

Issue No 9 - April 1992

INTERLEND 92 - ASSURING QUALITY

I can almost hear you all saying not another conference on quality, why has FIL chosen this as the subject for this year's conference. Yes, there is a lot about quality management at present but that is because it is such an important subject. Interlending is possibly only a small part of the service that your library provides; it is a vital one and we all know that the users of our services tend to remember the time the request took 6 months and not the 60 times that the item was received in 5 to 10 days. We can never be satisfied that it is not possible to improve the standard of the service we give of the 60 as well as the odd one that takes too long. Many users of the interlibrary loan service make extensive use of the facility and for some of them the quality of the library service is judged by the speed with which they can obtain material. We need to be looking at the service that we provide and to see how we can increase its efficiency.

By sharing our experience we may be able to think of ways that we can improve our own services. For this reason the programme this year covers a range of topics but centres on the key issue of quality and how

having achieved a level of service, we can continue to improve that service. We have kept the format as in previous years with a mixture of papers and workshops. Our speakers include Brenda Moon, Librarian of Edinburgh University, Roger Stoakley, Librarian of Somerset County Library, Ron Pybus, Librarian of Wiltshire County Library and the workshops include music led by Paula Thompson, Librarian of the Royal College of Music, Grey Literature and training.

It should be an interesting conference and I hope that we shall see you at Bath. The conference brochure has been sent out during March and if you don't receive your copy or you know of someone else who would like a copy please contact me at Aston University Library & Information Service.

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

Recently, many librarians have been concerned about increasing costs of on-line database searching. These costs are traditionally based mainly on the amount of time spent online and the number of references found in each individual search. As an alternative approach, some database producers and suppliers have started to offer contracts to individual libraries, whereby the library buys a license for unlimited use of the database(s) for a specified period.

In a development of this last concept, CHEST (the Combined Higher Education Software Team), whose remit includes obtaining software and license conditions at reasonable prices for the UK academic community as a whole, was advised to negotiate the establishment of an experimental system, based on a bibliographic database, which could be used by ANY university or polytechnic or research council funded body. In order to attract as many organisations as possible, the database(s) chosen would have to be of very general interest, in higher education terms.

So it was that CHEST reached agreement with publisher ISI (Institute for Scientific Information) to lease (for 5 years from early 1991) the data published in their indexing journals Science citation index, Social science citation index and Arts and humanities citation index from 1981 onwards (including weekly updates) and in Index to scientific technical proceedings from 1982 onwards (updated monthly). This includes all the data published in the current awareness bulletin current contents and covers over 7000 journals.

The service was introduced, with a limited amount of data, in February 1991. Regular enhancements have followed and there was a substantial upgrade in September. Data service organisation is provided by Bath University Computing Services in the form of the Bath ISI Data Service - hence the acronym BIDS. Access is via Janet (the Joint Academic Network). At the start of service, the system could support 100 users concurrently. This figure is to be increased to 300.

For those interested in the technical aspects of BIDS, the hardware is an ICL series 39 with a storage capacity of 80 gigabytes. As for the software, the system runs under VME. Data is mounted under STATUS free text retrieval software, plus some locally driven software.

Each subscribing organisation pays £6000 + VAT per annum for 5 years for a site license, with a discount for those signing up before March 1991. This allows their staff and students to access BIDS from any terminal on campus at almost any hour of the day (or night!) for research or teaching purposes - it is not available for commercial use. Initial enthusiasm was such that 47 institutions joined almost immediately. Within each institution, individual teaching departments can have their own usernames and passwords, so it is possible to monitor the use made of BIDS by the various subject groups.

The system is intended to be sufficiently user-friendly to be used by people with no experience of online searching on the commercial hosts such as DIALOG. As with the introduction of CD-ROM databases, which are equally 'self-service', this involves a transfer of searching techniques from librarians to their customers, who themselves become 'end users'. Librarians are now expected to take up a new role relating to mass instruction in information management skills. Each user receives a helpful guide card summarising the most popular features and searching techniques - more detailed documentation, intended primarily for the librarians who have to answer questions about BIDS, is in the pipeline. Most libraries offer some demonstrations and/or training sessions. There is also a help desk at Bath, staffed during office hours, and a user group has been formed. Most people download the references they have retrieved to their electronic mailbox via the local campus network. They can then manipulate these references as required, for example, print them or reformat them for future use with a software package such as ProCite or Reference Manager.

