CHAPTER: 3
LIBRARY CONSORTIA

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3.1 INTRODUCTION

Historically, libraries have generally stood alone, using subscription agents, booksellers and library suppliers as middlemen to order the long lists of journals, monographs and text-books that libraries acquire each year. But now, with the convergence of expensive databases delivered via new technology, coupled with growing pressures to do even more with less in financial budgeting terms, the need to adopt new ways of acquiring important and essential products has taken root (Reardon, 2001).

It is no coincidence of course, that the development and acceleration of electronic databases - firstly on CD ROM and latterly via WWW delivery - has driven libraries towards a more collaborative approach to acquiring these kind of products because the facts are that electronic products carry much higher levels of financial investment than single books or journals ever did. Banding together is a common response among libraries in an environment that is characterized by rapid technological change, high inflation of the cost of library materials, and a shift towards digital resources. Bolt (2000) notes the following reasons behind collaboration:

- Response to pressure from funders to use resources efficiently
- Cope with reduced resources
- Make more services more accessible
- Increase positive results of cooperation
- Help communities solve problems and move forward
- Bring attention to the role and contributions of libraries.

Cooperation occurs when two or more libraries work together to provide more developed services to their respective users (Boisse, 1995). The proliferation of electronic information services and products, and increasing availability of information processing, storage and communication technologies in libraries facilitated the sharing of resources and engendered new cooperative schemes. Moreover, librarians increasingly feel that they must cooperate to reap the benefits of “economics of scale”. In traditional resource
sharing schemes, libraries possessing the physical materials tend to benefit more from the cooperative collection development efforts. However, the availability of networked information resources encouraged libraries to streamline their cooperative collection development efforts. This has facilitated cooperative collection development efforts and further encouraged libraries to set up library consortia to provide more and varied electronic resources through the networks and to increase their bargaining power with publishers of electronic information resources.

Libraries have always worked co-operatively to help overcome the problem of insufficient funds and escalating prices to achieve cost efficiencies and effective utilisation of resources. Fortunately, as librarians grapple with these issues, they have at their disposal organizational means of leveraging resources which previously served them well and which offer promise of even greater utility and effectiveness in the digital age. Groupings of libraries with similar purposes, interests, geography, or need - library consortia -- once more are coming to the fore, reinvented and reinvigorated by the opportunities and challenges of technology. Libraries once again are finding that institutions working together can accomplish far more than they can individually. The age of library consortia -- local, regional, national, and even international -- is at hand.

Library consortia are a formal association of libraries not under the same institutional control, but usually restricted to a geographical area, number of libraries, type of materials, or subject interest established to develop resource sharing among members. The objective of Library Consortia is to control and reduce information costs, to improve resource sharing, to develop a network information environment and share licensing issues with each other (Hirshon, 1998). Consortia may have begun initially for a variety of reasons, but most had one over-reaching purpose: economies of scale. This purpose remains today. Sharing with others, who, in turn, shared back, meant certain items, did not need to be purchased by every library.

A library that is perceived to be co-operating will be looked upon more favorably than one, which is perceived to be inward looking in its attitude. This benefit in belonging to a
consortium is reinforced if the consortium is part of the governmental structure in a country or region. Many consortia benefit from being based at a national library, which integrates the consortium into the political structure of the country (Friend, 2002).

The proliferation of consortia would indicate that there is generally some advantage to the formation of such groups to facilitate access to electronic resources. For any particular institution, the issues would seem to be:

- better pricing achieved through a consortial approach to a vendor,
- reduced administrative overheads for individual consortium members,
- consistency of access for users (e.g., academics moving between institutions),
- centralized negotiations with vendors on license terms.

The information revolution and the ever-rising cost of journals have dramatically increased libraries' reliance on consortia. One of the main roles these consortia have played is to make deals to get databases, journals, and other information at better prices. Consortia win deals by maintaining a critical mass of members that allows them to make bulk purchases, although even small consortia can negotiate good deals for their members.

3.2 LIBRARY CONSORTIA

Traditionally, library cooperation meant sharing collections in some way, but it could also include sharing of services, or of processes such as joint cataloging of materials, or of staff and user training. In general, however, most libraries kept their autonomy and consortia involvement was a peripheral library service. Recent developments in library funding, and the growth in importance of electronic materials have led to a change in thinking about how libraries cooperate, and the growth of formal cooperative entities (Bostick, 2001).

