

Association of Atlantic Universities/Blackwell North America  
Cataloguing Project

by

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In the Atlantic Provinces, a new regional network of libraries has been formed. Libraries in the network enjoy a cataloguing support system which reduces catalogue card production costs and provides efficient, fast service.

The Association of Atlantic Universities laid the foundation of the network in the summer of 1976 when they signed a contract with Blackwell North America, Incorporated. This company made available its complete data base and all programming as well as implementation support for its library Technical Services package. The programmes were delivered and set up for running at the University of New Brunswick Computing Centre in Fredericton, New Brunswick. During the fall the staff of the Computing Centre familiarized themselves with the operating system and did testing to overcome technical difficulties within the centre. The first products were produced in January for the University of New Brunswick Library.

The official name of this project is the Association of Atlantic Universities/Blackwell North America Cataloguing Support Project, or the AAU/BNA Project. It is being called a "project" simply because the contract is for a two year period. At the end of that time, a detailed evaluation will be made of the accomplishments of the system and a decision will be made to continue if appropriate.

During the summer of 1975, a study was done to determine cataloguing costs and card reproduction costs in the university and college libraries

of the Atlantic Provinces. This study showed cataloguing costs ranging from \$2.67 to \$15.66 per title and card reproduction costs from \$0.50 to \$3.77 per set. The project will reduce such costs for each member institution while making the cataloguing more uniform for the area. But more important still, the project will make close cooperation possible among participating libraries in the network.

A general description of the working system of the project is in order before we enter into specifics concerning services and plans. The system offers a comprehensive array of technical services and related products for libraries. Although the project will begin with the production of basic card sets and labels, experience with the system will lead to greater output sophistication. The system can provide ready-to-file catalogue card sets, book catalogues, and microform catalogues, as well as records in machine-readable form.

The B/NA System is founded on an extensive data base of Library of Congress MARC records and library holdings information. B/NA MARC records adhere strictly to the MARC II structure and contain all bibliographic data elements provided in the source cataloguing copy. The computer programs allow an individual library to modify data elements in a record to follow local practice (for instance, a library may wish to replace the designated LC call number with a local or national one for Canadian literature). Such modifications are recorded and retained on individual Library Users Files only, guaranteeing that the data base remains true to source for the

next user. In this way each library builds up an accessions file for new acquisitions which they can use in the future to produce accessions lists or microform catalogues as required. .

The system offers one of the largest data bases available in the world, a rich and reliable source of current and retrospective cataloguing in many languages, including records for serials and non-print materials as well as monographs. Cataloguing information from a variety of sources is contained in the data base, which is updated by approximately 3,000 records per week. A library may choose to accept records from any or all of the following groups:

- a) LC MARC Distribution Service Records, from 1965 to date;
- b) B/NA MARC records from other LC sources and from original cataloguing;
- c) British National Bibliography MARC distribution service records;
- d) CAN/MARC records from 1973 to date;
- e) COMARC records (German MARC);

The data base is represented in visual form by the microfiche title index. Each participating library receives a copy of this index and uses it for cataloguing information. The index is produced on COM fiche; accumulations of the entire data base are issued quarterly, with supplements accumulating on a weekly basis. Users need look in only two places for up-to-date

information. Citations in the index are arranged alphabetically by title; they include descriptive cataloguing, call numbers (both LC and Dewey Decimal Classifications). The standard card set contains four main entry cards and a tracing set, but the number of cards may be varied to suit local needs. The system can eliminate the call number from certain ranges to enable a library to type in their own customized numbers if required. All cards are produced completely headed and ready for filing.

Card and label sets are produced to profile specifications for \$1.00 per record used. Cards are printed on medium weight acid free Perma/Dur 100% rag stock, manufactured to ALA standards. Labels are printed on Avery Destrux stock, four labels per volume. All cards and labels use the full ALA character set. Cards can be ordered presorted in alphabetic or numeric sequence, depending on final destination and use.

Products can be requested by ISBN, LC card number, microfiche accession number or author/title. Forms are available for requests and a holdover recycling service is also provided if needed.

If an item does not appear on the microfiche, or is not in the data base, original and modified cataloguing can be handled by a data entry system. Full products are created consistent with MARC formats.

Each request which results in a product is recorded in machine readable

form on a User File. Every library has its own User File which can be used to produce individual book or microfiche catalogues. A number of User Files can be merged to produce combined lists or catalogues. There is no additional charge for the creation of machine readable User Files.

Libraries may use the microfiche title index to compare with their own records and in this way convert retrospective files to machine-readable form. This may be done without producing card products for each addition. From these records subject bibliographies, monthly acquisitions lists, or any other needed lists can be produced for individual libraries or groups of libraries.

It is the immediate object of the project to provide cataloguing support services to all libraries in the Atlantic provinces and thereby to reduce searching, cataloguing, end processing and card production costs of participating members. In addition to cost savings, the system will result in greater efficiency in individual libraries as well as a standardization of cataloguing and processing in all libraries in the area.

As a by-product of card requests, a record of each data base item used will be stored in machine-readable form. It is from these machine-readable records that a union catalogue of all participants will be produced. This union catalogue, and the benefits to be derived from it, is the main aim of the project. The union catalogue will be used for cooperative ventures such as cooperative cataloguing interlibrary loan

and collection rationale.

Another purpose of the project is to inform the libraries in the Atlantic Provinces about automated systems, their benefits and use. This project will serve as valuable training experience and will enable intelligent informed decisions to be made about the future of automated systems in the Atlantic Provinces.

Consecutively, the project will provide interested libraries with holdings lists which can be used as subject bibliographies, acquisitions listings, etc. Such lists will be costed individually according to each library's use and needs. By summer, 1977, there will be eleven libraries using the system.

The AAU/BNB Project represents a bold new venture for the libraries of the Atlantic Provinces. For the first time, cooperation in cataloguing and collection rationale can be a reality. Libraries both large and small, regardless of type or clientele are joining together in this common network to increase efficiency in Technical Services and to improve library service for all the Atlantic Provinces.