National Libraries in the Digital Era

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Abolish Barriers: the role of libraries in an evolving Europe
Helsinki, 7 May 2010
National Libraries

“Custodians of the nation’s intellectual heritage, thus providing organisation, access to and preservation of the national imprint in all media” (IFLA).
The Digital Era: user demands

- Changing user demands: they expect the services to be closely related to their community or their workflow.
- Complication:
  Users: researchers, general public
  Not a well defined community
The Digital Era: towards digital collections

- Definitions: which items are to be collected? Websites? Tweets?
- Print and/or digital
- Digital born publications
- Digitisation of the print collection
- Preservation
The Digital Era: co-operation between libraries

Blurring borders:
Everybody wants to have access to all kinds of information: cultural, scientific.
Towards a national digital library with different front-offices: national library, public libraries, research libraries
The Digital Era: co-operation between heritage institutions

Blurring borders:
More and more publications do not only contain text but also research data, audiovisual material. These different elements become more and more integrated.
Position of the National Library

Co-operation within a network becomes essential. The meaning of an institution is not only defined by its traditional “core business” directed towards its own identity. Also by its identity in a network: the number and type of partners and the relation with these partners.
KB, National Library of the Netherlands

- Towards a digital collection
- Access
- Preservation of the collection
- The KB in the libraries’ network
- The KB in the network of cultural heritage institutions
- The international network
Towards a digital collection

Strategic plan: priority # 1

To offer everyone everywhere digital access to everything published in and about the Netherlands:

• more and more born digital publications are collected

• all Dutch books, newspapers and periodicals from 1470 will eventually be digitised.
Towards a digital collection

Strategic plan: priority # 1
To offer everyone everywhere digital access to everything published in and about the Netherlands:
• more and more born digital publications are collected
• all Dutch books, newspapers and periodicals from 1470 will eventually be digitised.

Conditions for public/private partnerships:
- public domain
- non-exclusive
Improving Access

**Strategic plan: priority # 2**

To foster the establishment of a joint, national information infrastructure that exploits the possibilities of the digital world optimally. The result will be that everyone can search in the entire paper and digital holdings of the Dutch scientific and public libraries: a national digital library.

The KB will play an essential role by ensuring access through its e-depot. We will improve access to the digital collections by a variety of search facilities.
Preservation of the collection

Strategic plan: priority #3
To guarantee long-term storage of digital information. This is a necessary pre-requisite for future access to digital information. The KB aims at a new, affordable, scalable and long-term storage facility for digital information (“e-depot”), operational in 2013.

In this context the KB will strengthen its international position in the vanguard of applied research in the field of digital preservation.
Network of Libraries in the country

- KB, public libraries, university libraries
- Towards a national information infrastructure
- Union catalogue for print items
- Digital content repository for relevant digital information: e-books, journals (licensed and open access), cultural heritage
The national library infrastructure

- A national digital library
- Access through all libraries: front-offices
- Example: pilot with Elsevier Science
Cultural heritage institutions

- Borders between different types of content will blur
- Users want integrated access
- Short term: co-ordinate preservation
- Long term: National Digital Information Infrastructure
- Neerlandiana: aggregator for Europeana
International network

- CENL: international role, parallel to the development of a national library

- TEL: aggregator for library content in Europeana

  Essential: involvement public and research libraries

- Europeana: Co-operation with cultural heritage organisations

  Infrastructure, Content, Access

- Joint effort in the preservation of content

  (International publishers; Safe places model)
“Well in our country,” said Alice, still panting a little, “you’d generally get to somewhere else - if you ran very fast for a long time, as we’ve been doing.”

“A slow sort of country!” said the Queen. “Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!”
Thank you!

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