



ICMR LIBRARY BULLETIN

(Bulletin of ICMR Headquarters Library)

Volume 1 No. 4

October – December 2004

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ICMR Hqrs. Library

Tel: 26588980/279 (Ext.)

26589585 (D)

E-mail: icmrhq_11@yahoo.co.in

Published by

Indian Council of Medical Research
V.Ramalingaswami Bhawan, Ansari Nagar, New Delhi-110029

Digital Libraries

What is a Digital Library

Digital libraries basically store materials in electronic format and manipulate large collections of those materials effectively.

Digital libraries are repositories of electronic texts, images, and other materials. Digital libraries are generally found on the

Internet, although large collections of remotely-accessed CD-ROMs could also be considered a digital library. Materials in a digital library may have been "born digital" or they may have been digitized using a scanner.

Why Digital Libraries?

There are many reasons why one might want digital libraries. They might make research easier for scholars. They might ease the budget pressures on libraries. Solve our increasingly urgent preservation problems, or they help libraries extend collections into new media. But perhaps their most important advantage would be their ability to help society, to make information more available, raise its quality, and increase its diversity.

1. Introduction

Digital libraries are needed both to let libraries offer new and improved services, and to deal with a cost crisis now affecting their current services. There are libraries (e.g. in some pharmaceutical companies), which already spend more than half their acquisitions, budget on electronic resources. Meanwhile, many research organizations/institutes are finding it impossible to maintain their traditional collecting practices within the constraints of their institutional budgets. They look eagerly to the

new technology as a solution. Increases in journal and monograph prices, currency shifts, and increases in the number of publications are all making it harder for libraries to afford their previous level of purchases. Nearly every organization reviewing its subscriptions and canceling journals. The whole system is near collapse.

In addition to problems of buying material, libraries are facing with increasing costs for buildings and storage, and with a steadily growing problem of acid paper books which are deteriorating and need treatment. Building costs also increase steadily, and on many campuses there is simply no room to put another large library even if the funds are available to build it. Since most universities/organizations do not monetize space, this rarely appears in a library budget, but the

cost of space is probably comparable to the cost of materials in some realistic accounting.

Thus, libraries are faced with two simultaneous problems: their inability to buy enough new materials, and their inability to keep enough old materials. Electronics can, in principle, be an answer to both.

2. Advantages of Digital Libraries

So far, digitisation has been described as something that avoids problems. In addition, electronics can offer many advantages to libraries. These include both better access to traditional materials, easier preservation, and extension of library collections.

Better Access:

As many have discovered, the ability to search provides an enormous advantage to electronic materials when an Ascii version is available.

Electronics also provides several other advantages. Ubiquity is one clear edge: a single electronic copy can be accessed from a great many locations, and to many simultaneous users. Copies can be delivered with electronic speed, and it may be possible to reformat the material to the convenience of the reader. Unfortunately, although the library

Online searching has for some years been replacing printed abstract journals. Printed encyclopedias, for example, are giving way to CD-ROMs which are smaller, cheaper, and far more effective to use.

may be immune from losing access to its own copy via theft, in the digital world there is a different kind of theft in which the copyright holder loses control, rather than the library losing its copy.

Preservation:

Another important advantage is preservation. Digital information can be copied without error. As a result, preservation in a digital world does not depend on having a permanent object and keeping it under guard, but on the ability to make multiple copies, assuming that at least one will survive. The major risk to digital objects is usually not physical deterioration but technological obsolescence of the devices to read them. Helical-scan magnetic tape is perhaps the only format likely to wear out before it becomes obsolete. The lifetime of magneto-optical cartridges, linear magnetic tape, and certainly CD-ROM is expected to be in decades, while the lifetime of the reading devices is perhaps only about one decade (except for CD-ROM). But assuming a reasonable refreshing schedule, and a reasonable attempt to avoid buying devices which are special-purpose rather than widely marketed, libraries can expect that digital information will be kept with less deterioration than paper.

Funding: The major worry is the funding for the regular refreshing. Libraries today often view preservation as a capital expense; a book is rebound or photocopied and then replaced on the shelf and forgotten. Digital preservation will be an ongoing operation, requiring a regular future expense. Librarians worry that they are committing their successors to operations for which there will be no funds. However,

note that every few years the capacities of storage devices get larger and larger. As these storage devices get larger, the cost of copying bytes decreases. As a result, if a library can understand how it will fund the first refresh cycle in five to ten years, it can expect that the next refresh cycle will be so cheap as to be insignificant.

