

## **Collection Development in Internet Era – A Need for Change !**

**R. LAKSHMI and P. SUMA**

Documentation Research and Training Centre, Indian Statistical Institute,  
8th Mile, Mysore Road, Bangalore 560 059,

### **Abstract**

Collection development is the process of identifying the strength and weakness of the collections of library materials in terms of patron needs and community resources and attempting to correct existing weakness, if any. One has to cross many hurdles created by IT for developing the collection. A well framed Collection Development Policy (CDP) is of great help in guiding all these activities. The authors have described the means of use of Internet and Push Technology facilities for an effective collection development in the libraries by mentioning different search engines and URLs. Advantages and disadvantages of Internet and Push Technology are provided. Internet can be used for identifying different sources of information, can also be used from ordering to collection of information. Lists of selected Library and Information Science journals and different reference sources available on Net are appended.

### **Introduction**

Collection development is the process of planning a stock acquisition program not simply to cater for immediate needs, but to build a coherent and reliable collection over a number of years to meet the objective of the service<sup>6</sup>. It is the process of identifying the strength and weakness of library materials collection in terms of patron needs and community resources and attempting to correct existing weakness, if any<sup>4</sup>. This requires the constant examination and evaluation of the libraries resources and the constant study of both patron needs and change in the community to be served.

The collection development is a continuous process which starts with selection and ends with weeding out of information. The different stages in collection development are :

- Assessing the user needs vis-a-vis objectives of the organization
- Determining the selection policy

- Evaluating the existing collection
- Acquiring/Accessing the document/information
- Processing the document/information
- Resource Sharing/Cooperative efforts
- Weeding out-includes retention, preservation, relegation and discarding

### **Difficulties of Collection Development**

Developing a good collection is not an easy assignment. One has to cross many hurdles created by IT and its applications. Following are some of the constraints in collection development :

- Existence or emergence of lots of inter-disciplinary nature of studies and demands for that information.
- Availability of same information in different formats
- Proliferation of information
- Escalating price of document/information
- Usual annual budget cuts/shrinking budget
- Others-includes space and manpower problems.

### **Collection Development Policy (CDP)**

CDP is a written document and an important tool for guiding all activities related to planning, budgeting, selection and acquiring library material. CDP will help the library to make best use of its limited resources by indicating who will be served for what purpose and with what type of material.

Preparation and review of a CDP should encourage the library or information center to define and redefine the goals & objectives. CDP helps the library collection to confirm to the aims and objectives of the institution thereby helps in translating those aims and objectives into clear and specific guidelines for each stage of material handling - selection, acquisition, processing, housing, weeding. The guidelines in the policy should cover all subject fields and all types of library materials.

In any environment the selection policy should guide at each step. The CDP be such that it should allow to acquire print-on-paper and non print-on-paper. There should be a provision to change the CDP if it is required.

## Use of Internet for Collection Development

Internet is vast resource of different sources of information. Eventhough much useful information is embedded in Internet, it will be of no use unless we mine those resources. There are different ways to locate the known or unknown sources on the net. If we know the universal resource locator (URL) of a site we can either FTP or TELNET or browse using a navigation tool such as Netscape or Internet Explorer.

Library catalogues of LC, OCLC, BLDS, NLM, etc are quite useful to other libraries. Publisher catalogues or publishing house home pages provide bibliographic information about their publication. Option to order those publications through online is also provided. This type of correspondence saves the time of librarian and quickens the acquisition process.

Surfing the Internet calls for familiarity with some of the search engines. A search engine is a program that searches documents for specified keywords and returns a list of documents where the keywords are found. Following are some of the popular search engines and their URLs.

Search Engines	URL
Altavista	<a href="http://www.altavista.com">http://www.altavista.com</a>
Excite	<a href="http://www.excite.com">http://www.excite.com</a>
HotBot	<a href="http://www.hotbot.com">http://www.hotbot.com</a>
Inference Find	<a href="http://www.inference.com/ifind">http://www.inference.com/ifind</a>
Infoseek	<a href="http://www.infoseek.com">http://www.infoseek.com</a>
Lycos	<a href="http://www.lycos.com">http://www.lycos.com</a>
Megallen	<a href="http://www.mckinley.com">http://www.mckinley.com</a>
<i>Metacrawler</i>	<a href="http://www.dogpile.com">http://www.dogpile.com</a>
Opentext	<a href="http://www.opentext.com">http://www.opentext.com</a>
Savvy Search	<a href="http://www.cs.colostate.edu:2000">http://www.cs.colostate.edu:2000</a>
Webcrawler	<a href="http://www.webcrawler.com">http://www.webcrawler.com</a>
Yahoo	<a href="http://www.yahoo.com">http://www.yahoo.com</a>

Since Internet browsing and downloading consuming lots of time, push technology comes to rescue from 'aimless browsing'. It is considered as answer to 'Internet Clutter'; the next wave in digital information delivery. This technology is also known by the name 'Webcaster' or 'Netcaster'.