The motivation for the existence of library consortia is, by and large, twofold. Firstly, librarians share a desire to work together, to work collegially, to share and to make
information readily accessible. Secondly, librarians seek to achieve economies and savings for their organizations (O'Connor, 2005)

Library consortia range from informal collaborative efforts aimed at sharing resources and leveraging funding and expertise to sophisticated, automated networks encompassing large regions. Many times, consortia are established through grant funding. Once the initial grant runs out, funding is then picked up in another manner. Some cooperatives are funded through state funds exclusively, while others use a mixture of internal sources, such as members' fees, and external sources such as state funds, E-rate discounts and grants. (Conrad and Lessner, 2002)

Consortia provide and facilitate services to reduce staff work at the local level, extend the reach of individual library budgets, help to enhance services to their constituencies, strategically plan and maintain awareness of innovations that may improve library service. Some provide centralized services for members like cataloging, automation, Internet access, technical support, group purchasing and subscriptions and staff training (Pronevitz, 2000). Some consortia have progressively become advocacy and development agencies (Conrad and Lessner, 2002). They are building consensus among diverse library staffs, providing cost effective programs and taking advantage of opportunities for peer-to-peer sharing (Simmons, 2000).

According to experts in library cooperation, consortia will continue to be an important feature of libraries in the future. Peters (2003) believes “that collaboration involving libraries is crucial to the continued success of libraries”. He continues that the risk of not cooperating is redundancy, duplication and missed opportunities.

Library consortia will become even more important in the future by assisting libraries in implementing and managing the process of change. The most successful consortia in the next century will help libraries predict their emerging needs and help them work through the process of change to develop strong programs and services in a way that fosters experimentation, risk-taking and creativity (Bosseau, and Hirshon, 1999). The future will
also be one of growing international cooperation. Consortia need to be aware of the global information environment (Peters, 2003) and its effects locally.

### 3.3 DEFINITION

The word "consortium" has become fashionable almost everywhere in the library world. The real meaning of the expression, however, is not always self-evident. It is not clear, whether only a loose group of cooperating libraries is meant or an organization based on a legal contract or at least a Memorandum of Understanding. In most cases the message seems to be that there is a group of cooperating libraries, which have agreed on a common goal and a common policy to achieve it.

Consortia is the plural form of the term *consortium* but is often used in place of the singular form. The dictionary definition for *consortium* is very broad. It is derived from the Latin word for fellowship. The meaning emphasizes the coming together of separate groups for a purpose (Oxford 1993).

- Partnership, association.
- The companionship, affection and assistance, which each spouse in marriage is entitled to receive from the other.
- An association of organizations or States formed for commercial or financial purposes.
- A group; an assortment.

The term "library consortium" can be defined as an association composed of several member libraries. It has its own structure of governance and can act as a corporate body on behalf of all its members. Cooperative collection development, sharing physical resources through document delivery services and provision of access to electronic information sources are among the main purposes of setting up a library consortium. Hundreds of local, regional and national library consortia are operational throughout the world (ICOCL, 1998).
Library consortia are defined in the professional literature both in specific and broader terms. A generic term to indicate any group of libraries that are working together toward a common goal, whether to expand cooperation on traditional library services (such as collection development) or electronic information services. The term is now used perhaps too broadly, and encompasses everything from formal legal entities (such as incorporated or governmental agencies) to informal groups that come together solely to achieve better pricing for purchasing electronic information.

The simplest definition of Library Consortia would be the coming together of libraries to achieve a common goal that is beyond what an individual library could achieve on its own. Ball and Pye (2000) have taken the definition of library consortium one step further. They defined a library-purchasing consortium as an association of independent organizations that act in concert to procure for themselves goods and/or services specific to libraries.

3.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF LIBRARY CONSORTIA

Ann Okerson (2004) has identified the following characteristics of library consortia:

- Always institutions/libraries, not individuals
- Can be formal or informal, big or small
- Many, many numbers and types
- Other words used for “consortium” = alliance, association, confederation, cooperative, council, digital library, network
- That means, many choices for name & structure, depending on mission, organization, and message
- Some are becoming very large and complex
- Some have broad programs
- Others do principally licensing of electronic resources
- Can be restricted:
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- to specific library types (special libraries, academic libraries, etc.) or government agencies

- Can be open:
  - To all local, or regional, or country wide group libraries; some consortia include all libraries in their region including elementary school and public

- Underlying structure can be “informal” or “formal,” some or lots of centralization, many activities or highly focused:
  - Most Informal: no central office, leadership rotates, volunteers are key; this can work for a startup, or for a narrowly focused set of consortial goals and/or limited financial resources
  - Most Formal: legally incorporated or an organized office in a government or NGO, permanent staff, an ambitious set of ambitions and goals and many members

- Can change over time

There is a growing number of large/small, informal/formal consortia worldwide. Their functions vary considerably e.g. shared cataloguing, marc records, reciprocal borrowing, collection sharing, integrated library systems, virtual union catalogues, servers and virtual reference collections.

