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Catalogue and Index

Periodical of the Chartered Institute of Library and
Information Professionals (CILIP)
Cataloguing and Indexing Group

Editorial

March 2012, Issue 166

This issue is focussed on two recent CIG events, one on shelf-ready and one on reclassification, which were held in September and December 2011. We bring you articles written by several of the speakers, based on their presentations on the day, and additional articles on reclassification projects at the British Film Institute and at De Montfort University. We also bring you news on developments in thesaurus construction, and a review of Vanda Broughton's new book, *Essential Library of Congress Subject Headings*. We hope that everyone will find something here to interest them.

All the presentations from both events are available on the CIG website here: <http://www.cilip.org.uk/get-involved/special-interest-groups/cataloguing-indexing/pages/presentations.aspx>.

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Shelf Ready Processing at Leeds Metropolitan University

David Baron, Bibliographic Services Manager

Leeds Metropolitan University has been using shelf ready with our two main book suppliers, Coutts and Dawson, for about 10 years. By shelf-ready, we mean that the supplier:

- Applies all stamps (ownership, process grid, etc)
- Applies almost all labels (spine labels, collection labels, date labels)
- Inserts (but not programs) an RFID tag
- Covers or binds the book, if required
- Provides a MARC record which meets our specification, including a shelfmark (based on Dewey, and following our Cuttering rules) both in the record and on the spine label.

Orders are sent to the suppliers by EDI, and the exact processing required is specified through the holding code. It is also possible to use coded notes to specify exceptions – eg no spine label required for this item.

Over 85% of our material is received shelf ready; the other 15% is made up of out of print books, foreign languages, material which we have to buy from specialist suppliers (eg art catalogues), and non-book formats such as AV, maps, and printed music. Of the shelf ready material, only 2% needs to be seen by a cataloguer; this excludes authority work, which is done from reports.

The process we follow:

Academic Librarians select the books in conjunction with academics.

Electronic “selection list” orders are created by the Academic Librarians or Collections Maintenance teams; selection lists are a feature of the Symphony library management system which allow library staff to create batches of orders more quickly than creating them individually.

The orders are then placed by the Acquisitions team; the order includes the holding code, and this defines processing – eg type of loan (ref, 1 week, short loan – each with own stamps and labels), collection (general, law, EDC – different spine labels), location (HY, CC, CHC, staff copy – different labels).

Orders are sent each night by EDI, and responses are also received by EDI; we have so far not implemented invoicing, but we are currently looking into that.

Each day we check the suppliers’ ftp servers for new MARC records; each file of records corresponds to a consignment of books. The MARC records are loaded onto Symphony, and this prompts Acquisitions staff to unpack and receive the books, referring to the packing notes.

Once the books have been received, the RFID tags are programmed, and the books sent to the shelves. We have a service standard that 95% of shelf ready books should reach the shelves within three working days of being unpacked, and we have actually achieved 100% for the last few years; usually books are on the shelves within 24 hours.

Our Finance team receive paper consolidated invoices which are matched with the dispatch notes; we are currently looking at moving to EDI invoicing to streamline this process.

Acquisitions issues

- You need to order the right thing, with the right details! – this might sound obvious, but using EDI and shelf ready it is not always obvious that a mistake has been made until it is too late to rectify; suppliers will not accept returns of processed books unless you can persuade them that it was their error, not yours. Errors occur most often when the wrong ISBN is used – for the wrong edition, or the wrong format; suppliers, quite understandably, get confused when you are apparently asking them to label and stamp an ebook!

- Receipt relies on someone downloading the MARC records – this relies on the technology working (networks and ftp servers sometimes go down) and on there being someone available to download the records. Several people have the knowledge and the permissions to do this, but it is not unknown for them all to be unavailable on the same day, meaning that the records cannot be downloaded, and therefore the books cannot be unpacked and received.
- House style (fonts, size, alignment, position of labels, stamps and tags) – suppliers must be able to provide servicing which matches your existing house style, rather than you having to change to their standard.
- Exceptions – shelf ready works best when you can specify a limited number of standard ways of processing books; in our case, this is specified via the holding code which is transmitted to the supplier as part of the EDI order. However, there will always be exceptions to the standard processing, and there must be a way of transmitting information about this as part of the EDI process. The most common exception is additional copies, which do not require a record but which must have the same shelfmark as existing copies.
- Working with the librarians – historically, some of our Academic Librarians liked to do things their own way – eg re-writing parts of the Dewey schedules, creating local subject headings, or ordering from specialist suppliers. We have had to educate them about the costs (both money and time) involved in asking for non-standard servicing, or using a non-shelf ready supplier.

