

Service to Industry by Independent Research Libraries

less a rare book library than those of other great men of his day, such as his associate, J. P. Morgan.

Support of the independent research library derives to some extent from its endowment. Original funds have normally appreciated over the years, with prudent management of portfolios and operating budgets. But most are dependent in part, at least, on continuing contributions from individuals and corporations, for certain segments of their programs. Charges are also levied for some services, notably that of photocopying; reimbursable services, in the case of the Crerar Library, form a significant portion of its total program, as will be noted later.

These libraries generally consider themselves to be public libraries, freely accessible to any user. Occasionally, the terms of their charters or their own regulations may restrict use to certain scholarly ends or by special permission only. Such limitations appear to exist more in libraries of esoteric, humanistic, or rare content (Morgan, Newberry, Huntington, Folger) than in libraries of scientific character where current information, instead of historical, is of primary interest.

With service to industry in areas of science and technology as the focus of study, there are a very limited number of relevant institutions to consider. Of overriding significance are the Linda Hall and Crerar Libraries; no other of this independent character and stature are known. Discussion is thus largely drawn from experiences in these two institutions, with some examples from the Hill and Lloyd Libraries.

It is probable that half or more of the use of these libraries derives from industry. Linda Hall reports that perhaps three-fourths of its service may be directed to industrial needs, and Crerar estimates a similar amount. The proportion is probably somewhat less in the Hill and Lloyd Libraries, due to the former's reference functions and the latter's professional character. Customarily, persons in industry learn of these resources by word of mouth or referral, and invariably are amazed at their existence, outside the usual purview of public and academic libraries. Both Crerar and Linda Hall have undertaken fairly extensive programs of publicity over the years. Talks to local and national professional and business groups, feature articles in the daily and trade press, news stories whenever a worthy event takes place, direct mail use of society membership lists, and similar promotional efforts are made. Often the initial acquaintance occurs when using some bibliographic tools—the *New Serial Titles*, the list of periodicals

covered by *Chemical Abstracts*, or various union lists or directories. Referral by research organizations and other libraries is common, accompanied by a request for complete description of resources and services. It is certain, however, that by no means all potential users are yet aware of these (to them) unusual facilities.

A major characteristic of industrial use of the independent research library is its off-premise nature. Less than one-third of Linda Hall's visitors are from industry, and Crerar reports about 20 per cent in this category. The remainder of the Linda Hall in-person users are thought to be students; no real record is kept of the volume of use, self-service being the general rule. At Crerar, a study made prior to its 1962 move showed visitors to be constituted of about 20 per cent student and 23 per cent professional group representatives (doctors, lawyers, architects, consultants, etc.); some 33 per cent of use was by Crerar staff (largely in behalf of industrial requests).

A second use characteristic reported by the two large independent science libraries is the shift from local to regional and national scope. The original intent in both instances was service to the immediate community. Crerar's planning was dovetailed with that of the Newberry and Chicago Public Libraries, to provide balanced coverage. In Kansas City, it was discovered that science library resources were not adequate to attract research interests and industry; Linda Hall was designed to fill this need in the area. Because of existing medical library resources, limitations were set in that field.

In the years prior to World War II, industrial and research interests were concentrated at large population centers, with reasonably good information resources at hand in public and academic libraries. With the explosion of research effort following the war, industry and government research activities have scattered over the land. Industrial parks and research sites have sprung up in relatively isolated locations without existing information resources. As a consequence, satisfaction of needs has required new contacts, in many disciplines to fit the newly developing sciences, and at many different sources. Both Linda Hall and Crerar have felt the impact of this broadened demand, in both the geographical and the topical senses. It is estimated that 60 per cent of the use of Linda Hall is now from outside the Kansas City area. No statistics are presently available at Crerar; prior to its move, nearly one-third of in-person users were not from Chicago, and a large part of other service requests were regional and national in origin.

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At the Hill Library, it is felt that their principal effort and most of the money are directed toward serving industrial research needs. Approximately 40 per cent of the collections are in science and technology. A large number of industrial users are from the region outside St. Paul proper. The Lloyd Library has long given service to industry, within the specialized coverage of its holdings; the Cincinnati area draws most heavily on the service, but inquiries are also received from elsewhere in the United States and overseas.

A further characteristic of the independent research library is the absence of circulation to individuals, in the general public library tradition. Most consider themselves research-oriented, with emphasis on reference work and availability of materials. In science libraries, of course, great importance lies in back files and especially the current issues of periodicals and serials. Conventionally, these are less likely to circulate, and restrictions are thus not unexpected. Linda Hall honors interlibrary loan requests. In addition, local companies establishing a specific need by the filing of a letter request are permitted borrowing privileges; nearly 300 have taken advantage of this provision, and nearly 20,000 items per year are picked up and returned locally.

Crerar Library extends borrowing privileges to individuals, non-profit institutions, and corporations contributing an annual membership fee. Loans to companies are currently at a level of about 19,000 per year. Industries contributing at a substantial level are assigned a study room full-time in the Crerar Library, for use of company personnel. Materials can be set aside here for longer term projects. Both the Lloyd Library and the Hill Library restrict loans very sharply.