As BIDS is updated weekly, it can provide very recent references. Of course, the system does not produce the quantity of references which can be retrieved via a specialist abstracting or indexing service - it cannot attempt to index the same number of journals in any subject area. The user also has to search one year's data at a time, a rather tedious prospect for searchers accustomed to accessing the whole of the 1967-1991 Chemical abstracts database at one fell swoop, for example. Abstracts (summaries) of the individual periodical articles are unfortunately not available on BIDS, which can be a particular disadvantage in interlending terms, as scanning of abstracts can result in greater selectivity in requesting material through the interlending system. ISI is now making abstracts available for the indexing services, e.g. Science citation index, which make up BIDS, but it is not likely that the abstracts will be offered as part of BIDS itself. On the other hand, the layout of the reference on BIDS is very clear and should not prove problematic, even to those unfamiliar with the layout of inter-library loan request forms. A variety of formats for downloading reference is offered. Among these are 'title only' and 'title and author only' - not particularly help-

ful, and these do NOT include the name of the journal in which the article was published!

There have been some complaints about the slowness with which the various facilities have been gradually introduced, especially 'citation searching', the online equivalent of using the printed 'citation index', where you can find recent papers because their authors have cited in their bibliographies an earlier paper you already know about. Personally, however, I have been impressed by the excellent response times and by the fact that the service is very rarely unavailable.

BIDS is likely to be only the first in a line of databases made accessible to higher education in this form. Indeed, CHEST is already engaged in discussions with other database producers and suppliers, although again these are chiefly those which offer databases covering very broad subject areas, for example BIOSIS (Biological abstracts).

Stephen Harling
Subject Librarian
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CHARGING FOR INTER LIBRARY LOANS AT UNIVERSITY OF READING LIBRARY

In January 1991 we introduced a charge for I.L.L. requests - it was a small charge and not a full cost recovery operation. The initial charge was set at £1 per request, as departments had not budgeted for the cost in their 1990-91 figures. Each department was supplied with statistics of their previous year's usage (this came as a shock to some departments!)

Vouchers are bought by departments on an internal requisition and each request needs a voucher attached. Students also require a tutor's signature indicating that the request is needed for their work.

Cash can be paid at the I.L.L. desk, £1 if the request is signed, £5 if not. Staff can also pay £1 if required for teaching/research, £5 if not. Cash handling has not been a problem and the introduction of charges has not been too traumatic for library staff, when the true cost of an I.L.L. is

explained, readers have realized the necessity for some contribution.

Each department controls its own supply of vouchers - some pass on charges to post graduates, some to Academic staff, some give so many free and then charge - it is irrelevant to the I.L.L. department.

The number of requests has dropped by about 10% - we have retained the charge at £1 for the 1991-92 session. No refunds are given if the item is not obtained, neither is it refunded if the item is in the library.

The £1 is always referred to as a 'handling charge'.

Janet Mould
Inter Library Loans Librarian
University of Reading

BLPES AS A BACK UP LIBRARY

The British Library of Political and Economic Science is the library of the London School of Economics. Founded in 1896, its scope is the social sciences in the widest sense of the term and it is one of the largest libraries in the world devoted exclusively to this range of subjects: - 950,000 bound volumes, 28,000 serials (13,000 current).

BLPES is one of the back up libraries for the Document Supply Centre (BLDSC). As such it only accepts requests from other libraries which have first tried BLDSC and have then been authorised to approach BLPES. Thus we do not accept telex, telephone, e-mail or automated print out requests. Exceptions are other University of London colleges & institutions and government agencies.

BLDSC returns authorised UK requests to the originating library for the latter to forward to us. (Overseas authorised requests are passed on direct).

What restrictions do BLPES make? Any material not for loan to our own readers is not available for interlibrary loan (this includes periodicals, pamphlets, reference collection) and any Course Reading List material.

We receive approximately 175 requests from our own readers and 150 incoming requests per month. Of the latter, about 40% are for Official Publications. As these have already been searched for elsewhere they are often obscure working documents.

