's ILL system would not be to provide an example for others, but to provide a contrast with what had gone before. When I found I was speaking in the graveyard slot before lunch and having listened to one of the previous speakers describe her high-tech system, I realised I was really there as the Cinderella of the party. I therefore tried to highlight some of the unique aspects of our public library ILL system, as opposed to a special or university one.

First of all, some background. The Inter-Exchange Dept was until two years ago run by one librarian, Brenda Webster, with the help of two assistants. Recognition was given to the fact that one librarian and two assistants could not deal effectively with the vast numbers of requests generated by Edinburgh's 23 branches, 6 central departments and 5 mobile libraries, both for in and out of stock items, not to mention the 3' thousand or so ILL requests coming in per year from outside authorities.

A review in October 1989 changed the structure of the old Inter Exchange service by incorporating it into a much larger department with a wider remit. The present Stock Control Department, of which I am Librarian-in-charge, is now responsible for the request service including ILL's. The 4 librarians in the department also have responsibility for stock editing, manning the reader's adviser desk in Central Lending, for bibliographical checking, some promotional activities and dealing with suppliers over approval sets and orders. We have 2 Senior Library Assistants and 6 Assistants who are also used as a relief pool for the branches. On paper it is an impressive staff - until there is a 'flu epidemic when they disappear like snow off a dyke!

The benefit of having a larger staff covering a wider remit than simply requests is that however many staff you have off sick, on holiday or on relief, there is generally someone left to deal with the urgent things. We do tend to prioritise requests, leaving the boring transfers and withdrawals etc to times when staff are thicker on the ground. A recent study of our delivery times from the date the customer made the request to the date they received it, showed the average (including both in stock and ILL requests) to take 24 days. Other benefits are the sheer variety of work, and the fact that we are also involved with ordering stock.

The disadvantages of having a large staff dealing with ILLs include a loss of personal service - even though the service is much quicker it is less cosy - and some loss of expertise. We are lucky however to have the original three staff from the old Inter Exchange Department to provide continuity. Indeed most of the procedures we use now remain unchanged from that time (a) because they work and (b) because we hope to computerise ILLs in the near future and are saving major changes till then.

I perhaps ought to mention at this point that Edinburgh City Libraries has an on-line catalogue, and that over half our branch libraries are issuing and reserving stock on-line. We hope the remainder will be up and running by the middle of next year. At that time the branch

requests for in stock items of which we still handle about 2,000 a month, will cease, because all branches will be able to reserve on-line. What we will be left with will be the 500-600 requests a month for out of stock material, many of which we turn to ILLs. Our present computer software, which for the interested is Book Plus run on IBM hardware, has no ILL package, so we hope to buy in a software package to meet our needs.

I said earlier that I would highlight what I believed to be different about a public library's ILL service.

One difference lies in the number of branch libraries or site served by one centralised ILL Dept, and the resulting variation in service offered. For example, the librarian at a large branch may be very familiar with ILLs and happily suggest to the customer that there will be no problem acquiring a copy of the required book even if it is out of print and not in stock. However a librarian at a small branch only a few miles down the road may only deal with 5 or 6 ILLs a year, so be unsure or reluctant to offer the service. Indeed the librarian may have gone off duty leaving an assistant who again cannot explain the procedure. To try to counter this problem we produced an in-house ILL manual for staff, which resulted in branch (as opposed to Central Dept) ILLs rising from 10% to 27% of the total submitted. So awareness of the service is increasing amongst branch staff, but the need to educate all "coal face" staff is obvious as it is they who must advise the public as to what service they can expect. Once the request is sent in to our Dept as an ILL we thereafter deal direct with the customer.

The second lies in the very varied type of customer coming to the public library, ranging from the reader who has both author and title of the required item totally incorrect, to the one who gives the exact bibliographical details and has photocopied their source of reference for us. The Central Library especially has a lot of customers from academic institutions, and over 40% of Central ILLs are for periodical articles.

