ROLE OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA IN RESOURCE SHARING

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Abstract.

Information Resource centers and libraries are facing high demands for services and resources at the same time declining levels of manpower and financial resources. So that Libraries are not able to offer these services. A natural development resulting from this situation is the development of library consortia. "Primary aim of Library consortia is to fulfill the intellectual, social, informational and educational, aspirations of users through mutual provision of quality resources and services for the library. The trend of consortia or mass of libraries buying e-information collectively has become very essential in the last few years. This new scenario, along with new forms of purchasing and selling e-information, has led to new pricing models.

Based on this paper the various offers from different publishers for access to electronic journals and discussed the need and objective of library consortium in this digital age.

Keywords: Library, Consortium, e-information

Introduction

In the field of library and information science the word 'consortium' is not new. It was used for interlibrary loan among libraries and information centers for sharing of resources. Later on, cooperative cataloguing systems were organized as consortia.

In pursuance of to the Online Dictionary of Library and information Science (ODLIS), library consortia can be described as "an association of independent libraries and/ or library

system established by formal agreements, usually for the purpose or resource sharing. Membership may be restricted to a specific geographical region, type of library (public, academic, special), or subject specialization."

The library consortium is a collective action of a group of libraries toward a common goal of sharing or exchange resources with each other. It is not merely about sharing the resources but also improving access to information. It refers to support and coordination between the libraries for sharing resources of information. A consortium is to maximize the accessibility of information and minimize costs and repetition without losing individual identity.

The need for electronic journals has created the necessity for the librarians to change their role of keeper of the library documents to that of a navigator of information. The conclusion suggests that despite the political and social, legal difference, consortium development follows a predictable life cycle. All the development followed by structured process it may be sequential as same as algorithmic pattern rather than casual relationship.

Need of library consortia

Although a library consortium is formed to achieve shared goals, the main goals of cooperation vary. One of the most common goals is resource sharing. Electronic resource licensing is another goal, aiming to reduce costs per unit through the formation of purchasing consortia.

Vasishta, Dhanda & Dhingra (2012) provided factors that justify the need of consortia development for the management of electronic resources:

1. **Budgets: -** Every institution allocated the budget to every department for their development and smoothly working same as others library also allocate the budget discipline wise to acquiring electronic resources. The libraries with their less financial allocation have to judge new ways to merge globally accessible e- resources. Consortia

are formed to enhance and best utilization of the financial power of the institutes over other resources.

2. **Explosion of information:** There has been rapid attack of new material and e- versions of old materials resulting in the availability of information in numerous forms. This flood shows no signs of abating. A consortium, with the collective strength of resources of various institutions available to it, is in a better position to address and resolve the problems of managing, organizing and archiving the electronic resources.

3. **Dependency:** With the dissemination of information in myriad forms, it is difficult for every library to be fully sufficient to provide the information needs of its user community. Financial constraints, human resources, space curb, inadequacy are factors that influence the libraries to opt for the consortia approach.

4. **Diligence of Publishers:** This approach has helped to get attractive discounted rates and most of the publishers respond positively to the call of consortia. They are excited to give the best possible offer.

5. **Diversity in user and their needs:** the change is the rule of nature that's why technology has changed expectations of researchers, their willingness to accept services that are available on demand. The Web-based resources are a suitable answer to the expectations of users. The users want to have access to that material as promptly as possible, and many of them want information at their computer screens.

6. **Rapid Access:** The technology provides an unparalleled media for delivery of information with rapidly and economy. All the variety of users can now hope to have access to their learned journals articles in electronic form as the electronic access is comparatively cheaper. Users are initial stages to expect electronic delivery that is speedy and accessible at remote.

7. **Authenticity of research:** The research output of all institutions is expected to increased access to international e-databases and full-text resources, so that libraries are willing to develop the collection with the addition of electronic resources.

8. **Professionalism:** This theory has fantastic influence on the consortia initiatives. The

changing role of librarian as a conservator to a navigator/disseminator of information has improved the significance of library consortia.

9. **Developments for future:** stability in system with well managed way is an important part of the technology; it can store, retrieve and deliver the electronic resources. Consortia help in technological change publishing industry and associated legislations which can affect the libraries directly or indirectly.

Objectives

- To encourage and support the professional development of librarians
- To cooperate and collaborate with global library consortia and other relevant organizations and institutions.
- To provide a forum for sharing information.
- To promote intellectual property rights
- To work towards the creation and promotion of virtual libraries
- To enhance the provision of learning resources and access to information
- To negotiate and subscribe to electronic databases for consortium members

Consortium selection and procurement of resources

The consortium activity mainly consists of resource identification, selection and licensing with set guidelines and framework. "While selecting the resources always keep in consideration the need and users of information. In the process of collection development, selection involves assessment of the market for identification of relevant offers, selecting and evaluating offers on the basis of cost benefit analysis (Schaffler).''

Selection Resources

The selection criteria should be consisting of:

1. Resources available from scholarly societies, university presses and not for profit organizations should be preferred over commercial publishers.

2. Well established multidisciplinary resources with broad coverage preferred over highly specialized sources targeted for specialists.

