Ahmedabad Library Network—ADINET

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ABSTRACT

The paper describes the databases being developed by ADINET and the information and communication services it presently offers and plans to offer in the near future to its member libraries and other users. ADINET, although a very recently started network (formally inaugurated in February 1995), has taken quite a few initiatives to play a very useful role in library resource sharing and in information dissemination.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ahmedabad Library Network (ADINET) was formally inaugurated in February, 1995 when a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the National Information System for Science and Technology (NISSAT) and ADINET at Ahmedabad. ADINET is the fifth library network sponsored by NISSAT in the country and aims to bring about cooperative mode of working amongst more than 150 libraries and information centres in and around Ahmedabad. Using modern tools of information technology, ADINET will not only help library users but individuals too, of different professions in getting access to information of their interest. Coordinated efforts for suitable collection development will result in sizeable reduction of unnecessary

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duplication of subscriptions. E-mail facility being provided by ADINET will enable the members to exchange information with others within the city and outside.

2. DATABASE ACTIVITIES

Creation of a centralised database, i.e., a union catalogue of holdings of libraries in Ahmedabad is an important activity of ADINET. The centralised database will contain a number of databases pertaining to serials, books, theses/dissertations, non-book material and subject experts with their fields of specialisation. Inputs are collected from various libraries in whatever format/medium they are available and then they are keyed in the ADINET host computer as per standard format recommended by INFLIBNET to maintain uniformity.

In a short span of less than a year, the following databases have been created and are being constantly updated.

2.1 Institute Master

This database contains information about 74 libraries in Ahmedabad. Information about more libraries will be added in phases.

2.2 Journal Master

This database presently contains bibliographic information about serials/journals titles currently subscribed by 74 libraries of Ahmedabad for the year 1995. The contents pages of journals, abstracts of articles, and inclusion of back volumes will be taken up gradually.

2.3 Book Master

Generation of Union Catalogue of Books is a herculean task due to the sheer number of books to be entered in computer after filling up the mandatory fields and authenticating each entry against any mistakes. In the first phase it is proposed to collect book data from about ten libraries in Ahmedabad which are already computerised and enter them into the host computer.

3. SERVICES

Services to be offered by ADINET can broadly be categorised as under.

3.1 Library Related Services

ADINET will enable libraries to give the following services to users more effectively.

3.1.1 On-line Information Search

Information can be searched by the participating libraries by accessing the Union Catalogue database. This catalogue initially will have the holdings of periodicals only. Gradually holdings of books, dissertations, reports and important non-book materials will also be added to it.

3.1.2 Inter-Library Loan

ADINET will enable a user to find the location of a periodicals/books/reports of his interest Once located, they can then be borrowed on inter-library loan.

3.1.3 Photocopying Service

When requests are received for journal articles, they can be photocopied and sent to other libraries at specified cost.

The Inter-Library document delivery service has been started.

3.1.4 Current Awareness Service

Current awareness service can also be provided from commercial databases which are available in some libraries in machine readable form.

3.1.5 Information Service

By generating useful databases and procuring commercial databases, all the members can be provided access to the latest bibliographic and factual information.

3.2 Other Services

3.2.1 E-mail Service

INFLIBNET has already installed an e-mail software in its computer. Mail boxes for ADINET members can be opened in this computer. Just by dialling into the INFLIBNET e-mail number, one can post messages meant for other members and at the same time retrieve messages received from others. This service will be of particular help in case an institution wants to send notices/messages to several institutions. It is proposed to subscribe to ERNET so that ADINET members can exchange e-mail with others in India or even abroad.

3.2.2 Bulletin Board Service

Information about popular lectures/talks, conferences, seminars, etc. which are

organised by various institutions can be given on a bulletin board. ADINET will provide a facility for posting notices about such events so that others can read them.

Members can also highlight some breakthroughs achieved by them or pose problems faced by them on bulletin board so that other members working on similar fields can respond.

4. PROMOTION OF LIBRARY AUTOMATION

Library automation has two main components viz.; (i) Computerisation and (ii) Networking. Computerisation would greatly help a library to offer speedier services to users and streamline various library operations. But for accessing other libraries/information centres/databases, networking is required. Library may have computers and networks but exchange of information also depends on the cooperation and willingness of librarians. For a city library network to succeed, there has to be cooperation among the librarians. To inculcate the spirit of cooperation and spread awareness about library automation, ADINET provides a platform to librarians of Ahmedabad to interact. This is done through monthly meetings held at different institutions.

