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Innovations Affecting Us

Second Generation Online Systems from Book Vendors

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THE EVOLUTION

For years libraries have selected, ordered, received and processed books. Early electronic databases offered by book vendors were basically intended to provide information to support the ordering process. They were DOS-based and provided access to a database that could be used as a source of information on the order/delivery process and they enabled electronic ordering.

The second generation of these systems is Web-based and designed to support interactive communication between the selectors, acquisitions staff and the vendor. When the database of all titles is searched, any action taken on a title for a specific library is displayed for that library. Passwords enable the appropriate staff involved in the process to take action related to the selection/order/delivery status of a book for their library.

Tables of contents for books along with book summaries are being added to the files by all vendors or are in the planning stages. This information adds to the richness of vendor databases as selection tools.

Approval plans were an early and efficient form of outsourcing the selection function. The ability of these new vendor systems to interface with the local library automation systems means that they can streamline the paper flow, reduce rekeying, and load records one time, basically offering a library sophisticated electronic support for collection development, acquisitions and processing.

This supports the trend of fewer professional staff in technical services. When libraries implemented automation in technical services in the last ten years, many serials librarians' positions were combined with acquisitions and some cataloging functions have shifted to acquisitions when primary MARC records are identified at the point of ordering a title.

As vendor's Web-based systems interface with local library systems, they integrate data needed in both library and vendor processes, enabling libraries to streamline their operations and achieve efficiencies. Increased communication and possible consolidation is evident between cataloging and acquisitions and collection management with these developing Web-based systems.

Four vendors's systems are described in detail here: **Academic Book Center**, **Blackwell's**, **Midwest Library Service**, and **Yankee Book Peddler**. **Baker and Taylor** will offer their **Title Source** on the Web and on tape by the end of 1997. This profile driven acquisition system provides full tables-of-contents, annotations, scanned book jackets and selecting lists on 2.2 million records. They are evaluating what system overlay to put on top of their extensive database.

THE OPTIONS
Academic Book Center - The Book Bag (www.acbc.com)

The Book Bag was introduced this year and replaces their prior telnet system called the Firm Order Book Connection. The Book Bag provides a Web interface which allows the user to search the database of 1.3 million records and place a firm order or review their approval plan selections. Standing orders file is under development and will be added by the end of 1997.

The Book Bag provides libraries with the ability to decentralize book ordering and still maintain control as selectors can order books directly with the appropriate password. Each search of the entire database provides any local title history indicating the status of a title, what action has been taken and why. Results of searches can be displayed sorted by title, author or series.

Taking advantage of Web commerce technology, The Book Bag allows users to add titles to a shopping basket which can be reviewed before checkout. Collection development is supported by emails which capture the bibliographic information and can be sent to other staff, generating discussion on titles under consideration.

Collection management staff can perform approval review online interactively, seeing

prepublication information on new books which match their profile and will be automatically shipped on publication or books on which they will receive a slip. They can either eliminate them from the order or activate the order online, thereby controlling what is shipped.

In addition to online ordering, The Book Bag offers the ability to download mini MARC records which contain the price, volume and series notation and are expanded to include library specific purchase order numbers, fund codes and internal notes. This information is then printed and delivered with The book to facilitate processing. To minimize keystrokes, library staff add their local information to files attached to bib records in The Book Bag database which are then downloaded. This is the alternative to libraries creating order records which are uploaded to the vendor's file.

Academic Book Center also partners with **OCLC PromptCat** and can generate the cataloging record from the invoice. Libraries will have records in their catalog by the time they receive the book. One of the challenges is how to match the mini MARC with the full MARC record which must be resolved by the library's integrated library system. Currently this process works with libraries using **Innovative Interfaces**. Ideally standards could provide the basis for an interactive exchange of data during the day rather than using offline exchanges.

Blackwell's - Collection Manager (cm.blackwell.com)

Collection Manager was designed last year as a Web-based tool that enables customers to look at their approval profile online in the context of Blackwell's database of 800,000 academic titles covered since 1989. Developed with the input of thirty libraries and introduced in the summer of 1997, Collection Manager was modeled on the workflow issues involved in the decision process for book ordering and processing.

Staff in collection management can search by subject (LC, NLM, or Blackwell's) and view a list of books that match their profile and see what action has been taken on each title. Blackwell's assigns each book in the database up to five subjects and also assigns non-subject parameters, such as level of audience, readership level, and language.

The database displays how many libraries received the book or received slips. Selectors can generate lists of books that match the subject criteria of a profile. Each title in the list is linked to an explanation of the approval action taken.

