A New Perspective to E-resource Management.

Dr.Sanda Bercovici

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem sandab@savion.huji.ac.il

Introduction to the lecture presented at:

The Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries International Conference (QQML2009), Chania, Crete, Greece, 26-29 of May, 2009.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the academic library is involved more and more in the creative process of knowledge. New management strategies are introduced in the reorganization of academic libraries , involved more and more in the process of higher performances in both , theory and practice.

The diversity of academic libraries is the direct result of the various typology of higher studies institutions, with different missions, different organizational structures, with accent on different academic study subjects, with different student populations. The collections content and services help the educational formation and research in the specific institution, the library must give the right answer for the specific necessities of the medium in which it was created.

The academic library activity is not a static one, it has to be sensible to the changes of the external world, which have a high impact on the collections, access and services. The continuous changes in higher education studies and the dissemination of information affect the informative media, the information use and the human knowledge. The library changes are technological, intellectual and social, with a powerful influence on the way in which the library is informing the community, but also on the way in which the library specialists understand their role in the high studies performance and in the educational process.

The success of an academic library depends in which manner it understands the dynamism and the complexity of the academic world; this manner influences the organizational structure, the activity and the decisions of the library. The rapid changes at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the new millennium are a challenge for the academic libraries.

From the analysis of factors from different categories it is evident that in a large measure, the policy of libraries allocation is influencing the organizational transformations and the activity in the different services.

The information technology and the information communication (IT and ICT) technology are the factors which had changed the image and the organizational structure of the academic library and, as a it follows, the information strategies and their allocation are essential not only for libraries development, but even for the existence of this subsystems in the university.

The library marketing became primordial in decisions of management of information and in the emphasis on the library contribution in decisions about the process of educational formation in universities. Nevertheless the role of libraries in the information society is better and better understood (but still not enough) In many countries, the libraries are involved in the process of organizing the electronic bibliography for distance teaching; in others, the libraries maintain the electronic resources, but in most of them, the reference services are reorganized and extended in order to give immediate answers to the user community. These new phenomena in the academic libraries activity need an increase in professional staff; the human resources structure is changing: specialists in information science, in hardware and technicians are about 50% from the library staff. The use of competent libraries catalogues is the result of the decrease in the number of specialists in technical services (cataloging and classification).

The library plays an important role in the whole information structure of the university. In the era of information dissemination, the libraries deal both with adaptation and with information management (including the management of resources and metadata). The libraries support the research of the local scientific community by the popularization of resources organized by profile and by services on individual alerts, on demand. These activities are allowed by the use of advanced software as SFX, Metalib, Verde, TDOne.

Collection development is still one of the most important roles in an academic library, which will be able to satisfy the university users needs, by collecting and preserving all relevant resources on different typology, but in my opinion, the core of the professionals is the user education, considering the users demands.

The IT progresses determined the integration of a different typology of documents, influencing the collection development. Collection management includes decisions related to the policy of sharing acquisitions, to the problematical issues of cataloging or classification of a large typology of resources, the digitization and archiving of documents and their accessibility through the Internet.

The concept of "closeness to sources" of the traditional printed collections is modified, influenced by the multiple access possibilities of a virtual global library, with a various collection of research resources.

The information crisis, which influenced the necessity of an increased allocation for acquisitions in the academic libraries, is now influenced by the recent financial crisis, and both of them had forced the libraries to look for new organizational solutions, based on the features of the new typology of documents and on advanced IT.

Software programs as SFX and TDOne are important tools for the management of e-resources in the academic libraries, changing the whole concept of work, study and research.