



The Importance Of Library Catalogues In Resource Discovery

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Abstract-User approach for searching documents in a library has changed owing to arrival of various formats of documents. Now format is as important as Author or Collaborators or Title or Series or Subject approach. This paper manifests this paradigm shift in this User's approach of searching documents.

1. INTRODUCTION

A library catalogue is the backbone of any organized library system, acting as a guide to the vast and diverse collection of information resources available. It is a structured inventory that provides detailed bibliographic records of all materials housed within the library—whether they are books, periodicals, theses, reports, audiovisual materials, or digital resources (Taylor, 2004). By using the catalogue, users can efficiently identify and locate materials based on key search elements such as author, title, subject, keyword, or call number.

With the advancement of information technology, traditional card catalogues have been largely replaced by Online Public Access Catalogues (OPACs), which allow users to search and access library collections from remote locations at any time (Hildreth, 1985; Breeding, 2006). This digital transformation has significantly enhanced the usability and accessibility of library resources, enabling seamless navigation through vast collections with just a few keystrokes.

The library catalogue not only supports the daily operations of the library but also plays a critical role in academic research, learning, and information dissemination. It helps reduce the time spent in searching for materials and allows users to explore additional related resources through cross-references and subject links (Gorman, 2001). For librarians and information professionals, the catalogue is also a tool for collection development, inventory control, and user services (Chan, 2007).

In today's information-driven society, where timely access to accurate data is essential, the library catalogue stands out as an indispensable tool. It bridges the gap between the information seeker and the source of knowledge, promoting the effective utilization of library resources. Whether in an academic, public, special, or digital library, the importance of a well-designed and updated catalogue cannot be overstated—it is the gateway to knowledge.

A library catalogue is a useful search tool for the effective use of library. Once a user knows that a catalogue is available in the library and he/she familiar with its use. The various approaches of a user of find a document, like trying to find out a document of a known author; or, of a known title.

The vital job of Information provides/library professional is to ensure that the individuals who need information can obtain it with minimum of cost (both in time and money). The society demands from the library to provide right information to right user at the right time in the right way.

The process of accessing or obtaining the relevant information from the library collection is known as Information Retrieval.

In relation to a user, the documents that can satisfy his information need can be categorized into two groups.

1. **Known Documents** : When the user is in a position to specify a document by using name(s) of its Author(s), or Collaborator(s), or Series, or by its title, the document can be regarded as 3 Known Document, in relation to the user concerned.
2. **Unknown Documents** : For all practical purposes in all situations when the query for the document is formulated by using the name of the subject treated in it, it is helpful to treat it as Unknown Document in relation to the user concerned.

Again one and the same document can be known to some users, but unknown to others. Thus we may say that a document may be sought by a user under a number of headings form, author, collaborator, title, series etc. However physical storage system adopted usually organizes a document under one heading or perhaps two of these headings for example, fiction documents by author. To meet the needs 'of users librarians traditionally dealt with the other possible approaches through a substitute record. the catalogue.

3. ACTS To FACTS Catalogue

Library catalogues, with which we are familiar, a traditionally ACTS (Author Collaborator-Title-Series-Subject) catalogues as major user's approaches have been identify But due to the advent of a number of r information carriers. Not only the content c document but container also influence the user's demand and thus play a significant role in selecting and retrieval of information. The same document in the form of e-book may be preferred by a user instead of its printed version only due to the format. So, now it has been the duty 1 cataloguers to recognize the user's need and provide them a modified catalogue i.e. FACT (Format-Author-Collaborators-Title-Series-Subject) catalogue.

4. METHODS OF EARLY WARNING

To provide the 'early warning' to the catalogue users about the format of a document, various techniques are in vogue. Some are being discussed below to analyse their penetration power of user's satisfaction.

A. Material Designations (GMD & SMD) : Material designation may be defined as the physical form of the document being catalogued as a slide or a model. AACR 2 further divides it into two elements; a general material designation (OMB), for example, video recording; and a specific material designation (SMD),-for example, video disc.

Example: GMD

BOZZETTI'O. Bruno

Happy birthday [motion picture] I Buzzetto

New York : Janus Film [distributor], 1980-1 film reel SMD .

(10 min.) : sd., col.; 16min. Title from the data sheet.

There is a clear appeal in the idea of such an early warning system's for the catalogue user who wants to know quickly the form of the document. However, there is a lack of evidence concerning user preference and whether statement such as 'graphic' is sufficient description for the user. The ability of the user to scan catalogue card and note the designation quickly has also not been researched, so far we know

There has been considerable debate concerning the merits of general material designation. AACR2 states that it is an 'optional addition'. The problem of material designation is further complicated by the number of terms used to describe the physical forms. It is crucial for library users that they are helped to identify easily the particular format that they are interested in using. The librarian is faced with a proliferation of terms and often different definitions of terms. For example, the terms 'chart' can mean a flip chart, wall chart, star map or navigational chart. AACR2 has not completely tidied up this area and indeed a number of terms such as, flip chart, photograph, postcard, stereograph, study print and wall chart are not defined in the glossary.

B. Colour Coding: Other method of 'early warning' is colour coding of catalogue cards. For example, in this system all slides would be on blue cards, all sound discs on green cards etc. It may be helpful in an integrated catalogue to have the non book materials (NBM) listed on different coloured cards where the vast majority of stock is of books. The user searching for an NBM item would have quick visual guide in these circumstances. However Weighs objection should be noted: Colour coding is not recommended for the following reasons.

1. Photo reproduction of catalogue data is impractical because the use of colour film raises Costs.
1. Colour coding is also impractical for computer produced books, micro form, or online catalogues.
2. To make coding economically feasible in centralized cataloguing, an internationally accepted standardised colour code would have to be established. At present there is no such standardisation. Individual resource centres using such services would have to colour code by hand, a time consuming task.
3. As new types of media are acquired, the media centre would soon run out of distinctive colours. Shading of colours could lead to confusion if the quality of the colour were not maintained.
4. Colour coding erodes the all media approach to resource centre materials.
5. Catalogues reproduced on micro film would be able to reproduce such colour differentiation only at great expense.

C. Media Code: Another possibility is a media code in the top of the catalogue card. Furlong and Platt list 16 such codes:

F Film	P Picture
FL Film loop	R Record
FS Filmstrip	S Slide
K Kit	SP Specimen
MA Map	TC Tape: Cassette
MO Model	TR Tape: Reel
MP Microform	W Word card
MS Microscope slide	WA Wall chart

The usefulness of a media code is open to question particularly as the user has to remember a further set of letters. Users don't remember such codes and often require the help of library staff to determine their meanings. To remember codes+the classification number may be asking too much of the average catalogue user. The problem of standardisation and advent of new media are common in colour coding and media code.

6. CONCLUSION

To summarize, there needs to be a separate catalogue for Format as like Author/Title/Subject catalogue to provide user a specific and direct access point. To provide the SMD at the end of subject descriptor is being used this may not be considered to be the ultimate solution.

Perhaps the clearest exposition of what a user may demand from a catalogue was written by Charles Ammy Cutter in 1876. But Cutter was referring to the need to help a user in the choice of a book. The passage of over hundred years and introduction of a number of new information careers demand for FACTS catalogue in lieu of ACTS catalogue.

7. REFERENCES

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