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National Library of Canada
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

National Library of Canada

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INTRODUCTION

Publicly funded institutions are facing major challenges and significant change in today's economy. While they cope with deep budget cuts and significant downsizing, they are also managing the rapid convergence and integration of information technologies while continuing to improve service to the public. Technology, innovative partnerships and the growing demand for electronic access to services and information present opportunities and challenges in both the public and private sectors.

The development of the knowledge-based economy raises a number of public policy issues about the respective roles of the public and private sectors. Of particular concern to the National Library of Canada are issues relating to the assurance that all Canadians have equitable access to information; the continued viability of a distinctive Canadian culture within the global electronic environment; and the preservation of our cultural heritage for future generations. These are all areas in which governments can play an important role and libraries, as public institutions, can contribute a great deal. The challenge is to ensure that they have the resources to enable them to maximize that contribution.

Research and development are essential to ensure that libraries continue to use new technologies effectively, gain the requisite expertise to manage electronic information resources efficiently, and integrate their services into the global network. The federal and provincial governments and the private sector are building an electronic information infrastructure in Canada, which is a high priority of the federal government because it will contribute to the economic, social and cultural well-being of the country.

The emphasis on the Canadian electronic information infrastructure makes the National Library's electronic information initiatives of pivotal importance as the institution fulfills its mandate of building a strong national resource for the study, understanding and continued vitality of Canadian culture while seeking partnerships and exploring new ways of improving its services to its users.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The National Library of Canada's primary responsibilities are to collect, preserve and make accessible Canada's published heritage. A major resource for research in Canadian studies and for the promotion of Canadian literature and music, the National Library also plays a key role in fostering library development and facilitating resource sharing among Canadian libraries.

Established by Parliament in 1953 and governed by the National Library Act, the National Library of Canada develops and preserves collections to support its own services and those of other Canadian libraries; administers legal deposit (through which Canadian publishers are required to submit copies of their publications that will become part of the Library's collection); promotes equitable access to library and information services; produces the national bibliography; coordinates federal library services; and redistributes surplus material from other libraries. All these activities aim to make the information held by the National Library and other libraries accessible to all Canadians.

The National Library's operational branches are Acquisitions and Bibliographic Services, Research and Information Services, and Information Technology Services, which work with four small policy and support branches: Corporate Policy and Communications, Information Resource Management, National and International Programs, and the Office of the National Librarian.

Acquisitions and Bibliographic Services

Acquisitions and Bibliographic Services (ABS) is responsible for developing the Library's collections of published material; administering legal deposit; providing national bibliographic services; managing bibliographic files from domestic and foreign sources for resource sharing; and developing and maintaining cataloguing standards.

ABS gathers the nation's books, periodicals, sound and video recordings and other publications in all formats, and catalogues and lists new titles in various inventories and publications, such as *Canadiana* and *Forthcoming Books*. It acquires material through legal deposit, purchase, gift, exchange and administrative arrangements with other government organizations. Bibliographic responsibilities include: creating, maintaining and distributing records that describe Canadian publications; assisting in the development of national cataloguing standards which facilitate access to Canadiana material and making these standards known; coordinating a pre-publication cataloguing program; distributing machine-readable catalogue records; and assigning standard book, music and serial numbers to Canadian publications as part of international identification programs. In support of resource sharing, ABS creates and manages a national database listing the material held by more than 500 Canadian libraries. It also coordinates the filming, publication and sale of theses from the graduate schools of 48 Canadian universities and colleges.

Research and Information Services

Research and Information Services (RIS) is responsible for managing, preserving and providing access to the Library's collections, for providing comprehensive reference and research services in Canadian studies to researchers and other libraries, and for public programs.

Directly oriented to clients, RIS preserves, maintains and provides access to the National Library's collections of books, periodicals, newspapers, government publications, microforms, sound recordings, printed music materials, electronic publications and literary and music manuscripts. In support of Canadian studies, RIS offers research and advisory services in the Library's areas of emphasis (Canadian literature, music and history) and information on library and information science. RIS provides reference and referral services for other Canadian libraries and information on materials held by other libraries, lends National Library materials to libraries across Canada and distributes surplus published materials among Canadian libraries through the Canadian Book Exchange Centre. It promotes the nation's published literature and music through public programming.

