



KATHOLIEKE UNIVERSITEIT
LEUVEN

Biomedical library to e-only learning centre supported by a depot service

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Meeting of minds

- The biomedical group board of the K.U.Leuven
 - Wants to go e-only
 - Wants an optimal learning environment
- The Flemish association of academic libraries
 - Wants to organise a co-operative depot service for scientific periodicals



Background - Leuven

- The University Library is a distributed group of 12 libraries and units
- Faculty and campus libraries are owned and financed by the faculty or academic group: central services are funded centrally
- But policy and professional matters are developed and implemented by a UB-wide management team led by the Chief Librarian
- The decision by the biomedical group to go for an e-only learning centre is made by the biomedical group with advice from the Chief Librarian/UB management team



Background – The Flemish association of academic libraries

- A co-operative organisation of libraries of universities, high schools (awarding professional bachelors), other scientific libraries and research institutes
- Works together on:
 - Consortial licensing
 - Professional development
 - Specific issues e.g. copyright



Reforming the biomedical library

- Researchers do not need the physical library any more
- Students DO need a study environment suited to their contemporary way of working:
 - Group work
 - IT intensive
 - Special equipment: e-boards, screens etc.
 - AND quiet space still



Coupled with:

A building development programme which will take space from the current library

Hence the move to e-only journals and smaller but more intensively used reader areas and a reduced core collection of textbooks and handbooks

Inspiration for this approach: the Learning Grid model of Warwick University – employment of students as supervisors/advisers will be looked at in Leuven.



But there was still a problem

How to ensure ongoing access to the older periodical literature?

Answer: a co-operative depot service in Flanders for the paper volumes

- Idea initiated by K.U.Leuven and U Gent
- Taken up by the Flemish Association of Academic Libraries
- Leuven chairs the workgroup



The depot service - concept

- One copy of each paper journal held by one of the participating libraries in Flanders
- Applies to the biomedical, natural and exact sciences
- The humanities and heritage collections not included
- Pilot – the biomedical sciences
- Participants:
 - K. U. Leuven
 - U. Gent
 - Free University of Brussels (VUB)
 - U. Antwerp
 - Royal Library
 - Institute for Tropical Medicine



Steps

- Agreement in principle by all institutions before work began
- All holdings checked and updated in the Flemish union catalogue of periodicals – Antilope (run by Antwerp)
- Service level agreement developed and formally approved by all institutions
- Criteria for assignment of titles to libraries agreed
- Antilope updated with the depot holder information
- System ready for use June 2009 – relegation to depot holder and disposal of duplicates if desired



Terms of the Service Level Agreement

Agreed mutually and reciprocally that:

- The depot holder may not dispose of the depot copy without consulting the other partners
- No partner is obliged to dispose of any material
- The depot holder is identified in Antilope
- The depot holder must keep the depot copy in reasonable conditions for preservation
- The depot holder will deliver a requested copy of an item within 48 hours via the Flemish interlibrary loan service (Impala) at the standard price



Criteria for assignment

The following criteria were used to assign titles to participating libraries:

- Completeness of the holding
- Uniqueness of the holding
- Specificity of the holding (e.g. tropical medicine)
- The holding is already designated for preservation by the library



Further possibilities

- Move on to the natural/exact sciences
- Co-operation with the Walloon (French speaking) institutions
 - Mutual interest in exploring the possibilities
 - Walloon institutions already have a similar project for reference and bibliographic works

Meanwhile.....

The biomedical library of the K.U.Leuven is about to start relegation – commencing with the big runs of journals which give the quickest win in space saving related to effort.



A win-win

- All the participating libraries are short of space and can now solve their problem by co-operative action
- While the future access to the paper version is assured within Flanders
- And the K.U.Leuven can move ahead with the innovation and re-orientation of its biomedical library