

RESOURCE SHARING : INFORMATION SHARING

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When we speak of resource sharing, we mostly mean document sharing through union catalogues, list exchanges, interlibrary loans, cooperative acquisition programs... Yet, the first and primary condition of the library network efficiency is information sharing.

Libraries have been quite successful in this field for the last decades but, nowadays, new technology such as electronic mail or telefax offers unequalled facilities to set up and promote a permanent and world wide program of information exchanges liable to meet the increasing needs of punctual responses. From an eight year experience at Paris Observatory library which has been hosting the French national service CADIST [Centre d'acquisition et d'information scientifique et technique], we can assert that, outer demands of informations being at the same time useful information sources, such a quick answer service *does* participate to the improvement of the inner service efficiency.

On the other hand, rich or poor, large or small, old or new, each library can act as a supplier of information as well as a customer. Reciprocity being the right basis of any durable deal, the development of the information exchanges is an inexpensive and simple way to promote larger cooperative programs.

Great and very diversified is the need of information : astronomers' last addresses, information on the adequate plate cabinets, identification of new non commercial series, order address of particular and peculiar documents, local average prices for budget argumentation...

The launching of such a regular service needs neither much time, nor much money. Let the volunteers make themselves known to the library community, let them spread the type of informations they are best suited to provide and the complete address to get in touch with them. Why not start now ?