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Internet projects and bibliographic activities in Russia

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Abstract:

National bibliographic agencies were first institutions in Russia to begin using Internet technologies in realizing their functions. More than 7 years of work in new electronic environment allow them now: 1) parallel with publishing national bibliography in printed form and on CD-ROM, to present it in Internet; 2) to increase scope of national bibliography and extend its coverage through developing distributed system of its producing, which is achieved by means of co-operation and co-ordination between national libraries, Russian Book Chamber and other national agencies which are in charge of controlling branch documentary flow; 3) consider the problem of identification, control and registration of network resources, which do not have analogues on traditional carrier, with subsequent inclusion of these resources into the national bibliography.

1. National bibliography in printed form, on CD–ROM and in Internet

In the mid-nineties Russian bibliographic institutions, libraries of federal and regional level acquired access to Internet. Development and implementation of web-technologies in many respects extended opportunities of bibliographic institutions; major of them, Russian Book

Chamber, along with publishing current national bibliography in traditional form and on CD-ROM now provides access to the national bibliography online. Currently the data bank of the national bibliography numbers in total 2 million 600 thousand records. Part of them, dating to 1978-1999, is available in Internet (http://www.bookchamber.ru/kngsearch.htm). Russian Book Chamber developed National information system "Russian Books in Print" (http://www.bookchamber.ru/bipsearch.htm). Creation of such a system, where it aimed to gathering and summarizing information on all the books, published in Russia and represented in the market, helps in developing book market, as well as strengthening information relations between publishers, book distributors and users of book output – libraries, schools, institutes, colleges, etc. Centres for retrospective national bibliography also presented their resources in the Internet. For example, the National Library of Russia (Saint-Petersburg) at its web-site presented the data base "Russian Eighteenth Century Civil Printed Book from collections of libraries of Russian Federation (1708-1800)", which represents the whole repertoire of book published in 18th century held in the collections of the National Library of Russia, other Russian libraries, including museums, archives, universities (http://www.nlr.ru:8101/poisk/r_book.htm#7).

2. Co-operation of national bibliographic institutions

Implementation of Internet became a powerful incentive to development of distributed system of producing national bibliography by means of co-operation and co-ordination between national libraries, Russian Book Chamber and other national agencies carrying out control of branch documentary flows in various fields of knowledge. It is well-known that national bibliography, besides having function of bibliographic and statistical control of all printed output being published in the country, provides support of certain directions of work of the libraries of the country – selecting and acquisition for supplementing library collections, retrieving documents and their delivery to users, cataloguing.

Last years we can see great spurt in the field of development of Russian machine-readable cataloguing (e.g., development of national bibliographic formats RUSMARC for various kinds of editions, creating national system of authority files, providing access to electronic catalogues for remote users in web-environment). It is worth to note an important aspect of implementing Internet-technologies in this field, i.e. in the filed of shared cataloguing, which allows a lot of libraries to abandon original cataloguing and instead to use already existing bibliographic descriptions (still having the possibility to edit these descriptions later) created by large libraries or specialized bibliographic centres. In Russia there are strong traditions of "traditional shared cataloguing", that is practice of producing and circulating printed catalogue cards work by the Russian Book Chamber. But in contrast to libraries in other countries, which play quite an active role in the system of shared automated cataloguing, have national and regional centres for cataloguing, which are able to satisfy needs of libraries of various types in receiving ready-made bibliographic records – Russian libraries are just at the beginning of the road of shared cataloguing.

Currently practice of shared cataloguing in Russia is just in its experimental stage – stage of adjusting technology of library co-operation and software adaptation. There is information on practice of copy cataloguing in regional corporate systems (Siberia, Volga region, etc), which were created with support of the Open Society Institute, as well as information on a number of centralized library systems in Moscow and Saint-Petersburg.

As a positive aspect, we can consider creating National Information Library Centre ((http://www.nilc.ru/) on the basis of two national libraries (National Library of Russia and Russian State Library). One of the main aims of the Centre is development of specialized network for Union Electronic Catalogue of Russia, which will allow:

1. to collect information on the content of collections of all major Russian libraries and organize rational document delivery to users all over the country,

2. to co-ordinate process of acquisition,

3. to organize process of centralized cataloguing by means of copying records for majority of Russian libraries,

4. to develop shared system of electronic current national bibliography, including regional bibliography.

If the project is realized completely, Russian libraries will be able to perform practically all their basic functions via Internet. It is worth to note the project CIP (Cataloguing-in-Publications), being developed currently, which will also contribute to broad using Internet-technologies both in cataloguing and in acquisition. This project also will be realized on the basis of the two national libraries and Russian Book Chamber.

3. Identification, control and providing access to network resources in Russia

Currently there is no doubt that we need to take advantage of powerful information, reference and scientific potential of network resources in Russia. First of all this is stipulated by the fact that Russian segment of global network is developing not only quantitatively but also in terms of content. Major Russian publishers begin to present in Internet full texts of periodicals and monographs, electronic network libraries are emerging, sources of secondary information are moving to Web-environment. Furthermore, following sources are now available in Russian Internet: catalogues of libraries and publishers, news, electronic publications (which do not have printed analogues), factual, address, reference data bases, software, images, video, music and many other.

First theoretical and practical developments were basically associated with technical procedures of implementation of MARC-formats for describing network resources, including them into library electronic catalogues and data bases, their systematization, archiving and preserving. Later there began works on adaptation and implementation of international format, which was created by OCLC in 1994 in the framework of the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative project.

Well-known are two Russian project dealing with control and registration of network resources using Dublin Core format. First of them, "Systematic catalogue of Russian Internet Resources" was fulfilled in the Russian State Library (http://www.rsl.ru/r_res2.htm), second one, "WWW full-text and bibliographic resources for libraries" – is joint project of the Russian State Library and the National Library of Russia. The main aim of the register is to provide the verified information sources for specialists in librarianship and information sciences. (http://www.ruslibnet.ru:8101/dc/).

Currently new possibilities of reflecting network resources in the national bibliography are being considered.