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## ABSTRACT

Cutbacks in funding and personnel required the Mankato State College Library to gain more effective control over its serials collection. The task was to integrate the various data, some uncecorded, on standing orders and serials holdings and to produce for the library directors specialized lists of many types: all titles ordered from a specific vendor, titles to be dropped, and other lists to satisfy administrative needs. In the interest of speed, it was decided to use a compucerized system. The record format for serials was expanded from a two-card-per-unit-record system to one that allowed for multiple-line main entries and titles, locations, holdings, internal notes, subscription details, and other fiscal and cataloging information. Records are constantly revised as new, or more complete, information comes in. Along uith the production of administrative data, the system can quickly generate lists for public and faculty use and to meet special requests. Lack of outside programing support for the project proved to be an asset, rather than a liability, for having the same person doing the programing and bibliographic work reduced manual checking and handiling of data. The appendix includes sample materials generated by the system. (SL)


How can a library handlo a drastic budgot cut when it has ilttle idea what its annual obligation for standing ordors, blanket orders, periodicals, serials, memberships, and other continuations really is? This is tho croblem we are facing in the Media System at Mankato Stato College.

## THE PROBLEM

It happened because wo experienced a decads of rapid growth in budgot, matorials, and numbers of students, faculty, and librarians. "In the old days", when one person handled ordering, receiving, and check-in of all matorials, the standing orders were not recorded anywhere. The dibrarian know what they wores he had ordered them and recognized them on recoipt. There was always enough money to pay for them as they arrived.

Then he left.
As the system grew rapidly, supplemental legislative allocations to build the collection for accreditation by various agencies increased the materials budget to over $\$ 600,000$ per year. liftle extra money was allocated for adjitional personnel to verify orders, receive materials, or process books. Additional funds would often be released near the ond of a fiscal year and would have to be spent within days. To develop the collection rapijly, many items were placed on standing order or as other types of annual obligations. There wasn't time or staff to keep adequate records of these orders, and there was little urgency to do so as the money was always there to pay the bills. The need for better control of these items was long recognized and various people made attempts at improving the syster, but other pressures were greater.

Then the tide turned.

Studont errollment dropped. Supplemental furds from all sources here roduced or oliminated. Staff cuts including professionals, clerks and students began. The Nedia Systom didn't know what it was obligated to pay each year.

## THE SOLUTION

ro assist in gaining control of standing orders and othex types of annual obligations, the media system had available in the library a complete unit record system with which we had been producing a periodical list for two years; a remote job entry terminal to the college's Univac 1106 one librarian with soveral years experience in library automation and serials; and one librarian with a little experience in serials, automation, and one course in programming. We also had several lists and files of supposed standing orders ara many poople in the system who "knew" of specific standing orders, or a depository account or details of a membership.

Our task was to develop a system to gather all this information, to clean it up, and to come up with some totals as well as with accurate lists of the various typus of orders. We were also asked by the Media System Directors to provide specialized lists of many types: all intles ordered from a specific vendor, titles to be dropped, materials to be ordered direct from the publishers each year, and other lists to satisfy administrative needs.

Our first decision was to use the computer to manipulate the data and produce updated 1 ists in various formats containing all known information about cach entry far faster than could be accomplishod manually. Our next decision was to expand the basic record format we had developed for periodicals. Our major limitation was the unavailability of programming support from outside the Media System.

Our record format was expanded from a two-card-per-record unit record system to one that allows for multiplemine main entrios and titles, locations, sub-locations, form of material, call number, and holdings for each of as many as nian subscriptions per title; cross-references, intornal notes; public netes; annual price, number of subscriptions, vendor code, department code, serial type, pubiication status, receipt status, and other fiscal and cat. aloging information.

An eight digit serial identification number was assigned to each record to kee! the entries in alphahetical order and to serve as the record number that was punched in each card. A three digit card type and continuation code was used, giving a theoretical maximum of 999 cards for record. The serial identification number appears with the record on every type of printed sutput for easicr reference bi those submitting corrections, and for use in future update programs. Tins type of record-building proved fortunate since we have been forced to continually add new types of internal notes. We have easily added codes and notes such as TO BE DROPPED, for instance, and produced a total list with these entries identified for the user, as well as selectively printed lists of only the entries with each type of note or code.

This past year we have coded and keypunched the records trom each known standing order list and file; added call numbers and holdings from the card catalog and shelf list; checked the resulting list against the serials shelf list and added anything that might possibly ve a standing order. In addition, wo checked the total list against the past year's purchase orders, adding anything that wa rememered to have been purchased on a continuing basis, as well as adding purchasing information for existing entries; and checked the list against cumative book Index for prices and series information.

We are checking all incoming possible standing orters against tho list, also. The lists aro constantly being revised as entries are changed, new entries added, and dead, monographic or duplicate entrios climinated. Many peoplo have been questioned concorning detnils of memberships, depository accounts, blanket order, and subscription plans. This information is added as gathered, usually in the form of internal notes with the name of the person or sourco. Meanwhile, academic departments have been evaluating sections of a list arranged by call number to deaide which titles are to be dropped.

