DOING IT TOGETHER FOR COST EFFECTIVE ACCESS TO SCHOLARLY INFORMATION: A SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

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Central to the DHET’s strategy is: “the objective of ensuring that the country is committed to sustaining and strengthening long-term research that is transformational, generates new knowledge and can work towards strengthening society and the economy”.

South Africa in a Nutshell:

- Approximately 1.2 million square kilometres
- 9 provinces
- Population of approximately 50 million people
- 11 official languages
- Many different cultures giving rise to the name the “Rainbow Nation”.
- Largest GDP in Africa
- Until 1994 segregated educational institutions
“Freedom Charter”
(adopted at the Congress of the People in Kliptown on 26 June 1955)

“The Doors of Learning and Culture Shall be Opened".
"Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine that a child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another."
New Funding Framework

The New Funding Framework (NFF) for higher education institutions which was to address previous inequalities was published on 9 December 2003 in terms of the Higher Education Act, No. 101 of 1997, in the Government Gazette (No. 1791). The new funding framework was implemented in the 2004/05 financial year
Restructuring of Higher Education System in 2003

• Six comprehensive universities offering a combination of academic and vocational diplomas and degrees.

• Six universities of technology offering vocationally oriented training

• Eleven traditional universities offering theoretical academic degrees.
Establishment of Regional Library Consortia

• Well before the restructuring of the academic institutions, universities in different regions of the country were already forming regional library consortia.

• Collaborate on specific goals:
  – to ensure optimal access to information for members through regional and national cooperation
  – Promote collection building and resource sharing
  – Provide support for the implementation and management of common library systems
  – Improve information literacy skills and share training resources
Coalition of South Africa Library Consortia (COSALC)

• Founded as in 1999
• Regional Consortia were Members
• Vision: “to enhance access to information and the sharing of resources to benefit the clients of library consortia in South Africa through national co-operation.”
• Registered as a Non-Profit Organisation in 2003
South African Site Licensing Initiative (SASLI)

• Main project of COSALC
• SASLI’s role was to
  – Establish needs
  – Negotiate prices
  – Negotiate terms and conditions of licenses with publishers
  – Co-ordinate access and training
  – Other issues related to the cost-effective use of electronic information.
South African national Library and information Consortium (SANLiC)

• COSALC changed its name to SANLiC in November 2006. Name change legally registered in 2011.
• Reflects the relationship between company and members more accurately
• Membership structure changed to institutional membership as from 2012
SANLiC’s Vision

“To be the leading facilitator of cost effective access to high-quality scholarly electronic information in support of research, teaching and learning in Public Higher Education and Research Institutions”.
SANLiC’s Mission

SANLiC facilitates, on a non-profit basis, affordable access to scholarly electronic information in support of the learning, teaching and research activities of its members. This is achieved mainly through collective negotiations with publishers and aggregators. It also promotes the use of high-quality, open access electronic information resources.
SANLiC as an Instrument of Collaboration

Consortia world-wide are group efforts of individual libraries to achieve more than they could if they operated on their own.

Examples of collaborative projects:

- resource sharing
- shared library systems
- storage of archived materials
- staff training
- negotiations for and licensing of online information resources.
SANLiC as an Instrument of Collaboration (cont.)

Many difficulties in entering digital era:
- Inadequate human resource capacity in many institutions
- Lack of enough skilled staff
- Lack of funding to implement a broad e-resources programme.
- Need for greater negotiating power for more reasonable pricing and terms and conditions for access to high-quality peer-reviewed electronic information resources from major international publishers.

SANLiC would become the instrument through which all member institutions would be able to benefit from centralised skills and expertise.
Areas of Collaboration through SANLiC

- Collaborative Funding
- Shared Expertise
- Collaborative Training
- Marketing and promotion of electronic information resources
Collaborative Funding

• Funded through annual Membership Fees and annual Service Fees
• Fees based on level of participation in SANLiC negotiated deals
• Sound financial footing
• No undue financial burden on any individual members
Collaborative Funding:
  1) Professional Services

- Employs professional staff with strong negotiating skills to obtain substantially lower prices for member institutions.
- Experienced in the practical and legal issues involved in the licensing of electronic scholarly information resources.
- Good understanding of the South African academic and research library environment.
- Assessment of needs of member institutions
- Evaluation of new offers on electronic information resources
- International trend watching
- Coordinator & champion for new initiatives like Open Access (e.g. SCOAP3) and training
Collaborative Funding

2) Legal Services

- SANLiC has access to contract lawyers for assistance in difficult publisher agreements and licences
- No additional charges to members
Collaborative Funding:
3) Administrative Services

• Administration and management of legal processes associated with contracts and agreements
  – Finalisation and signature of legal documents
  – Central archiving of legal documents
  – Making documents available online to members

• Electronic resources management (ERM) of over 120 electronic resources.

• Event planning and management e.g. bi-annual conferences, “Road Shows”, training opportunities and meetings
Shared Expertise

• Thirty member institutions have a broad range of skills and expertise amongst their staff.

• SANLiC draws from this pool for:
  – SANLiC e-Resources Advisory (SEA) Group. Five librarians assisting SANLiC manager with:
    • Input on new offers and renewals
    • Evaluation of products: content, pricing, terms and conditions etc
    • Needs of members
    • Licensing and negotiations
    • Conference and Road Show planning
Shared Expertise (cont)

• Special ad hoc renewal committees for negotiations with large publishers with high value content

• SANLiC Forum:
  – New, web-based discussion group for SANLiC members
  – Variety of topics
  – Accessible by members only for information, input and feedback
Collaborative Training

• SANLiC Workshops/Conferences
  – Bi-annual conference for all members
  – Relevant and practical issues addressed
  – Trends watch from international speakers
  – Staff from member institutions contribute their insights and expertise

• SEA Group: serves as training opportunity for new/ inexperienced e-Resources librarians
Collaborative Training (cont.)

• SANLiC Road Shows:
  – New initiative started in 2012
  – Six different regions
  – Updates on SANLiC products and services
  – Staff from SANLiC members run 2 mini workshops on new and important issues relevant to electronic information provision
  – Discussion groups sharing problems and insights

• Training as a new strategic initiative
  – Identify and implement more training opportunities
  – Training Task Team to be formed by volunteers from member institutions
Marketing and Promotion of eResources and SANLiC Services

• SANLiC offers more than 120 products to its members. Awareness creation through:
  – Trial access opportunities
  – E-mail announcements of new offers
  – Full details on all offers on SANLiC web site
  – Annual renewal announcements

• SANLiC web site:
  – All current offers with full details
  – Open Access resources page
  – Useful links
  – Other organisational documents
Future Strategy

Areas that will receive particular attention:

• Expanding access to electronic information resources e.g. eBooks, eTextbooks, video databases etc.
• New business models for access to a wide variety of electronic resources
• Growing SANLiC membership to include other non-profit and public benefit entities
• Greater involvement in Open Access initiatives
• Capacity building/skills development
Conclusion:

SANLiC as a consortium has demonstrated and continues to exemplify a successful collaboration effort among thirty South African academic and research libraries to achieve more together than they could have done as individual institutions.