The consortia can be loosely clustered into the following types:

- Technical processing
- User services
- Special subject, product areas
- Inter library loans or reference networks

3.5 HISTORY, DEVELOPMENTS AND BENEFITS

3.5.1 HISTORY

The exact date for the introduction of the term “library consortium” is not clear but the concept of a consortium as being an association or partnership has long been a tenet of
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librarianship. The published literature indicates that the concept is not new (Kopp, 1998), and it refers to co-operation, co-ordination and collaboration between, and amongst, libraries for the purpose of sharing information resources. However libraries has not used it widely until about the 1980s.

None other than Melvil Dewey wrote about “library co-operation”, in an issue of the Library Journal which appeared in 1886, and a year earlier E.A. Mac presented views on “Co-operation versus competition” in the same publication (Kopp, 1998). Historically, the common form of library cooperation was the sharing of union catalogue information, storage facilities, collection development, and human resources at local, national, and regional levels (Payne, 1998). Another form of co-operation has been based mainly on inter-library lending (ILL) services where co-operating libraries agree to enter into reciprocal borrowing and use of materials from other libraries (Potter, 1997). This form of co-operation enabled libraries to borrow books and periodical articles that were not available locally. The sending of requests and delivery of materials used postal, fax and courier services. It is worth noting that the ten-year period from 1980-1990 saw some of the first important developments in library automation, coupled with the increased use of computers in bibliographic processing activities, and database searching. Perhaps the role of consortia in sharing expertise on library automation was another reason for the growth in such organisations in the 1980s (Nfila, and Darko-Ampem, 2000).

3.5.2 DEVELOPMENTS

Consortia are commonly formed to increase the purchasing power of the collaborating institutions, to expand resource availability (in the past, print materials, increasingly today, digital data, and in the future, possibly human resources), and to develop and/or offer automated services. In her 1972 study of academic library consortia Ruth Patrick (1972), identified six activities engaged in by at least a third of the cooperative organizations surveyed: reciprocal borrowing privileges, expanded interlibrary loan service, making available union catalogs or lists of resources, photocopying, reference, and delivery services. Each of these functions remains relevant to the purposes of most
consortia today, although technology has changed the way they are carried out and a new service—joint licensing of electronic resources—has emerged as a major complementary activity. With vendors continuously experimenting with different business plans for offering digital data and seeking to protect and expand profit margins of the print era, libraries almost are required to join forces to protect the interests of their clientele.

Affecting the future of "how information will be created, marketed and purchased," is viewed as one of the primary reasons for the development of today's consortia, but "consortia have the potential of serving their member libraries in many ways. Chief among these are collective buying power, collective technical expertise, resource sharing (digital and traditional media), staff development, consolidation of services and collections, risk sharing, exploitation of a pseudonymous identity for grant seeking and lobbying purposes, and the intangible benefits of collaboration". Dannelly (1995) in his writing on resource sharing partly explained how time has helped promote the growth of library consortia when he wrote "We are entering a Golden Age of Cooperation because 1) the technology to link libraries and to make the users of one library aware of the collections of others is available and getting better all the time, and 2) economics are forcing us to cooperate."

Libraries have gone from print indexes to librarian-mediated online searching, from CD-ROM user-friendly systems to highly powered Web-based systems that provide index entries, abstracts, and the full text and image of the article. Technology and its recent advancements have enabled the library resource sharing more effective than ever before.

Today, library consortia are undeniably hot, and new consortia seem constantly to be forming. Library consortia are establishing the cutting edge in database licensing practices and playing an increasingly important role in IT research and development efforts. The burgeoning power of library consortia is clearly evident in the extent to which vendors are now tailoring products and business practices to meet the needs of this emerging market.

The development of consortia were/are an outgrowth for the desire for resource sharing, nothing new either, and consortia seem to be getting bigger and bigger. But in
an environment where change is the norm, we always have to be on the lookout for new ways to improve old techniques -- techniques for resource sharing and consortium building (Morgan, 1998).

3.5.3 BENEFITS

The fundamental reasons for libraries to form consortia are service improvement and cost-effectiveness. Domer and Judith (2000) give a more specific analysis:

- To improve services to users
  Consortia must be customer-focused; if there is no benefit to the library’s users, the motive for joining a consortium is questionable.

- To gain financial benefit
  Aggregated buying and bargaining power can strengthen the libraries’ position in the marketplace.

- To share
  The consortium may share catalogues, collections and collection development, storage, and staff expertise.