Cataloguing issues

- Standardisation – for shelf ready to be most cost effective, you need to keep manual intervention (either by the supplier, or by your own staff) to a minimum, and in order to achieve this you must follow the established standards as closely as possible. We have found this to be a particular issue with Dewey and LCSH; in the past, we used to truncate some Dewey numbers, but we now accept the full number as supplied in the MARC record – this is not always popular with the shelvers! We use Dewey Option A for Law, which requires manual intervention as records are not usually available with Option A numbers. Spelling can also be an issue – LCSH uses American spelling and terminology, and in the past we have Anglicised some of these headings; we have worked to reduce these, but there are still some headings which we feel would not be helpful to our students (eg railroads v railways). We also have some locally created pseudo-LCSH for topics which are not adequately covered.
- Authority control – we do our own authority control (following AACR2), so we need to bring headings in the suppliers' record into line. We do this from reports generated from Symphony.
- Cutters – We have our own rules for Cutters, which are probably over complex in some subject areas. This means that our Cuttering is often a manual process for suppliers, and they pass on the cost to us. We are working to simplify our Cuttering ; we recently revised computing, and we are looking at art and literature. The downside of this is that the existing material needs to be re-Cuttered, re-processed, and re-shelved, so we have to consider the costs versus the benefits.
- Local fields/notes – These are outside the scope of shelf ready processing; although we try to keep them to a minimum, we do still have some local notes – eg “Leeds Met author”, which also requires an additional label.

EDI

EDI is the key to shelf ready ordering; Symphony natively supports two EDI standards, X12 and 9XX – unfortunately, suppliers in the UK use a third, EDIFACT, which requires a certain amount of setting up on Symphony. It is not intuitive, and requires specific text to appear in specific fields of the vendor record; normally it does not need to be edited, but if some of the EDI details change it can be difficult to identify exactly where and how the change needs to be made.

EDIFACT relies on transferring data via ftp, and this can cause problems when servers are migrated, or permissions are changed, or servers are down. It is not always obvious when something has gone wrong. It is important to monitor system

reports, but even so a file can appear to have been sent OK, but it turns out it has not been received. The longer it takes to identify a problem, the more difficult it tends to be to resolve.

The Future

We have been using shelf ready for a number of years, and the process works well for us. This has, perhaps, led to a degree of complacency, and it may be time to re-assess our shelf ready processes and see if they can be improved or updated. Some of the things which are on our wishlist:

- Shelf ready supply of AV materials – with quality MARC records! Some suppliers have offered a partial service, but none has yet delivered a satisfactory product. The MARC record tend to be mapped conversions from other formats, and the quality is not acceptable.
- Out of Print – some suppliers can provide servicing for out of print books, but the timescales and costs involved in using their out of print services have proved prohibitive.
- Full EDI – we are currently working on EDI invoicing, and we are also considering EDI quotes.
- RFID initialisation – would it be practical for the suppliers to program the RFID tags as part of the processing?
- Investigate EDI quotes to allow us to order via the suppliers' systems.
- EDI with Swets for journal subscriptions – particularly invoices, which currently very time consuming to process on Symphony.
- Automate some of the manual processes – downloading records and receiving books on the system.

Conclusion

We have been using shelf ready at Leeds Metropolitan for about 10 years, and through various staffing reviews and restructurings we have reached a position where we could not operate without it. For the vast majority of the time, it works very well, but when problems do occur they can be difficult to spot, and time consuming to resolve. It requires effective communication between library and suppliers, and careful monitoring of the process – particularly the EDI elements.

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