Although we are a deposit library for the United Nations, United States and UK governments we do not hold all material from their subsidiary bodies, especially that which is outside our subject area. This is also true for our holdings of other states' official publications. Many official publications are filed using their original document number

with the relevant official catalogues acting as indexes and are not listed on our computer system. Often the very little information given with the incoming requests causes problems in tracing them. However we still manage to satisfy 40% of all requests from other libraries.

While 150 incoming requests per month does not compare with other back up libraries such as Cambridge University, this is reflected in staffing. There are 4 interlibrary loans staff (3 library assistants and 1 senior library assistant) over 50% of whose duties are outside interlibrary loans. Requests are generally dealt with within 48 hours. Given this turnaround chasers should be sent within 2 weeks, otherwise there is difficulty in tracking down our original response. If our response is NOT in stock or Decline to Lend, we attempt to reply immediately. If an item is Missing from the Shelves the item has been looked for at least three times on separate days. We request that reapplication is not made for at least 6 weeks as we will be in the process of a full search ourselves. Where incoming requests are not authorised the British Library form is returned to the originator for BLDSC authorisation; however we do attempt to advise whether an item is available for loan. Most unauthorised incoming requests understandably come from public libraries, who may not be aware of back up library procedures.

Mark Perkins
Interlibrary Loans
British Library of Political and Economic Science

Inter-library Loans at Lancashire County Library

Lancashire County Library is one of the largest public libraries. It covers a wide geographical area and its users come from a variety of backgrounds including rural and urban areas and from several ethnic minorities. We also cater for a diverse range of business and academic needs. The Library authority is divided into 14 districts with a total of 107 branches. 2 trailer and 15 mobile libraries from which to supply the services offered.

Despite a bookstock of 3.4 million and a resources fund of £3.6 million for 1992/93, inter-library loans is an increasingly important area within Lancashire County Library. In 1990 we automated our ILL system and we were the first public library to install the Lancaster University ILL System. This has radically altered the way in which we deal with ILL requests and made our service much more efficient.

All ILL's are dealt with in the Request Section at County Library Headquarters in Preston. We do a thorough bibliographical check on all requests. We have two CD-ROM readers and a number of data bases which we find invaluable; we also check various on line services such as BLAISE. In 1991 we installed the VISCOUNT system and all requests are now checked against this data base. Where locations are found we apply direct - by post. We make heavy use of our regional system and we only apply to BLDSC if we know the item to be in their stock, or if we cannot trace any locations. The use of these automated systems has enabled us to speed up the processing of our requests and the majority of items which cannot be supplied from stock are either applied for on ILL or ordered for stock the day after they arrive in the request department. On arrival all ILL items are receipted on the Lancaster University ILL System, the records

are downloaded on to GEAC to form the bibliographic record for issuing at the branches.

During the past year, and despite a rise in the cost of a reservation from 35p to 50p our ILL requests have risen by 10%. The take up of the VISCOUNT system by other libraries has greatly increased the number of ILL requests we receive, a 17% increase so far in 1990/91. This is due in part to our place on the rota - number 3 - the first two locations being 'last resort' libraries.

Lancashire County Library Bibliographical Services Section has recently been restructured. This came into effect on the 1st of January. There are now three Assistant Librarian posts dealing with incoming and outgoing inter-library loans, plus a Library Assistant to input requests and undertake clerical duties. Elements of the work of the three Senior Library Assistants are also connected with ILL for example receipting items on the automated system. In 1990/91 the section made over 15,000 requests to other libraries and the County as a whole supplied almost 7,500 items. Lancashire County Library is committed to maintaining the best possible inter-library loans service and there are no plans to curtail it. In fact it is likely that the inter-lending function of the Request Department will continue to increase over the coming years.

Kate Godsell
Assistant Librarian (Requests)
Lancashire County Library

The DSC's recent proposals to change the thesis copying and loan service raise a number of questions for interlending librarians.

The issues raised are briefly as follows:-

- a) That a non-returnable looseleaf copy of each thesis be supplied to BLDSC for microfilming. This will allow faster cameras to be used thereby making the process of copying theses more efficient.

For many universities and polytechnics this would mean a change in regulations.

- b) The elimination of detailed copyright declarations and the introduction of a standard statement of the author's protection and the limits of legitimate use.

This raises a problem for some universities and polytechnics who do not accept that theses are 'published literary works' in terms of the Copyright Act and argue that thesis copyright declarations may be required in legal copyright cases.