- To encourage discussion and collective thinking
  Intangible benefits, such as wider discussion and collective thinking, have been identified and smaller libraries in particular gain from working in a more extensive environment.

- To demonstrate reduced costs
  Libraries can demonstrate to funding agencies and stakeholders that resources are being used effectively.

- To manage change
  Consortia can assist their members to manage in changing environments.
For the libraries, the advantages are no fewer, but they are of a different type. The main ones are (Anglada and Comellas, 2002):

- Joint purchases always tend to offer more beneficial conditions than individual subscriptions. These benefits are economic (discounts) and of other types (conditions of access, licenses to use information, perpetual archiving, etc.). The discontinuation of interlibrary lending, at least within the consortium, also represents a significant saving.

- Through consortia agreements many things can be negotiated, such as the conditions of renewal, so there is a certain control of the cost of inflation.

- A third economic factor is that joint purchasing has a great power to attract new money towards libraries. The attraction of the agreements makes it easier to make economic efforts because they lead to access to far more information. After a long period in which library managers have had to fight for more money to buy the same or less, the situation of seeking more money to obtain more is certainly stimulating. The capacity of consortia agreements to attract special budgets from the administration to complement the normal library budgets is far from negligible.

- Last but not least, consortia purchasing has resulted in a considerable increase in the amount of information offered to users. The most spectacular case is when the agreement is of the "all-you-can-eat" type (subscription of all the titles of a publisher), but even when the agreement only includes cross access (a library can access its titles and also those to which it has not subscribed but other libraries in the consortium have), the gains are very important even for libraries with the largest bibliographic collections.

3.6 LIBRARY CONSORTIA MODELS
There are many important elements, which libraries need to consider prior to adopting a consortia approach to electronic database provision. These include (Lowe and Feighan, 1999):

- Defining the basis for the consortium: This involves understanding the business profile and needs or requirements of all of the organizations that will be affiliated with the consortium.
- Setting the goals and required outcomes of the project: Like any successful project, the scope and desired goals need to be clearly defined to keep the project and team members focused and on track.
- Determining the type of product required: What kind of product or service is being sought? Are there mixtures of products (i.e. full text with abstract/index entries)? To what purpose will the chosen product be put? Who will have access to it? Will it have an impact on existing resources? Will funds need to be transferred from existing expenditure in order to keep the product after a trial period?
- Developing criteria for evaluation: Criteria for evaluation may include evaluation of content, coverage and format. Other criteria may include access method, output options, search functionality and user interface, etc.
- Determining projects management structures: Identify decision-making authority, timeframe, risks, etc.

Despite the fact that consortia are usually formed in order to reduce costs, (the cost of access to information resources, for example), they are not merely loosely connected buying clubs. The most successful consortia develop as institutionalized strategic alliances whose level of sharing resources highly benefits the members. As the model for a modern consortium does not exist, the types of consortia run a whole gamut - from tight, highly centralized structures (e.g. an organization encompassing a particular geographical and administrative region), to loosely organized library network of various profiles. Each model has its strengths, goals and has to function in its respective political reality. There are many hybrids based on the above-mentioned models, and the consortia
can evolve from one model to another (Piotrowicz, 2002). Various models of consortia have been discussed in the LIS literature. They are:

- Allen and Hirshon (1998) describe the development of consortia within a continuum with degrees of centralization. “As a general rule, the more decentralized the consortium the greater the degree of autonomy each member retains. However, there can also be a correlation between the amount of autonomy that the individual institution retains and the ability of the consortium to achieve goals as a group. If the authority is highly centralized, the consortium is more likely to have dedicated staff that can perform the ongoing work. Centralized consortia also may also have a sponsoring agency to advocate for external funds. These funds can provide assured purchasing power for the consortium which in turn will get the attention of suppliers and vendors because they will always be much more interested in working with a flexible central authority that can not only negotiate prices but can also pay the bill.” (Allen and Hirshon, 1998)

Allen and Hirshon described four points along the continuum, and recognized that groups may evolve and shift as their mode of operating and the environment change.

- The loosely knit federation
  The loosely knit federation is governed by member libraries and usually has no central staff or central funding. It is flexible, with low overheads and usually a low level of return as well. There is little risk or investment of time but it is difficult to achieve more than the simplest outcomes. The group has few common interests, no central authority, and only limited group purchasing power.

- The multi-type/multi-state network
  The network usually has central staff but a voluntary (and therefore low) level of cooperation among members who have little common interest. Vendors generally
provide poor discount rates because there is no guaranteed level of participation. The agenda is characteristically fragmented.

