

Maintaining Access to print Materials – a Finnish Model

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THE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT

Even though there are signs that the end of the hybrid library might well be in sight within a few years, we still have to manage and develop the hybrid library. Hybridism manifests itself in all sectors of the library profession, starting from library space and building planning, information provision on internet, virtual reference etc. In collection management one of the most challenging issues is how to manage the rising costs of hybrid collection development. The challenge is to provide access for every user to the document he or she needs and at same time to ensure at least an acceptable basic print collection in the library (Ceynova & Coners, 2003). Many tools have been developed to support local libraries in managing hybridism. Co-operation and specialisation of different types of libraries is naturally needed in this. Another direction is to provide centralised tools for managing reasonable service levels for users in terms of access to information. In Finland, library co-operation has been developed over many decades and specialisation in terms of collections and database constructions etc. have been essential in formulating national collections.

Library co-operation has been backed by national policy where certain decisions can be made at a national level and where individual libraries can trust in the availability and continuity of these national services and institutions. It has also led to a situation where resources are shared and acquired as cost-effectively as possible. The basis on which an individual university library can build its own services can be divided into two parts: university libraries have established consortiums that acquire and maintain the services and collections needed in the digital environment and the National Repository Library ([NRL](#)) ensures the availability of less used and older printed material.

The backbone of electronic resources provision is the National Electronic Library ([FinELib](#)), which acquires Finnish and international resources to support teaching, learning and research. FinELib negotiates user-rights agreements for electronic resources on a centralised basis for its member organisations. The university libraries receive central government funding via the Ministry of Education. In addition to the central government funding, the university libraries pay for acquisitions out of their own budgets.

At the moment there are about 20,000 full-text online journals, 175 reference databases, dictionaries, and reference books and a growing number of e-books. New publications for all fields are acquired continuously and they can be used from the beginning of each calendar year.

The print collections are much more varied, and the volume is huge. The following table illustrates the printed collections in research libraries: printed books and periodicals (source: [Research Library Statistics Database](#)).

	Collections, physical units	Shelf space needed for collections, km
University libraries	15,546,171	490.0
Polytechnic libraries	2,419,384	45.2
Special libraries	3,573,152	89.7

The acquisition of printed materials by research libraries has increased since the depression in the middle 1990s. The following table illustrates the acquisition of printed books and periodicals in 2004:

	Acquisition, physical units	Shelf space needed for acquisitions, km (estimation)
University libraries	597,303	15.7
Polytechnic libraries	225,404	5.9
Special libraries *	42,975	1.1

(* some important special libraries do not participate in the Research Library Statistics Database.)

SHELF SPACE AND COSTS

Shelf space has changed in Finnish libraries from 1990 to 2004 in the following way:

	Shelf space needed for collections, km	Change 1990-2004	Open stacks, shelf km
University libs.	490.0	+ 54,251 shelfmeters	218.9
Polytechnic libs.	45.2		34.7
Special libraries	55.0	- 5,779 shelfmeters	12.0

Growth in university libraries' collection space has been controlled by establishing the National Repository Library. It is meant to be a repository to be shared by all libraries in Finland as the most economical way of storing library material. Thus the need for building space for library collections is decreased and can be controlled. The material in the Repository Library is received by transfer from other Finnish libraries and becomes the property of the Library.

Libraries have transferred 91,000 shelf meters (up to June 2005), of which university libraries have transferred 53,000 shelf meters. The costs to house this amount of print material in local libraries can be calculated. According to a library building standard university libraries can keep in open stacks 3.61 and in local stores 7.33 shelf meters of print material (Hagman, 1988). The rent for local stores is about €10 per m². This would indicate that cumulative savings in libraries so far are €3.3 million of which 2.3 million are in university libraries. Annual costs to house acquisitions are €400,000. Using the Repository Library's services to enable zero-growth collections can generate substantial savings at local and national levels.

This kind of infrastructure for low-use collections radically reduces collection costs and also local retention costs. At the same time, the material access range for libraries served increases.

