2016

Library Automation and Digital Collections Efforts of Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria Nsukka.

Helen Nneka Okpala (nee Eke), Mrs

Library Automation and Digital Collections Efforts of Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Helen Nneka Okpala
Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
helen.okpala@unn.edu.ng

Library automation and the building of digital collections in University of Nigeria Nsukka library has taken some new turn in recent times. There are programs which are written to enhance the day to day library operations of the library which cover tailor-made procedures and systems such as sales ledger systems, wages systems, stock inventor systems, library circulation control systems, word processing systems, etc. According to Eke (2011), libraries make use of application software for such tasks as ordering of materials (Acquisition module), registration of students (Circulation module),etc.

The software so far used for the Library Management System are:
1. Tinlib
2. Xlib
3. Lib+
4. Koha

Tinlib: Tinlib is a widely used systems application software in libraries introduced in 1993 as part of the World Bank Loan Project in Nigeria. The National Universities Commission (NUC) introduced TINLIB software for Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) for use in Federal University libraries. Some state universities also followed suit and adopted this software (Faniran, 2001).

Xlib: After trying other types of software, a number of libraries in Nigeria (including NAL, UNN) adopted X-lib software due to such capabilities as the menu-driven feature, which provides options like acquisition, cataloguing, circulation, systems administration Some of these libraries upgraded their software from X-lib to Libplus, which purports to be an upgraded version of X-lib.

Lib+: Libplus is an upgrade of X-lib. Both have such modules as acquisitions, cataloguing, circulation and enquiries. University of Nigeria Nsukka library adopted Xlib and later upgraded to Lib+, via the same company. These software are proprietary and so, issues like frequent consultation of the vendor always arose, especially for trouble shooting.

Lib plus (Lib+) was developed as an upgrade of X-LIB and it offers the following modules: acquisition, catalogue, circulation, enquiries/reports, speed search, Virtual library, Web services (optional), Patronage, multimedia library. It can be noted therefore, that the difference between X-Lib and its upgraded version (lib+) is the web-based feature of the lib+. Nnamdi Azikiwe Library adopted x-lib and lib+ at some point, but it was later discarded especially after the records were attacked by virus and efforts of the library personnel were null and void. Secondly, the software was found not to be Z.39.5 compliant and so, there were no found possibilities of sharing resources with other libraries, either by importing or exporting records.

In 2007/2008, the Cataloguing module was the area of concentration of the library. The cataloguing staff were billed to enter all the cataloguing slips in the Lib+ Cataloguing module. Several records were entered but at a point, all were wiped due to virus attack.

Koha: Recently, an Open Source Software called *koha* adopted and Catalogue module is practically being utilized by way of entry of bibliographic records of books. This is to ensure that the library users access the library books via the Online Public Access Catalog which offers an interface to the catalogue database so that users can search the database. The Nnamdi Azikiwe Library Opac is available at http://nal.unn.edu.ng/. An Open source software is such that can be downloaded and customized to suite a particular library's need. . The source codes of such software are made available to the public such that they can copy such codes and amend them to suit their environment. As such, some libraries are taking advantage of that. For instance, Nnamdi Azikiwe Library (NAL), University of Nigeria Nsukka is currently adopting *koha* for its operations, the catalogue module being currently adopted. This came up after the failure of X-Lib and Lib+ in supporting creation of OPAC and importing of records into the proposed OPAC from Library of Congress databases. The software was simply not web-based and therefore not Z39.5 compliant as earlier stated. There is currently and ongoing exercise of importing records from Library of Congress database to the NAL's database. Records are also built in the library's OPAC via entry of bibliographic details of each book contained in NAL library. These are done with the library's catalogue cards and slips which the personnel enter in the *koha fields*. It can be reported here, that about ten thousand records have been entered in the NAL's OPAC. This OPAC build-up exercise is intended to aid the library users access materials outside the traditional library catalogue which takes more time of users. In addition, the exercise intends to make for a standard way of accessing the library's resources, among other reasons.

