Library Consortia : A Need of Hour

Dr. Ranjana K.Jawanjal[1]

[1]Librarian, Shri Dnyaneshwar M Burungale Science & arts College, Shegaon, Maharashtra, India

ABSTRACT

The concept of library consortia and library networking to aid information resource sharing and support activities in libraries has become a real necessity in India. This paper briefly discusses the concept, need, factors, advantages, disadvantages of library consortia and it gives brief information about Main Consortium likeCSIR,INDEST, INFLIBNET consortia in IndiaThis paper covers various models and the benefits of e-journals consortia. It also discussesthe existing environment about users preferences and difficulties.

Keywords: Library Consortia, CSIR,INDEST, INFLIBNET, E-Journal;

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of library networking to aid information resource sharing and support activities in libraries has become a real necessity. explosion of information and inadequate library urged the libraries to adopt new philosophies and technologies for collection development and reduce the costs of information. Library Consortium is an Association of a group of libraries to achieve mutually the common objective. It is i felt that the concept of E-Journals consortia can work well the libraries without requiring additional fees to access the e-journal.

Definition of Consortia: A consortiais an association of two or more individuals, companies, organizations or governments (or any combination of these entities) with the objective of participating in a common activity orpooling their resources for achieving a common goal. Consortium is a Latin word, meaning 'partnership,association or society' and derives from censors 'partner', itself from con- 'together' and sores 'fate',meaning owner of means or comrade.

Need for library consortium:

The consortium is needed for libraries because of:

1) Information explosion.
2) Diversity of user needs
3) Financial crunch
4) Impossibility of self-sufficiency

Factors to Consider before Consortia Formation: factors to be taken for an effective functioning of a successful consortium.Like resources identification on the basis of usage and usability, long run planning of the technology infrastructure,access to back runs of periodicals will have to clearly spelt, copyright and licensing, archival issue, price issue should be economically favorable. Last but not least, designing and launching a library consortium should be long term sustenance and robust models towards achieving the above goals.

Advantages of Consortia:

i. Consortia-based subscription to electronic resources provides access to wider number of electronic resources at substantially lower cost;
ii. Optimum utilization of funds.
iii. Facilities to build up digital libraries
iv. Helpful to provide better library services like CAS and SDI
v. Cost Sharing for Technical and training support
vi. ElectronicJournals demand neither library space nor shelling costs nor can they be stolen from the library
vii. The consortium have been offered better terms of licenses for use, archival access and preservation of subscribed electronic resources, which would not have been possible for any single institution;
viii. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
ix. Economy in maintain

Disadvantages of Consortia:

1. Absence of a printed copy of Journals
2. Require training of staffs in handling electronic documents etc.
3. Consortia require high initial investments in licensees and information and communication technology.
4. Copyright problems
5. Unreliable telecommunication links and insufficient bandwidth
6. Lack of archiving and back files availability
7. Internet Access id necessary
8. Users are not accepting e-journals as per with the printed Journals

CSIR Consortium:

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in India has 40scientificlaboratories involved in basic and applied research in various disciplines. Many of the laboratories have well equipped libraries, and some of them act as the main information centers for different subjects, functioning as consultant libraries at the national level. Access to e-journals through the use of state-of-the art technology is possible in many of the libraries belonging to these laboratories. Each of the laboratories has a well-established library or documentation center.

INDEST Consortium:INDEST is an open-ended proposition, and welcomes other institutionswith the similar area of interest and who can join for sharing benefits. The INDESTConsortium is the most ambitious initiative taken up so far in India in the area of engineering and technology disciplines. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has set up the Indian National Digital Library in Science and Technology (INDEST) Consortium. Institutions including the Indian Institutes of Science (IIScs), the Indian Institutes of Technology

(IITs), and a few other centrally funded government institutions through the consortium. Besides that, 60 government or government-aided engineering colleges and technical departments in universities have also joined the consortium with the financial support from the All India Council for Technical Education. In addition, a total of 26 other engineering colleges and institutions have also joined the consortium on a payment basis.

II. INFLIBNET

Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET), a programmer of the University Grants Commission, was launched in May 1991. The main aim of INFLIBNET is to establish a national computer-communication network to link libraries and information centers in universities, colleges, universities, UGC information centers, institutions of national importance, R&D institutions, etc., and thereby improve capability in information handling and services. It is a programme for academic excellence to be achieved through establishment of a mechanism for information transfer and access to support scholarship and academic work. It facilitates pooling, sharing and optimization of scarce library resources in the country. As a major programme it helps modernize libraries and information centers in the country through application of information technology.

Benefits of E-Journals Consortia:
a. Scope for electronic archives;
b. Availability and monitoring of usage statistics;
c. Getting deep discounts through joint pricing negotiations – hence lower unit cost Of information;
d. can be read anywhere in the world, at any time, by any number of people as long as the readers have an internet connection;
e. Also allow the inclusion of audio-visual material as well as the other formats and technological innovations that are available on the Internet, such as keyword possibility of self-sufficiency

Consortia Models
The types of consortia identified are generally based on various models evolved
in India in Varity of forms depending upon participations' affiliation and funding sources.
i). **Open Consortia**: -This type of consortia is very flexible and it is the wish of members of consortia can join and leave any they please. INDEST Consortium is an example to this.
ii). **Closed Group Consortia:** -It is within defined group. This kind of consortia emerges either by affiliation and collaboration among them like CSIR, DAE, IIM Consortium. And the formation and operation of the consortia guidelines and its administration are fairly simple and easy.
iii). **Centrally Funded Model:** -In this model, consortium will solely depend on the parent body. A few examples are INFONET by UGC, ICMR, CSIR by DSIR.
iv). **Shared-budget Model:** -"In this model the participating libraries take the lead and form the consortium. IIM and FORSA are examples of this model".

III. CONCLUSION

Library consortia, providing for physical and electronic delivery of materials, and integrating theCollection-developmentprocess is all distinct and crucial steps in moving toward the twenty-firstcentury library. It is the case; clearly identified landmarks represent important goals and milestonesfor measuring our common progress on a journey through a new and unfamiliar landscape. Consortia are tools, which will aid in exploiting the features of the e-resources as well as in effecting savings.

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