An example of strategic partnership: local and national level organisations

The National Repository Library is an institution whose existence is based on national level decisions: there is the legislation (Law Act and the Degree) on which the Ministry of Education is committed to provide funding. Individual libraries can trust in the availability and continuity of this service.

The director of Kuopio University library PhD Jarmo Saarti writes about this setting:

“The basis on which an individual university library can build its own services can be divided into two parts: university libraries have established consortiums that acquire and maintain the services and collections needed in the digital environment (e.g. library systems, digital object management systems and acquiring e-material licences). The National Repository Library ensures the availability of less used and older printed material (at the present time an increasing proportion of the new printed materials are also found in its collections). These two library types are combined with modern database and library system technologies. Thus the end product is a portal or portals through which the user can access these different resources via his/her own computer. For example, Kuopio University Library's patrons can search and make reservations from both, the University's collections as well as the National Repository Library's collections from their own library's OPAC. Books are delivered within 24 hours from NRL and electronic copies of journal articles even faster to

recipients via e-mail. This has made it possible to transform Kuopio University Library's small book collection into a large one by their supplementation with 55 shelf-kilometres from National Repository Library's collections for the use of our patrons. One possible vision is that Kuopio University Library specialises even more on the user-services and user education and obtains the documents that our patrons want from where those documents can be obtained most cost-efficiently."(Saarti, 2005).

Strategic decisions in Finland (Saarti, 2005):

Kuopio University Library	University Libraries	National Repository Library
Specialisation	Co-operation especially in library systems (Voyager, Metalib Portal, Digital Object Management)	Providing access to print material
Providing e-access	E-material acquisition (FinELib)	Using modern technologies in logistics (e.g. Universal Borrowing module of Voyager)
Providing limited print collection		Developing e-services in document delivery directly to the patrons
Teaching and guidance of patrons in their information needs		

The National Repository Library is the key actor in the infrastructure for low-use collections. It can arrange storage and access to print materials cost-effectively. The centralised repository can streamline its activities and reduce unit costs in many ways. The storage facility is constructed to be very space intensive: compared to local storage facilities it can accommodate more than double the amount of material per square meter. Also the location of the repository has been chosen to be in less expensive area. Finally: carefully planned work processes allow lower staff grade than in ordinary libraries. All the rationales generate savings on a national level.

The NRL is a state library, administratively located under the Ministry of Education's Science Policy Unit from which it receives funding. This is convenient for libraries as they experience the services of the NRL as an extra support from the government. The services of the NRL are free of charge for libraries.

The material transferred to the NRL becomes its property, which allows deduplication. One copy of the material is kept and this is one of the rationales of a national level solution: there is no need to store the same material e.g. four copies in four technical university libraries. Deduplication is an important tool for national level collection management. The collections in libraries participating in the Research Library Statistics Database include 16.2 million book holdings and 5.6 million physical units of periodical, totalling 21.8 million physical units. The number of titles indicates that nearly half of these are duplicates. Total deduplicated collections in Finnish research libraries should be about 12 million physical units.

The NRL has a commitment to the future: its collections are growing. At the moment a collection of 2.7 million items can be enlarged to 22 million items. This is probably not needed as the deduplication diminishes the need for storage, even though all printed collections would be transferred to the repository. 2.7 million items require 53 shelf kilometres and 22 million items would need about 400 shelf kilometres.

One quarter of the material originally acquired by Finnish research libraries has been transferred to the NRL. The growth rate in the NRL is about 4 shelf kilometres of deduplicated materials a year. The budget of the NRL is 1.6% of combined university library budgets and 6.8% of their acquisition budgets (Vattulainen, 2004). The extension of local library collections in the form of the NRL collections is an essential tool in providing services for patrons.

CATALOGUING

The material transferred from libraries must be processed. Cataloguing takes place in a Linnea2-environment - the software is Endeavor's Voyager. This is library software co-operation between all university libraries, the NRL, the Library of the Parliament and some other large libraries. The key result is the national union catalogue LINDA. It is being used as a tool for copy cataloguing, information retrieval and interlibrary lending locating. Voyager is a somewhat problematic tool in a union

catalogue environment, because it requires the existence of local catalogues on which it builds a physical union catalogue. This sometimes causes extra work for cataloguers.