Digitization of records in Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka
Digitization implies conversion of documents and art works into digital images (Fabunmi, Paris, & Fabunmi, 2006). Several efforts have been made towards the full establishment of a digital library in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (Eke, 2011). Back then between 2008 and 2011, the library worked in collaboration with the ICT department during the times of Professor Chinedu Nebo as the Vice Chancellor. The then Director of ICT, Dr. Christian Bolu spearheaded the technologies behind the digitization process, by training the librarians (professionals and paraprofessionals) and casual staff specifically employed for the digitization process. Then, there was no dedicated software for the exercise, rather the theses and dissertations were directly scanned page by page into the computer, then rasterized (exactly the word used back then which could be likened to OCR – Optical Character Recognition). Eke (2011) carried out an extensive study to capture this process. According to Eke:

> The digitization project in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka started with a set target of digitizing and uploading about a total of 500,000 files in the university's website. In 2008, training of staff involved in the project commenced. These include data entry operators, some youth corps members and some library personnel. The first set of documents selected for digitization was PhD theses. These bound materials were

> first unraveled by library staff in the bindery section and then shifted down to Innovation (ICT) centre where the digitization exercise is carried out…Following the unraveling, scanning, bookmarking and rasterization processes is the checking of the job by professional librarians who go through the various stages of the digitization process, ensuring that the work has been professionally executed searchable through the metadata files. Typographical errors are also checked, after which each material is digitally signed ensuring quality assurance. Afterwards, the document is uploaded and linked to the university website (p. 6).

Several issues were encountered during the digitization exercise which brought the process to a halt one of which was *Virus attack* . A virus called *Ralia odinga* seriously attacked all the computers used in the digitization project and ate up several of the digitized files. This was an uphill task for the personnel involved. There arose the issue of securing a strong antivirus. In fact, that was a lesson learnt in a hard way because there was no stand-by antivirus to protect the files. Due to no serious measures put in place to monitor the workers, people could use their external drives on the computers which hampered the scanned files. Several files were lost in the process of recovery such that it took several years to recover about half of the damaged files which were later uploaded to the UNN Open repository.

More recently, the University of Nigeria Nsukka decided to upgrade from Open registry/repository to acquiring the Dspace Open Source Software to help secure, organize and showcase her local, intellectual contents such as Theses and Dissertations, Inaugural lectures, newsletters, etc. Dspace is used to Institutional Repository (IR) in most Universities. It is worthy of note, that IR of an institution is meant to showcase NOT ONLY works that are published in journals or books, but unpublished works of authors. On that note, authors are enjoined to self-archive their intellectual works such as conference papers, poster presentations, working papers, etc on platforms such as Institutional repositories and personal websites. IR is a way of ensuring that the published and unpublished works of scholars is made globally accessible to the academic community (Bhardwaj, 2014). Asogwa and Ugwuishiwu (2016) carried out a study and found that IR increases institution's webometric ranking and hence the visibility and impact of an academic institution.

In University of Nigeria therefore, academic staff were asked to create researcher profiles on Google Scholar and Researchgate platforms and also get their scholarly publications archived on the Institutional Repository. This singular act enriched the digital collections of the university as well as attracted a two-time high ranking of the University Scholars in 2016.

Okpala, H. N. (2016). Library Automation and Digital Collections Efforts of Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

References

Asogwa, C. N., & Ugwuishiwu, C. H. (2016). Building Institutional Repository in Academic Digital Libraries: Requirements and Implementation Issues. *Empowering the 21st Century Learner*, retrieved from http://aa-rf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/SAICET-2016-Proceedings.pdf#page=161

Bhardwaj, R. K. (2014). Institutional Repository Literature: A Bibliometric Analysis. Science & Technology Libraries 33 (2), 1 - 18. Retrieved from http://www.freepaperdownload.us/1246/Article1145826.htmon 21 Jan 2016

Eke, H. N. (2011). *Assessment of the X-Lib and Lib+ Library software: Case of Academic and Special Libraries in Nigeria.* Germany: Lap Lambert Academic Pub, retrieved from http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=2132561

Eke, H. N. (2011). Digitizing resources for University of Nigeria repository: Process and challenges, *Webology,* 8 (1), retrieved from http://repository.unn.edu.ng:8080/xmlui/handle/123456789/224

Fabunmi, B.A., Paris, M., & Fabunmi, M. (2006). Digitization of library resources: Challenges and implications for policy and planning. International Journal of African & African American Studies, 5(2), 23-36.

Faniran, A. (2001). The adequacy of TINLIB Bibliographic display of OPAC in Nigeria academic libraries: a case study of Kenneth Dike Library, *Journal of the Nigerian Library Association (NLA),* 35(1), 63-67.