

Library Automation: A Case Study of DIHRM Library, New Delhi

Sufian Ahmad

Librarian, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi

Abstract

In India, some libraries and information centers made efforts to automate their library routines and services in the 1960's. Nowadays most of the libraries have started or already have completed the process of computerization of their house keeping operations like, Acquisition, Cataloguing, Circulation, Serial Control, OPAC, etc. This article is a case study of the automation of library at DIHRM, New Delhi.

Key-words

Library Automation, Computerization of library, Library Software, Library Hardware, Database Creation.

Introduction

The term 'automation' was first introduced by D. S. Harder in 1936. He defined it as 'the automatic handling of parts between progressive production processes in relation to engineering industries. Since then the term has been applied to a wide variety of automatic machinery and automatic systems, and is commonly used to describe any operation in which there has been a substantial substitution of controlled action for human efforts or intelligence.

About the Library

Delhi Institute of Heritage Research & Management (DIHRM), New Delhi was established and fully funded by the Govt. of NCT of Delhi, is an autonomous Institution of higher learning and research. The Institute is affiliated to Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University to conduct the Master's degree Courses in Archaeology and Heritage Management, and Conservation, Preservation and Heritage Management. The Institute's library has more than 10,000 books and back volume periodicals. The automation of library has been done using the library software, *Troodon (3.0)*.

Advantages of automation

Automation has the following advantages:

1. Large data can be handled with ease and accuracy
2. Operates at a great speed and promptness
3. High rate and better quality in performance
4. Labour saving
5. Cost effective
6. Ease in functioning
7. Avoids/ eliminates duplication of work
8. Greater manipulation possible

Software (Troodon)

Troodon is user-friendly, multi user and multi-tasking library management software. This Software has been developed by the Comtek Services Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, to work on Windows 95/Windows NT. The package is user friendly and can be operated by library staff without much prior knowledge of computer operations. The Software provides the following modules:

Acquisition: This acquisition module covers all operations of right from the stage of accepting the indent for payments of a publication, up to the records entries covering the books received are merged with the holdings database (OPAC). Acquisition module is very versatile in terms of functioning. Starting from the allocation of funds (budgeting) it has provision to acquire documents by different means and ways.

Circulation: This module covers all the operations of circulation right from creating member records to printing of reminders for outstanding loans, no dues certificates along with issue/return/renewal of documents, stock verifications, etc.

Database Maintenance/Retrospective data conversion: This module covers all operations of database creation and maintenance. It not only takes records from the acquisition, circulation module for the books recently acquired, but can also be used for retro-conversion. Such retro-conversion can be done by capturing bibliographic details of existing collection in the library and also by downloading required records from CD-ROM database. The records are validated and merged with the database. Bar-code labels for circulation purpose can also be printed out using this module.

OPAC: This module allows library database searching by entering preferred terms. This is mainly used for information retrieval.

Serial Control: This module covers all operations of serial control right from receiving of indent for a periodical to the binding of issues and compilation of periodical holdings database. Compilation of union catalogue can also be done.

Procedure adopted for database creation

Database of DIHRM Library has been created by directly feeding the data into database maintenance module from the Accession Register and remaining fields like ISBN/ISSN, subjects, key words, etc. from the respective books/journals.

The database could have also been created by filling up a separate data input sheet for each document. However it was avoided because of lengthy and time consuming process.

Problem faced in the process of automation

While cataloguing the books certain problems were faced by the library staffs. One of them was cataloguing of books which were in hindi language. Initially the data was entered in the source language but later on it was realized that users faced problems when they searched the catalogue. So the entire data was re-entered again into the roman script.

Another problem that we faced was the computers which were connected through Local Area Network (LAN) got frequently hanged because of which lot of inconveniences were caused to users as well as the staff members.

Hardware and Software requirement

Pentium IV, 256 RAM, CD-ROM Drive, Window NT or Window 2000

(Minimum Hardware and Software requirement is Pentium II, 32 MB RAM, Windows 95)

Laser/Inkjet Printer

UPS

Total Expenditure

1. 3 IBM Computers (Pentium 4, 256 MB) @ 40,000 each	total	Rs.1,20,000.00
2. 3 Network Cards @ 650.00 each	total	Rs.1950.00
3. Laser Printer		Rs.15000.00
4. Laser Barcode Reader QS 1000		Rs.17250.00
5. 8 Port Switch D-Link		Rs. 4950.00

6. UPS	Rs. 20,000.00
7. Library Software Package (Troodon)	Rs. 95,000.00
8. Network Cable & Conduit @ Rs. 20 per mtr resp. (25 mtr each)	Rs. 1000.00
9. Networking and cabling for all 3 Computers	Rs. 2500.00
10. Barcode Label (20000) @ Rs. 750.00 per 10 thousand	Rs. 1500.00

Total	Rs. 2,79,150.00

The total expenditure for library automation may vary according to the selection of Hardware and Software Package for the library.

Conclusion

This article is useful for those who are planning to computerize/automate their libraries, especially the procedure for creation of database, rough idea of expenditure, hardware/software requirement, etc., will certainly be immense useful. In spite of so many features claimed by the software vendors, it has been experienced that problems occurred frequently in the library software packages available in the market. To rectify the problems, every time one has to depend upon the developer/vendor of the software. Therefore it is recommended that we must be careful while selecting/purchasing any of the library software packages.

References

1. Aswal, R.S. Library automation for 21st century. New Delhi: S.S. Publications, 2006.
2. Saffady, William. Introduction to automation for librarians. Chicago: American Library Association, 1983.
3. User's manual (Troodon Software).
4. www.dihrm.delhigovt.nic.in