We are producing on a regular basis alphabetic lists by main entry containing all information concerning non-perivdicals for use by the receiving, cataloging, and bibliography sections. Fox public reference use this data is combined with tho periodicals data to provide a comprehensive serials list which contains those parts of each record needed for public use. We also provide lists arranged by clessification number for use by bibliographers and reference librarians; as all serials are classified, this provides a temporary substitite for a subject list of serials. Specialized lists and exception remerts, such as all entries for multiple subscriptions or items costing over $\$ 50.00$, are produced on demand. Edit lists are produced as needed.

We have not yot been aile to predict all of the types of special reports that have been needed. As new budget crises develop, new types of lists are needed and will be produced. Theso special reports are always needed urgently. Our first experience of this type was a request for a list of all current poriodicals in call number order to be duplicated and distributed to faculty for then to solect subscriptions to be cancolled. This list was needed within two weeks of the request. At that time, our only indication
in the keypunched record of a current periodical was the presence ir the holdings statoment of a hyphen followed by a space, the traditional openentry format. So we programmed to build reccrds, search the holdings for this combination of charactors, sort the selected records in call number ordor, and print a report.

There have boen many experionces of this type. Our ability to meet them demonstrates, wo think, the difinito advantages of having librarians familiar with serials doing the systems design, the progiamming, the editing, and the roport design, as well as keeping the whole operation moving as officiently and rapidly as possible under the conditions.

This one example also illustrates another advantage of car system over a manual systom; the ability to produce an extensive specialized list within a short period of time. In the above instance about 6650 records were checked by the computer to find the 3127 current titles; then the current titles were sorted by call number and printed. A report that would have taken weeks of clerical labor was produced in loss than two hours. The prom gram took about a wook to write, but it has since become a basic program on which many others have beon built. Still, the whole project was completed more accurately and in less time than would have been possible manually from the existing records.

The other point that should be stressed is our use of the computer to assist in cleaning up the data. Wo began with titles and call numbers and have added more data as information is received and rovised, as prices are added, as main entrics are corrected. The system is constantly expanding in types or data, in number of entries, anci in types of output.

We have beon quite concerned with the appearance, legibility, and conciseness of our output reports. We have several basic formats which are
varied as needed for specific roports. If a roport is to be printed for distribution, we are also concerned with minimizing reproduction costs, if possible. We are always careful, however, to produce a readable, useful report, it makes little sonse to savo a fow dollars on reproduction costs if tho rosuit is a poor product.

The system has grown from a two card unit record periodicals book catalog to one including documents, sorials, standing orders, other continuations, and the periodicals holdings for four other colleges. The data base now includes over 11,000 titles of all types.

Lack of outside programming support has not been the liability we originally thought it would be; in fact, it has usually been an asset. All programming is done in ANSI COBOL and is basically modular. Having the same person collecting and editing the data and also writing the programs has been an advantage to us. Our operation is small enough to do this, as a fulltime programmer couldn't bo kept busy with our present level of automation. The person doing both the programming and the bibliographic work cun fect. idiosyncracies in the data that need to be considered in programming and knows i the programing techniques that will reduce manual checking and handing of the data.

Although the development of our management information system is continuing now and will probably never cease, we feel that we have already begun to realize a return on our investments in planning and programming. The system has assisted in data collection and editing, provided new information and reports for library managors and library users, and provided techniques to oliminato duplicate effort and files throughout the Mankato State college system.

## APPENDIX

Reports produced
Serials Worksheet
Sample Pages
Continuing onliyations $-\infty$ public ilst
Continuing obligations me internal 1ist
Continuing obligations -- by class numbers with sub-totalscontinuing obligations -- individual subscription pricegreater than $\$ 100$
on a regular basis or as needed.

For internal use (with part or all of public information plus detalls of purchase, retention, cancellation, etc., as available) in alphabetic order unless stated otherwise.

- Coding list

Proof list -- periodicals
Proof list -- continuing obligations
Current periodicals
Current periodicals; by class number
Current periodicals; by class number with those to be canceled so marked and with appropriate sub-totals and summary

Periodicals master file on card stock
Edit lists: records without titles
records without class numbers
records without holdings
class numbers improperly punched
Continuing obligations (non-periodical serials plus memberships, depository accounts, service plans, blanket orders)
Continuing obligations; by class number with probable and questionable obligations so marked and with appropriate sub-totals and summary

Continuing obligations to be canceled with totals
Questionable obligations with totals
Probable obligations with totals
Standing orders to which we have more than one subscription
Continuing obligations with individual prices greater than $\$ 100$ per year

For public use: alphabetic order unless stated othewise.
Periodicals: Mankato only
Perlodicals; 5 colleges
Serlais; Mankato only
Serials; 5 colleges
Periodicals; by class number
Valley Carnpus branch library holdings
Valley Campus; by class number

Planned for Spring and Summer, 1973
Current periodicals by vendor with relevant information and totals.
Current periodicals by department charged with relevant information and totals.

Continuing obligations by vendor with all information and totals. Continuing obligations by departmient charged with all information and totals Continuing obligations check-in forms.

Continuing obligations check-in weekly status reports.





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