- c) That all theses are prepared to BS4821:1990.

This would require a change in university/polytechnic regulations in some cases.

- d) That an author's agreement is completed by all students submitting theses ensuring that they are aware of their rights with regard to sales of their theses by BLDSC.

Reactions to this proposal are mixed. Some universities feel that this issue should be agreed with SCONUL and COPOL before implementation.

- e) Selective deposit.

BLDSC have made it clear that the most popular UK Thesis held by them has been issued 12 times in a one year period. However, they add that, if the changes are accepted, they would be more likely to market UK theses to stimulate demand. However, some universities and polytechnics are of the view that UK theses should only be copied on demand, similar to the system for U.S. theses.

The initial discussions on the review of BLDSC's commitment to the provision of UK theses have not led to a consensus amongst universities and polytechnics and BLDSC's final position is that if agreement is not reached, they will close the service.

The decisions made as a result of these discussions have a direct bearing on the provision of theses through the interlending network and may result in some universities and polytechnics 'opting out' and deciding to charge premium rates for loan or preferring to sell theses at a 'commercial' rate. Already some librarians in the UK are restricting the loan of theses, even for those works not available from BLDSC, making access to valuable sources of original research almost impossible. The trend to ask for extra payment for the loan of theses is emerging which again may restrict the borrowing if libraries decide not to pay.

Another concern is the possible loss of the valuable indexing services to theses provided by BLDSC which provide a much more current source than Index to Theses.

It was agreed at the last FIL Committee Meeting, after extensive discussion, that members would expect FIL to take an active part in trying to ensure a satisfactory conclusion to this issue. For this reason, FIL is asking LINC to raise the issue nationally with some urgency.

Elaine Dean
Head of Inter-Library Loans
University Library
University of Sheffield

Competing for Quality - inter-tendering?

Interlending in the public library sector may seem at first an unlikely candidate for Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT), but on Guy Fawkes' day last year, the new Local Government Bill heralded a new round of white collar services to be put out to CCT, including library support services. The latest Citizens Charter white paper, "Competing for Quality" published soon afterwards, provided a rationale for the proposals. We all tended to assume initially that the activities included were book ordering, cataloguing and classification, as interlending and the reserve stores had not been referred to specifically. However, clarification by OAL officials made it plain that all services not provided directly to the public were included. However, interlending is usually interlinked with other headquarters services, and cannot function effectively in isolation.

"Competing for Quality" expounds a basic philosophy that the local authority should be enabling bodies, not necessarily providing services directly, but concentrating on "core responsibilities" i.e. setting its priorities, determining standards and identifying local requirements. In-house workforces should only be able to contract to provide a library support service if the workforce won it in fair competition with the private sector, and should adopt commercial style accounting principles. Phrases like "client and contractor functions" performance monitoring" and "results-orientated working methods" are already familiar in local government, and would now seem to be making fresh inroads into our own specialist realm.

In Buckinghamshire, Interlending is the smallest section of the head-quarters Bookstock Department, which also includes the Cataloguing/book ordering and reserve bookstore sections. We handle some 25,000 requests a year, making full use recently of the expanded LASER Viscount network. The County Council's cautious response to the proposals mainly focusses on the more labour intensive function of materials acquisition, which it states should not be done by an external agency, but by professional librarians in direct contact with customers. It argues that if part of the library service is contracted out, staff cannot be re-deployed to the best advantage in times of shortages or changing demand, and the integrity of the service is lost. These arguments can also apply to interlending of course, which is hardly viable on its own. The Bucks response also disputes that there will be a ready response from an existing market, as asserted in the White Paper, which sees the private sector eager to bid for such services. Finally there is the absurdity of setting a target date for tenders of October 1994, when the local government review may well alter the structure and boundaries of local authorities shortly after that, and render all the work on tendering specifications etc. useless.