A **Reference Shelf** links to approval resources such as a core publishers list, coverage and cost studies, and a North American authors' list. The table-of-contents and book jacket copy will be available soon.

Librarians can create separate accounts for each individual allowing them to specify how they wish to have their search results displayed on the screen. Libraries relying on slip plans have the advantage of more than

one selector being able to review multidisciplinary titles at the same time, rather than being limited to one copy of a slip. They also have access to more information than can be printed on a 3 x 5 slip of paper, such as tables-of-contents.

Blackwell's plans to introduce acquisitions features early in 1998. Librarians will be able to annotate records they have reviewed, selected or rejected. Collection Manager will create an order review file with MARC records, which can be download, into the library's automated system. Enhancements planned for next year include interactive profiling, cooperative collection development for consortia and management reports that will enable an institution to perform various "what if" scenarios.

Midwest Library Service - InterACQ
(www.midwestls.com)

InterACQ was introduced in 1995 as a Web-based service providing online access for Midwest's University Press Approval Plan customers. Access was provided to the customer's profile(s) and the approval plan database. When the database was expanded to include selected science, technology, and health science titles, access was extended to firm order customers. By the end of 1997, the database will contain 75,000 titles within 36 months of their publication date.

Midwest's approval program is a university press publisher-based plan. InterACQ incorporates multi-level password access, allowing one administrator and multiple users access to the database. Although any registered library user can recommend actions, such as profile changes, overrides to profiled selections, and ordering books online, only the local administrator is allowed to approve the recommendations, commit to profile changes, and consummate orders online.

Broad searches are conducted by title, author, LC Class, LCCN, ISBN, or series. Further refinement of the search process is accomplished with the use of "filters" such as language, level, price and publisher, etc. Numerous actions are designated for approval titles, such as: included, excluded, notify by form, too new in the database to be determined.

Forthcoming titles are pre-profiled to determine probable action, but the final decision regarding each title is made following a comprehensive book-in-hand analysis. The library may define exclusion parameters based on book type, LC Class, series, publisher, etc. Midwest's business is primarily firm-order based. InterACQ permits online ordering directly from the database or by manual input for titles not listed. Since the beginning of 1997, publisher-based summaries are included with most titles entered into the database. US MARC formatted

records can be downloaded for use in the library's local system. InterACQ correspondence is designed for system communications, confirmation of transactions, and not for use as a general email service for internal customer service support.
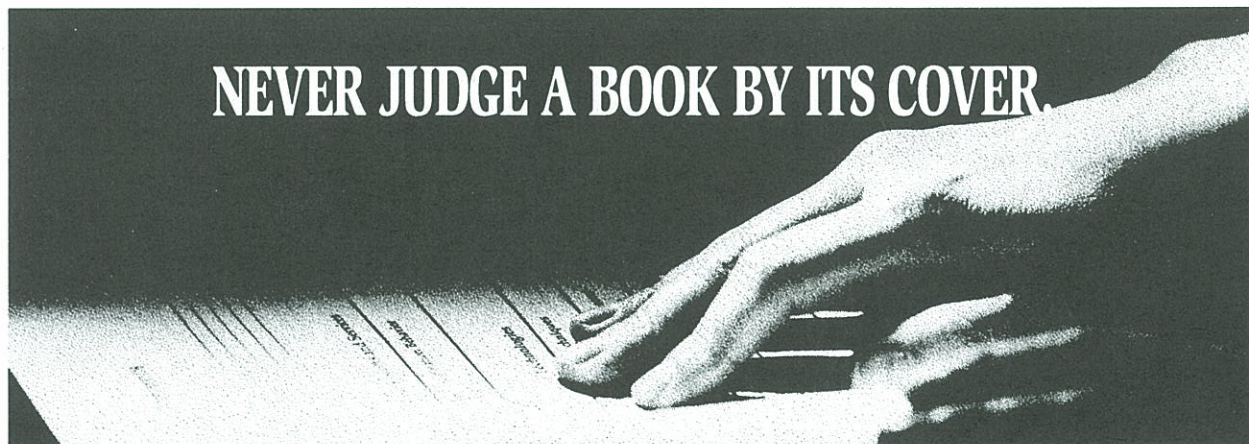
Yankee Book Peddler - GOBI
(www.ybp.com)

GOBI stands for **Global Online Bibliographic Information** and is the successor to Folio, YBP's first generation system which enabled libraries to search their database, place orders and see where a book was in the order/delivery process. Today's system offers libraries acquisitions, collection development and cataloging support with access to query, selection, order and report functions.

