



Recent Publications

BOOK REVIEWS

OPACs and Beyond. Proceedings of a Joint Meeting of the British Library, DBMIST, and OCLC, August 17-18, 1988. Dublin, Ohio: OCLC Online Computer Library Center, 1989. 120p. \$12.50 (ISBN 1-55653-0970-6).

OPACs and Beyond is a collection of thirteen papers prepared for presentation at the second annual invitational conference held at OCLC Online Computer Library Center in Dublin, Ohio. The conference, a joint meeting of the British Library, DBMIST (Direction des Bibliothèques, des Musées et de l'Information Scientifique et Technique), and OCLC, centered around the OPAC (online public access catalog) and interrelated automated systems and projects.

The first of four sessions was chaired by Martin Dillon, Director, Office of Research, OCLC, and began with a review by Derek Greenwood of the British Library on OPAC installations and the current state of library automation in the United Kingdom. Subject retrieval, enhancing of bibliographic records (such as enhanced records from publishers' or booksellers' records), and linking systems and databases were areas covered. Even though users have become more sophisticated in their demands, the aim remains to provide users ready and simple access to information through OPACs.

The MLR (Managing Large Retrievals) Project, sponsored by the OCLC Office of Research, was highlighted as research undertaken to focus on providing the end user an overview of retrieval and how to

navigate through long lists of references. Of continued attention was the MARC record, suggested as a source of information.

Session two, chaired by Brian Perry, Director of Research and Development for the British Library, concentrated on the OPAC through information retrieval, subject authority control, and problems encountered with large databases and multiple databases.

Stephen E. Robertson, professor in the Department of Information Science at the City University of London, discussed the relation of information retrieval to interactive library catalogs.

The next paper reviewed "Subject Authority Control in Online Catalog Design," a four-phased project from September 1987 to December 1988 supported by the OCLC Office of Research and the University of Michigan. The study of machine-readable Library of Congress Subject Headings was considered a very important step toward effectively designing systems for the incorporation of Library of Congress Subject Headings-machine readable in online bibliographic systems.

The session ended with Clifford A. Lynch, Director of Library Automation at the University of California, Berkeley, who viewed as top priority for library automation in the next decade the elimination of the distinction between books and journal articles.

Serge Chambaud of DBMIST chaired the third session, which began with a pa-

per on the future of academic library OPACs. Lynn J. Brindly from Aston University in Birmingham, England, reviewed major findings of past studies largely undertaken by OCLC. Users want more services, such as more terminals in and out of the library, subject searching improvements, and greater database access to more materials. For progressing toward the future, an emphasis was suggested on expert systems, graphics, multimedia tools, and electronic publishing. Subject searching and its enhancements were considered as key stepping stones into the future.

Another representative from the OCLC Office of Research gave a paper on "Union Catalogs on Personal Supercomputers," with the observation that searching features are restricted by slow access to centralized systems. A prediction was made that changes will occur in database storage, availability of name matching, better color and graphics display, demand of instant results, and increased speed.

Foremost in the designer's mind must be designing systems to make the user's life more pleasant and productive.

The Université de Technologie de Compiègne, France, had representatives at the conference presenting a paper on "Communicating in Natural Language with a Library Database." A database system, VORAS, based on semantics for knowledge representation, enables designers to flexibly represent and manipulate data and knowledge.

"Videotex for Open Access to Multiple Catalogues on Multiple Media" was presented by Cabinet Norbert Paquel, Consultant and Director, Laser Media, Paris. Because of the thousands of services offered on the network, standardization was emphasized as mandatory. Online databases produced by universities and institutes plus the use of scientific and technical databases have been promoted by DBMIST. DBMIST is working toward developing CD-ROM use in libraries for access to "a worldwide catalog of bibliographic information and primary documents." A description of the project completes the paper.

In "Human-Computer Interaction and Online Catalogues," Nathalie N. Mitev from City University, London, issued a call for an investigation of searching rules and their effects, since methods of retrieval information are not separate any longer (such as catalogs, cataloging, libraries, and retrieval systems). Users do not wish to be bogged down with complicated guide tools and as a result many will remain novice users.

Videotex was explored next by Jean-Bernard Marino, Director of the Service Commun de la Documentation, of the Université de Metz, France. The videotex program was launched in 1978 with the Minitel terminal, electronic directory, Transpac network, and Kiosque invoicing. Because videotex requires special rules and imposes changes, a caution was issued: "Make it simple."

Miriam A. Drake of the Georgia Institute of Technology ended the conference with a paper for the plenary session on online systems from a managerial perspective, "Electronic Library of the Future, or

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Commissioned and approved by the ACRL Board of Directors, the manual is the result of two years of development and field-testing. The project was headed by Dr. Nancy Van House of the University of California at Berkeley, who also worked on the development of *Output Measures for Public Libraries* (ALA, 1987).

The measures are specifically designed for academic libraries. The manual contains all the background information and materials you need to carry out a measurement project, including survey forms ready to photocopy. The manual will also be available with a database software package to make your data collection even easier!

Measuring Academic Library Performance: A Practical Guide

By Dr. Nancy Van House, Beth Weil, and Charles R. McClure
Prepared for the Association of College and Research Libraries, under the auspices of the Committee on Performance Measures, Ad Hoc

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Price to be announced. ISBN 0-8389-0529-3.

A L A B O O K S

American Library Association

50 East Huron Street
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Visions for the Twenty-First Century Are Okay but What Will We Do for the Rest of the Century?" The library staff developed Library 2000 goals, described as: increased amount of information available through the campus network; all forms of information delivered to the workstation or PC; faculty productivity increased; information resources productivity increased; personalized information systems created; human/information system interaction studied; rich learning environment for students created; every Tech graduate information literate. Her finishing touch was appropriately pointed: "While we look forward we will look backward to increase and intensify our efforts to preserve our knowledge, history, and culture."

The proceedings offer a wealth of information on the status of online public ac-

cess catalogs and other related automation issues, including projections into the future. With representatives from France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, a larger perspective of the current state of library automation, chiefly that of the OPAC, is in store for the reader. A minor irritation is the continual use throughout of acronyms. However, the authors do not fall into highly technical jargon as one might expect, but instead present a clear picture of the international scene. As stated in the preface: "The papers. . . reveal diversity of technological applications, a spectrum of private, academic, and governmental enterprises, and a variety of access methods and systems for use with library materials and other information resources."—Kathleen Sparkman, *Baylor University Libraries, Waco, Texas.*

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

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