University of Technology Library as a national resource center for commerce and industry

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In small countries, such as the Scandinavian ones, public institutions, like libraries, often have several functions. Instead of limiting services to the staff and students of University the University Library as a rule, also welcomes other users. Following the example of a.o. Germany my country, Finland, has adopted a policy of national resource libraries appointed by the Government of the country for a discipline. There are national resource libraries for the following fields:

- technology and allied sciences
- economics
- forestry
- agriculture
- education and psychology
- medicine
- social sciences
- the humanities
- statistics.

The tasks of a national resource library are to extend both library and information services to everybody in need of information in the field for which the library is responsible; and to maintain co-operation with other libraries in the same field a.o. as regards co-ordination of acquisitions. To be appointed a resource library you have to have excelled. In order to succeed as a national resource library an attitude "noblesse oblige" is necessary.

Since 1972 Helsinki University of Technology Library has been a national resource library for technology and allied sciences, and extramural use of the library's services has grown more rapidly than the use by the staff and students of the University. As illustrated by figure 1 the number of interlending requests has almost tripled since the year 1972 while the number of local loans on the campus only has grown with 30 percent.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of interlending by user groups in 1984. As clients for photo-copy services large industrial companies are responsible for more than 50 percent of the service and small and medium-sized companies for about 6 percent. Concerning interlibrary loans from the collections of the library the corresponding figures are 25 percent and 8 percent.

In figure 3 the corresponding distribution of online-searches and reference questions is shown. 60 percent of chargeable online-searches are carried out for the business enterprise sector, and the same applies to answered reference questions.
Figure 1. Service statistics of Helsinki University of Technology Library 1972-1984

Figure 2. Interlending by user groups in 1983

Figure 3. Information services by user groups
Allocation of manpower for extramural services

It goes without saying that especially industrial clients require rapid service, be it then loan services, answers to reference questions or copies of contents pages of periodicals. Many industrial clients would like to make all their orders over the telephone. Here we have some restrictions. Orders of online-searches and reference questions are of course received over the phone and the same applies to orders of loans: maximum of three items or copies of three papers. For a greater number of interlending requests telex, telefax or teletex is recommended. Mail services using national or international interlending forms are naturally accepted as are online orders, which, however, can be made only of items held by the library and included in the online catalogues.

A study carried out in March 1984 showed that altogether 20 man-years were devoted by the library to extramural activities. Of these, 11 man years were for interlending to industry and three man years for reference service and information services to industrial clients. As seen from the organization chart below this is more than one third of the total manpower resources.

The time constraint of industrial life could not be met, unless extra staff was available during peak periods as well as during vacations. This flexibility is possible only, because income from services to extramural clients can be used for remuneration of additional staff as well as for computer costs and purchase of equipment. Without full cost recovery service by a technological university library is out of the question.

Figure 4. HELSINKI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY LIBRARY ORGANIZATION
Acquisitions policy

Soaring acquisition costs have led libraries and other information units of the business enterprise sector to cancel periodical subscriptions and to decrease acquisitions of other documents. The same applies to technological university libraries. The selection of titles to be given up cannot be based on the preferences of the faculty and students. The use made of individual titles of periodicals and other documents by all clients of the library becomes a selection criterion. International interlending services have to be used to satisfy both the intramural and extramural need for less used material.

As the purchasing power of the literature grant decreases, conflicts arise between the interests of the institutes of the University and the Main Library which pays special attention to the needs of students and the needs of industrial and other outside clients.

National resource libraries in Finland have received a better compensation for the climbing costs of acquisitions than other research libraries. Thus it has been possible at Helsinki University of Technology to continue the long-established usage that 40 percent of the literature grant is allocated to the departmental and institute libraries for acquisitions decided on by the teaching faculty alone. More than half of this is spent on monographs. The remaining 60 percent of the grant, in 1985 2,760,000 Finnish marks, are spent by the Main Library, mainly on journals with heavy use. Only 30 percent of this acquisitions grant is used for conference proceedings, reference material and other monographic material. (see figure 5)

The selection criteria adopted for selection of material to be purchased or accepted as gifts are

- frequency of use, especially as regards periodicals and conference proceedings
- national priority areas for scientific and technological research
- priority areas in industrial research and development

Figure 5. ACQUISITIONS IN 1984