

From Rapdoc to Webdoc: an Evaluation of the Pica-Rapdoc Project and an Introduction to the New Pica-Webdoc Project

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FROM RAPDOC TO WEBDOC: AN EVALUATION OF THE PICA-RAPDOC PROJECT AND AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW PICA-WEBDOC PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

At the IATUL Conference in Tallinn in 1992 a report was presented about a new PICA project: RAPDOC. Information was presented about the reasons to start the project, its objectives, finances and project planning as well as information about the underlying interlibrary loan analysis in The Netherlands.

The RAPDOC project officially came to an end on October 1, 1995. A project evaluation will be presented as well as the future usage of the obtained results. In the same year when the RAPDOC project came to an end, a new PICA project was launched: the PICA-WEBDOC project. In December 1995 an agreement was signed with RLG for collaboration on this project. The new service will allow end users to search WebCat, a special catalog of bibliographic records (maintained in parallel on both the RLG and PICA host computers, via Web browsers and to retrieve documents linked to them - full text, articles, maps, images etc. - using Web technology. WEBDOC interposes a licensing and accounting server between the catalog record and access to the whole document it describes, to verify that the user is covered by an institutional license or else to debit the users personal account.

WEBDOC is designed to provide an environment for end-users access where the rights holders may seek compensation for use of their materials. These include many journal articles and some unusual, high-quality and primary sources collections.

RLG and PICA plan to launch WEBDOC as a pilot production project this year, starting in January in the Netherlands and Germany and in September in the United States. PICA has already identified a group of Institutions in the Netherlands that will participate with their end users in the pilot; this year RLG will identify pilot participants from among its members. Both organizations seek cooperation with commercial document suppliers and publishers to participate in the project. PICA recently signed the first contract with a publisher, Kluwer Academic Publishers in Dordrecht, the Netherlands.

WEBDOC is the first phase of a broader strategic collaboration planned to achieve streamlined access to documents in paper form as well as digitized materials - and to give the end-user a single interface for information retrieval, document request, electronically assisted document delivery, and conventional interlibrary loan. RLG and PICA intend to pool development resources in creating shareable software modules and to offer integrated end-user services to libraries and their patrons on both sides of the Atlantic.