- The tightly knit consortium
  This may have a sponsoring agency and may have a focused membership profile (e.g. research libraries). Some dedicated staff co-ordinate programme development but do not really control it. The consortium may rely solely upon institutional funding, or may supplement resources with external funding. It could share a union catalogue. Publisher discounts to this group are likely to be higher and the group may develop a defined and beneficial development agenda over time.

- The centrally funded statewide consortium
  This consortium has a sponsoring agency and probably a separate source of funds to boost campus purchases. There will be a central agency that secures the contract and pays many or all of the costs involved, such as the database subscriptions. Members jointly agree on services to be purchased, based on their shared interest. Staff are available to further the group’s objectives, and the central administration may be involved in determining agenda and policies. With a central source of dedicated funds, member libraries have more of an incentive to collaborate than with any of the other models”.

- O’Connor’s (1999b) four models are predominately based on how the consortia are funded:

  - Off the Top
    Members are drawn together for a common purpose by the availability of funds, usually centrally provided. Examples are OhioLink and INDEST. The difficulty with this model is that the absence of central funding could result in the destruction of the model.
Get on with It
Funds initially are provided by a grant to stimulate action and then funding is taken over by the consortium’s institutions.

Let’s Help Ourselves
In this model “a company is established to provide library services or businesses one of which becomes a negotiating arm of the organization.

Do it Our Way
This model is similar to the first model, but is nationally funded and focused.

Helmer (1999) identifies a wide variety of models of library consortia based on the following characteristics:

- Those formed by government mandate (as opposed to those that survive in spite of government obstacles).
- Those that license electronic resources (i.e. most consortia today).
- Those that offer other services including: shared catalogues; union catalogues; patron initiated borrowing systems; cooperative collection development; digitising material; staff training; courier systems; preservation; shared human resources; etc.
- Legal status , e.g. a non-profit corporation versus having no legal status, or an informal buying club compared with extensive memoranda of understanding, bylaws and government structures.
- Staffing - No staff versus a central office with staff.
- No central funding versus funding from a government agency.

Helmer (1999) also makes the important point that, based on his study of consortia, “there is no single best model for a library consortium.”
Dorner and Judith (2000) has offered the following models based on their observation of various consortia models:

By sector

Consortia can be categorised by the type of libraries or organisations that participate in each consortium. These can be divided up into one of four main models.

- Single sector
  Consists of libraries that are all of the same type, e.g. academic libraries, public libraries, etc. There is no overlap with other library sectors.

- Single sector with state or national library involvement
  Consists of a single sector of library but also has the State or National Library as a member or partner.

- Multi sector
  Members may be from all types of libraries and may include nonlibrary partners.

- Mega consortium
  Formed when consortia have joined together with other consortia and/or other groups.

By funding source

Consortia can also be divided by how they are funded. The models here fall into three main categories:

- Internal Funding
  Predominately funded by the members of that consortium.
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- **External Funding**
  Not funded by the members but funded predominantly by outside funders, including governments, councils, and grant money.

- **Combination of both internal and external funding.**
  A mixture of internal and external funding sources.

- **By governance/organisational structure**
  Consortia can also be modelled based on how formal their structures are. There appear to be two main models, each with two sub-groups.

  - **Governance structures**
    - Informal structure: usually has decentralised decision making, is not incorporated, agreements are informal
    - Formal structure: usually centralized decision-making, incorporated as a non-profit organization, agreements are formal

  - **Organisational structures**
    - Without a central office or dedicated staff
    - With a central office and dedicated staff

- **By specific interest**
  Consortia can be grouped according to the predominant interest or a special interest of the group for joining together. These models can be viewed on their own or as subsets of sector models. The four categories identified below are those that have been found amongst existing consortia – others are possible

  - **Discipline**
    Focus is on one discipline or subject area: e.g. Science and Business and Economics
o Government information
Focus is on acquiring, organising and providing public access to government information

o Monographs
The focus is on acquiring monographs for the group in a cost-effective manner

o Electronic information
Focus is primarily on obtaining site licenses for electronic information

Thus consortia can take many forms and, depending upon their purposes, membership, funding, governing structures, and the commitment of the participants, can realize varying degrees of collaborative success.