## Push Technology

Push technology is an application software which helps to deliver customized streams of information at the work desk without disturbing the other work. It works in the background while the user working with other programs. 'Push' not only made retrieving information from the web easier, but also allowed 'off-line' browsing.

### *Advantages and disadvantages of push technology*

Push technology offers following advantages :

- The ability to customize information sent to users results in drastic cut down of the time spent by average web surfer.
- They can automate delivery of crucial news to users.
- Push products provide a cost-effective alternative to e-mail, voice-mail or snail mail
- Push products centralize and ease control of information at the server level, rather than at users' PCs
- Push allows companies to reach their target audience more easily, effectively and in a more eye-pleasing manner

Some of the disadvantages of Push technology are :

- Not likely to work well with larger amounts of data, or higher numbers of users;
- Lack of administration and development tools are likely to impede the growth of push technology;
- Pushing too much data at peak times or improper network configuration may still clog networks;
- Push may also add to information anxiety rather than ease it;
- Some applications occupy lots of space on a user's hard disk; the more successful the push technology, the bigger the user's hard disk has to be;
- Wastes time by drawing attention to trivial matters.

Following are the web addresses of some of the Push Technology Sites :

Software	Universal Resource Locator
AirMedia	<a href="http://www.airmedia.com">http://www.airmedia.com</a>
BackWeb	<a href="http://www.backweb.com">http://www.backweb.com</a>
Castanet	<a href="http://www.marimba.com">http://www.marimba.com</a>
Channel Manager	<a href="http://www.datachannel.com">http://www.datachannel.com</a>
Downtown	<a href="http://www.incommon.com">http://www.incommon.com</a>
Freeloader	<a href="http://www.freeloader.com">http://www.freeloader.com</a>
Headliner	<a href="http://www.headliner.com">http://www.headliner.com</a>
INCISA	<a href="http://www.wayfarer.com">http://www.wayfarer.com</a>
Intermind/Verity	<a href="http://www.intermind.com">http://www.intermind.com</a>
MyWay	<a href="http://www.myway.com">http://www.myway.com</a>
NETdelivery	<a href="http://www.netdelivery.com">http://www.netdelivery.com</a>
Point Cast	<a href="http://www.pointcast.com">http://www.pointcast.com</a>

Push is the tool that helps to ease information gathering. It can be used as supplementary one that works by a automatic supply of information to user from Internet.

The concept of 'push' is not new to librarians. It was referred as 'Selective Dissemination of Information' in which information was scanned manually and disseminated to the required user. Librarians do use this technology using automatic searches, such as KR Information System's Alert service of NEXIS's Eclipse, and other mechanisms such as Contents page Service, clipping services and E-mail news delivery. As librarians are familiar with this type of services they can easily handle 'Push Technology' as information gathering tool.

The ever significant trend in computer industry which always research on decreasing the cost of hardware and increasing the capability of software can bring about notable changes in push technology in near future. As this technology is in infant stage, newer developments can be expected soon.

If that particular information is actually required by the user, download and add to the database. Otherwise provide link to it. (if it has permanent use).

### **Advantages of Internet with respect to Collection Development**

Internet has revolutionized the communication, accessibility, timeliness and upto datenss in the following way:



- 1) Communication
  - Can easily locate the publishers' details
  - Communicate to the publisher without extra cost
- 2) Accessibility
  - E-mail journals are available on net - some are free. The selected list of URLs of the Library and Information science journals are listed in Appendix A
  - Most of the sources on web provide more links than print-on paper
  - Helps in co-operative development by searching OPACs of different libraries
- 3) Timeliness
  - Saves time-paradigm shift from just-in-case to just-in-time
  - With great speed users can get the information in time. There by it fulfills the fourth law of Library Science 'Save the time of the reader'
- 4) Uptodateness
  - Publishers update their online version frequently than their printed version (Example Directories)
- 5) Cost effectiveness
  - Cost of reference collection can be reduced to the great extent because many of the sites offer free services. List of reference sources are given in the Appendix B.

### **Constraints using Internet for Collection Development**

Though IT removes some old basic problems it created new problems. The following are some of the problems created in Internet world which has direct impact on collection development.

