UTLAS / STATE OF THE ART

UTLAS / ETAT DE LA QUESTION

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ABSTRACT

The use of automation in libraries from 1980 to 1985 will be considered from the perspective of UTLAS. Highlighted will be the application of mainframe, mini-computers and micro-computers to various library operations, both local and centralized, such as authority control, thesaurus construction in a shared environment, acquisitions, circulation and online enquiry. The bilingual capabilities of the UTLAS system will be examined, as will the future of specific projects in Canada, the United States and Japan.

RESUME

Ce mémoire aura pour thème l'application de l'automation aux bibliothèques dans la période 1980-1985, telle qu'envisagée par UTLAS. Il portera plus particulièrement sur l'utilisation des grands ordinateurs, des mini-ordinateurs et micro-ordinateurs pour effectuer diverses opérations de bibliothèque tant au niveau local qu'au sein d'un réseau, par exemple, le contrôle des vedettes d'autorité, la construction partagée de thésaurus, la fonction acquisitions, le prêt et l'interrogation en direct, seront examinés aussi les possibilités bilingues du système d'UTLAS et l'avenir de certains projets se déroulant au Canada, aux Etats-unis et au Japon.

UTLAS - STATE OF THE ART

Any planning done by a bibliographic utility such as UTLAS is greatly influenced by an economic climate in which library budgets continue to be cut annually, communication costs increase slightly each year and systems management and software costs are rising rapidly, thereby creating a labour-intensive industry. In response to these conditions UTLAS has taken, over the past year, and will continue to take steps to

1. spread our revenue base
2. allow our data base to grow
3. develop new technologies using mini- and micro-computers
4. and enhance authority control and the system's bilingual capabilities.

It is these four points which will form the basis of my presentation today.

REVENUE BASE

Rising costs coupled with the need to purchase new equipment so as to keep up with advances in technology have led to an effort to diversify our revenue base. This is illustrated by two agreements established during 1980-81.

First, UTLAS and the Research Libraries Group (RLG) have agreed to cocperate on a variety of projects such as the production of page form catalogues for members of RLG. These microform and bookform catalogues will be produced on the Honeywell Level 66 after the conversion of our page form catalogues to this hardware sometime in the fall.

The second agreement to which I referred was signed with one of Japan's largest companies, Maruzen. This 111 year old enterprise is involved in such diverse activities as the importation of Western imprints, the publication of Japanese materials and the provision of information services to Japanese libraries. Starting this fall Maruzen will access UTLAS' Cataloguing Support System (CATSS) online during the night (Toronto time).

Present users of CATSS will benefit from the lengthened service hours and the revenue generated by these two agreements.

GROWTH OF THE DATA BASE

UTLAS' second response to the present economic conditions is the growth of its data base. As it grows, the data base becomes more useful for library functions such as cataloguing, interlibrary loan and acquisitions. A larger data base means an improved hit rate for a library, thereby decreasing the

percentage of original cataloguing required. This in turn represents a substantial cost-savings for the library.

As of April 30, 1981, the UTLAS data base included 8.5 million user records, 2.5 million source records and 1,050,000 authority records. In terms of access keys, this means 16 million precise keys and 5.5 million browsable keys.

In an effort to increase the usefulness of the data base for cataloguing, UTLAS continues to establish agreements to acquire new bibliographic files such as the one being created by the Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions (CIHM) in cooperation with the National Library of Canada. When completed, this project will provide cataloguing data for over 50,000 pre-1900 Canadiana imprints. These records will be loaded into a private file in CATSS and made accessible to pre-determined clients. UK MARC was acquired and loaded this year. We have also subscribed to INTERMARC and are in the process of converting it to our format.

Increasing the size of the data base also has a positive impact on interlibrary loan as more locations can be found and an increasing amount of verification can be done online. With more and more libraries faced with the necessity of participating in collection-sharing projects, the role of the data base in the ILL process will become of greater importance.

UTLAS has also tried to aid libraries in pre-cataloguing functions such as verification and ordering. We have gone about doing this by contacting book publishers and book vendors in an attempt to acquire their stock lists which would be stored in our data base and eventually used by UTLAS clients to initiate orders directly online. While still at the discussion level, we hope these efforts will lead to a pilot project aimed at testing such a service. Such a project would enhance the acquisition module being developed at UTLAS. Over the past year three libraries have been testing this module's ability to create on-order records and generate orders.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES

A third area with which UTLAS has concerned itself is the development of new technologies using mini- and micro- computers. By developing a distributed processing system using CATSS and our Library Collection Management System (LCMS), we hope to help libraries reduce communication costs, automate local library functions and make use of resources already invested in the creation of their CATSS data base.

The online catalogue, circulation and statistics management modules of LCMS are now mature. A project is under way to test the online catalogue at the Metro Toronto Reference

Library where we expect to see the first department using it by October 1981. Presently the library, equipment and the data base are being prepared. One of the major goals of this project is to study and improve system/user interface, an essential factor in the usefulness of the online catalogue. Other goals of this project will be to test the retrieval capabilities of LCMS and authority control in the online catalogue.

Development continues on the intelligent terminal which we see as the automatic link between LCMS and CATSS. It will allow two-way interaction between the mainframe and mini-computer. In other words, libraries will be able to search on the mainframe computer housed in Toronto and then handle all editing locally on the mini-computer, thereby saving on communication costs.

New technologies will also affect the mainframe computer. As many of you know, UTLAS is in the process of converting its products and CATSS from Xerox Sigma equipment to Honeywell Level 66 computers. The conversion of CATSS will mean that UTLAS' cataloguing support system will be replicatable and therefore available for purchase.

New technologies will also allow UTLAS to address problems it has faced over the past year, such as slow response time. We have acquired additional Sigma equipment which will run in tandem with the Sigma 9 on which CATSS presently resides. The aim of this change is to make the online system more efficient.

AUTHORITY AND BILINGUAL ENHANCEMENTS

The fourth point outlined in the introduction of this paper was the enhancement of authority control and the system's bilingual capabilities. Over the past year a large number of authority records were integrated into the data base and clients of UTLAS were offered a service known as a "data base walk". The aim of this online process is the retrospective validation of headings in all machine-readable records in a library's file. The UTLAS authority system has proved to be a cost-effective means for users to maintain control of headings in their bibliographic records and of implementing AACR2.

A second enhancement of the authority system and a means by which the bilingual capabilities of the system have been improved is the "Traduire" or "Translate" command. Used online at the time of record creation or derivation, this facility allows for the automatic translation of non-subdivided Library of Congress Subject Headings. This could represent both time- and cost-savings for our French and bilingual clients who presently carry out this task manually. "Translate" is made possible by the existence of the Repertoire de vedettes-matiere, the official French translation of LCSH created and maintained by Universite Laval and stored in machine-readable form in the UTLAS data base.

The development of this command was greatly assisted by the participation of the Universite de Moncton in a pilot project. Preliminary statistics gathered by Moncton indicated that approximately 50% of their subject headings were being translated.

CONCLUSION

I have by no means presented an exhaustive picture of recent and future developments at UTLAS. The points outlined today serve merely to give you an idea of the issues facing UTLAS in the early eighties and projects which will allow UTLAS to serve its clientele more effectively.