GOBI enables Boolean searching of over 1.7 million titles in the English language and provides data on shipments, orders, etc, going back two years. Primary and secondary search criteria are designed to accommodate both the novice and experienced searcher.

Firm orders can be searched and placed online. Collection development staff can review slips online sorted by title or LC class code, for books which were selected on approval plans and tag them to be ordered or block them from being shipped. The Web environment makes it easy to send emails to YBP staff from any screen.

Chaos

complete unit, the Object can be used by your computer without pre-arrangement. For a look at these concepts in more detail, I urge you to spend a few minutes on the Web. Go to <http://www.disa.org> (DISA, the Data Interchange Standards Organization, is Secretariat to the U.S. EDI standards development group). Once there, you are given the option to look at some of the committee activity. Select the Strategic Implementation Task Force (SITG) and take a look at the UN and ISO/IEC documents on file there. AND, if you find yourself thinking that you can help this effort and make it work more appropriately for your organization or community, get involved. Contact BISAC or SISAC at the addresses elsewhere in this article and volunteer. We can use all the help we can get if we're going to get in right in the next century!! 🌳

Back to the Future

tutions, but for future generations as well. Thus, expending capital on information as though it were merely a utility is onerous. On the other hand, if reliance on per-use fees for low impact information allows more selective capital investments in high impact information, then my instincts as a collections person might be satisfied. The expansion of reliance on per-use fees might accelerate the market correction we at HighWire are involved with as well.

20. After two years into the project what has surprised you? Any profound lessons? Have your goals changed?

MK: The enthusiasm for the online versions by readers has surprised us. The warmth and strength of our relationships with our co-publishers has been a wonderful surprise. The examples of the *JBC* and *Science* have been mentioned only and are quite pervasive ones, but the other relationships with the other publishers have been wonderful and quite productive as well. The most profound lesson to date is that HighWire demonstrates what a small, but brilliant band of professionals can do to affect change given the focus on the mission, on satisfying authors, editors, readers, publishers using information technology. Our goals have not changed, though our methods and technologies have.

21. Would you like to add anything?

MK: I can promise only that the future will bring as many opportunities and changes as the recent past. Not only HighWire, but Stanford in general seeks to exploit the opportunities to the advantage of its academic community and for the colleague communities elsewhere. Get more information about HighWire at http://highwire.stanford.edu/." 🌳

Innovation Affecting Us

Popular report options include: items selected but not yet ordered, recently shipped items, approval plan activity report sorted by fund code. Reports can be created, viewed online and printed or (if too long) attached to emails. For collection development purposes, records display global title histories showing how many customers received the book on approval, compared to customers who received only notification slips for that title.

GOBILink, used in conjunction with GOBI, can create bibliographic and order records in a local library system from orders entered into GOBI, eliminating the need to re-key item-by-item. Libraries can download data which will trigger encumbrance, order, receipt and payment transactions in the local library system.

For cataloging support, GOBILink can facilitate the overlay of order-level records with cataloging records directly from YBP or through **OCLC PromptCat**. GOBI ordering screens provide space for libraries to communicate local data to be included in the cataloging fields. YBP is beta-testing shelf-ready materials for libraries with call numbers provided by OCLC via PromptCat.

Available since January 1996, GOBI continues to evolve and a list of enhancement ideas appear on the Website. A picture of GOBI (bird) and imaginative description also appears on the Website, adding a sense of humor to the electronic environment. 🌳

Back Talk

them, causing all sorts of troubles. and yet, it is in the future where our greatest leverage is. We can't change the past, although if we are smart, we learn from it. ... If we learn to anticipate the future better, we need not fear it. In fact, we can welcome it, embrace it, prepare for its coming, because most of it will be the direct outgrowth of our own efforts." (p. 18).

The proponents of the Yale classical curriculum were able to hide behind its historical legitimacy. Are we hiding behind the historical legitimacy of print research? Me? I am good at attacking digital foolishness: I mouth the "you can't read a computer in the bathtub or bed" clichés. But do any of us really believe that this steady growth in the amounts spent on electronic resources is going to end or even slow down? Do we really think the generation of kids flocking to the Internet (whose fragile minds I worried about in a previous column) are going to reverse direction? So are we the people shifting the gears from how information is acquired, processed, stored and preserved now to how it will be done in the future? Or are we some loose nuts and bolts in the gears, trying to stop or slow down the process? 🌳