Thirdly, the age of our ILL customers can vary from 12 up, which can result in requests for junior stock and for older fiction, but our housebound readers especially seem to always catch us out by requesting the very Jeffrey Farnol or Annie S Swan not in that stock.

The cost of the ILL service is no more than the standard reservation fee of 25 pence, and we make no limit on the number of ILL requests one customer can submit at one time - indeed batches of up to 50 are not uncommon! This is something we are monitoring, and some of you may have had a phone call in recent weeks from one of the librarians asking about your ILL charges and conditions. We do not want to restrict the service in any way, but would like to widen it to offer it to more readers.

Lastly, we do a lot of bibliographical checking, and except in the case of periodical articles, do not expect the customer's bib details to be accurate. We have a number of bibliographical tools, or should I say toys, on CD ROM - Bookbank IP and OP, BookFind, ABIP, BNB and LC, and the BM Catalogue. Believe me, they are invaluable. But I will leave you with an example of a request that even these marvels of modern science with all their keyword searching, could not crack. The request was for a non-fiction book by Yves Montand, entitled "Scarred". Thinking this was a straightforward request, we went ahead and checked every CD-ROM we could lay our hands on, but to no avail. When the reader was contacted for a source of reference, we were directed to a newspaper article which gave sordid details of Montand's relationship with his wife. As the article had the headline "Scarred by a great beauty" I suppose we were lucky not to have been given Beauty, G. as the author.

Anne Hunt
Stock Control Librarian
Edinburgh City Libraries

Inter Library Loans in an Academic Library - an alternative to charging?

I read Marilyn Hurd's letter with interest (FIL Newsletter No. 7 "Charging for Inter Library Loans...")

As a result of similar problems at the UEA Library, i.e. increased demand and a rapidly disappearing budget, a new policy for Inter Library Loans (ILL) was introduced at the beginning of this academic year, which others may be interested in.

Mindful of the administration which can result from the introduction of charges and that the Library should continue to budget for the ILL service, a formula, similar to that devised for book and periodical provision has been applied to ILL.

I have promised a fuller report to the editors of this Newsletter next year, so I will not go into great detail at this stage. The main features of the policy are as follows. Each of the main Schools in the University has been allocated a set number of requests for which no charge is made. The formula, worked out by John Hutchins, Sub-Librarian, took into account such factors as previous use and staff and postgraduate numbers. Should a School exhaust an allowance before the end of the year, any further requests would have to be paid for at the full cost of the BLDSC form. In order to monitor use, each School is sent a monthly printout from the ILL Office which shows how much of the allocation has been used and by whom. No further administration is undertaken by ILL staff.

It is too soon to say whether this policy will be successful, because it must have been in force for a full year before an assessment can be made, and it is subject to review. However, requests are half what they were for the previous year at this time, it has been accepted as equitable and a better option than paying. Some Schools have devised quite elaborate schemes to monitor use, others, perhaps more wisely, are waiting to see how use develops before making plans which may not prove necessary. To date, (October 1991) it all seems to be going smoothly, but no doubt there will be problems before next summer, and as I have said, I will write a fuller report in a later Newsletter. Meanwhile, if anyone wishes to have further details, or has any questions they would like to ask please contact me at the address below.

Ann Wood
Head of Inter-Library Loan & AV
University of East Anglia Library

CHARGING FOR INTER-LIBRARY LOANS AT EXETER UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

At the beginning of the new financial year on 1st August 1991 the University of Exeter introduced devolved financing. This means that there are no longer central funds for library purchases or inter-library loans, so a charge must be made for each request. The sum decided on had to cover costs until July 1992, and is based on the BLDSC current charge of £3.69 per form (including VAT for photocopies), taking into account the expected annual increase in the spring. £4 per item was chosen, with multiples for multi-volume works, anything from London University Library, or international loans. A refund voucher will be given for all unsuccessful requests.

