

Greetings fellow Librarians/Information workers,

I trust that the New Year has dawned full of hope for you and your library!
Certainly as Christians this has to have been the case.

On to this issue!

In this edition of ACTEA Librarians eNews:

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We begin with the most important section of the newsletter - letters from our readers!

1. News from our librarians

Phyllis Engle, Librarian at the Theological College of Zimbabwe, writes:

"Last May the college moved to a beautiful new campus and held its grand opening in July. For some years there were plans to build, but with ever increasing costs a search was begun for an established facility that might be for sale.

The college purchased the Hilltop Motel which is located on the south edge of Bulawayo on the road to Beitbridge. It is also strategically located across the road from the National University of Science and Technology. The campus with its lovely gardens makes it appealing to the public and it can be used for conferences during term breaks.

The college offers an advanced diploma in theology, BA in theology and BA Honours in Theology. We have graduated the first group from the honours programme. The vision is to begin a masters programme in several years.

The ground floor of the main building was renovated to provide a new

library. There is a large reading room with some smaller reading areas among the stacks. There are two offices for the librarians and a workroom. New shelving was installed with room to expand the collection to twice the size of the present 13,000 volumes. There is an attractive display rack for current periodicals and a storeroom for back issues. Since we are in the process of computerizing the book catalogue, a computer is located near the circulation desk. We have recently installed the Christian Periodicals Index on the computer.

Our clientele consists of TCZ staff and students, including evening classes, university students, pastors and other Christians from the community.

We are truly grateful to the Lord for His provision for the college. The new campus was opened debt-free and funds have been made available for continued expansion."

Phyllis thank you so much for this. Great to hear your news!

Dr Lincoln Brownell writes from Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary:

"Miracles follow miracles and wonders never cease! The Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary is a journey of faith. Miracles continue to follow miracles in the war-torn country of the West African state, Liberia, founded by freed African-American missionaries in 1821.

The LBTS John Mark and Betty Carpenter Silver Jubilee Library stands as the only theological library in the country. LBTS library reached a milestone of 18,000 volumes in the last few days. An in-service workshop was led by Mrs Jenny Johnson, a Liberian librarian of the University of Liberia, and Rev Clifford Wright, LBTS Acting Librarian. The focus of the training was on the Library of Congress System. LBTS hopes to switch its library from the Dewey System to the Library of Congress system during the course of academic year 2003-4.

Family and friends of LBTS are donating new and used books for the ongoing growth of the library."

Lincoln, it was great to hear your news! Is anyone else out there considering converting to LC? If so, please write about your experience and what advantages you foresee in such a switch.

2. Phyllis Masso's column

Phyllis writes, " The African Librarians listserve is once again up and running. If you would like to subscribe (free), visit this website to find our more.

<http://mailman.nlsa.ac.za/mailman/listinfo/aflib-1>

So, you have a backlog of cataloguing and feel that you'll never catch up? Do you want to computerize your existing collection according to MARC international standards but are overwhelmed? Classification and cataloguing of books is one of the most arduous tasks for a librarian. There is a tool available, however, that will save you time.

The Library Corporation has a collection of databases of already-catalogued books, including one database called TheoMARC, which is "contributed cataloguing" of over 600,000 theological books from a consortium of theological institutions in the US. (Other databases are the whole British National Library, The Library of Congress, Medical Libraries, Research libraries, Public and School libraries, French libraries, etc.)

To use it, you purchase the ITS for Windows software subscription and the TheoMARC database for a one-time price of US\$500, including postage. This allows you to use the database for three years, or you can opt to have the database updated for a higher price, the cost depending on how often you update. At the end of 3 years, you may resubscribe. You search the database by ISBN, LCCN, author, title, etc. and when you get a "hit" , you edit the record (using Windows conventions such as cut, copy, paste, backspace) to include your local holding information (name of library, barcode or accession number, call number prefix, etc.) and then save the record to a file. Sometimes, you don't get a hit and need to do original cataloguing.

MARC templates are provided for many resource types (books, video-cassettes, computer programs, audio tapes, even community resources, etc.) and the built-in help file answers any questions you have about MARC every step of the way. Or, you can use the cataloguing of a similar title, edit to match the title you have in hand, and save the edited version to your file. When you later purchase a library automation program that is MARC compliant, you import the records you saved in ITS for Windows, and you're ready to circulate them. ITS also allow you to print cards and labels on your computer, so after a cataloguing session your just print the whole batch at once. ITS for Windows is Z39.50 compliant, so may also be used to do copy cataloguing from the internet.

To order ITS for Windows software and TheoMARC or to try it free for a while

contact the international sales person:

Lisa Rauh, The Library Corporation US headquarters: Irauh@tlcdelivers.com
Lisa is a committed Christian and is very helpful. Also visit their
website <<http://www.tlcdelivers.com>>

If you are planning to do your own retrospective conversion (putting your existing records into computer format), to save money when you automate your library, I would recommend you consider ITS for Windows. I also recommend that you simultaneously add barcodes to the top, middle cover of your books so that you don't need to handle books twice during automation. If you are unable to buy barcodes locally, contact Ben Jackson <Benj@imagedata.co.uk> in England for a quotation. Price is approximately 12 British pounds per thousand barcodes + postage. Order code 39 glossy bar codes printed on extra permanent material (so they will adhere to cloth-bound books). Order barcodes that come 45 to a sheet on adhesive plastic. You can ask them to print your library name on them too. They are pre-cut, so you peel off an individual barcode from its backing paper and stick it onto the library resource (book, etc.).