The PA Consulting Group, whose leaked report to the D.O.E. was used by the opposition parties to discomfort

the government, described the libraries, museums and arts facilities as having a variable market potential. Acquisitions and catalogue binding were seen as good candidates for CCT, but not library branch management. No mention of inter-library loans as far as I know, and not much meat on the bones of the case. Various concerned groups have commented on the proposals, scarcely mentioning our specialty - what better justification can there be for FIL's existence? N.A.G. (National acquisitions Group), held two seminars and produced a draft response. This urged that an efficient library support service should have data to hand about its cost effectiveness, and calls for research to be done to make the benefits of library support services measurable and demonstrable. N.A.G. raised the same question about whether there was a market out there to compete, and expressed concern about the quality of service taking second place to cost. It can be appreciated here that the true and full cost of interlending passed on to readers would severely reduce the use of the service.

The Library Campaign and NALGO also responded. The former stated that the only major contracted out library service is book servicing, where the price is kept low and suppliers' profits depend on the NBA (Net Book Agreement) protected price of the books. One could equally ask here how lucrative a prospect is interlending. Our dependence on in-house computer systems for data on possible titles in stock or on order would be complicated, as the Campaign points out, if some of our services were hived off under a separate contractual umbrella.

NALGO has no quarrel with the delivery of high quality, responsive services, but advocates an integrated approach by people with intimate knowledge of current collections and the changing needs and demands of local communities. Comment is made on "maintaining the regional and other specialist schemes" - these of course depend on a high degree of cooperation and consensus between libraries. The experience of Westminster and Cambridgeshire, NALGO argues, are that the only bids would come from in-house, for which the cost of preparing the bid and continue performance monitoring would have to be taken into account.

CCT may of course by-pass interlending, but any changes to library support services could well have knock on effects. The result of the next election is bound to affect us in some way, even if it is limited to local government boundaries, and does not include tendering. In any event, I would expect interlending sections in public libraries to be affected by the overall trend towards performance objectives - (All requests obtained within six weeks/months?) - customer charters and even income generation from bibliographical databases. The future will never be quite the same, but watch this space!

Martin Tapsell, Bibliographic Officer
(Requests) Buckinghamshire County Library

THE LANCASTER ILL SYSTEM A USERS VIEW

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The Lancaster ILL System was designed by Ian Stuart of Lancaster University and is a Menu driven, stand-alone management system specifically designed for Inter-Library Loans by an Inter-Library Loans librarian. It uses the American Pick Operating System (invented by, wait for it... Dick Pick in 1967) which is extremely fast though unusual.

Menu driven is a phrase which I hope is self explanatory, stand-alone means that it is independent and not connected to any network. There is one micro computer which can support up to five users and our system has two dumb terminals and another independent computer, which is able to emulate a dumb terminal, attached so that four people can work at any given time. There is also a dedicated printer, a tape streamer (for security backup) and a modem to communicate to the outside world.

We have been using this system for eighteen months and chose it for its adaptability to our existing interloans practices and for its versatility. For example, many functions generate a print out (e.g. RENEWALS), the idea being to send the note to the reader confirming the renewal of the loan. We have changed the system so that an appropriate letter is generated to send to the lending library requesting the renewal. This is one small example.

IN USE

We receive just under 8,000 requests per year from programme makers, researchers etc via our internal Reference Libraries. The enquirers start with the Reference Library and if the request cannot be satisfied with internal resources the request is passed through to us. There is no personal contact with our users who are spread out all over the country, the majority however are based in London.

When the request has arrived I then decide how best to obtain it from a variety of Local public libraries, special libraries and finally the British Library D.S.C.

Having logged on to your computer, you are presented with the Main Menu which has twenty choices of action which are selected alphabetically or numerically (i.e. 1. APPLICATIONS just press 1 and it happens). Nearly all the Main menu choices have Sub-menu's which are all clearly labelled and all in different colours which is easy on the eye and gives a good idea of what kind of screen you are currently in.

The requests are typed into the computer at this stage. Potential locations in the LASER system are included as a source of reference. Most LASER requests are dealt with by 'phone. All non-BLDSC requests are added in a batch with a number sequence (unique to us) attached by the computer automatically in a specific template within the APPLICATIONS sub-menu. Requests destined for the BLDSC have a separate template to accommodate the separate search levels available. The machine automatically allocates the BLDSC request number that has already been loaded into the machine. These are placed in a special Artel file which is later loaded onto a floppy disk and sent directly to the British Library down the 'phone line via the modem. Prior to this, all requests are placed into a file called pending where they can be checked and edited before being added to the main body of requests.

All other requests are added to an Email file (as it does not generate a print) most of which are requested by us over the 'phone.