The charge can be paid in 2 ways; either the departments buy tokens value £4 each from the Library, or individuals pay cash. This has caused a great drop in the number of inter-Library loan requests:

	1990	1991
August	913	111
September	881	257
October	1267	316

We think that this is because the departments are horrified to discover the true cost of inter-library loans, from which they had been shielded, and are wary of spending too much of their funds on this service. In particular the post-graduates seem to have been very hard-hit, but this has drawn to our attention an unsuspected number of borrowers including post-graduates who are willing to pay for inter-library loans if they have to. It will be interesting to see whether this downward trend continues, or whether the University adapts to the new conditions and accepts that it must pay the economic price for the inter-library loan service.

Heather Eva
University of Exeter Library,
Inter-Library Loans,
November 1991

NEWS FROM BLDSC

Sorting of automated requests

In November BLDSC implemented a major enhancement to our Automated Request Processing system. The new software, known as BLINE, sorts incoming automated requests into various categories such as serials, monographs, conferences, then sorts by title and year of publication. This means that the vast majority of the requests (over 90%) can be printed out already sorted, thereby reducing costs and speeding up overall processing times.

Obviously requests are more likely to be correctly identified and sorted if the bibliographic details are as full and accurate as possible and properly set out - see section 2.4 of the Customer Handbook for information about our preferred order of bibliographic details.

Worldwide Searches

Worldwide Searches (known previously as Z searches or International Loans) tries to obtain from abroad items which are not available in the UK. About 12,000 requests a year are sent to all corners of the world, from Hong Kong to Germany, India to USA (our biggest supplier). The success rate is about 75% though supply times vary considerably from country to country: the quickest was 4 days (from USA via OCLC) and the slowest, from a country which will remain nameless, took a total of 4 years! Obviously patience is often a pre-requisite of requesting a Worldwide Search.

The current cost of an overseas request is 3 forms, though the real cost is more like £20.00. One form is charged for failures to contribute to our costs. You should note that we cannot go abroad for items which are:

published in the UK
still in print
audiovisual material
whole serial issues
genealogy
for home reading.

Also some countries are reluctant to participate in international lending.

For further information contact Worldwide Searches at the usual BLDSC address or telephone 0937 546055/6 (or even try our new JANET mail address: BLDSC@uk.ac.rl.gec-b). Section 6.3 of the Customer Handbook also gives more details.

ARTTel 2

We have recently held 2 "Focus Groups" on the subject of ARTTel. The purpose was to bring together small groups of BLDSC customers from various sectors to help us evaluate the present system, suggest improvements and generate ideas for the future development of electronic communications for ILL requests and messages relating to them. Unfortunately we were unable to extend a general invitation to all our customers, but if you have any ideas about ARTTel and how it could be improved and developed I would be pleased to hear from you.

MICK OSBORNE
Customer Services
28 October 1991

THE BRITISH LIBRARY
DOCUMENT SUPPLY CENTRE

ART Tel
REPLIES INTRAY

The REPLIES INTRAY allows customers to access replies to their requests online via ARTTel instead of having them printed out onto Request Status reports and returned by post. The INTRAY file is updated continuously thus providing the fastest possible response. INTRAY is available only via ARTTel, to customers who have registered to use it.

If you are interested in using the REPLIES INTRAY, or would just like to know more about it, please contact Customer Services for a copy of the brochure giving full details. If you are at present sending requests by other methods, but would be interested in finding out more about ARTTel, Customer Services staff can provide you with the appropriate information.

CUSTOMER SERVICES
THE BRITISH LIBRARY DOCUMENT SUPPLY CENTRE
BOSTON SPA, WETHERBY, WEST YORKSHIRE LS23 7BQ
TEL: 0937 546060 FAX: 0937 546333

UWCC'S IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LIBERTAS INTER-LIBRARY LOANS MODULE

Introduction

The LIBERTAS Inter-Library Loans module is a package developed by SLS (Information Systems) Limited. It was introduced into the first of the University of Wales College of Cardiff's libraries for the beginning of the new session in September 1990, and is now operational in all eight site libraries. As a member of the SLS automation cooperative for many years, we were already using most of the available LIBERTAS automation offerings, including cataloguing, circulation, acquisitions and public access functions. The ILL module offered most of the features we were seeking and had the advantage of being a multi-user system which would integrate with other modules with which we were already familiar.