3. Resources to be preferred in electronic form.

4. Resources which are very important but highly cost intensive are to be preferred over those which are less important or less used and low cost.

5. Selection to be based on usage of e-resources to consortium participants.

6. Speed of access and reliability of resources provided.

7. Impact factor based on analysis of citation indexes and other factors to be considered for assessing relevance of e-resources selected.

8. Level of demand by users.

Publishers Ranking For Journals Selection

Selection and evaluation of resources for the consortium is a tough job. The following could be an ideal situation for selection publisher's titles.

1. Based on union catalogue of subscribed titles, analyze the publishers and subject- wise dynamics of currently subscribed titles and rank publishers using:

   a)   By number of titles,

   b)   By total number of subscriptions for those title, and

   c) By the ration of currently subscribed titles for the total number of titles published by a given publisher.

2. Selection of non-subscribed titles, the following could help:

   a) Trial basis usage statistics

   b) Ranked list of tittles based on impact factor, and

c) Ranked list of titles by publishers' global usage. This could be useful in selecting titles within publisher's collection, if the consortium has already decided on the publisher.

Request for Proposal (RFP)

"Analytical selection process of e-journals is completed; Request for Proposal should be prepared and sent to the vendors. Some of the following key point pertaining to selected items should be covered in RFP.

1. Resource Selected for purchase with

- Comprehensive product specification
- Recent spread of the resources among the members and the format in which existing members currently subscribe them.
- Technology platform details.

2. Technical terms and requirement such as

- Access model-print plus electronic, electronic and e-plus print or others.
- Archiving requirements such as content delivery format and medium, archiving rights for print subscribed contents cross shared content and needs, non subscribed content.
- Conditions of perpetual access from vendors site for post termination period.
- Back file requirements.
- Training and technical support.
- Document delivery rights and limitations
- Commercial terms regarding
- Contract period and issues
- Payment and related commercial terms like performance guarantee."
- Conditions concerning contractual liabilities, handling disputes, etc.

Library consortia issues and challenges

"The library consortium activity is a complex process which involves the wholehearted support and concerted efforts of the Libra, their management and the publishers. They form an important trio in the new scholarly information environment **(Srivastava & Verma, 2014); (Sreekumar & Sunitha, 2007)."**

1. **Increasing Users; Expectation and Availability of Limited Budget:**   With inadequate budget, one of the greatest issues involved is to meet the expectations of the participating institutes. Every participating institute has their own requirement. If a consortium has a good budget, then it can satisfy the needs of the member institutes.

2. **Resources Identification:** Identifying the most appropriate product which is agreed upon by all the members of the consortium is more or less difficult proposition. This is mostly because each and every member will have their own wish list of information product and services, though the overlap between the products will be on the higher side in the case of the unideal uniform group.

3. **Technology Infrastructure:** Extensive range planning and sourcing of the appropriate IT and Communication infrastructure conducive for proper delivery of information resources is pre requisite for every participating library

4. **Fair Use:** copy right is one of the challenges which are faced by INDEST- AICTE consortia.

5. **Pricing Issues:** There is no standard practice or processes begin followed by majority of the publisher. In most cases, cost of the journals are out of reach of many libraries and only a consortia approach could provide some meaning full practical solution. Publisher's are invited for negotiations and asked to offer their best prices to the consortia several methods of pricing are followed, but what is important is that, the price offered by the publisher's should be economically viable for the participating libraries.

6. **Licensing and Copyright Issues:** Consortia Licensing is a legal processes of acquiring uses right of the Intellectual Property governed by the copyright laws for a community of members.

7. **Archival Issues: "**This is an area which needs utmost attention and unfortunately this is yet to be attended to by the consortia in India. Long-term preservation of the invaluable wealth of information being accumulated by the consortium is to be archived and preserved for posterity."

Examples of E-Journals Consortia India

1. INDEST – AICTE Consortium *(http://paniit.iitd.ac.in/indest/)*

2. UGC INFONET *(http://web.inflibnet.ac.in/info/ugcinfonet/ugcinfonet.jsp)*

3. FORSA Consortium (Astronomy and Astrophysics Libraries)

4. *(http://www.iiap.res.in/library/forsa.html)*

5. CSIR Library Consortium

http://www.niscair.res.in/ActivitiesandServices/MajorProjects/majproj.htm#ej

ournalconsortia)

6. ISRO Library Consortium

7. IIM Library Consortium

8. HELINET (Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Karnataka)

(http://www.rguhs.ac.in/hn/newhell.htm)

9. ICMR Library Consortium

Summing up:

"In the age of globalization, library consortia are ways to achieve the cost effectiveness by bridging and digitization the libraries at national and international levels. With the proliferation or information in myriad forms, it is difficult for any library to be fully

sufficient to cater to be information needs of its user community. Financial constraints, space curb, human resources inadequacy also stress upon the need for libraries to opt for the consortia approach. Consortia are also becoming increasingly interested in the other costs in the supply chain between the original request and material becoming available to the user (p. 104)". "We also predict consortia playing a major role in improving the quality of service from suppliers, working in partnership with suppliers to develop new services, and fostering the integration of systems and services. This is already evident in the shelf-ready books developments outlined above. This service requires a great degree of integration between the systems of book suppliers and those used by libraries."

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