I'm not going to be able to go through all the functions methodically but will highlight the ones that are most relevant to our usage.

****I shall assume that you are still with me and you have a brief idea about the system and the way in which we work.****

The main advantage of this automated system is that all your records are easily accessible either by searching for the author, the reader or the request number (if known). There are two files where records can be viewed in this way, BROWSE REQUESTS and BROWSE ARCHIVE, REQUESTS being the file of all current material that is yet to arrive and all items on issue. The ARCHIVE contains all material that has been returned or that was meant for retention (e.g. photocopies). So you can find everything you've got and everything you've ever had in author order (or the first word in the Citation field), reader order or request number order. There are five browse levels which tell you various things like the Report History, the Loan History (loan and return dates and overdue dates etc) and individual Notes you may have made and Letters that have been sent. 'London Library on loan but reserved for us'. Each report is automatically dated and once typed is there forever. APPLICATION REPORTS comes into its own with BLDSC reply codes which are merely added in the form that they arrive and all relevant letters are machine generated.

After a given time, if the item has not arrived a chase file can be printed (an option available when you print your overdue notices which we do daily) and libraries that have not responded to our requests can be 'chased' by whatever method - Arttel for BLDSC, post, telex, Email etc. I usually only chase once a week as I feel guilty about bothering libraries that may be as bogged down with requests as we are!

When the book arrives a wrapper is placed around the cover (rather like the British Library Heavy Waiter wrappers) which explains that the book is not BBC property and should be returned by a specified date. The unique request number is written on this wrapper which is a help when the book is returned and also a help should one of our readers have any enquiry about the book whilst it's in his/her possession. Issuing is divided into BLDSC material and non-BLDSC. When issuing a BLDSC book the return date is calculated according to whether the book is short/long loan or urgently required for someone else. With non-

BLDSC books the library has to be specified and the due date typed. There is a facility for making any relevant notes. In our case we note the bar code as it helps to identify the book and note the condition if it happens to be falling apart.

In normal libraries, the readers will come to the library to collect their books. In our case, the books are delivered to the readers so the next step, after printing the receipt notification, is to acknowledge that the book has been 'COLLECTED' which is a bit of a nonsense in our case but has to be done as after a few days a letter will be generated saying that the reader hasn't collected it yet!

As I have said before, the overdues are generated automatically and if we're really lucky the reader will either return the book or ask for a renewal. In the case of renewals, the item is called up via its unique i.d. number and the new date can be typed in. Again, most of our renewals are 'phoned in' by the reader and we use the resultant print as a request to the lending library and either send or deliver it.

When a book is returned you merely type '4' for RETURNS, enter the i.d. and there you are. There is a check to make sure you are returning the right item - in fact in several of the screens and functions there is always a check so that if you have made an error, you can always correct it at that stage by answering 'n' for no rather than 'y' (for yes!)

While many of our requests are conducted over the 'phone there are groups of libraries which have electronic facilities of some kind which we cannot or do not 'phone. It is possible to transmit your requests electronically. The requests are formatted for transmission either from APPLICATION;EMAIL or TELECOMMS;EMAIL ITEM TRANSMIT and in our case they are sent down a 'phone line to the BBC Message Switching Service which will then transmit everything out in whatever format the receiving library wants (e.g. Telex, fax etc). The requests for the British Library D.S.C. are first of all dumped to a floppy disc and then transmitted directly to Boston Spa through Arttel.

The same thing happens in reverse for incoming messages, we have an Inray for B.L. requests and a Mailbox in the BBC M.S.S. which we access through TELECOMMS; the incoming files are captured and can be printed off. Incoming requests can also come in this way although most of them are still postal!

There are one or two other really useful features that I would like to mention. In APPLICATIONS there is an option called LIBCODES which is a file of library names and addresses etc. The system arrives with some records already on and are accessed by the standard library code as found in the British Library Code book. It is advisable to stick to these and on the whole we do with the exception of about 130 libraries which are the ones most heavily used by us. In these cases we have made up our own codes, e.g. London = London Library. The BL code is also inappropriate when we are dealing with individual branches within a group.

When the library code is on your system it comes in handy when applying and issuing and everything comes out in a uniform way should you search the computer for everything you have out from any given library.