This article does not seek to list all the features of the system, but concentrates on the main benefits and effects which the new system has brought, highlighting some of the features. It concentrates on borrowing from other libraries, rather than lending to them.

Access to ILL records

Perhaps the most noticeable benefit has been the new degree of flexibility in record searching. LIBERTAS has brought an ease of access to ILL records by the provision of many more access points than in our manual system. Previously it was difficult to trace a record other than by BLDSC voucher number and name of requester. The new system provides access via bibliographic enquiries. Records can be traced by entering the author, the title, a combination of these, or just one or more keywords from the title.

One can also search by request number enquiry (sequential, supplied by the system), BLDSC voucher number, and via the user record, i.e. user name or user number. In addition, there is a 'Request selection' transaction, which is a facility used daily by ILL staff to display requests awaiting amendment or approval for transmission; it creates a brief profile of these requests, and their status.

The improved access to records, together with the new speed at which they can be traced has certainly helped to promote greater efficiency, especially when dealing with reader enquiries.

Access to the files is no longer confined to ILL staff. Students are now able to search via their user number at the many OPACs in order to check requests outstanding, the latest report on a request, and whether there is material awaiting collection.

Entering requests

One question which I am frequently asked when discussing the system with staff from other libraries is: 'Do you allow users to enter their own requests?'.

The LIBERTAS system has this facility, but at UWCC we decided instead to keep to our well-tested system of asking users to complete a form, since we require a departmental authorisation signature for each request, (our departments are charged for ILLs). We also prefer to obtain the copyright declaration signature at this stage on the form, so that if a photocopy is supplied, it can be received on the system and despatched immediately to the requester through the internal mail. Requests can be input singly, or as we usually prefer, as a batch. They are entered in form-filling mode rather than as free text.

Transmission of requests

Before the introduction of the system, most of our sites sent their requests to BLDSC by post. We now transmit these requests using ARTTel via JANET, and this has improved the turn-around time significantly. A print file is now produced for non-BLDSC requests, which are still sent by post.

Reporting facilities

Reporting facilities, i.e. the communication between ILL staff, lender and requester are excellent with the new system.

Progress reports can be added to the request record, for example, to log reports from BLDSC. When a report is logged a notice can be generated and printed for the lender, requester or library staff. Reports can be added quickly, since each standard text or notice is identified by a two-character report code. The menu has a 'Report Codes Enquiry' which lists the codes and their associated reports. At Cardiff we use report codes ranging from A1 to Z1 and have tried to make them as memorable as possible, e.g. keying in report code 'W1' adds a report which notifies the requester that he is on a waiting list, and 'Z1' is a notification that there are no UK locations, and asking whether a search abroad is required.

The standard text in reports can be modified where necessary, and there are also three codes, one each for lender, requester and staff, which allow the input of a free text message.

In this way, the progress screen attached to each request record displays significant dates in the progress of the request and its status, as well as detailing what reports have been made on it.

Chasers

Chasers are generated automatically if no response has been received within a specified period - usually six weeks before the first chaser. This has helped to eliminate much of the time-consuming work associated with chasing - namely the selecting of records and photocopying of 'A' copies. Automatic chasers to BLDSC are transmitted via ARTTel, and chasers can be printed for posting to other libraries. Chasers with a non-standard report can also be generated. The chaser flag can be set so that a chaser will be initiated earlier or later than usual if required.

Receipt and circulation procedures

Circulation procedures in many respects now mirror those within the library's main circulation system. Newly supplied items are received on the system and a loan status is assigned - a different code, depending on whether the item is for loan, for retention, or for use in the Library only - but the same concept as for normal loan statuses. If the item is for loan, the system prompts for an item number, which is then automatically assigned - again, the same concept as for ordinary barcode numbers.