Information Technology Services

Information Technology Services (ITS) is responsible for developing, maintaining and operating the computer systems which serve both the National Library and the Canadian library and information community.

ITS provides leadership, coordination and policy development for the computer-based Canadian library and information community network, conducts research into library applications of computer technologies, and provides Internet support services to the National Library and systems support services to both the Library and its federal government library clients.

Corporate Policy and Communications

Corporate Policy and Communications is responsible for the Library's corporate policy, planning and communications activities, including internal audit, program evaluation, strategic and accommodation planning. It is also responsible for marketing the National Library and promoting its programs, services and role as a national cultural institution through publications.

Information Resource Management

Information Resource Management is responsible for coordinating the development of policies and strategies related to the Library's corporate information resources, including collections, databases, preservation and government information holdings.

National and International Programs

National and International Programs is responsible for directing the Library's national and international activities related to its major programs. It provides advice and support services to federal government libraries, and libraries serving specialized communities. It also coordinates and facilitates national and international resource-sharing and heritage initiatives.

Office of the National Librarian

The Office of the National Librarian provides administrative support to the Chief Executive Officer, the National Librarian.

The National Library and the National Archives share financial, administrative, personnel and conservation services.

KEY INITIATIVES 1995-1996

Networked Information Resources

The National Library is optimizing the use of technology and mounting networked information resources to enhance the national scope of its services, to improve access, and to encourage greater self-sufficiency among users of the Library's services. Current initiatives include:

- The development and maintenance of the Library's World Wide Web Service. The Library established its WWW site in June 1995, building on the gopher server established the previous year.

- The production of a number of unique resource discovery tools that provide subject gateways for Canadian information.

- A series of pilot digitization projects that draws on selected material in the Library's collections and are designed to add Canadian content to the information highway.

- The mounting of an electronic version of the Library's major exhibition, "Out of This World: Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy", on the World Wide Web.

- The publication of electronic versions of many National Library publications.

- The design and implementation of procedures for the acquisition, preservation and provision of access to Canadian electronic journals.

- The formulation of policies in cooperation with federal and external partners related to the acquisition, organization and dissemination of government information.

Systems Development

The National Library completed the first phase of its AMICUS project in 1995, when it replaced its old computing platform and bibliographic system, DOBIS, with more up-to-date information technology. AMICUS provides greater processing and memory capacity, a relational database management system, full-text management software, and a suite of applications providing access to the Library's national database using the client-server approach to system design. Implementation was completed in the second quarter of 1995, approximately one year later than originally planned, due primarily to unexpected technical problems with the new client-server technology.

More than 600 Canadian institutions currently use AMICUS to search the National Library's database of some 10 000 000 records for bibliographic information to support interlibrary loans, cataloguing, and reference service. The number of users is increasing by five to ten percent annually and approximately 500 000 records are added to the database each year.

Current priorities include improvements to system performance, enhancements to support electronic document management and digitization, and better automated loading of the holdings of Canadian libraries into the database. In order to minimize the amount of bibliographic instruction required for both on-site researchers and searchers on the Internet to use the Library's catalogues, the National Library is cooperating with the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (CISTI) to develop a simplified end-user interface for AMICUS.

Access

In cooperation with the Canada Communication Group (CCG), the National Library has introduced a program for the expedited cataloguing of federal government publications. Under this program, bibliographic records for materials being distributed to Canadian libraries under the CCG Depository Services Program (DSP) are made available on AMICUS by the time libraries participating in the DSP program receive their copies of the publications.

As part of the National Strategy for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities (ending March 31, 1996), the National Library administered two programs. Over the past four years, the Adaptive Technology for Libraries Program has provided matching contributions totaling $654 235 to 107 libraries to enable them to purchase adaptive equipment to make their collections of print and electronic information accessible in Braille, audio and large print formats. The program was designed to provide 50 percent of the cost of adaptive equipment. However, in many cases, libraries contributed more than half the cost to ensure greater access to their collections and services. Through the second initiative, the Large Print Publishing Program, the Library provided matching contributions totalling $315 000 to 15 Canadian publishers to produce 58 Canadian books in large print. The two projects, which cost a total of $1 372 000 over their four-year duration, were evaluated in 1995-1996 and the findings were very positive.

