Relationships Between the Central Library of the Technological University of Heavy Industry and Regional Industry: Advantages for the University

Jozsef Zsidai
Technical University for Heavy Industry
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE CENTRAL LIBRARY OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
OF HEAVY INDUSTRY AND REGIONAL INDUSTRY: ADVANTAGES FOR THE UNIVERSITY

by

J. ZSIDAI

Miskolc, the place where I live and work, is an industrial town lying in the eastern part of Hungary at a distance of 180 km from Budapest. It has 200,000 inhabitants and 40,000-50,000 people come there to work from the nearby smaller towns and villages every day. A concentration of industry has developed in Miskolc and in its surroundings, especially in the valley of the River Sajó. Heavy industry predominates in the locality and important segments are iron and steel, machinery, chemicals, electrical energy, mining of coal and other minerals, building and building materials. The number of industrial workers and employees is about 155,000 and there are altogether about 22,000 technicians and engineers. 12% of the national income is produced here.

In the heart of the industrial centre in Miskolc is the Technological University of Heavy Industry with Faculties of Mining, Metallurgical and Mechanical Engineering. The university also has two colleges situated in Kazincbarcika and Dunaújváros. The number of students of the university and colleges is 5,000, and the number of lecturers and employees is about 1,800. Within the university are eight research institutes which belong to different ministries and to the Hungarian Academy of Science.

It is not necessary to emphasise that this industrial, research and educational environment requires an excellent and specialised library and information service from the university library, which is the only significant one in this economically important region.

Our library is one of the oldest technological university libraries in the world. From the school of mining officers founded in Selmechbánya (now in Czechoslovakia) in 1735 the college gradually developed between 1763 and 1770 and the library developed together with the college. The Academy's deed of foundation was issued by Maria Theresa in 1770. Since that time our university has been continuously working, though it moved twice - to Sopron in 1919 and to Miskolc in 1949. Today the library has about 360,000 volumes with annual acquisitions of about 14,000 books. There are approximately 2,200 periodical titles (3,300 copies) and there is continual addition of other forms of documentation such as microfilms, translations, operating manuals, lecture notes, etc.

Organically the library of a university institute, 32 departmental libraries and the libraries of the two colleges belong to the Central Library. Altogether 61 persons work in the Central Library, 14 of them with university degrees, and of these three engineers work for the information service and two other persons with university degrees are responsible for the information service in the field.
of social sciences. The library has up-to-date reprographical equipment. The new building of the library was completed in 1969; it is therefore quite modern, and with its floor space of 7,610 sq. m. it provides very good conditions for performing the given tasks.

According to the duties laid down by law, the university library has a threefold function:

- to serve the training and research work of the university
- to act as the regional special library of North-Eastern Hungary
- to serve as a special library of national level in the field of mining and metallurgy.

In this lecture I should like to go into details about the local, regional function. Relationships between the library and local industry have developed significantly during the past six to eight years. The forms and content of these relationships are - in my opinion - perhaps worthy of attention; that is why I decided to give an account of our work, experience and problems in the course of this IATUL Conference.

1. Co-operation with the Three Largest Chemical Works

In 1970 we elaborated a general contract with the departments of information and documentation of the three chemical works, which was signed by the general managers of the works and by the Rector of the University in February 1971.

The contract sets out the different ways of co-operation and among them the common acquisition of special literature is the most important. We decided that those items and types of literature which are extremely expensive, and which are used by all the participants, should be acquired jointly and only in one copy. The acquisition, cataloguing, storing and organisation of usage is done by the library, while finance is provided by the firms.

Our joint acquisitions so far are:

a. The chemical patents of the United States published from 1962 onwards (on microfiche, altogether about 650,000 items).

b. Chemical Abstracts, 1907-1935 (originally the library had the volumes of this important reference journal from 1935).

c. Chemical Abstracts Index 1907-1971 (none of the participants in the scheme had the series before).

d. Gmelins Handbuch der Anorganischen Chemie, complete series.

e. Journal of Polymer Science, complete set.

f. Chemical Abstracts, from 1975 - only one complete series and nine sections for the co-operating firms.

Together with the firms we annex the actual minutes of co-operation to the contract every year and the financial contribution from the firms is also stated. The acquired literature remains in the library and is entered in the inventory with the annotation 'gift'. The specialists of the firms come to our library
regularly and get photocopies of the literature they need, and pay the usual price for the copies.

2. Regional Technical Translation Agency

A section of the Translation Agency of the Hungarian Central Technical Library and Documentation Centre works in our library. The task of the Agency is to make translations of technical and scientific texts for industrial firms, research institutes and departments of the university. There is an administrative staff of three persons, and the translations are made by engineers and research workers in industry and by the research workers of the university. They do the translations on a commission basis and their wage is more or less sufficient. The average monthly output of this section of the Agency ranges from 2,000 to 2,500 pages.

The significance of the Translation Agency in the library

- The university library has a regular close connection with almost all of the industrial firms and there is the possibility of organising co-operation in other fields similar to that in the chemical sphere.
- The translations are made by specialists and in this way clear, correct and precise translations are given to the customers from industry and the university.
- The translations can be ready within a short time, in cases of necessity even within one day.
- The engineering and other specialist translators can enrich their professional knowledge and vocabulary by translating the most up-to-date texts, and they also receive additional income.

Our translations are generally excellent and firms soon came to appreciate this service, which started on 1st September 1973.