A useful feature of the system is its ability to generate a receipt slip - a type of bookmark which is inserted into the book, giving details of the borrower's name and department, bibliographical details of the item, item number, date due, and any special restrictions on the loan - though produced much quicker and more neatly than if one attempted to write or type these details on to a bookmark!

ILLs can be loaned to the requester from the issue desk via the circulation system. Notices asking the reader to come and collect inter-library loans are produced automatically by the system as ordinary daily circulation notices, as too are overdue notices, both in a fraction of the time which it used to take to perform these tasks manually.

Archiving of completed requests

Completed requests are archived to permit staff browsing in the archives file. This provides access to records, for example via BLDSC number, subject keyword, author and title, and can be very helpful. It can be used, for instance, to ascertain the supplier of a previous item, or to assist in acquisitions policy, by supplying information on items in heavy demand.

Conclusion

It is now over a year since we first started using the LIBERTAS ILL module. Now that the system is being used in all our branches and is proving very popular amongst ILL staff, it is perhaps a good time for us to consider further developments. For instance, LIBERTAS offers facilities for the management of accounting procedures which we are not yet using, and it would be very helpful if these could be introduced.

The package continues to evolve, and there are, of course, still a few modifications and enhancements which we would like to see. For example, it will be useful when the further transmission routes which SLS is planning (especially e.mail) are available.

LIBERTAS has had a considerable impact on the ILL service we offer our users, and the way we manage it. Above all, perhaps, it has given us the opportunity to look critically at the procedures which we operated, and to adopt better and more efficient practices. By doing so, significant progress has been made.

Jane Sparks
Inter Library Loans,
University of Wales,
College of Cardiff,
Bute Library.

ATTENTION

FORUM FOR INTERLENDING

EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE WORKSHOP ON INTER-LIBRARY LOANS

Thursday 30th April 1991
at
South Glamorgan County Library Headquarters, Cardiff

The Forum for Interlending is organising a workshop primarily for library staff involved in the daily organisation of an Inter-Library Loan service.

The morning's programme will include three speakers, representing academic, special, and public libraries, who will outline their Inter-library loan activities: Emma Cusworth, Aston University Library; John Kenyon, National Museum of Wales; Helen McNabb, South GLamorgan County Library H.Q.
After lunch participants will split into discussion groups where it is hoped that I.L.L. experiences can be exchanged. Participants are asked to bring samples of their I.L.L. stationery. Registration will start at 10.30 am onwards and the Workshop will commence at 11.00 am and finish at 4.00 pm.

The cost, including lunch and refreshments, is £10.00 to members of FIL and £15.00 to non-members. Booking forms are available from and should be returned (by 13th April) to:

Jane Sparks
Inter-Library Loans
Bute Library
University of Wales College of Cardiff
P.O. Box 430
Cardiff CF1 3XT
Telephone: 0222 874000 ext. 5986

Please note that this workshop is aimed at staff involved in the day-to-day handling of I.L.L. requests.

A map and further details will be supplied as confirmation of your booking.

BLCMP'S ILL MODULE AT BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY

At Birmingham University we tested the first release of the BLCMP ILL module in April 1990. The module operates in BLCMP's CASS (Cataloguing and Acquisitions Support System) environment to allow access to the BLCMP database. The user interface is determined by the CASS software so the principal data entry screen for creating requests contains numerous bibliographic fields. This facilitates the downloading process from the BLCMP database but is not ideal for inputting data from scratch. Also the format takes up more space than can be displayed on one screen. The module is command-driven with no function buttons or menu and so some features of the system lack the speed and efficiency that characterise the best stand-alone modules. In the first release ILL was a single-site module but it had multi-user access through any BLS terminal.

Access to the BLCMP database (now over 10m records) is certainly an advantage. It provides bibliographic checking, elimination of items already in stock and identification of holding locations on the BLCMP Union (now over 50 libraries). The database also includes the BLDSC monograph records from 1980 onwards and the BLDSC Conference file.