- Finding out what is available is difficult. Since Internet is having lots of junk information, finding out what exactly we want is a time consuming task. This calls for expertise in using search engines for navigating the net;
- It is difficult to judge the authenticity of the information. This is because all of them (form experts to novice in a field) put their information on net and evaluating them are tedious process;
- Missing links/deadlinks/no data links are problematic;

- Downloading consumes lots of disk space and time;
- Disappearing of sites, change in URL address are yet another problem.

### Conclusion

Collection Development is an important process in any library. The goals of collection development are unaltered in any environment - whether digital or in print media. The main difference between past and present collection development is the existence of same information in multiple formats such as print on paper, CD-ROM, Online and Interent. In other words 'Information Mix' is the order of the day. Dilemma exists in librarians mind regarding selection of formats.

Internet is a collection of vast resources. It has tremendous impact on collection development. Internet can be used for identifying different sources; can also be used from ordering to collection of information. It saves lots of time for user and staff. Finally, it helps to provide Right information to Right user at Right time.

### References

1. Agarwall, A. The pull for push. *Information Systems Computer World*, Dec. 1-15; 1997; 66-72.
2. Bing Michelle. Push: A technology with staying power. *Database*, Aug/Sept 1997; 27-30
3. Cogswell, J. The organization of collection management functions in academic research libraries. *Journal of Academic Librarianships*, 1987; 13; 268-76.
4. Faruqi, K.K. *Development of collections in the library*. New Delhi; Anmol Publishers; 1997.
5. Gopinath, M.A. and Rao, I.K.R. Collection development and usage : An analytical approach. *DRTC Annual Seminar (19)*; 1982, Paper AA
6. *Harrod's Librarians' Glossary and Reference Book*. 5th Ed. Gower Publishers, USA; 1984.
7. Seetharama, (S). Collection Development/Management in an Information Technolgy-Based environment : current initiatives and issues. *DESIDOC Bulletin*, 1997; 17(1); 11-20.

### Appendix-A

#### Selected list of Library and Information Science Journals available on Net :

Cybernetics

<http://www.cindoc.csic.es>

ARIADNE Library and Information Science Journal

<http://www.ariadne.ac.uk>

Information Research on Electronic Journals

<http://www.shelf.ac.uk/uni/academic/I-m/is-lecturer/ircont.html>

Journal of Internet Cataloguing

<http://jic.libraries.psu.edu>

Cataloguing and Classification Quarterly

<http://ccq.libraries.psu.edu>

Library Journal Digital

<http://www.ljdigital.com>

The Library Quarterly

<http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/LQ>

Database

<http://www.online.inc.com/database/index.html>

Online World

<http://www.online.inc.com/index.html>

Index Morganagus

<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/%YEemorgen/morganagus>

This is a library related electronic serials using glimpse indexing technology

### Appendix-B

#### Following are the few examples of reference sources available on Web.

##### *Dictionaries*

1. Webster's revised un-bridged dictionary

<http://humanities.uchicago.edu/forms-unrest/webster.form.html>

2. Random House dictionary

<http://www.answers.com/reference.cgi>

3. Dictionary of acronyms and abbreviations

<http://www.ucc.ic/cgi-bin/acronym>



4. Dictionary of Science and Biotechnology  
<http://biotech.chem.indiana.edu/pages/dictionary.html>
5. PC Webopaedia dictionary  
<http://www.pcwebopaedia.com>
6. Free Online dictionary of Computing  
<http://wagner.Princeton.EDU/foldoc>

Note : List of dictionaries are provided in <http://www.onlook.com>

### ***Encyclopaedias***

1. Britanica Online  
<http://www.eb.com>
2. Grolier multi-media encyclopaedia Online  
<http://www.grolier.com>
3. McGraw-Hill Encyclopaedia of Science and Technology, 18th ed  
<http://www.mhreference.com/EST/est.html>

### ***Thesauri***

1. Roget Thesaurus  
<http://humanities.uchicago.edu/forms-unrest/ROGET.html>
2. Library of Congress Thesauri  
<http://lcweb.loc.gov/lexico>

### ***Quotations***

- Famous Quotations  
<http://www.labirinth.accl/pirovich/lotes.html>
- Bartlett's Familiar Quotations  
<http://www.columbia.edu/acis/vartleby/bartlett/>

### ***Newspapers***

- Washington Post  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com>
- New York Times  
<http://www.nytimes.com>
- The times  
<http://www.the-times.co.uk>
- Observer  
<http://www.observer.co.uk>

Hindu Online

<http://www.hinduonline.com>

Deccan Herald

<http://www.deccanherald.com>

Times of Inida

<http://www.timesofindia.com>

Note : List of all online newspapers around the world is available at

<http://www.worldwideneews.com>