3. The Application of the American METADEX System in Miskolc

During the years 1973-1974 our library studied the possibilities of the adaptation of the METADEX magnetic tapes in Hungary. On the basis of the promising results the system was put into operation in April 1975.

We want to develop this into a nation-wide service because for the economic operation of the system it is essential to gather external subscribers for at least 35 profiles. I mention it here because the development achieved is of significantly regional character; in the first months of the year we obtained subscribers for 27 profiles, for 26 of which the subscribers work in this region and only one being commissioned from Budapest. No doubt we shall have a sufficient number of external subscribers, but the fact that 26 come from this region marks the vitality of regional connections and the possibilities that can be put to account.

4. Other Forms of Co-operation

In 1972 on the occasion of the International Book Year we organised a scientific session in our library. The session discussed the relationships between research work and the information service. In the course of the session, six specialists working in industry were among those who gave lectures. Some of
the titles were:

- the connections of technical progress and patentability with documentation
- the increase of the efficiency of research work within the firm on the basis of utilisation of information about special literature etc.

Also in the same year the university library organised a 16-hour course with the title "the application of computers in the library" and experts from different firms were able to participate.

We co-operate in the field of extension training within the Association of Hungarian Librarians.

We regularly organise exchanges on working methods.

We provide the information departments of firms with a considerable amount of photo- and book-binding service.

We take over out-of-date literature from firms, of course without compensation. By doing this we free their full stacks from superfluous books and periodicals. The firms consider this a very important service.

Experiences of the regional co-operation, consequences of principle and practice

The present state of our regional relationships is the result of about five years' work. During this period we could collect valuable experiences which - in my opinion - can be easily summarised.

- Co-operation cannot exist without mutual advantages to the partners and it is not enough to give general ideas about the possible benefits. The partners themselves must feel that they benefit from the co-operation.

- The partners are of the same rank in the distribution of work; they benefit from the advantages of the co-operation in terms of the invested costs and labour.

- In general partners will enter into co-operative arrangements where objectives can be attained which are not possible on an individual basis.

- It is very difficult to change the old, established practice (e.g. the co-ordination of subscriptions for periodicals) in such a way that none of the partners lose by the co-operation.

- The partners must have freely available financial means and a right to independent decision.

- Great care must be taken of the partners' sensitivity and private authority.

The advantages of the regional connections for the University

The library - first of all because of inflation in western countries - has financial difficulties if it wants to perform its task in acquisition. If the most valuable items of literature can be acquired with the help of this co-operation with industrial firms, we can greatly improve our situation. Another fact that makes necessary the exploration and exploitation of these kinds of financial sources is that the number of publications has enormously increased. Due to our industrial relations we get several orders for giving bibliographical
information, making photocopies and bookbinding for the different firms, and these orders bring quite a considerable income to the university. From this income at least 25 employees of the library also benefit. By running the translation agency in our library we can give powerful help to the research work going on at our university by providing the necessary translations on a professional level and in a short time.

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs - recognising the results of the regional relations in Miskolc - decided to include the library in the national deposit copy service from 1 January 1966. This means that the library receives free of charge the volumes of all Hungarian publications on science, excluding biology, and all publications on engineering. In practice this means that the library annually receives 300 periodical titles and about 1,500 books, lecture notes and operating manuals without cost. The finance saved in this way can be used for the acquisition of foreign publications.

The results I have discussed sound very nice, but their achievement demanded enormous organisational work and effort. My firm belief is, however, that regional work is one of the basic functions of a technological university library situated in the provinces and this function is also a great honour for the library at the same time.

DISCUSSION

C. G. WOOD: Translation facilities assume an important role in the dissemination process in your country. If translators are paid on a commission basis is it not likely that the amount of translations will be artificially increased?

J. ZSIDAI: The University is a clearing house for requests for translations, which comprise 20% generated within the University and 80% from industry. We have no translation budget problems in Miskolc.

Z. KOVATS: We use a budget control system at Veszprém based on the Budapest Agency. The working of it is flexible, and there is opportunity for supplementation, if necessary, by request to Heads of Departments. Translators are paid directly, but this does not significantly influence the amount of work undertaken.

S. SCHWARZ: Hungary is similar to Sweden in many ways, but in our country translation is of minor importance. If translation is such an important part of information assimilation can one be sure that some kind of filter does not hamper access to the desired material? It is important also that a research worker should be able to select items from secondary publications, and if unfamiliar with the language how can this be done properly?

Z. KOVATS: A reader can only make use of material which he understands and we are, therefore, giving very considerable help. Selection from secondary publications is done by computerised retrieval according to the profile formulated by the scientist.

V. AMMUNDSEN: How can industry manage by sharing copies of information tools which one needs to consult almost daily? How far away are the chemical works you mention and have they got other reference tools for daily use such as Referativnyi Zhurnal-Khimiya? Do the chemists visit the library frequently or have you a telephone reference service?
J. ZSIDAI: The three factories near Miskolc are 8, 20 and 35 km distant. We use telex for information queries and these are answered in 1-2 hours. We have the services of two postmen and photocopies are sent the same day. If necessary a special delivery is made of urgent material. Periodicals do not leave the library unless they have been in stock for a year. Our arrangements stem from the fact that industry has insufficient western currency to buy all the periodicals it needs and hence it is forced to use university facilities. Chemical Abstracts costs, for example, 1 million forints and it is better to have one copy in the region than none at all. Each of the factories has both scientific information personnel and chemical engineers and these people come to read in our library.