The destination of each request is determined by the user. Application can be made to BLDSC via Arttel or by letter to any potential supplier. Names and addresses of locations are held in the BLS supplier file. Additions can be made to this file from within ILL. Locations are identified on the data entry format by codes taken from the BLDSC Directory of Library Codes.

In the first release full borrower details had to be entered for each request but ILL is now integrated with the CIRCO borrower file. This allows retrieval of borrower details such as name, address and status by validating the borrower number. It also checks the total of borrower's requests and the number in progress against limits set by the library. In addition traps are displayed (eg outstanding charges) and warnings (eg in progress limit will be exceeded) which can be overridden.

Sequences of BLDSC numbers can be easily added to the system. A warning message appears when the remaining total of numbers falls below a level set by the user. Requests that do not require BLDSC numbers can be assigned a local number of no value.

Requests for BLDSC are formatted for transmission to Arttel by using BLS's management information module MISRETRIEVE. This is done overnight after all new requests have been created for the day. The following morning a report to verify transmission and a recall file can be viewed.

Requests destined for non-BLDSC suppliers are printed in a format defined by the user, quoting a BLDSC number, bibliographic details and retrieving the address from the BLS supplier file. As yet the system does not provide for the electronic transmission of requests to other libraries.

To answer enquiries about requests in progress the ILL file can be searched by borrower number, control number (ISBN or BLDSC number), author/title or title. The record is then displayed in an OPAC style format, including the current status (eg ON ORDER, received etc) and the most recent report.

When items are received they are edited on the Process format to record the despatch of photocopies or the arrival, issue and discharge of loans. Unfulfilled requests are edited on the Report format which facilitates the generation of messages. These can be memos to the reader such as notifications of arrivals or delays, overdues or recalls; or letters to other libraries such as chasers or renewals. Action on requests in progress (eg reapplication to BLDSC) is also recorded on this format.

The generation of output as a result of edits is carried out in batch mode by running macros in overnight routines. The macros use MISRETRIEVE and PRESENT to prepare letters memos or transmission files.

BLS ILL cannot produce any statistical analysis of the ILL file. MISRETRIEVE queries can be devised to provide this kind of information but they have to be created by Systems staff.

The module now has a multi-site facility so that site libraries hold separate BLDSC request number series. Execution of the macros then creates site-specific output for transmission and printing. Transmission is carried out centrally with an Arttel report and recall created for each site. Memos and letters are generated centrally and can be printed out either centrally or on site.

Our experience of the BLS system is that the functionality is perfectly satisfactory and it interacts well with the BLCMP database and the CIRCO file. But because the user interface is rather dated it is laborious and cumbersome in operation. In general the system needs to be more responsive to the need for management information. For readers, ILL does not display in the OPAC borrower enquiry function. There is a need to develop an electronic mail facility to other libraries and to provide for a system in which all users have e-mail boxes. Some of these improvements would be achieved by making ILL available on BLCMP's planned UNIX platform. However, ILL will probably not be among the first BLS modules to be made available under UNIX.

Martin Killeen
Main Library
University of Birmingham
November 1991

CIRCLE OF OFFICERS OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEMS (CONARLS)

As CONARLS has recently come to greater prominence nationally, not least because of its work in reviving the Provincial Joint Fiction Reserve Scheme, this is a good time to draw readers' attention to what it is and to what it does. CONARLS' constitution states that its objectives are "to support, encourage and assist the development of the inter-library lending network and all forms of library co-operation within the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, and to facilitate international library co-operation wherever practical". Behind these bland phrases lies a great deal of activity.

