April 2001

It's All In How You Look At It

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REFEREED ARTICLE

It's all in how you look at it
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Company libraries exist to provide information that will assist in making, producing, or selling the company product, whether the product is stock, insurance, health care, or widgets. To meet this goal, it is necessary for the library to manage information that is internally written and specific to the company's product.

Many of us fall into the trap of thinking that managing these unique information sources requires unique solutions. We create unique processes and databases that are totally outside the sphere of processes and products we use for the rest of our library. When we fall into this trap, we create separate processes for different information resources, requiring separate program maintenance and data input. Often, it is necessary for our users to look in many different places for traditional library material and that which is unique to our company. Only frequent library users will learn multiple retrieval locations and methods for different types of information. The occasional user will go elsewhere, often to a colleague or someone's personal file drawer, or stop looking for that piece of information entirely.

When traditional library products are viewed as processes, a new realm of possibilities for information management opens. Employee accessibility to information resources can be improved while task efficiency is increased. Here are some examples.

The Torrington Company is a division of Ingersoll Rand, with manufacturing locations around the world. This company manufactures widgets (bearings, motion control devices, etc.) Society-

written standards (such as those written by ASTM), standards written by customers, internally written research reports, and society technical papers from such societies as the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) or the Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME) are just some of the items managed by our library that are unique to our business. Is each of these kept separately, in separate databases that the library must maintain and the employee must know how to search? The answer is NO!

When thinking of standard library tools as a process, the library catalog becomes a tool to let employees throughout an international company see what the library makes available to them. OCLC data is a data source we can use to load descriptions of many items into the library catalog. The catalog's thesaurus is not simply a list of LC subject headings; it is the controlled vocabulary used in our library database. Routing lists in the serials module of our library catalog are not simply routing lists; they are distribution lists that show who is receiving any title in question.

While these descriptions of library tools may seem obvious when you read them, we forget these definitions when confronted with information unique to our business. By using them, we can expand the scope and the use of these tools.

At the Torrington Company, industry standards are important to getting the product out the door. Was the material tested properly? Was the product designed properly? Was it inspected properly? Will it be shipped properly? Is the most recent revision of the industry standard being used when answering these questions?

Obtaining the most recent revision of the standard, being certain that the document in hand is the most current one, and discovering who else in the company may already have a copy were tasks being done at the manufacturing plants. Plant employees have no training in information management, nor are they using their job expertise when they track standards. The decision to bring standards management through

the library, while the right thing to do for the company, brought a large increase in workload to the library. By thinking of traditional library tools as processes, standards management was streamlined while the currency of the document in hand, locating who else in the company has that title, and even obtaining the document became easier for employees.

Let's start with the library catalog. The software used for the library catalog is BASIS/Techlib. In addition to our library collection, there are collections of material located around the company set up as branch collections. Copy records indicate the "branch" location, which is viewable on the public catalog. Adding local collections of standards was simply an extension of this concept. Since there is one contact for standards at each plant, circulating standards collections at plants could be indicated on the OPAC.

The library catalog is populated using OCLC records. A MARC record is a "machine-readable catalog record." Hmmm. With the computer development that has occurred since the MARC record was initiated, there are many other machine-readable data sources that could be used for catalog records. Programming in BASIS/Techlib instructs BASIS as to which fields of the library catalog get populated with specific fields from the MARC record. This mapping can be done for other tagged electronic data sources as well.

We are using ILI Infodisk's standards database as the machine-readable record source for the bibliographic record of the standards we are tracking through the library. Mapped to BASIS/Techlib's catalog record, we are able to populate these records with more detailed information than we would have time to include with original entry. For society papers, such as SAE and SME, we are using a traditional database, Engineering Index, offered through Dialog. Since DialogWeb does not offer the tagged field format, we are downloading these records using DialogLink. We have made arrangements with both ILI and Engineering Information to use their records in this way. For internally written research reports, laboratory reports, and other internally generated information managed through the library, we mapped preexisting internal databases to the library catalog record. This allows us to load records, rather than creating them originally.

