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International Focus/ EDILIBE

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International Focus

Action Plan For the Libraries in the European Community: LIBACT 2/EDILIBE

Submitted by **Jane Maddox (Harrassowitz)**

Participants from England, Holland, Italy and Germany carried out work on the EDILIBE project (Phase I) from March to December 1991. This project was based on the German project "Elektronischer Datenaustausch zwischen Bibliotheken und Buchhandel auf der Basis von O(pen) S(ystems) I(nterconnection)", which was funded by the Bundesministerium für Forschung und Technologie, and was managed by the Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, Frankfurt am Main. The EDILIBE Project was financed by the Commission of the EC and the final report has now been submitted. The following organizations were involved in the project:

- John Rylands University Library, Manchester,
- Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit te Gronigen,
- Starkmann Library Services, Led., London,
- B. H. Blackwell Ltd., Oxford,
- Casalini Libri s.p.a., Fiesole,
- Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden.

The main objective of the entire project is to prepare, to test and to promote the application of electronic communication between the book trade and the libraries on the basis of the international standards EDIFACT and X400. The use of telecommunication standards, which conform to OSI (Open Systems Interconnection), enables the interconnection of heterogenous EDP-systems, whereby data from various systems can be understood and processed without double keying.

The first phase of the project served the purpose of analysis and theoretical work on the basic principles. The following tasks have been carried out:

1. EDIFACT:

—Checking and extending the message types Offer, Order, Order Response, Invoice, which were defined as branch-specific subsets for the corresponding EDIFACT-formats,

—Comparing the format drafts with

the currently available Anglo-American standard formats for business transactions between the book trade and libraries: BISAC, ANSI X.12, TRADACOMS,

—Reviewing whether EDIFACT is used in related branches and could be transferred to communication between libraries and their suppliers.

2. X.400:

—Analyzing the application of the X.400 standard within national and private communication networks in each country,

—Checking whether a comparative functionality of the Telebox 400 Service of the Deutsche Bundespost Telekom will be available in the countries of the participants,

—Transposing the results for implementation by the project participants.

3. System Configurations:

—Analyzing the participants' in-house systems with regards to the functionalities already available, and confirming deficits.

—Developing concepts for solutions with regards to technical realization and cost-efficiency.

All analyses were carried out with success. The results can be summarized as follows:

It was shown that there were no existing uses of EDIFACT in branches of similar structure which could be transferred. The comparison of EDIFACT with related national standard formats showed that EDIFACT is more extensive and more flexible, but that there are common features with TRADCOMS, so that a transfer from TRADCOMS to EDIFACT is feasible in England.

The format draft, which was introduced into the project, did not need to be altered very much for the partici-

pants and it was updated according to the EDIFACT directory 91.1.

Tests were undertaken to check the level of telecommunication and availability of X.400 software products in the participating countries. Concrete software and hardware configurations were designed for all project partners in order to create the prerequisites for standardized communication. The results were taken up in the proposal for the second phase of the project.

The continuation of EDILIBE (Phase II) within the Action Plan for Libraries in the European Community was fundamentally approved by the Commission at the end of March 1992. The following objectives are to be achieved:

1. Realization of those concepts developed in Phase I for each participant's system configuration, implementation of EDIFACT-converters and X.400 software in all in-house systems and creation of import/export interfaces.

2. Execution and documentation of inner-operability tests.

3. Commencement and continuation of the standardization process for the developed EDIFACT-subsets "Quotes, Orders, Order Responses, Invoices", proposal for the necessary branch-specific, structural alterations and the extension of the code lists, with the possible inclusion of additional demands on the part of the publishers.

The circle of participants is going to be extended to include the national libraries of Madrid and Florence. The project will probably commence in September 1992. More information is available from:

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