3.6.1 INTERNATIONAL

One of the first USA academic Consortia was the Triangle Research Libraries Network, formed in 1933. The first Consortium in the State of Illinois was founded in 1965 and was known as ILLINET, the Illinois Library and Information Network, which had a foundation of 18 Libraries that supplied services to over 500 public libraries. (Weech, 2002) In fact Consortia became so prolific in the USA, they published a Directory of Academic Library Consortia as early as 1972. (Bostick, 2001a)

There are numerous very successful types of consortia amongst public libraries, but in the area of E-Services, Allison Dobbie found there is a range of inconsistencies. For example In the USA co-operation is extensive, with some of the most successful being the Internet Public Library (http://www.ipl.org/) and The Librarian Index to the Internet (http://lii.org/). However, Dobbie found that in Europe funding for projects from the European Commission is often dependent upon co-operation, and when the project is completed the partnerships fall apart. In her survey she found that Switzerland, Denmark and Belgium have excellent networks of consortia, but other countries were struggling to
develop co-operative E-Services. On the other hand, Australia is shown to be innovative and a model for the establishment of co-operative Digital Collections. (Dobbie 2002)

Internationally, there are numerous examples of formal/informal co-operative groups and consortia that are very successful. The International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC) first met informally as the Consortium of Consortia (COC) in 1997. The Coalition continues to be an informal, self-organized group comprising (as of September 2000) nearly 200 library consortia from around the world. The Coalition serves primarily higher education institutions by facilitating discussion among consortia on issues of common interest.

One of the largest Consortia in the world is OhioLink. OhioLink has 80 members, provides access to 31 million library items, and has a catalogue system with the capacity to service 4500 simultaneous users. (Rogers, 2002) Executive Director of OhioLink, Tom Sanville, is a great believer in consortia, particularly the collective buying power. He states that Libraries can overcome the inherent limitations of the print medium, the entrenched and limiting economic practices of vendors to individual institutions, and the library imposed, self-limiting, collection development mentality of information rationing that pervades our community. By radically changing the value equation of information delivered per dollar spent, Consortium can set the evolution of our industry on a new and better long-term course. (Sanville, 1999)

3.6.2 INDIA

Several library consortia have been set up in India over the last few years, to obtain site licenses and enable desktop Internet access to scholarly e-resources like e-journals and databases. Prime examples include the INDEST consortium under the MHRD (Ministry of Human Resources) initiative covering leading academic institutions like IISc (Indian Institute of Science), IIT's (Indian Institutes of Technology), IIMs (Indian Institutes of Management) and NITs (National Institutes of Technology); and CSIR (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research) consortia covering about 40 national laboratories. INFLIBNET, with UGC (University Grants Commission) support, is another major
initiative covering universities. The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) through their consortia make Science Direct (Elsevier) available to all its constituent libraries. The description of these consortia is given in the following pages:

CSIR Consortia

NISCAIR is the nodal organization for developing a "Consortium for CSIR Laboratories for Accessing e-journals". The activity shall range from creation to monitoring of the access facility of scientific periodicals published by leading international institutions. To start with, an agreement has been signed with, e-journal publisher, M/s Elsevier Science for a period of four years for 1200 journals. Under this scheme, CSIR scientists shall be able to access these journals and download material for their use. Such access to world wide journal resources will play a very vital role and strengthen research and development in CSIR laboratories, thus leading to knowledge generation useful for socio-economic development of the country. The objectives are:

- to strengthen the pooling, sharing and electronically accessing the CSIR library resources.
- to provide access to world S&T literature to CSIR labs.
- to nucleate the culture of electronic access resulting into evolution of digital libraries.

FORSA

Forum for Resource Sharing in Astronomy And Astrophysics (FORSA) came into existence in the year 1982, for sharing the resources available in astronomy libraries in the country. The following institutions are members of this forum:

- Indian Institute of Astrophysics
- Inter-University Centre for Astronomy & Astrophysics
- National Centre for Radio Astrophysics
- Nizamiah Observatory, Osmania University
- Physical Research Laboratory
The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has set-up the “Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Sciences and Technology (INDEST) Consortium” on the recommendation made by the Expert Group appointed by the ministry under the chairmanship of Prof. N. Balakrishnan. The Ministry provides funds required for subscription to electronic resources for 38 institutions including IISc, IITs, NITs, IIMs and a few other centrally funded Government institutions through the consortium headquarters set-up at the IIT Delhi. Besides, 43 Government or Government-aided engineering colleges and technical departments in universities have joined the Consortium with financial support from the AICTE. Moreover, the INDEST Consortium, as an open-ended proposition, welcomes other institutions to join it on their own for sharing benefits it offers in terms of highly discounted rates of subscription and better terms of agreement with the publishers. All electronic resources being subscribed are available from the publisher’s Website. The Consortium has an active mailing list and a Web site hosted at the IIT Delhi.

The INDEST Consortium is the most ambitious initiative taken so far in the country. The benefit of consortia-based subscription to electronic resources is not confined to 38 major technological institutions in the country but is also extended to all AICTE-accredited and UGC-affiliated institutions. 68 engineering colleges and institutions have already joined the consortium on their own.