Software obsolescence: A more serious refreshing problem, in reality, is software obsolescence. Milton Halem of NASA has pointed out that the variety of software formats far exceeds the number of hardware devices manufactured, and that these programs come and go more quickly than the hardware does. Libraries should rely on standards \-MARC, SGML, and others \- for which software can be expected to exist into the indefinite future.

Extension of library collections: Digital storage also permits libraries to expand the range of material they can provide to their users. For example, both audio cassette tapes and vinyl records pose problems to libraries; neither will stand a large number of playings without deterioration. Digitizing the sound can produce a format (the audio CD) that is much safer to use. Digital material can also permit access to fragile photographs, someday to video tapes, and to the new kinds of multimedia materials that are created only on computers and simply have no equivalent in any traditional format.

DIGITAL VS. TRADITIONAL LIBRARIES

The shift from traditional libraries to the digital is not merely a technological evolution, but requires a change in the paradigm by which people access and interact with information.

A traditional library is characterized by the following:

- emphasis on storage and preservation of physical items, particularly books and periodicals
- cataloging at a high level rather than one of detail, *e.g.*, author and subject indexes as opposed to full text
- browsing based on physical proximity of related materials
- passivity; information is physically assembled in one place; users must travel to the library to learn what is there and make use of it

By contrast, a digital library differs from the above in the following ways:

- emphasis on access to digitized materials wherever they may be located, with digitization eliminating the need to own or store a physical item
- cataloging down to individual words or glyphs
- browsing based on hyperlinks, keyword, or any defined measure of relatedness; materials on the same subject do not need to be near one another in any physical sense
- broadcast technology; users need not visit a digital library except electronically; for them the library exists at any place they can access it, *e.g.*, home, school, office, or in a car

Everything can be stored

The total number of different books produced since printing began does not exceed one billion. (The number of books now published annually is less than one million.) If an average book occupies 500 pages at 2,000 characters per page, then even without compression it can be stored comfortably in one megabyte. Therefore, one billion megabytes are sufficient to store all books. So it is certainly feasible to consider storing all books digitally.

- photographs
- legislative material, court decisions
- museum objects
- recorded music
- theatrical performances, including opera and ballet
- speeches
- movies and videotape

Very Large Databases

A database of a billion objects, each of which occupies one megabyte, is large but not inconceivable. Once one is comfortable with sizes of this kind, it is feasible to imagine a thousand such databases, or to envision them all as portions of the same global collection. This amount of storage is sufficient to house not only all books, but all of the following:

Distributed Holdings

While traditional libraries measure their size by number of books, periodicals and other items held, the relevant statistic for a digital library is the size of the corpus its users may access. This means that digital libraries will want to expand their "holdings" by sharing digital links with other libraries. Unfortunately, there seems to be very little sharing of this sort taking place at present.

Traditional libraries have been developing for hundreds of years. In addition to providing new services, digital libraries should continue to carry out important functions of our current libraries:

- collection
- organization and representation
- access and retrieval
- analysis, synthesis, dissemination of info

International Library Associations

American Library Association (ALA)

The American Library Association (ALA) was founded in 1876 in Philadelphia and subsequently [chartered](#) in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Its mission is "to provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all." Its [membership](#) is open to "any person, library, or other organization interested in library service and librarianship...upon payment of the dues provided for in the [Bylaws](#)."

It is governed by an elected [Council](#), its policy-making body, and an [Executive Board](#) which "acts for the Council in the administration of established policies and programs." Policies and programs are proposed by standing [committees](#), designated as committees of the Association or committees of Council. Headquartered in Chicago, its operations are directed by an [Executive Director](#) and implemented by [staff](#) through a structure of programmatic [offices](#) and support units.

The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)

IFLA (The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) is the leading international body representing the interests of library and information services and their users. It is the global voice of the library and information profession.

Founded in Edinburgh, Scotland, IFLA has 1700 Members in 150 countries around the world. IFLA was registered in the Netherlands in 1971.

REGIONAL OFFICES

IFLA has regional offices in Africa, Asia and Oceania, and Latin America.

Publications

IFLA Journal

IFLA Journal is published four times a year. Each issue covers news of current IFLA activities and articles, selected to reflect the variety of the international information profession, ranging from freedom of information, preservation, services to the visually impaired and intellectual property.

International Cataloguing and Bibliographic Control (ICBC)

International Cataloguing and Bibliographic Control (ICBC) is a quarterly journal devoted to issues,

projects, research and new developments in the broad field of Bibliographic Control.