Regional Library Systems have been enabling inter-library lending and promoting co-operation since 1931. CONARLS members are the Directors/Managers of the nine Regional Library Systems of the UK; also represented are the Library Council of the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, BLDSC, BL National Bibliographical Services and the Library and Information Co-operation Council (LINC). FIL is a co-opted member. Rather than going into further abstract detail, a description of recent CONARLS activities will give a true flavour of what the group does:

- At the behest of LINC, CONARLS produced a report which re-assessed the operations and role of the PJFR scheme and made recommendations, since accepted, to revitalise and enhance the scheme. Linked to this was a successful seminar on fiction lending and inter-lending held in Birmingham in June 1991

- The Circle is currently examining the collection of Regional statistics with a view to recommending ways in which some uniformity can be agreed

- CONARLS is examining proposed local government reorganisation to identify issues affecting co-operation and inter-lending

- CONARLS works closely with the British Library Document Supply Centre, and co-ordinates national opinion, e.g. about the reduction of service in BLDSC's music department

- The Circle co-ordinates the production and development of regional union catalogues.

This, of course, merely gives a flavour of what goes on. CONARLS achieves a great deal behind the scenes of inter-lending from facilitating the inter-lending and transport of books and other materials to tackling national issues on behalf of Regional members.

If you want to know more about CONARLS, why not contact your Regional representatives.
They are:

SCOTLAND
Christian Wright Tel: 031 226 4532

YORKSHIRE & HUMBERSIDE
Bernard Wright Tel: 0924 371231

LONDON & SOUTH EAST REGION
Frances Hendrix Tel: 071 636 4684

WALES
Richard Lewis Tel: 0970 623816

NORTH WESTERN REGION
Joan Unsworth Tel: 061 234 1947

* NORTHERN REGION
Michael Long Tel: 091 281 8887

EAST MIDLANDS REGION
Michael Maxwell Tel: 0533 538921

SOUTH WESTERN REGION
Bridget Powell Tel: 0272 273962

MIDLANDS REGION
(post vacant) Tel: 021 235 2673

IRISH LIBRARY COUNCIL
Annette Kelly Tel: Dublin (01) 761167

NORTHERN IRELAND
Harry Carson Tel: 0861 525353

In case of difficulty, contact the Honorary Secretary, Michael Long, at the number above.*

Michael Maxwell
Chairman, CONARLS

In praise of VISCOUNT
(with apologies to Stefan Vizinczey)

It seems to me that the time has come to be positive about VISCOUNT, despite all the initial problems when the new software was loaded onto the system. VISCOUNT is a wonderful weapon in the hands of interlending librarians, and we need to exploit the resources that it gives us to the full. These are some of the options that VISCOUNT makes available to us.

1. Bibliographical Checking

VISCOUNT is a major bibliographical tool, containing over 2,000,000 entries. If an item is not in print, it should be our first resort for searching because it will give us both the full bibliographical details and the locations. This is invaluable, but it is not new. The old VISCOUNT offered this service.

2. ILL Requests

Most of the functions here are new. The general messaging service allows us to send messages on a rota which means that we do not have to input the message every time we receive a report saying "Not in stock", "On loan" or whatever. A negative response automatically sends the message to the next location.

We can check on the progress of our reports both online and offline which we could never do before. Offline checking helps us to identify the requests where further action is needed. Online checking allows up to edit requests, adding and deleting locations as necessary. This also helps us to identify those libraries which are not fulfilling their interlending obligations, and to take the necessary action.

We can print out updated reports to keep our colleagues in the front line on the enquiry desks informed about the progress of reports. This means that they do not have to chase us for information about outstanding requests, and consequently have more time for other professional work.

We will soon be able to send messages on VISCOUNT direct to BLDSC and will be able to nominate BLDSC as part of the rota. As other regions begin messaging online, VISCOUNT will develop into a national interlending network for public libraries. This will be a major advance that should revolutionise the way in which we work.

3. Location Amendments

The new software allows us to add and delete items from the database. In Redbridge, we add items to VISCOUNT by sending a tape to LASER HQ but it is possible to add locations by batching in ISBNs and BNB numbers. This will not create a full bibliographical entry, but it will tell other libraries that you have an item in stock, and enable them to generate a message.

You can also use ISBNs and BNB numbers to delete a location. This means that when you receive a request for an item that is not in stock, you can remove it from the database. This has two advantages. Firstly, you will not receive any further applications for the item concerned and will not waste time searching your catalogue for it. Secondly, other libraries will not waste their time applying to you for the item.