You will key in (or scan, if you buy a barcode reader for approximately 200 British pounds) the barcode number into the appropriate field. (I recommend MARC field 852 for local holdings and subfield p for barcode.) Then, when you are fully automated, you will scan or type in the barcode number of the library material and the barcode of your library user, and the circulation of the materials will go quickly.

I am a missionary, serving in Keyna, and I do free library automation consulting. Feel free to contact me with your questions at:

phyllism@gatewayonline.co.ke

3. What is a MARC record and why is it important?

In her column above, Phyllis mentions "MARC". What does MARC mean? A MARC record is a MACHine-Readable Cataloguing Record. Machine-Readable means that a computer (machine) can read and interpret the data in the cataloguing record.

Why can't a computer just read a catalogue card? The information on a catalogue card cannot simply be typed into a computer to produce an automated catalogue. The computer needs a means to interpret the information found on a catalogue card. The MARC record contains little "signposts"

before each piece of bibliographic information. The best file structure allows for records with an unlimited number of fields and unlimited field lengths. Such flexibility is necessary because not all titles are the same length. For instance, some books are part of series, while others require no series statement. Audiovisual items have longer physical descriptions than do most books.

The computer cannot expect a certain type of information to begin and end at the same position in each bibliographic record. The title, for instance, will not always begin with the 100th character of the record, nor end at the 207th position. Each MARC record contains a little "table of contents" to the record, according to a predefined standard.

A computer needs help if it is to read and interpret the bibliographic record. If a bibliographic record has been marked correctly and saved in a computer data file, computer programs can be written to punctuate and format the information correctly for printing a set of catalogue cards, or for displaying the information on a monitor. Programs can be written with the aim of meeting a wide range of search criteria.

4. Why does one need one standard?

MARC has become a standard way of handling cataloguing data. Devising one's own method of organising bibliographic information can isolate one's library, limiting its options, and creating more work for oneself. Using MARC standard prevents duplication of work and allows libraries to better share and benefit from bibliographic sources.

Choosing to use MARC enables libraries to acquire cataloguing data that is predicatable and reliable. "Home-grown" systems of cataloguing are not able to take advantage of a world-wide standard whose main purpose is to foster communication of information.

Using the MARC standard also enables libraries to make use of commercially available library automation systems to manage library operations. Many systems are available for libraries of all sizes and are designed to work with MARC. The MARC standard also allows libraries to replace one system with another with the assurance that their data will still be compatible.

How many libraries in the ACTEA network are using the MARC standard? Do you think it is important for smaller theological libraries in Africa to subscribe to this standard? Many smaller libraries have staff who are not trained in cataloguing and classification. Phyllis mentions some options

above. Let's hear your opinion!

5. Booklets on Report Writing, Quoting Sources and the Internet

Potchefstroom University in South Africa has produced a useful set of booklets (30 - 60 pages long) on Referencing Techniques, Report Writing and the Internet. These booklets are a must for any library. The booklets come with a CD.

The booklet on Quoting Sources deals with topics such as: Which style? The Harvard Style, Plagiarism, Copyright, Direct Citations, Indirect Citations, etc.

The Internet booklet deals with topics such as: What is the Internet / World Wide Web? Getting connected to the Internet, URL's, Hypertext Links, Search services or tools (Directories/Search Engines), Searching the Web (Boolean searching, Proximity searching, Truncation, Field searching, etc.).

Style and presentation are refreshing, making the topics covered easily understandable.

The booklets can be purchased at a price of R90 (\$10) for the three from:

Engela J van der Walt
Ferdinand Postma Library
Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education
Private Bag X 6001
2520 Potchefstroom
South Africa

6. Considering readers' needs in the library (Part 1. Part 2 in next eNews)

Meeting the needs of readers is the major function of a library. Control of the use of the library by formal regulations and psychological methods can help in achieving this aim.

In terms of the library building it is well to remember that an in-depth examination of the activities of readers is an essential prior activity to engage in when a decision has been made to create a well-designed library building which will encourage the desired use and discourage misuse.

Here we will briefly consider some factors to be taken into account when considering the library as a study facility.

Do you think, for example, that one should intermingle study tables with the storage units, or should the study area be completely separate from the bookstacks? Or perhaps a combination of both?

Observing reader behaviour, it does seem as if readers who require study facilities for a long time rarely need to be placed next to the stock. The reader usually collects the main books for use and takes them to a study table and remains there for some time. In this situation he/she does not want to be disturbed by readers engaged in any other activity. It seems that the majority of readers spend more time at a study table than in any other activity. Observe if this is the case in your own library.

More next time!

Please, please write in with contributions. We really want to hear who you are, what you think, and what you are doing.

God bless,

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