Similarly there is a USER MAINTENANCE FILE which is a list of all our users with their addresses and 'phone numbers. Again each user has a unique i.d. which comes in handy when applying and can also be used for browsing REQUESTS or ARCHIVE.

The system can produce STATISTICS for any period of your choice. It can count Applications and Receipts and list the libraries applied to and received from. It can do lots of other things that we haven't even used yet. In addition to this there is a computer language called ACCESS which can be used to draw almost any kind of information about your requests.

Another thing worth mentioning is system security. Once a day, all requests and archive information is dumped onto tape so that if anything goes wrong you have recent information and in the

worst possible event the most information you can lose is one day's worth. It has happened but it was infinitely more soluble than re-sorting a drawer full of index cards after dropping it and almost all missing information was recovered. Merely thinking of all the things that can go wrong with a paper filing system is enough to get you running to the nearest computer! Additionally every two weeks you dump everything to tape, wipe the computer completely clean and then load it all back on again. As well as giving you a complete back up of everything it also compacts all the information on the disk, giving you more space and helping the machines speed and efficiency.

The bad points are: very few people in the country understand the Pick system so altering your letters or doing anything like that is not easy. Furthermore, the books available explaining Pick are very hard to understand. The main problem with the system itself is that it is not like a word processor and you cannot move freely around your application or report fields but it depends what you are used to and you get used to it anyway. The thought of one man as the prime person and contact point for trouble shooting for a growing number of users is a worry that has passed through my mind from time to time, but so far, so good.

So there you have it, from small beginnings and no competition, in interlines automation there are 45 sites using this system (at my last count) and now there are ten other systems available. Even so, if I were starting all over again I still think there is no better system for my particular set up. The facilities are far too complex and numerous to mention here and for anti-automation Luddites it is extremely user friendly and virtually no tuition is required (assuming there is already a grasp of the principle of Interlines). Buy one today!

Rob Corp
Assistant
Outside Loans Department
British Broadcasting Corporation
Library and Information Services

Urgent Action Service

In response to customer comments BLDSC has reduced the fax charge and handling charge for items not available. Fax delivery now costs 4 request forms (down from 5) and the handling charge 1 form (previously 2). The facility to add urgent requests to waiting lists has also been introduced, cost 2 forms. Use of the Urgent Action Service continues to grow and these changes should increase demand even more.

A sister "premium service" known as LEXICON is also proving popular with some customers. LEXICON allows you to send in your requests in a variety of formats which are convenient to you e.g. a simple computer printout of references, and you can also get your copies sent to you as a batch. The cost is 2 forms per copy but there is no handling charge for failures. With the copyright cleared option now available, multiple copies of individual articles can also be ordered - at a discount for larger numbers. LEXICON also caters for one-off requests from non-registered individuals who can write, phone or fax in their requests.

Mick Osborne
Customer Services BLDSC

X Searches from SRIS

From the beginning of February, X search requests for items not held at BLDSC are being passed to SRIS if the items are known to be held there. This is part of our evolving policy of making more effective use of the whole of the BL's collections. Sending X searches to SRIS should not delay requests significantly and will improve satisfaction rates. Please note that all requests should continue to be sent to BLDSC; they should not be sent direct to SRIS.

ARTTel developments

BLDSC has just begun work on developing a more effective and user-friendly ARTTel system. Although it will be a great improvement on this present system and we hope that existing ARTTel users will decide to change to it, there will be no compulsion to do so as the two systems will run in parallel. We have already consulted with some customers about what they would like from a new ARTTel and we will, of course, keep developers of automated ILL systems fully informed. At some point in the near future we will be looking for some guinea pigs to help us test the new system. Anyone interested please let me know.

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

FIL DIRECTORY

The FIL Directory of members, containing data from the questionnaires returned to the FIL Committee, is now completed and on disc. The information is as recent as the completed questionnaires, but the structure and staffing of Libraries being as it is, will soon be out of date. Therefore, on printing, we are including a page at the start of the Directory, with another form to be used for updating your entry or entries. Please complete any amendments and return them to the Membership Secretary.

Ann Illsley
University College of North Wales, Bangor.

We hope the completed Directories will be despatched by June, before the Annual Conference in Bath. We will be sending a free copy to each Institution entered; updated second and subsequent Directories will probably be for purchase.