A major form of service, as in other types of libraries, is provision of photocopies of various types, in lieu of loan of actual materials. Linda Hall is well known for its low-cost microfilm service, and also does a heavy business in paper copies, preferred by the majority of its clients. Lumping loans and photocopies together, this library sends some 30,000 items per year outside the local area to various types of users; with local requests included, over 50,000 requests are satisfied annually in these ways.

Crerar's statistics on photocopying also do not categorize industrial from other sources. Approximately 24,000 orders per year are processed, containing about 55,000 separate references. The great bulk of these are in response to the needs of industry. Both the Lloyd and Hill Libraries also provide copying services to their clients.

Mail and telephone inquiries are a further means of exploiting the resources of the independent research libraries, but no published or private statistics are available on industry use of these channels. At the Hill Library, perhaps half of the total service is in response to telephone requests. Crerar and Linda Hall also utilize teletype equipment, receiving loan and copy requests in this manner, and making occasional substantive information replies.

A unique service by Crerar Library is provision for contracted library and literature research. Since 1947, its Research Information Service (RIS) has undertaken retrospective searches, bibliography compilation, translations, scanning for current awareness services, abstracting, bulletin preparation, and other means of satisfying client needs. Charges are based on hourly rates for technical and clerical staff, and for current awareness service a monthly fee is negotiated. Searching, scanning, abstracting, and analysis are performed by full-time staff with science degrees and bibliographic training and experience. Of the total RIS output, possibly 80 per cent is directed to industry or industry-related clients, the remainder being done for academic or institutional users.

A third segment of Crerar's reimbursed services is in the Special Libraries Association Translations Center. Operated under contract to the Special Libraries Association (SLA), the Center collects completed translations from many sources, and makes them available by loan or photocopy; over 100,000 are now on file. This is done in cooperation with the Clearinghouse for Federal Scientific and Technical Information, whose *Technical Translations* announces accessions of the two centers, as well as of other agencies. The bulk of SLA's accessions are contributed by industry, which also initiates most of the 12,000 inquiries eliciting 9,000 translations each year.

Crerar's reimbursed services form a pattern of administration markedly different from other libraries. These non-profit operations now account for roughly 35 per cent of this library's operating budget. In a sense, its membership fees also subsidize the lending services and collections; for accounting purposes, such income is tied to purchases of books, and some 15 per cent of the total budget is derived from this source. Another 35 per cent is provided by the basic endowment, with a final 15 per cent in a contractual arrangement with Illinois Institute of Technology.

Linda Hall's photocopy service is generally done at cost overall, but the balance of its services are supported directly by the library's

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endowment and are not reimbursed. While its collections are used for contract bibliographic work, such operations are provided by the Midwest Research Institute (MRI), to which relevant inquiries are referred. In connection with such service, it is notable that neither Crerar nor MRI feels it desirable to take on the one- or two-hour type of job. Overhead costs per contract cannot be supported by much less than a ten to fifteen hour minimum. Unfortunately, this leaves a gap between free reference service provided by these and other libraries, and projects of some little magnitude; staffs are not available to do the intermediate size tasks free, nor can they be economically priced.

In general, it cannot be said that uses of the independent research library are greatly different in kind than those made of other types of libraries. Answers, copies, original materials, and assistance in use are provided much as elsewhere. It can be said, however, that the patron considers this type of library as more likely to have the material he needs. This is by virtue of the specialization which is a usual characteristic. In these institutions, holdings of depth, length, and breadth may well be of recognized stature. For the unusual or esoteric item, industry will turn to such resources. And since the common items are held as well, many companies automatically forward all requests to these institutions. Such dependence is not unknown with large and specialized collections in public and university libraries as well, of course.

In building its collections and tailoring its service program to industry, the independent research library has some possible weaknesses and several inherent strengths. There is not a closely associated faculty who can be called on for assistance in selection of material, interpretation of problem questions, and even discarding. As with public libraries, informal relationships of this nature can be developed and, on occasion, special consultative panels formed. The staff must be particularly alert to industrial and public needs, and skilled and knowledgeable in the selection and acquisition processes.

However, the independent library is not faced with the multiple costs of providing teaching materials, extra copies, and other educational media. Without circulation privileges, it is free of increased staff costs of this department and the preliminary preparation and later record-keeping chores. Presumably, such savings can be plowed into increased holdings and possibly other service activities. Its collections can be given added scope and depth, and in doing so may

thereby benefit industry, as well as research interests of academic communities and the professional and private worker.

Of particular significance is the freedom of the independent library to gauge its own program, its own policy, its own future. Although it will keep the general public need in mind, it is not subject to bureaucratic control of government. It is aware of student requirements, particularly at the level of advanced work; but it is not governed by faculty demands and changing interests, nor affected by the establishment or discontinuance of special programs, curricula or research contracts. It is thereby free to plan more objectively, with longer-term goals, and more definitive guidelines.

Whether such characteristics are particularly favorable to industry needs depends on the jibing of specialized interests. But, within the capability of such library programs, it is possible to locate resources on which industry can come to depend with consistent expectations.

Bibliographical Notes

No published studies bearing on industrial use of independent research libraries have been noted by this author. Information and opinion contained in this article have been derived from the following.

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