Medical Library Association (MLA)

The Medical Library Association (MLA) celebrated its centennial in 1998. Over the past century, members of MLA have served society by improving health through the provision of information. MLA members in forty-three countries around the world support the information needs of both health professionals and consumers. Health sciences librarians have been responsive to the social issues of the times, from supplying European libraries with materials after the devastation of World War II to contributing technical expertise to the fight against AIDS. The Medical Library Association promotes a legislative agenda that supports access to the world's health sciences information. Landmark initiatives resulting from activity in the legislative arena include a strong

national library with international programs, a national network of biomedical libraries for resource sharing, the development of integrated information management systems within and among institutions, and support for the development of knowledge and skills for information professionals. Coalitions and alliances with other organizations, agencies, and individuals who support the Medical Library Association's [mission](#) extend its resources and influence.

Publications:

The *Journal of the Medical Library Association (JMLA)* is an international, peer-reviewed journal published quarterly that aims to advance the practice and research knowledgebase of health sciences librarianship.

Canadian Library Association

The Canadian Library Association was founded in Hamilton, Ontario in 1946, and was incorporated under the Companies Act on November 26, 1947. CLA is a non-profit voluntary organization, governed by an elected Executive Council, which is advised

by over thirty interest groups and committees. The Association's five constituent divisions are:

- Canadian Association for School Libraries, including the School Library Administrators' (SLAS) section (approx. 190 members)
- Canadian Association of College and University Libraries (CACUL), including the Community and Technical College (CTCL) section (approx. 670 members)
- Canadian Association of Public Libraries (CAPL), including the Canadian Association of Childrens' Librarians (CACL) section (approx. 610 members)
- Canadian Association of Special Libraries and Information Services (CASLIS), with chapters in Calgary, Edmonton, Manitoba, Ottawa, Toronto and Atlantic Canada (appro. 675 members)
- Canadian Library Trustees Association (approx. 130 members)

The Library Association, UK

The Library Association is the leading professional body for Librarians and Information Managers.

Library Association has 25,000 members who work in all sectors, including business and industry, further and higher education, schools, local and central government departments and agencies, the health service, the voluntary sector and national public libraries.

Members are throughout the UK and in more than 100 countries overseas.

The Library Association is committed to enabling its Members to achieve and maintain the highest professional standards, and encouraging them in the delivery and promotion of high quality library and information services responsive to the needs of users.

Since 1877, The Library Association has been speaking up for Britain's libraries.

Library Association Enterprises offers a range of specialised products and services to all sectors of the library and information profession.

Publications:

Library Association Record, the monthly journal of The Library Association, and Library Technology with five issues per year, are available free to members and on subscription to non-members.

Library Association Publishing, with over 200 titles in print, is one of the largest publishers of library and information science titles.

Libraries In India on the Web

- [Centre For Science and Environment](#) New Delhi, India
- [Centre for Development Studies](#) Trivandrum, India
- [Developing Library Network](#) New Delhi, India
- [Health Education Library for People](#) Bombay, India
- [INFLIBNET](#) Ahmedabad, India
- [Indian Institute of Health Management Research](#) Jaipur, India
- [Indian Institute of Science - Bangalore](#) Bangalore, India
- [Indian Institute of Technology - Bombay](#) Bombay, India
- [Indian Institute of Technology - Delhi](#) New Delhi, India
- [Indian Institute of Technology - Kharagpur](#) Kharagpur, India
- [Indian Institute of Technology - Madras](#) Madras, India
- [Indian Parliament Library](#) New Delhi, India
- [Indian Statistial Institute, Kolkata](#) Kolkata, India
- [Indian Statistical Institute, Bangalore Centre](#) Bangalore, India
- [Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research](#) Mumbai, India
- [Institute for Plasma Research](#) Gandhinagar, India
- [Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics](#) Pune, Maharashtra, India
- [National Aerospace Laboratories](#) Bangalore, India
- [National Centre for Biological Sciences](#) Bangalore, India

- [National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management](#)
Hyderabad, India
- [National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences](#)
Bangalore, India
- [National Institute of Technology - Calicut](#) Calicut City,
India
- [Nirma University of Science and Technology](#) Ahmedabad,
India
- [Panjab University](#) Chandigarh, India
- [Physical Research Laboratory](#) Navrangpura, India
- [Pune Library Network](#) Pune, India
- [Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics](#) Calcutta, India
- [Society for Information Science India](#) New Delhi, India