The size of the catalogues are listed in the following table (catalogue records):

	2002	2003	2004
University libraries (part of Linda UC)	7,447,590	7,163,393	7,589,713
Polytechnic libraries	1,332,953	1,472,599	1,447,103
Special libraries	1,631,945	1,730,398	1,801,896
- of which the NRL	909,059	961,160	1,013,415

Catalogues have been growing even though occasionally maintenance - including double record control - has downsized the number of records. Annual record production is described in the following table:

Number of catalogue records by year:

	2002	2003	2004
University libraries (part of Linda UC)	385,619	430,159	379,254
Polytechnic libraries	162,112	118,983	121,484
Special libraries	95,225	121,081	84,324
- of which the NRL	48,287	52,862	52,704

The NRL participates substantially in national cataloguing co-operation. Most of the records (79.4% in 2004) are copy-catalogued from various catalogues all over the world using BookWhere software. Primary cataloguing is mostly retrospective, and this is the main role of the NRL in national cataloguing co-operation. 25% of all retrospective primary cataloguing in Finland takes place in the NRL.

INTERLIBRARY LENDING

Interlibrary lending and document supply (ILL&DS) provided by Finnish research libraries has recently encountered radical changes. University and special libraries have traditionally been net-lending libraries and their collections have formed the backbone of information provision. ILL&DS provided by them has, however, continuously diminished during recent years. For example, interlending and document supply was nearly 200,000 loans or article copies in 1997, but only 89,000 last year.

Diminishing ILL in research libraries can be explained partially by the fact that large portions of their collections have been transferred to the NRL, where the ILL demand has moved. ILL&DS in the NRL has grown continuously as the collections have grown. The growth has been 10-20% a year. In 2004 the NRL received 67,752 requests or orders.

ILL&DS activity is free of charge as all other services. This creates trust in libraries and they can rely on getting the material sent from their collections for their use whenever they need it. The work processes can be streamlined in a national lending centre. ILL&DS services are fast and efficient by any standards. The performance management system implemented between the Ministry of Education and the NRL closely follows indicators describing the service quality and level. It also requires following best practices and developments in ILL&DS software, equipment etc. Documents are delivered digitally, usually in PDF-format. There are projects going on to develop patron participation in the ILL&DS process. The main reason is that

patron initiation speeds up the service, diminishes unit costs and gives better fill rate than traditional interlending (Jackson, 2004).

The NRL participates in a national-level project where the patrons of the university libraries can place their orders as they retrieve information from a local library catalogue and the NRL catalogue to both of these catalogues. This is the implementation of Voyager's Universal Borrowing module. There are also other smaller projects to develop patron initiated ordering. It is also possible to deliver documents - PDF-files or printed books - directly to patrons.

EVALUATION 2004-2005

The Ministry of Education wanted to evaluate the NRL in 2004. The library had been functioning for 15 years and in many respects it is a unique institution internationally. The aim of the evaluation was to clarify:

- the performance and quality of its functioning,
- how its activities have responded to the goals that were set by establishing it,
- the status and role of the NRL in Finland's information provision system,
- the need to develop the library in changing function environment,
- the quality and performance of library's processes,
- the need to develop the administration and management.

An expert was nominated to do the evaluation. The results were - in brief - very positive (Laitinen,2005).

The NRL is very important for the whole library community and hence to the information provision system of research. The NRL guarantees availability of print materials and is a support organisation for the whole library community. Even though the electronic material increases, printed material will be needed for the foreseeable future. The role of the NRL in providing access to print material may even be more important in the future than it is now. Internal processes in the NRL are efficient and the services are fast and cost-effective.

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WEB SITES REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT

FinELib - National Electronic Library. <http://www.lib.helsinki.fi/finelib/english/index.html>

NRL - National Repository Library. <http://www.nrl.fi/english/index.html>

Research Library Statistic Database. http://yhteistilasto.lib.helsinki.fi/language.do?action=change&choose_language=3