The Consortium operates through its Headquarter set-up at the IIT Delhi. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) provides funds required for subscription to electronic resources for 38 core members including IISc, IITs, NITs, and a few other institutions; and for operation of the consortium.
The consortium headquarter functions under a National Steering Committee (NSC) for inter-institutional coordination and for taking decisions on policy issues under the overall policy direction of the Government of India. The Ministry has also set-up a National Review Committee (NRC) for the INDEST Consortium. The National Review Committee shall be responsible for overall policy, monitoring and coordination with UGC and AICTE for this Consortium.

The INDEST consortium subscribes to the following resources for various categories of institutions. All electronic resources subscribed are available from the publisher’s Web site. Local hosting of resources has not been considered at this stage.

- ABI / Inform Complete
- ACM Digital Library
- ASCE Journals
- ASME Journals (+ A M R )
- Capitaline
- CRIS INFAC Ind. Information
- EBSCO Databases
- Elsevier’s Science Direct
- Emerald Full-text
- Euromonitor (GMID)
- IEEE / IEE Electronic Library Online (IEL)
- Indian Standards
- INSIGHT
- Nature
- ProQuest Science
- Springer Verlag’s Link
- COMPENDEX on EI Village
- INSPEC on EI Village
- J-Gate Custom Content for Consortia (JCCC)
- JET
- MathSciNet
UGC INFONET

University Grants Commission (UGC) has initiated a programme called The UGC-INFONET E-Journals Consortium to provide online access to electronic journals and databases in all disciplines to the universities in India. All universities, which come under the purview of UGC, will be beneficiary members of the programme. The scheme would be gradually extended to colleges as well. Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) Centre, Ahmedabad, an autonomous institution under the UGC, are executing the programme. Accesses to various electronic resources have formally commenced from January 1, 2004, initially for 30 universities.

The programme aims at increasing accessibility of electronic resources to the universities. It will go a long way in mitigating the severe shortage of periodicals faced by university libraries for several years. The E-Journals programme is a cornerstone of the UGC-INFONET effort, which aims at addressing the teaching, learning, research, connectivity and governance requirements of the universities. The programme has been made possible due to the close and understanding cooperation between the UGC, ERNET, the Inter-University Centres IUCAA, INFLIBNET and CEC, and national and international publishers.

The UGC-INFONET will be overlaid on ERNET infrastructure to provide assured quality of service and optimal utilization of bandwidth resources. The project is being funded by the UGC with 90% capital investment and 100% recurring cost during the X Plan period. A Joint Technical and Tariff Committee (JTTC), consisting of leading experts in the country has been set up to guide and monitor the entire project. INFLIBNET Centre, an autonomous IUC of the UGC, is the nodal agency for coordination of the UGC-INFONET and facilitates linkage between ERNET and the universities. UGC-INFONET will be a boon to the higher education system in several ways.
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1. It will become a vehicle for distance learning.
2. It will be a tool to distribution of education material and journals to remotest of areas.
3. It will be a resource for researchers and scholars for tapping most up-to-date information.
4. It will form a medium for collaboration among teachers and students, not only within the country but all over the world.
5. It will be on Intranet for university automation.
6. It will establish a channel for globalization of education.

Training manpower is one of the most critical resources for successful implementation of high-tech programmes like UGC-INFONET. INFLIBNET/ERNET is giving training to network managers and library professionals for managing the WAN connectivity, network security, Mail Server, Web Server configuration and e-journal access management at their premises. More than 108 network managers from around 99 universities have been trained at ERNET India, New Delhi. Around 63 Library professionals from more than 63 universities have been trained at ERNET India, New Delhi. Above 63 Library professionals from 63 universities have been trained for e-resources management at INFLIBNET Centre, Ahmedabad.

IIM Consortium

The year 2000 was a landmark in the history of IIMs, with the formation of the IIM Consortia. IIMK took leadership in the formation of the IIM Consortia, and had the first meeting in Calicut. The objective was to ensure among the IIMs, optimum utilization and enhancement of the resources, and to minimise the expenditure by consortia based subscriptions to the commonly subscribed databases and journals. The idea was to approach publishers of CD-ROM Databases to begin with, as consortia, for better pricing and services. Eventually, other digital databases and journals were also planned to be covered by the programme. The meetings were proved to be very productive and successful. During the first meeting itself, a host of databases were jointly purchased at
very competitive prices, and a number of others promised supply of their products at a nominal cost.

