

## **A COMPUTERISED LIBRARY AS A NEW TYPE OF A SPECIALISED PUBLIC LIBRARY. THE COLIB "KIEVSKAYA" CENTRALIZED LIBRARY SYSTEM IN MOSCOW**

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The computerised library (CoLib) of "Kievskaya" Centralized Library System (CLS), Western Administrative Region of Moscow, was opened in September, 1996 in the premises, adjacent to a library for children of "Kievskaya" CLS, situated in the centre of Moscow. A remote prototype of this project was the computerised library in the town Paderborn (Germany).

The idea to organise a CoLib appeared after the CLS "Kievskaya" personnel representatives took part in the training seminar for Eastern Europe librarians (including Russia), held by German Library Institute in 1995. The project was financed by Department of Culture and Entertainment of Western Administrative Region (WAR) and municipal district "Dorogomilovo" administration, Moscow.

WAR allowed to increase budgetary funds for the library to acquire collection, to carry out cosmetic repairs and to equip the premises. However the CLS staff carried out the repairs works and the design-project, acquired furniture and installed it in the premises. All these works were fulfilled by the staff itself in order to economise the small funds that had been allowed to CLS.

Municipal district administration financed the "Program of creation and functioning of the library information net of municipal district "Dorogomilovo" on the basis of CLS "Kievskaya" libraries". Alongside with creation of a number of innovation library sections (such as Information service for the community, information service "education", social advertisements bureau, information and analysis service etc.) the program intended to create a computerised library for young people. As a whole Municipal district administration during 1996 and 1997 allotted for the Program 250 mln. rubles (\$ 44.000) a year.

During the 1<sup>st</sup> stage before the official opening of the CoLib a primary marketing research was conducted to study the needs of students, as well as adults in the territory covered by CLS "Kievskaya" in information and computer services. A

marketing research was also conducted on supply of information and computer services and resources in Moscow as a whole. At the same time a group of sociologists carried out a small study on the condition of collections and technical equipment of school libraries. They made up sociological certificates of the schools, particularly they wanted to know whether information technology was taught.

As a result we succeeded in minimising expenditures on primary acquisitions and still managed to secure our needs with comparatively small amount of money. At the same time the demand the most part of acquired resources was very high.

A resource base of a CoLib was created according to the results of the marketing research. The following work was carried out: a collection of printed publications on information technology (about 500 titles) was formed; and subscription to a number of professional periodicals (over 10 titles) was made; a collection of CD-ROM's (over 100 titles, mostly of encyclopaedical nature, educating courses, arts), was acquired; a stock of educating program and other electronic issues in floppy disks mainly as a help to education was formed; some technical equipment was acquired: 7 modern personal computers based on Pentium processors (one of them was excluded lately because of the demand of sanitary epidemiological inspection), a monochrome laser printer, a coloured jet printer, a coloured flatbed scanner and a special scanner for reading out bar codes etc.; all computers were networked in a local net (Windows NT-server and clients on the base of Windows-95); the library was linked up to INTERNET through a switching telephone channel (now we actively use e-mail; due to bad quality of the telephone line any serious work in a dial-up on-line mode is practically impossible); the problem of linking-up over an allotted channel with possibilities of entering Internet from readers' computers was under discussion for a long time and now the contract is signed at last.

In spite of acute shortage of financial resources, when acquiring software and information sources we managed to strictly stick to principle "Licensed resources only!". We are very grateful to both financing organisations and Moscow representatives of Microsoft for their help. They understood our financial difficulties and problems and sold us the standard software as for a budget organisation with a huge discount on education pack conditions. An additional considerable reduction of expenditures was given to us by permission to buy for a reduced education pack price the only reference copy of the software and (for a still more reduced price) some additional licenses to have the right to use the software in several computers. Due to this precedent we managed to receive

considerable discounts on similar conditions also from some other suppliers of general purpose software.

Thanks to such a support (despite a small over-expenditure) we managed to withstand sharp competition of the black market (first of all for CD-ROM variants of piratical software and "toys"). At the first stage we didn't buy any computer games with the exception of some licensed educational and business games. Now we plan, just as an experiment, for use in the section of paid services to buy a few dozens of licensed game CD-ROMs without the right of using them in the premises of the CoLib in order to avoid converting the library into a game centre.

From September to November 1996 the CoLib worked in an experimental mode. We stored up data on customers' demand, and on the attitude of different age and social groups of readers both to the very idea of a computerised library and to certain aspects of its activity and services. It should be noted, that at this stage all the services, computer time including, were free of charge.

During the period of experimental running we developed a technique of protecting the personal computers from unauthorised access by users (first of all from access to the sections of removable carriers, which could be a channel of computer viruses penetration). Experience shows that combination of password authentication and locking the disk sections with a key proved to be most effective.

We worked out an electronic (for librarians) and a printed (for users) annotated catalogue for all electronic and printed materials of the CoLib. All collection items were bar-coded so as to make easier search for necessary issues, as well as to begin realisation of the project of electronic registration of readers ( the readers cards are also bar-coded) daily book-lending and book-circulation. We still didn't and couldn't implement this task due to inadequate library computer programs by Informssystem and Moscow State University that we have in our CLS. We consider that the library program "Mamont" ("Mammonh") worked out by specialists of Sakhalin regional scientific library is the best one to serve the needs of public libraries. But Moscow libraries are oriented mostly to Informssystem library Software and Sakhalin is too remote a partner and is not represented in Moscow. All these factors make it very difficult to co-operate with both sides and we can not seriously rely on this system.

A State Public Polytechnic Library system IRBIS with an adapter to work in IntraNet/InterNet networks is now being run in public libraries. A new version of Informssystem with an adapter of the same type is being also developed. To our mind these two systems are the most perspective ones nowadays. The passover to

new systems is impeded by absence of the national standard (RusMark) and by prospective introduction of new international standards Imark and remote access. After unavoidable correcting work and "running-in" our CLS will buy modern library software and run-it-in first of all in the CoLib.

In November-December 1996 the group of sociologists was again invited to carry out a marketing research the main task of which was to make a sociological inquiry among the customers of the library (in person and over the telephone), to analyse the documents and to conduct inner survey.

According to the method of "including vision" we developed a program (it is being carried out now) of scientific-research work, the aim of which was to finish the organisation of the CoLib in the variant that would satisfy its customers. The work is based on the above mentioned sociological inquiry and on the consideration of the library's practical work in the experimental mode.

The collection of the Computerised Library was replenished. Now we can offer our customers various books and newspapers, printed and electronic magazines and journals, reference books and encyclopaedias, educating electronic games and programs, cognitive CD-ROM materials, reference books of metadata about the information market, price information on the market of personal computers and software, the materials of various conferences, workshops and exhibitions.

As a result nowadays the customers have the possibility to read in the library or to take home books on information technology and special periodicals, to make orders for acquiring books and electronic publications for their home "mediatheka". The customers can also master personal computers by themselves with the help of the educational programs, they can use e-mail, work with information navigation means, use text-processing software, graphic, or office programs, type-in and scan own materials, take part in amateur societies. The latter means that on the basis of the CoLib an Internet Club for young people will be organised. It is supposed to begin work in September 1997.

It is very important for the CoLib to work out educational programs for customers of different levels. These are 1-2 days training courses for beginners (mainly for teenagers), various types of courses of computer literacy (Windows-95, Windows-3.11), topical courses "Information search and computers" and "Advertising and computer technologies" for librarians.

It also is very important for a CoLib to have close contacts with producers of information resources and services and with professional journals. We plan to

conduct a Moscow city round table "Mediatheka" at school and in the library together with the specialised journal "Mediatheka".

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