

**Proceedings of the 24th Annual Seminar/Workshop of the Nigerian
Library Association, Cataloguing, Classification, and Indexing
Section**

**Held At Stella Obasanjo Library Complex, Lokoja, 17th-23rd October,
2004**

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The theme of this conference was strategies for managing Technical Services in library and information centres. Some of the papers presented at the sessions were:

"Subject Cataloguing and Computerization: Current Trends," by K. I. N. Nwalo of the Department of Library, Archive, and Information Science University of Ibadan. Nwalo defined subject cataloguing as the professional techniques and processes of identifying the subject matter or content of a work and choosing a suitable word or term from a thesaurus to describe the subject. Such a thesaurus or subject heading list is adopted by a bibliographic agency and so all the terms used to describe the subjects of the materials held are selected from such a list. He summarised the need for subject headings, quoting in the words of Aina (2004), that "there are library users who do not know the author and title of the work but are looking for document on particular areas of subject interest." Nwalo makes a clear distinction between descriptive cataloguing and subject cataloguing, and views the former as something that paraprofessionals can do, while subject cataloguing should be reserved for professionals.

Nwalo discussed the computerization of subject cataloguing, tracing the history of computerized cataloguing such as LC MARC. The three major phases of computerization of subject cataloguing are:

- **CIP Data copying:** transferring the cataloguing-in-publication data from the printed book onto a cataloguing worksheet.
- **Online cataloguing:** searching and locating cataloguing data through international computer networks.
- **Cataloguing on the web :** allows the local cataloguer access to an unlimited number of bibliographic databases around the world, once such databases are connected to the Internet.

Nwalo highlighted the characteristics of computerised subject cataloguing:

- Increased production
- Sharing of cataloguing data
- Deprofessionalization of the work of cataloguing librarians.
- Reduction in library staff.

Nwalo concluded by saying that it is necessary for libraries all over the world to computerise their operations. In Africa, and Nigeria in particular, no library has been fully automated, and librarians should be ready to face the challenge.

The next paper was delivered by Dr Ibidapo Oketunji titled "Library resources development and the role of information and communication technologies (ICT)." Methods of providing library resources have been static. The advent of computerized systems of communication is making improving the provision of library resources more difficult, because most libraries cannot cope with electronic systems.

ICT focuses on two areas of activity: delivery and support. ICT roles can be summarized as:

- Providing maximum access to collections and services for all existing and potential users regardless of their physical or educational abilities.
- Working to create new integrated products that deliver maximum benefit to communities and individuals.
- Creating links beyond libraries and information centres, tying the resources into other programmes, building networked learning space

- Ensuring that all of library's operational activities are as effective and as efficient as possible.
- Supporting the library's strategic objectives of leadership advocacy and advice.

The author discussed CD-ROM databases, which have the problem of sustainability. Internet access is a better choice for databases. The selection of a database is an even more complex process than the selection of printed material.

C.B. Nwosu, a deputy director of the National library of Nigeria, presented a paper titled "National Union Catalogue: the Way Forward." The decree empowering the National library of Nigeria as the National bibliographic agency for Nigeria gave the agency responsibility for national bibliographic control in the Universal Bibliographic control (UBC) network aimed at achieving universal availability of publication (UAP). It also has respectability for the implementation of programmes and standards established by IFLA/UNESCO for the achievement of effective bibliographic control in Nigeria.

A national union catalogue is a record of the publications that exist in a particular country. In most cases it is created by the national library of that country. In Nigeria, the national union catalogue was created for library cooperation in the comprehensive programme of national resource sharing. Five major libraries supported the national union catalogue. They are Ahmadu Bello University, University of Nigeria, University of Lagos, University of Ife, and National Library of Nigeria.

The aim of the project was to:

- Provide information on library holdings to promote resource sharing.
- Limit duplication among libraries to essential materials.
- Produce printed national union catalogue or union list which will be useful for inter-library lending,

A national union list of serials (NULOS) has already been created, beginning with the University of Ibadan in 1968. Since then, other libraries have been contributing to the NULOS. The first edition of NULOS, with approximately 12,000 records, received from 49 libraries, was published in

1977. Subsequent NULOS records will be put into a database, using the DOS version of the CDS/ISIS software.

There are differences in cataloguing practice in the catalogue cards sent by participating libraries. It is the role of the cataloguer to correct such anomalies using AACR2 as a guide. The National Library of Nigeria has a role in the production of the National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN) national name authority file.

Dr Ibidapo Oketuji delivered a paper entitled "Migrating the Catalogue Database from One System to Another." Less has been written about this area than on topics such as library automation and retrospective conversion of card catalogues. Migrating from one system to another is very expensive because it affects so many staff members and their work. All library employees must be involved if the migration is to be successful.

