

THE CIAD LIBRARY IN MEXICAN LIBRARY NETWORKS

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ABSTRACT: For the majority of the libraries in developing countries, to rely on a budget that allows them to acquire all the resources and services that their user required is without a doubt a problem. To this date few institutions have been to solve this problem. Trying to overcome this problem the following question arises: How to earn a higher economical solvency to defray the costs of information resources? How to increase the library's budget? What to do to lower costs of scientific information? The answers to these questions have not been easy to find. That is why the Mexican libraries have had to gather in work groups and nets for formation of consortia. This collaboration has allowed us to acquire and share resources for the some years already.

KEYWORDS: Information Network, Resource Sharing, Library Net. Networking.

Definition of library net:

Information Network: "a formal association among libraries, documentation centers, archives, and global or regional information systems created with the aim of coordinating their efforts and sharing resources to satisfy information needs of users in a subject area and/or geographic region of mutual concern to network members" (Hailu 1989).

Library Network: "Two or more libraries engaged in resource sharing. Library networks consist of two major components: a bibliographic and communications network and a resource network. The bibliographic and communications network encompasses bibliographic file-based resource sharing, and the shared use of library processing services, and the hardware, software, and organizational arrangements required to provide these services. The resource network component is concerned with resource sharing relating to library materials and collections...in the current environment of information processing, dissemination, and utilization, the term library network will be increasingly superseded by terms more oriented to functions, services, and transactions. e.g. information network, document delivery network, and bibliographic processing network" (Duchesne 1982).

There are two important nets where CIAD library has contributed as an active member. I will try to describe these two nets.

The first one to describe is RETBIN Network of Teleinformatics of the Mexican Northwest Libraries. Their motto is "To great informatic challenges great effort of cooperation". This network is formed by libraries of higher education institutes of the Mexican Northwest. This region is composed of five states, Baja California Norte, Baja California Sur, Sonora, Chihuahua and Sinaloa.

Their main objective is to consolidate cooperative actions of information services, for the optimization and improved use of technical, documents resources as well as human resources; and to insure that each institution possesses the means to improve, consolidate, expand and bring up to date the services that are offered to the users' benefit.

CIAD library has been participating in it since 1992. It is one of the founding institutions. It is one of the 20 current members. RETBIN is composed of 118 libraries with approximately 550 librarians.

The participating institutions in RETBIN are:

- CICESE
- CETYS-ENSENADA UNIVERSITY
- CETYS MEXICALI UNIVERSITY
- CETYS TIJUANA UNIVERSITY
- UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA DE BAJA CALIFORNIA
- UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA DE BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR
- CICIMAR
- INSTITUTO TECNOLOGICO DE LA PAZ
- UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA DE JUAREZ
- UNIVERSIDAD DE SONORA
- UNIVERSIDAD DE OCCIDENTE
- UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA DE SINALOA
- COLEGIO DE SONORA
- INSTITUTO TECNOLOGICO DE SONORA
- INSTITUTO TECNOLOGICO DE LA PAZ
- INSTITUTO TECNOLOGICO DE LOS MOCHIS
- INSTITUTO TECNOLOGICO DE TIJUANA
- CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS SUPERIORES DEL ESTADO DE SONORA
- CENTRO DE INVESTIGACION EN ALIMENTACION Y DESARROLLO

The means of communications between the members of the net is through its list server. Our activity of priority is to create projects to meet our goal.

We are working to form the consortium for the purpose of exchanging and optimization of the use of resources.

One of the projects is the formation of a periodicals catalogue.

Another is the acquisition of the databases in conjunction and to create a guide that helps us evaluate new databases.

Tasks accomplished:

- A guide to discarding bibliographical material
- Creation of a web page (<http://www.retbin.uabc.mx>).

The second net to describe is named “Red cooperativa de información para el apoyo de la investigación científica en México” which can be translated as “Cooperative net of information for the support of scientific research in México” This is composed of research institutions and higher education. (<http://www.conacyt.mx/dacssc/index.html>)

Their motto is “United in cooperation”

The mission of this group is:

To cooperate with efficiency to satisfy the needs of scientific and technological information for research institutions and universities our country.

Their main objective is to create and foment the cooperation between the institutions that formed the net to optimize the access to the resources, products and information services under the principle of reciprocity. This net is composed of library directors and chiefs of staff; it has 32 members of which five are National Autonomous of Mexico University principals and 27 report to the CONACYT Centers of investigation.

To meet its objective, the net is divided in five work groups, where each one has established its own activities.

These groups are:

1. Periodicals catalogue
2. Data Bases and Access to Information Systems
3. Interlibrary loans
4. Document supply
5. Support and exchange

It is composed of four commissions:

1. Negotiation of cooperative acquisition, the function of which is to negotiate with vendors and editors for a shared purchase.
2. Net-CONACYT Connection. This commission acts as an intermediary between CONACYT and other authorities, to negotiate for funds to benefit users.

3. Digitalization and Digital Library of the net. This commission is responsible for creating a digital space on the Internet with the scientific and technological product generated by their own institutions with the purpose of exchanging information.

4. Net formation. This commission is responsible for consolidating the net as an organization with its own juridical personality. Each one of these commissions has its own individual structure which is composed of a president, a secretary and their respective voices.

Accomplishment of this Net:

-A mailing list with the information of all the members that allow them to have fluid, quick and up-to-date communication.

-Discussion forum. This acts as a permanent connection and communication line. Only the members of the net have access this forum using a login id and a password.

-This net has a written code of interlibrary loan that allows the exchange of information between the libraries that participate. It is established by their code obligatory use of ARIEL as mean of exchange of information or documents.

-Another accomplishment is the creation of a net page (<http://www.cimat.mx/redbic/>).

Ongoing projects

Creation of:

-Periodicals catalogue

-Database catalogue

-Acquisition of services and resources information, printed and electronic.

Each one of the members contributes a copy of periodical publications of each library's collection. The need is create a compilation of all in one. We are working in the cost analysis of the periodicals and databases with a united purchase.

It is important to mention an arduous effort for the joint acquisition of the software ARIEL for those with institutions that do not have it and for updates to newer versions for those institutions that owns it.

A first step was the creation of a directory of the institutions who were interested; we found a total of 15 institutions for first-time acquisition and up-to-date versions.

The first problem encountered was the vendor can only give us one invoice to honor at discount, this motivated a disagreement between interested institutions because of an inability to justify expenses individually.

An alternative approach was to consider negotiation through the direct purchase by the CONACYT administration office. The negotiation lasted for four months and determined that share acquisition was impossible.

One of the strongest limitations that prevents our going further in our goals is that even being sister centers, we have independent administrative policies.

Another accomplishment as a result of the union libraries is the acquisition of printed and electronic information resources with the fund that was given by the World Bank. Together we made the negotiation with the vendors to reach more accessible prices.

Without a doubt working as group is not an easy task due to the existing limitations for example distant geographic localization, not enough money to assist to our annual meeting, lack of communication between administrative authorities institutions. This sometimes makes the process slow and causes the desperation of not being able to end the work projects on time. The accomplishment of goals of the project is enough reason to work with enthusiasm as group.

Thank you very much for your attentions.

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