The Directory is to be maintained on disc with the resultant database licensed under the Data Protection Act. The data will only be used for FIL business.

ATTENTION

FORUM FOR INTERLENDING

EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE WORKSHOP ON INTER-LIBRARY LOANS

Tuesday 16th June 1992
at
Glasgow University Library

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 National, Special, and Academic libraries, who will outline their Inter-library loan activities:

Jill McBride, Customer Services, National Library of Scotland Lending Services., Janice MacFarlane, BP Exploration, Carole Munro, Head of circulation, Paisley College.

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 5th June) to:

Margaret Hoolighan
Head of Inter-Library Loans
Glasgow University Library
Hillhead Street
Glasgow G12 8QE
Telephone: 041 339 8855 ext. 6702
Fax: 041 357 5043

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.

Survey concerning charging for BLDSC photocopies

Following a restructuring of the means by which we charged for photocopying from our own stock at Glasgow, the question was raised as to whether any comparable changes needed to be made in the interlibrary loans department. Using the helpful contact facilities offered by Janet I sent a message to the Lis-ILL list and my question was sent out to all the subscribers to this list.

My message was:- "At Glasgow we are trying to update our policy in the ILL office following on from procedural changes in how we charge academic staff for in-house photocopying from our own stock.

I would be interested to find out:-

1. whether you make a charge to your readers for supplying a BLDSC photocopy and if so
2. an indication of what the charge is

Presently we make no attempt to charge our academic staff for this which has created an anomalous situation since they are charged for our own photocopying service.

I received 30 replies in total, summarised as follows:-

- 15 (c.50%) make no charge
- 8 (c.27%) make a charge per ILL request :
3 @ £1, 3 @ 50p, 1 @ £1.50, and
1 @ 30p, plus 50p per additional
10 pages photocopying
- 3 (c.10%) charge approximately BL price
£3.60 - £4) for all ILL requests,
but within a devolved budgeting
context
- 3 (c.10%) make a charge per BL photocopy
: 2 @ £1 (1 of these charges 50p
per loan), 1 @ 50p
- 1 (c.3%) charges 6p per page for
photocopies whether in stock or
via BLDSC

Answers to the problem of creating an anomaly centred on the fact that if an item is in stock the reader has the choice of whether to copy or not whereas the ILL service gives access to the material. Theoretically the reprints supplied can then be put into stock but in practice it is too expensive in staff time to carry out this task.

A number of replies indicated that they only provided self-service machines in any case or viewed staffed photocopying as a 'value-added' service.

A few replies mentioned the requirements of the copyright legislation and stated that charges had been specifically introduced to meet the requirements of the Copyright Act. However, since half the libraries who replied have seen no need to introduce charging yet then it is clear that there is at least considerable confusion surrounding this matter. One reply referred to it as a 'pandora's box'! However, I now feel more certain about our present course of action, less exposed but inclined to explore the issues further.

Juliet Leeves states in her recent publication (p.16 of A Guide to Inter-Library Loan Management Systems, LINC, 1991):

'ILL is perhaps more restricted than any other of the library housekeeping functions by outside influences.'

This is the reason why organisations like FIL are important so that we can gain strength from sharing information and I recommend the use of the Janet Lis-ILL electronic network for this.

Helen Durdell
Principal Assistant Librarian
Glasgow University Library

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FIL COMMITTEE

In previous years we sent out with the papers for the Annual General Meeting a form for you to use to nominate someone for election to the committee. It is sad that it is rarely used and few people seem willing to consider serving on the committee. It is not a sentence for life as you can only be elected to service for two consecutive terms a maximum of four years. The number of committee meetings held is not large on average it has been four meetings a year, as the organisation of the annual conference is undertaken by a sub-committee. During the past year the committee has discussed and put forward views on the subject of differential charges for interlibrary loans, statistics required for interlibrary loans, as well as organising the conference and one day seminars. If therefore you feel that either you or someone you know would be willing to consider for election to the committee please don't throw the form away but use it and return your nomination to the secretary.

Emma Cusworth
Chairman FIL

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



Please register me as a personal/institutional* member of the Forum for Interlending.

I enclose a cheque for £15 made payable to the FORUM FOR INTERLENDING/Please invoice my institution*

* Delete as appropriate

Name: _____ Position: _____

Institution: _____

Address: _____