Our library catalog uses a thesaurus to ensure that controlled vocabulary is used. This assures us complete record retrieval and the ability to do precision searching. (Does the subject heading STRESS refer to what happens in daily life, or to what happens when a material or a product is used at its limit?) MARC records use Library of Congress subject headings. A data load of LC subject headings into our thesaurus populated it, but ILI Infodisk and Engineering Index use subject headings that are not part of LC. Rather than allowing our catalog records to have subject headings not included in our controlled vocabulary, we were able to expand our controlled vocabulary when we viewed our thesaurus as a list of controlled terms. In addition to the LC subject headings, we loaded the SAE thesaurus into our thesaurus as another controlled vocabulary data source, editing the subject terms where possible to eliminate circular references or two preferred terms for the same concept. (Before we were able to negotiate an agreement to use records from EI, we successfully negotiated with SAE. Since so many of our applications are in the automotive area, these subject headings are applicable to many data sources.) We have set up our thesaurus to do term switching wherever possible, so that subject headings are automatically changed to the preferred term. Subject headings that are not specific enough to already exist in our thesaurus now are often metallurgical. For these, we use the Metadex thesaurus to select our subject heading. Company specific jargon has also been added to our thesaurus, allowing employees to search for material according to the way we speak of it at Torrington. This also allows the thesaurus programming to switch terms used in internal data sources to the library catalog's preferred term.

We have chosen to use the standard number or the paper number as our call number for these types of documents. Employees look for ASTM A 17 or SAE 865321, so LC call numbers made no sense. This decision also allows us to map the standard number or the paper number to the call number field in the library catalog record, and requires no editing or LC classification on our part.

Standards management offered other challenges besides creating catalog and copy records. (Copy records are tied to catalog records in BASIS/Techlib and allow you to track individual copies of the same title without the necessity for duplicate catalog records.)

Standards are actually serial publications. By thinking of them in this way, many functions used to track serial publications are applicable to standards management. ILI electronically notifies its customers of updates of specific titles, based on a selection made by the customer. This is the same concept as the Dialog Selective Dissemination of Information (which later became Alerts, now offered by all database producers.) Using the ILI current awareness search, the new standards revision is ordered and predicted in the serials module of BASIS/Techlib. The routing list attached to this title is actually a distribution list that indicates who in the company receives copies of this document. (For standards only, we have made this distribution list viewable from the library catalog so that it is possible to see who in the company is getting a particular title. This is useful at the plants, where employees can see if a colleague has that item. They can walk and get it, rather than waiting for it to be sent to them.) A program was written for our serials module that automatically creates a copy record when an item is received. This is used for standards as well as for journals. By using BASIS/Techlib's basic claims feature, we can claim standards titles ordered but not received. When Torrington Company customers want to know how we are keeping up to date on the standards they require and how we track the copies, we can show them a methodical, reliable system.

By looking at the processes for which traditional library tools are used, we have been able to expand the toolkit used to accomplish any process for any given piece of information, while expanding the information held in the toolbox. Processing is streamlined, original catalog entry is reduced, routing (distribution) can be done for many different types of material simultaneously, and many types of information may be claimed using the same keystrokes.

The biggest advantage of all is that employees have easy access to what they seek at one tenth of what it was costing them without coming through the library, without factoring in staff time saved at the factories, or the financial impact of an order being refused when an of date standard was used. Both internally and externally written resources are listed in the library catalog. There is no need to look in several places (or for library staff to maintain several databases). And once an employee discovers that the library catalog is a resource for a particular request, they soon look to see what else the library provides. An increase in information sources managed through the library, streamlined library processes, increased employee accessibility, and library marketing are all accomplished at once by looking at the process the library tools are designed to facilitate!

Linda Senkus spent three years at Yale University's Interlibrary Loan Office and was a librarian at the University of New Haven and at NERAC. In 1990, she joined the Torrington Company, with the charter to create a company wide library. The vision of a library serving the entire company, from the President to those on the factory floor, has guided her decisions in maturing this library. She has published in the *One Person Library* and *Information Today.* She has served the Connecticut Valley Chapter as Hospitality Chairperson, Program Chairperson, and President, and the Materials Research and Manufacturing Division as Division Chairperson/Conference Planner.

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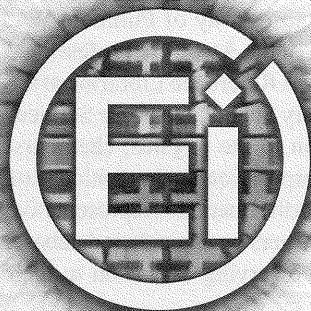
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