Recent Additions

1. Quality assurance of pharmaceuticals: a compendium of guidelines and related materials. Vol., 2: Good manufacturing practices and inspection, WHO, 2004
2. Neuroscience of psychoactive substance use and dependence, WHO, 2004
3. World report on road traffic injury prevention, WHO, 2004
4. Tobacco, Smoke and Involuntary Smoking: IARC monographs on the evaluation of carcinogenic risks to humans.
5. Cardiovascular survey methods, WHO, 2004
6. 5th Report on the World Nutrition Situation: nutrition for improved development outcomes, UNSSCN, 2004
7. WHO Report 2004 global tuberculosis control: surveillance, planning, financing, WHO, 2004
8. WHO model formulary, WHO, 2004
9. Assessing burden of rabies in India; APCRI, 2004
10. Young people's health in context: health behavior in school aged children (HSBC) study: international report, WHO Regional office for Europe, 2004
11. Toman's tuberculosis: Case detection, treatment and monitoring questions and answers, WHO, 2004
12. Guidelines for conducting community surveys on injuries and violence, WHO, 2004
13. Atlas of corrective surgical procedures commonly used in leprosy / H. Srinivasan, 2004
14. Obstetrics protocols for labor ward management, Jaypee, 2005
15. Guidelines for essential trauma care, WHO, 2004
16. TB/HIV: a clinical manual, WHO, 2004
17. Alcohol policy: global status report, WHO, 2004
18. Immunization in practice: a practical guide for health staff 2004 update, WHO, 2004
19. IARC monographs: some drinking water disinfectants and contaminants, including Arsenic, IARC, 2004
20. Guiding principles for feeding infants and young children during emergencies, WHO, 2004
21. Beyond the numbers reviewing maternal deaths and complications to make pregnancy safer, WHO, 2004
22. World report on knowledge for better health: strengthening health system, WHO, 2004

NEWS

PROQUEST

The Council has renewed the subscription for ProQuest Full Text Electronic Database for one more year *i.e.* 2005 as there is a great demand for this database due to wide coverage of full text journals. Currently this database has been located at four sites *i.e.* NIN,

Hyderabad; NICED, Kolkata; RMRC, Dibrugarh; CJIL, Agra. Two additional sites of this database are going to be installed at ICMR Hqrs. and MRC, Delhi to meet the demands of Delhi based ICMR institutes.

JCCC@ICMR

The subscription for JCCC@ICMR has been renewed for one more year *i.e.* 2005 as the services of

this database are useful to ICMR institutes and being utilized extensively by ICMR scientists.

Apprentices

Three apprentices have been recruited under the Govt. of India

Apprentices scheme for ICMR Hqrs. Library recently.

Events

JCCC@ICMR REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME HELD AT NIRRH, MUMBAI ON JULY 30TH 2004

JCCC@ICMR Regional training programme was held on JULY 30TH 2004 NIRRH, MUMBAI for imparting training to western ICMR institutes library & information professionals. Dr K. Satyanarayna, Chief (P&I) inaugurated the training programme. Director NIRRH attended the inauguration of training.



**Training Programmes of JCCC@ICMR Conducted at ICMR
Instituts**

Institution Name	Date of Training Session
Indian Council of Medical Research - Head Quarters (Delhi), New Delhi	11/08/04
Central JALMA Institute for Leprosy & Other Mycobacterial Diseases, Agra	4/10/04
Centre for Research in Medical Entomology, Madurai	6/10/04
Desert Medicine Research Centre, Jodhpur	19/10/04
Enterovirus Research Centre, Mumbai	9/08/04
Institute for Research in Medical Statistics, New Delhi	10/09/04
Institute of Cytology & Preventive Oncology, New Delhi	24/08/04
Institute of Immunohaematology, Mumbai	4/08/04
Institute of Pathology, New Delhi	11/08/04
Malaria Research Centre, Delhi	8/10/04
National AIDS Research Institute, Pune	9/08/04
National Institute for Research in Reproductive Health, Mumbai	30/07/04
National Institute of Cholera & Enteric Diseases, Kolkata	20/08/04
National Institute of Epidemiology, Chennai	4/10/04
National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad	23/10/04
National Institute of Occupational Health, Ahmedabad	20/08/04
National Institute of Virology, Pune	5/10/04
Rajendra Memorial Research Institute of Medical Sciences, Patna	12/10/04
Regional Medical Research Centre, Bhubaneswar	11/08/04
Regional Medical Research Centre, Dibrugarh	30/10/04
Regional Medical Research Centre, Port Blair	8/12/04
Regional Medical Research Centre for Tribals, Jabalpur	8/10/04
Tuberculosis Research Centre, Chennai	8/11/04
Vector Control Research Centre, Pondicherry	5/10/04