For most of the libraries in Ahmedabad, computerisation is a new work culture altogether. Library professionals need to be trained in this area while the users are to be educated in the use of computerised libraries and information centres. This is an important activity without which library automation will not succeed. ADINET therefore, organises various training programs at nominal charges for the benefit of library professionals and others. Training programs on use of CDS/ISIS for library computerisation and e-mail have been organised in last one year. A workshop on

AACR - 2 is planned for the near future. Such training programs will be a regular activity of ADINET in future.

To help the libraries in avoiding unnecessary duplication in the journal acquisitions, ADINET compiles and circulates every year a union list of current periodicals in Ahmedabad libraries. However, such reduction in duplication can be achieved only if the libraries are sure of getting copies of the journal articles promptly from other libraries. Towards this, ADINET has started a document supply service through which libraries can get documents from other libraries without employing their own scarce manpower for the work.

For information exchange, ADINET with the help of NISSAT has initiated steps to provide e-mail facilities to 30 Ahmedabad libraries this year using ERNET of DOE. A list of the Ahmedabad institutions whose libraries will be provided with this facility is given in Annexure - I.

5. FUNDING

ADINET is promoted by NISSAT which has provided grants for the establishment and operation for the first two years. The only other source of funding is through annual subscriptions from members.

6. HARDWARE/SOFTWARE AVAILABLE

6.1 Hardware

One PC-AT 486, 66 MHz EISA architecture

One dumb terminal

One PC-486 with CD-ROM drive

Three PC-386 DX2 machines

CCD barcode-scanner

One additional PC-486 DX2 with CD-ROM Drive has been ordered.

6.2 Software

SCO Open Server Network (16 Users) + Development 'C'

LAN Workplace for DOS

Windows for Workgroup

MS Office for Windows

EZY Bar for generation of barcodes.

CDS/ISIS

7. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

One of the major problems faced by ADINET in the initial stages of central database creation was getting inputs from different libraries. Postal requests to librarians to send their library data to ADINET hardly elicited any response. Reminders too were of no use. This problem was solved by sending persons to various libraries for collecting data. Monthly meetings too helped a lot in this matter.

Many libraries do not have computers. They send data in, either typed or handwritten form. Further they cover very few fields. This increases data entry workload at ADINET. But these problems will gradually ease as more and more libraries get computerised.

Another major problem is non-availability of telephone connections in libraries. Most of the libraries do not have direct telephone connections. Even after applying for a telephone connection it is impossible to guess as to when the library will get such connection.

Since city library networks like ADINET do not receive any grants (except from NISSAT for first two years), it is impossible to recruit staff on regular basis. Mere subscriptions are not of much help. So, work has to be carried out with persons employed on fixed stipend who are always on the look out for permanent jobs. So, the work suffers due to frequent change of employees.

8. CONCLUSION

ADINET is a recent city library network. A lot of progress has been made in the first year itself since its establishment. Some initial problems have been overcome. Inspite of some handicaps efforts are being made to make it a truly useful network.

List of the Institutes to be Provided Ernet Connectivity under ADINET

1. B.J. Medical College
2. Centre for Environment and Planning Technology
3. Centre for Health Education Training and Nutrition Awareness
4. Gujarat Institute of Development Research
5. Gujarat University
6. Gujarat Vidyapith
7. L.D. College of Engineering
8. L.M College of Pharmacy
9. Sheth KM School of Post Graduate Medical Research
10. Dharmsinh Desai Institute of Technology, Nadiad
11. Government Polytechnic — Boys
12. Centre for Environment and Planning Technology
13. Consumer Education and Research Centre
14. College of Nursing
15. Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India
16. Gujarat Cancer Research Institute
17. R.C. Technical Institute
18. Gandhi Labour Institute
19. Government Dental College
20. Gujarat College
21. M.G. Science College
22. Mudra Institute of Communication
23. National Institute of Design
24. L.D. Arts College
25. Sardar Patel Institute of Economic and Social Research Centre
26. Sardar Patel Institute of Public Administration
27. C.U. Shah Science College
28. H.L. College of Commerce
29. Forensic Science Research Laboratory
30. Government Polytechnic, Gandhinagar