The industrial use of university resources

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The Central Library of the Veszprém University of Chemical Engineering has about 100,000 volumes of books and subscribes to some 800 periodicals a year. The number of the staff is 32. Therefore, this library cannot be counted as one of the big and well-equipped university libraries. Nevertheless, within its limits, it renders an important service to the Hungarian chemical industry.

The main goal of the library, of course, is the support of the educational and research work of the university. In order to meet these requirements, we increase the stock and improve the organisation of our bibliographical, document delivery, and translation services.

In view of the needs of the whole national economy, we think that the documents, technical equipment and experience available at the university library can serve not only teaching and research, but also industrial needs. Although universities, hospitals, scientific and research institutes can be listed among the outside users of the library, the majority of requests are received from industrial firms. It should be noted that our contribution to the education of future chemical engineers is also a benefit to the Hungarian chemical industry, though this work is rather indirect. A detailed survey of the university library facilities in view of the services for industrial users is as follows:

Last year the university library carried out 104 online searches from DIALOG, SDC/ORBIT, and CASONLINE information centers. 61 orders (59 %) came from industrial companies.

In the frame of the taped SDI service of the Chemical Abstracts 120 subjects were monitored in 1984. 39 orders (32 %) belonged to industrial companies.

The copy service satisfied 7,272 requests. The share of industry is 1,173 cases (16 %).

The interlibrary loan service acquired 3,418 documents from other libraries; in 1,109 cases for industrial firms (32 %).

In the above cases the industrial use of the university library services ranged from 16 to 59 %.
The translation service - which satisfies mainly industrial requests - differs from the above services. The reason for this fact is that the knowledge of foreign languages is at a relatively high level at the university. Lecturers and researchers can study the scientific and technical literature in English, German and Russian. The demand of industrial companies is much greater. Of the 1924 translation orders 1,800 (94%) were from industrial companies.

The percentage distribution of industrial use of the university library services is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The percentage distribution of industrial use of the Veszprém University Library services. 1984.
Since Hungary is a small country (93,000 km²), the services of the Veszpré姆 University Library can be requested from any part of the country. Almost all of the Hungarian chemical companies have some relation with the Veszpré姆 University Library.

Figure 2 (see p. 76) shows the regional distribution of the services. It should be noted that the neighbouring companies use the Veszpré姆 University Library much more frequently than the other firms. Thus, the Veszpré姆 University Library plays an important regional role.

The relationship between the library and industry is fostered by graduate students as well. The development of the information services necessitates the transfer of knowledge of information retrieval methods to graduate students. The Veszpré姆 University Library organises post-graduate courses for chemical engineers. The program offers lectures and online training. Printed textbooks are provided. In addition to undergraduate courses, the library organised courses for 30 chemical engineers, who work for industrial companies.

It seems that the activity of the university library is useful for industry, but what good is it to the library? We think that the services we provide for industry enable us to keep our facilities up-to-date from the viewpoints of education and research. Without industrial services - and without charging for the services - the university library could not afford to establish online connections with international information centers, to subscribe to the required SDI services, journals, and to acquire expensive handbooks. A portion of the use-charge fees is used for the development of the library. In this way the chemical industry helps the university and the university library. Therefore, the title of this paper "Industrial use of university resources" could also be written in the following way: "University use of industrial resources".
Figure 2. Regional distribution of the Veszprém University Library services.