Resource Sharing

The National Library has successfully promoted the sharing of resources among libraries across the country and has provided tools for client self-sufficiency. These include: directories of interlibrary loan symbols and policies; document delivery guidelines; and union list products such as *Romulus*. In the last few years, interlibrary loan has increased dramatically, in Canada and around the world. Fortunately, technology is very useful in this area of activity and resource sharing is now more widely spread among libraries across the country, so that there is less reliance on a few major suppliers of interlibrary loans.

The National Library is involved in regular consultations with bibliographic systems developers, information providers and libraries to promote a coordinated approach to networking and to maximize the resource-sharing possibilities of the new technologies. Special studies have been conducted on linking union catalogue databases and the development of policies and service issues. The Library has prepared and disseminated guidelines to expedite the flow of documents within North America and worked with the Department of Canadian Heritage to negotiate an appropriate library postal subsidy program with Canada Post.

Collections

The legal deposit provisions of the National Library Act were amended by Parliament and received Royal Assent in June 1994. The new provisions came into force in April 1995. The revised statute and regulations require Canadian publishers, now including federal government departments and agencies, to deposit two copies of any publication of which more than 100 copies are produced, and one copy of any publication with a print run of between four and 100 copies. Under the former provisions of the Act, publishers were required to deposit only one copy of items retailing for more than $50. This ceiling has now been removed. Further revisions to the Act and regulations improve the National Library's ability to develop and preserve a comprehensive collection of materials published in Canada.

In April 1995, the National Archives of Canada transferred its historical collections of published materials to the Library. Preliminary assessments indicate that as many as 30 000 titles new to the National Library's collections and many additional copies of items the Library already holds may be found among the estimated 100 000 titles in the transferred collections. These materials have significantly enriched the Library's collection of rare Canadiana materials.

Preservation

In April 1995, with supplementary funding from the Treasury Board, the National Library began "Operation Recovery", a one-year project to recover some 8 000 items damaged by floods in the main building and a satellite storage facility between September 1993 and May 1994. The project entails replacing damaged materials where possible and arranging for conservation and bindery work on materials that could not be replaced.

Inadequate physical accommodation impairs the Library's ability to fulfill its mandate as custodian of Canada's published heritage. Therefore, the Library is seeking short- and long-term environmentally secure accommodations for its collections.

The Library must also deal with the considerable challenge of preserving non-print materials, such as videotapes, CD-ROMs and other electronic publications. Indications are that this portion of Canada's published heritage is even more vulnerable than the printed matter in its collections. The National Library, together with other partners from the public and private sectors, is addressing this problem and was part of a task force to develop a national strategy for the preservation and accessibility of the Canadian audiovisual heritage. In addition to activities that deal with current technical, policy and client needs, the National Library is concerned about ensuring that the electronic information currently available will continue to be available in the future.

Promotion

In 1995-1996, approximately 36 000 visitors attended some 106 literary events, music programs, conferences, lectures and exhibitions held to promote the Library's published heritage. The National Library has mounted an electronic version of its most recent major exhibition, "Out of This World: Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy", on the World Wide Web as well as presenting it at the headquarters building. The Library also published a variety of publications contributing to the study, understanding, appreciation and continued vitality of Canada's cultural heritage in various formats.

The contributions of private and public sector partners and sponsors are assisting in the production of the Library's annual Read Up On It kit, a bilingual guide to children's literature which is distributed to schools and public libraries across the country.

Together with other federal cultural and heritage agencies, the National Library continues its active role in the Canadian Heritage Access Project (CHAP). Its central objective is to use the new media or new technologies to develop Canadian cultural and educational products. This year, CHAP examined issues relating to the digitization of materials from federal cultural agencies.

National and International Programs

The Library has initiated a national statistical program for Canadian libraries. The Library has also continued to work on developing a national preservation strategy to address heritage preservation problems cooperatively as well as ensuring the preservation of the heritage collections in its own custody.

To address other preservation issues, the Library is also maintaining an active role in promoting the use of permanent paper and is collaborating on a major cooperative research project on paper permanence that is jointly funded by industry and government. If the results of the two-year research project are positive, the amount of paper that can be considered permanent will be greatly increased. This project is of great interest to both the pulp and paper industry and the cultural sector in Canada and abroad.