Reasons for system migration include:

- New technological developments
- Networking
- Expansion of database
- Vendor instability

When the time comes to migrate, staff are already used to computerization, the existence of machine readable database and a barcoded collection. Library administrators are faced with these questions:

- Will the data transfer to the new system?
- Will the barcodes be compatible with the new system?
- Will the new vendor understand the library's migration needs?

Some of the factors to consider in migrating to a new system include:

- **Support for migration** : Will the vendor be able to carry out the migration successfully. Does he have experience in migration? The librarian should consult libraries that have carried out migration exercise before.
- **Adherence to Standards** : Ensure that the new system will be able to comply with some of the existing standards guiding automation.

- **Capability of Expansion** : Efforts should be made to acquire a new system that has more room for storage i.e. large capacity or one that is capable of expansion and or interfacing with other models and system.
- **Vendor Support**: Support of the vendor should be solicited most especially in the areas of selection, installation of and training for the new system.
- **Networking capability** : This is very essential to a new system. It should be capable of connecting all kinds of networks, campus, regional and the high-speed national networks.
- **Flexibility of the system** : The new system should be flexible to be able to adapt to the changing environment system that can operate on multiple platforms are more attractive alternative e.g. UNIX and ORACLE.
- **Production of management and statistical reports** . The new system should be able to provide reliable and extensive reports. These will help the library administrators make better decisions.
- **Stability of the vendor** : Try and get as much information as possible about the vendor. The vendor should be able to provide current financial statements or manual report like number of employees, size of the research and development division, number of installations, number of recent sales. All these valuable insight into the vendor's prospects for the near term. If the vendor cannot pass the near term viability test, the long-term prospects become irrelevant.

For migration to move in the right direction, the library and staff thrive during the process, the following guidelines should be followed.

- **Keep a sane schedule** : As much as possible the time schedule for the take off installation and completion of the exercise should be strictly adhered to.
- **Direct the action** : In order to meet contractual and procedural deadlines, there should be somebody to direct the project to ensure every thing is on course and both the library and vendor comply.
- **" C" is for communication** : There should be free communication between the library and its staff and community. Opinions expressed should be addressed.
- **Train strategically** : Efforts should be made that the staff are trained in accordance with the new system. This could be done by a staff trainer or by the vendor.

- **Keep focussed** : There should be no distractions immediately migration starts. It should be completed before addressing other issues.
- **Yes, migrate** : Librarians preparing for migration should train/practise with the new system and not with test databases.
- **Seek public and staff input**
- **Be flexible** - As you work along with the new system you should be flexible.

The paper concludes by saying that migration is necessary in libraries, for them to upgrade their system, add modules from other system e.t.c in the words of Bridge "--- a library system cannot remain reliable much longer than about five years." Invariably it implied that a change is necessary and the mode of selecting a second system will be different from the first.

Selecting a good vendor is important. He should be able to handle data with care during transfer. Your new system should be flexible and easy to manoeuvre to take care of new technological developments and change with the least amount of difficulty.

Mrs J. B. Amune, the Ag Head Technical Services Department, Ambrose Alli University library Ekpoma presented a paper on "The Union Catalogue Project: the Role of the Nigerian Cataloguer." Sonaike's (2001) definition of a catalogue, "a record of the books and other resources of the library indicated on cards, books or machine-readable format" was contrasted with a union catalogue, defined as a catalogue that holds the combined records of two or more libraries who have agreed to cooperate and share resources for the benefits of their users. The need for a union catalogue is created by increased acquisition due to the information explosion. We must save the user's time as propounded by S. R. Ranganathan.

The explosion of information has led librarians to seek cooperative solutions for access to the maximum range of literatures at minimum cost (Emenike, 1999). This made Nigerian cataloguers eager to provide a union catalogue - a compass that will help users navigate the bewildering sea of information. A union catalog will eliminate duplicate files, reprocessing of data, repeated handing of the same unit of data, etc.

Nigerian libraries who wish to contribute to a union catalogue should indicate their interest and the National Library of Nigeria, which will serve as a coordinating centre. CD-ROM is the preferred format for the union

catalogue. There should be training through conferences, workshops, etc. The paper concluded by admonishing Nigerian cataloguers to assume a re-defined role as managers and automation experts ,most especially in cataloguing operations.

A. M. Iheaturu, C. N. Okorafor, and N. Mberu, all of Federal University of Technology, Owerri Library co-presented the final paper, "Resource Development in Modern Libraries: the Role of ICT." ICT is at the centre of the change that is fast sweeping across functions and services in libraries, particularly in the advanced countries. Technology has changed the processing, storage, retrieval and dissemination of information. Very few libraries in Nigeria have embraced the new information technology. Libraries that have been fully automated to include IITA Ibadan, NIIA Lagos, with NLN Lagos partially automated.

These proceedings would not be complete without mentioning the classification scheme for government documents produced by the cataloguing, classification, and indexing section of the Nigeria Library Association and the practical session on CD/ISIS-generating catalogue data/procedure for data input.

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