Criteria for Selection of Library Software packages
Section IV

Criteria for selection of library software package

In fact the selection of the software, aspects such as the objective of the library, collection services to be generated from the library, user friendly nature of the software, cost, compatibility, authoritativeness of the film which produced the software after sales service support etc should be considered.

The discussion made above will reveal that quite a number of library software packages both foreign and indigenous are available to librarians for automation. But the question is whether a librarian should go for a library package in-house developed by the computer expected available package. The software developed through in-house and that available from market have their on merits and demerits.

In the case of software developed scientifically and tested by time in its use. But of course, the cost is less in the development of such packages, whereas in the case of software developed by commercially agencies they are developed as a result of team research and tested by time and most of these packages have general application and are suitable for all types of libraries. But the cost is high in the case of commercially available library software packages. So in the light of experts opinion and experiences it is better to go for purchase of commercially available package for library automation.
Computerization of a library requires a lot of money, manpower and materials. The computerized library system may affect positively (or) negatively the efficiency of a library because of the particular software packages used by library. Hence an objective assessment (or) evaluation of the packages is required in the choice of a particular software for automation.

The general guidelines for the selection of a commercially available software package are the following:-

☞ Locate and evaluate a knowledgeable dealer (or) sales person,

☞ Thoroughly examine the documentation for the software you are considering.

☞ Arrange for a demonstration of the software.

☞ Prepare yourself before the demonstration.

☞ Put the program through in paces

☞ Evaluative the quality of the support you can expect from the dealer or vendor.

According to Glossbreber the following are the rules and guidelines for the selection of a software.

☞ Do not take anything for granted.

☞ You are not the stupid one
How many and tong? How many author names can you put in that file? How long each name be?

Forget about the sizzle and focus on the steak. Ask what the program can do and how well it can do it?

Whenever possible, make an effort to visualize yourself using the program.

Read at least two reviews of any program before you buy.

Get a demonstration on the identical computer, configured exactly as the one you will be missing.

Life will be easier if you stick with proven products offered by major hardware and software films.

Buy only the four building block "programs to start with the four building block programs are communications, word processing, electronic spreadsheet and personal database management.

Don't desire yourself crazy trying to get something to walk.

Nothing is impossible. But the given may not be worth the candle. Computers and software are so versatile that you can accomplish just about anything you want.

When ever you can – wait: make sure the rapidly changing software market works for you.

The publication entitled library systems Evaluation Guide listed the following guidelines as the phases for the selection of a library software
package for library automation especially for house-keeping operations.

Phase I - Setting objectives
Phase II - Fine taking of components of the methodology to agree with objectives
Phase III - Selection of candidate systems for evaluation.
Phase IV - Examination of accompanying system literature and documentation.
Phase V - Comparison of candidate systems with the functions and features, table and with the checklist of data elements
Phase VI - On-site evaluation of candidate systems
Phase VII - System selection and acquisition
Phase VIII - Post-installation evaluation

**Roulay** provides a checklist for the selection of a software package.

Under the following three heads viz.

- General criteria
- Technical criteria
- Support criteria

According to **Grosch** the following are some of the important criteria for the selection of software packages. He has pointed out the availability of the capabilities and product enhancements application software at the time
of installation other criteria include: examining hardware platform options, operating systems requirements, direction of the system developers towards open Systems, Conversion support, record of the old and new versions of the software ease of use etc.,

*There are some other features of the software packages:*

**Other's people's experience**

A well tested package that is established in the market place and with which several applications similar to that being considered, are in evidence and can be examined is generally to be preferred. Such as package is less likely to have boys and should have adequate support. Other people's experiences are useful in indicating the potential and problems of a software package, and others may offer help and advice in tailoring and implementing the package.

**Cost**

Cost is a primary consideration in the purchase of any software package. For Example, software packages for text retrieval large in price from under RS 50 to over RS. 50,000. Obviously more expensive packages offer a wider range of features and facilities but the application under consideration may only merit a more limited expenditure. These may be made difficult by the fact that some software is sold as part of a turnkey package which also includes hardware. Also it is important to recognize that the price of a package is only a small element in the over all cost of installing
a systems. In addition to hardware costs, these will be database creation and system installation and implementation costs that will probably significantly outstrip the price of the package.

Originator

The reputation of the systems house responsible for writing a software package is important to consider. Experience with other packages form the same originator may be useful in accessing a new package. A series of linked packages from the same originator covering different functions such as graphics, spreadsheet, processing, spreadsheets and databases are more likely to have a reliable interface than a series of packages from different originators. Some software houses are well-established and have long-established packages in the market — place whereas others are less stable. An established software house is more likely to be able to offer continuing support.

Supplier

Sometimes the supplier is the same as the originator, but especially with business software for micro computers, the supplier is an agent. Agencies may specialize in certain types of software and/or may be selling complete systems. Obviously, the supplier is an intermediary between the user and the originator and may hinder direct communication between user and originator, although the better suppliers and originators have worked out their respective responsibilities so that the customer is offered satisfactory support.