In 1995, the National Library, the Canadian Library Association (CLA) and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) sponsored an international meeting on interlending and document delivery at which Canada's approach was promoted and favourably commented on by professionals from abroad.

The Library provides technological leadership internationally by hosting IFLA's Universal Dataflow and Telecommunications Core Programme and its role in the development of IFLA's IFLANET electronic services.

Impact of Program Review and Budget Reductions

The National Library aims to deliver services that are highly responsive to the needs of the Canadian public and libraries and to provide equitable, affordable and universal access to the world's information resources, particularly information produced by and for Canadians and about Canada. Over the last several years of continuing restraint and cumulative budget reductions, the National Library has tried to maintain its core services at a level which effectively responds to client needs. This has been achieved by cutting costs, improving productivity through reengineering, reducing and reorienting particular programs, adapting and realigning organizational structures, and focussing on partnerships.

The Library is now dealing with a serious challenge to the programs and services it provides to Canadians as it copes with the accumulated cuts to its base budget. Budget reductions emanating from the first two phases of the Program Review, combined with continuing across-the-board reductions announced in earlier federal budgets, have resulted in a cut to the Library's 1994-1995 base budget of approximately 27.5 percent by 1998-1999. These cuts will have a significant negative impact on the National Library's collections, services and public programming, as well as on its coordination/liaison role in the Canadian library community.

- The National Library is purchasing less retrospective Canadiana, has cancelled almost a third of its current subscriptions to foreign periodicals, and is buying significantly fewer monographs published outside Canada because of collections budget reductions.

- The elimination of purchases of second copies of Canadiana published abroad means that no copies will be available for the Library's Preservation Collection.

- Resource constraints have forced the Library to cancel two of three eight-hour shifts for the mass treatment of acidic documents in its collections.

- The Library has reduced the number of staff providing services that support resource sharing, and is planning to introduce fees for interlibrary loan photocopies.

- Budget cuts necessitate a reduction in the number of titles that receive full catalogue records. There are now two other cataloguing levels, minimal and abbreviated, instead of the previous five, and the Library places greater reliance on minimal bibliographic records.

- Budget reductions have also forced the Library to narrow the scope of its services to other Canadian libraries through its collection of professional literature and documentation.

CONCLUSION

As the focus for information gathering and delivery begins to include electronic formats, the National Library of Canada is playing a pivotal role in providing access and information to national and international institutions, while continuing to collect and preserve the nation's published heritage in all formats. The Library has risen to the challenges posed by rapidly changing technologies and has coped with increasingly stringent financial restraints, ensuring that Canada's published heritage and information in general are accessible and affordable.

Table
Tableau

National Library Staff and Budget
Ressources humaines et budget de la Bibliothèque nationale

	Actual/ Réel	Forecast/ Prévu
	1994-1995	1995-1996
Full-time equivalent/Équivalents temps plein	500	475
Resources allocated (thousands of dollars)/ **Ressources affectées (en milliers de dollars)**		
Personnel		
Salaries and Wages/Traitement et salaires	21 113	20 709
Contributions to employee benefit plans/Contributions aux régimes d'avantages sociaux des employés	2 596	2 464
Other personnel costs/Autres coûts	23 709	23 173
Goods and Services/Biens et services		
Transportation and communications/Transports et communications	1 201	1 456
Information	403	508
Professional and special services/Services professionnels et spéciaux		
Computer services/Services informatiques	1 445	974
Other services/Autres services	3 574	5 007
Rentals/Location	331	104
Purchased repair and upkeep/Achat de services de réparation et d'entretien	297	476
Purchase of books and other material/Achat de livres et autres documents	2 553	2 269
Other utilities, materials and supplies/Autres services publics, fournitures et approvisionnements	1 112	706
Other subsidies and payments/Autres subventions et paiements	11	27
	10 927	11 527
Minor Capital/Dépenses en capital secondaires	1 012	1 571
Total Operating/Total des coûts de fonctionnement	35 648	36 271
Controlled Capital/Dépenses en capital contrôlées	1 260	1 090
Transfer payments grants/Paiements de transfert, subventions	427	452
	37 335	37 813