In the case of journals, all the six IIMs put together subscribe to over 2550 scholarly titles of which around 1200 are duplications (overlapping titles). Among these, 33 titles are being subscribed to by all the IIMs. Having convinced on the dire need for a journals consortia, major publishers such as Elsevier, Kluwer, Wiley, Blackwell and MCB University Press were approached and they all represented in the second meet, which was held at IIM Bangalore in 2001. The end result has been highly praiseworthy, that over 740 E-journals IIMs are able to get online access, across all the IIMs, by paying a nominal additional amount. The table below shows the salient features of the digital subscriptions at IIMK based on the IIM Consortia.

The present information resource base of the IIM Consortium is as follows:

- Blackwell HSS Collection
- Capitaline
- Nexis.com + Corporate Information
- ISI Emerging Markets
- Kluwer Online
- Taylor & Francis
- John Wiley

### 3.7 COST EFFECTIVENESS IN LIBRARY CONSORTIA ENVIRONMENT

Rising costs and decreased purchasing power have forced libraries to share resources to meet the informational needs of their users. There are many reasons why libraries are turning to the consortium model, many of which relate to ‘saving a buck’ (Lowe and Feighan, 1999):

- To gain consistency of resources to guarantee equity of access amongst a particular group of libraries (sectoral or regional). Consistency in this case can
mean both in terms of information access, and also technological development or advancement.

- For financial incentives — a consortia deal can be more cost-effective for the library, with lower administration costs for the vendor, hence lower running costs overall.
- It can lead to benefits of shared knowledge, skill and experience among the libraries.
- It provides the libraries with increased lobbying power with vendors for product development.
- There can be an increase in end user autonomy and reliance on remote mediated reference services especially in poorly resourced and/or remote geographic areas.
- It can be seen as a way of improving business performance and patron satisfaction.

Libraries around the world have known the benefits of working cooperatively for a long time and have formed consortia for purposes such as sharing cataloguing data, collection development and the acquisition of materials, and sharing the high costs of storage and preservation.

A survey of the literature indicates that consortia arrangements can be a 'win-win' situation for libraries, publishers and users alike (Phillips, 2001):

- Libraries gain from greater bargaining power in contractual negotiations and, depending upon how the consortium is structured, may streamline processes in the selection, evaluation and acquisition of online resources. Cost savings at the individual institution level can be realized, providing additional purchasing power overall.
- For publishers a consortium provides a single point of negotiation and the potential for greater take-up of their products when attractive packages are offered. Standard licenses benefit publishers as well as libraries and, under some models, publishers gain from consolidated ordering, renewals and payment.
Consortia agreements sometimes also bring publishers new customers, which may ultimately increase their revenue.

- Users benefit from more convenient access to more titles. This is especially the case if improved bibliographic control can be achieved. The combined resources of consortium members are more likely to be able to achieve this than individual libraries working on their own to catalogue titles.

Consortia have become an accepted means for many libraries to provide more and better resources for users for the same or lower cost. Library consortia have emerged as effective in squeezing somewhat better deals out of publishers for electronic licenses, thereby increasing access and reducing per-use costs of information. They have demonstrated that demand rises with decreasing prices in the digital world (Johnson).

*Consortial purchasing power of many libraries leads to affordable and sustainable access to electronic information.*

### 3.8 CONCLUSION

Modern librarianship as defined by the last 100 years assumes an underlying resource sharing and cooperative work ethic. It has always been a profession of partners and not competitors. Developments in modern resource sharing, whether they be document delivery services or computing services, do not have to alter this ethic. Learn to keep your old traditions but apply them to new environments and your institution will grow and continue to provide useful services (Lunau, 1999)

The structure and methodology used by library consortia becomes important as libraries try to negotiate better prices and conditions when purchasing full text resources. Indeed there is a direct relationship between the increasing use of library consortia and the emergence of online resources. ‘The internet, with its common protocols, has made it even easier to share resources and has also made it easier for libraries that are looking to form a consortium to gather information on what works for other libraries.’(Lowe and Feighan, 1999).
To be successful a library consortium needs more than just the goodwill of the consortium members and a common goal. It needs to be well managed with clear goals and objectives, be representative of the entire membership, use agreed methodology to evaluate and recommend purchases, and be open and accountable to the membership and other management structures or funding bodies (Lowe and Feighan, 1999).

Given the speed of changes in the environment it is impossible to accurately predict the impact of these trends or to identify things, which may occur in 6-12 months. Technology is opening up many new possibilities for libraries to offer innovative services and libraries will continue to exploit technology as it becomes available. In order to cope with increased demands, libraries must re-engineer traditional resource-sharing procedures and services and form partnerships. It is safe to predict that more consortia will be created and existing consortia will offer new services as libraries seek cost-effective means to acquire electronic information. (Lunau, 1999)
3.9 REFERENCES


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