The major problem with VISCOUNT now is that we have to learn how to exploit the system properly and fully. Once we have done that, a whole new world will open up to us.

David Kenvyn
Bibliographical Officer
London Borough of Redbridge

(N.B. In Redbridge, we have been producing a series of training sheets on how to exploit the various aspects of VISCOUNT)

Happy Christmas and New Year from FIL Committee

We hope you will continue to support FIL in 1992 and look forward to receiving your articles, news, letters and views.

Current FIL Committee Members

Emma Cusworth (Chair)
Library and Information Services, Aston University, Aston Triangle, Birmingham B4 7ET
Tel: 021 359 3611 x5102; Fax: 021 359 7358;
JANET: CusworthEA@Aston; BTGold: 79:LLA1015

Brian Else (Secretary)
Wakefield Libraries Headquarters, Balne Lane, Wakefield, West Yorks. WF2 0DQ
Tel: 0924 371231; Fax 0924 379287

David Kenvyn (Treasurer [from January 1991])
Redbridge Libraries, Central Library, Clements Road, Ilford IG1 1EA
Tel: 081 478 7145; Fax: 081 553 4185

Pat Beech (Membership Secretary)
Bibliographic Services, Shropshire County Library, Column House, Shrewsbury SY2 6NW
Tel: 0743 253672; Fax: 0743 253678

Thelma Goodman (Newsletter Editor)
Inter Library Loans, Lancaster University Library, Lancaster LA1 4YH
Tel: 0524 65201 x2528; Fax: 0524 63806;
JANET: LBA005@Lancs.Central; BTGold: 79:LLA1007

Ann Illsley (Newsletter Editor)
University College of North Wales, Main Library - Interlibrary Loans, College Road, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2DG
Tel: 0248 351151 x2988; Fax: 0248 370576;
E-mail address: ILL Bangor

Maureen Ridley
Cleveland County Library, Central Library, Victoria Square, Middlesborough, Cleveland TS1 2AY
Tel: 0642 249449; Fax: 0642 230690

Jill Evans
Inter Library Loans, Edinburgh University Library, George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9LJ
Tel: 031 650 3377; Fax: 031 687 9780;
JANET: J.EVANS@UK.AC.Edinburgh

Jane Sparks,
Inter Library Loans, University of Wales, College of Cardiff, Bute Library, PO Box 430, Cardiff CF1 3XT
Tel: 0222 874000 x5986; Fax: 0222 874192;
JANET: ILL@UK.AC.Cardiff.Taff

Observers

Alastair Allen (LINC)
c/o Sheffield Information 2000, Information House, 67 Surrey Street, Sheffield S1 2LH
Tel: 0742 750566;
Tel: at University of Sheffield 0742 768555 x4383;
JANET: A.Allan@UK.AC.Sheffield.Primea

Ann Hobart (Library Association)
Library Association, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE
Tel: 01 636 7543 x238

Mick Osborne (BLDSC)
Boston Spa, Wetherby, West Yorks. LS23 7BQ
Tel: 0937 546245; Fax: 0937 546333;
E-mail address: BLDSC@uk.ac.rl.gec-b.

INTERLEND 92: ASSURING QUALITY
9TH - 11TH JULY 1992

To be held at Bath University

To look at all aspects of Interlibrary Loans with regard to the provision of a quality service in a financially restricted climate.

Topics to be covered in papers and workshops include how to measure the quality of service, training for a quality service and how to maintain the quality service once it has been attained.

Further details and booking forms will be available in the New Year and sent to all members.

We look forward to seeing you at Bath in July 1992

Membership

Anyone interested in joining FIL is invited to complete the form below and return it to: Pat Beech (Membership Secretary, FIL), Bibliographic Services, Shropshire County Library, Column House, Shrewsbury SY2 6NW

Both institutional and individual members are welcome. The subscription rate for both categories is £15

✂ - - -