DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 090 913 IR 000 491

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TITLE A Management Information System for Serials and

Continuations.

INSTITUTION Mankato State Coll., Minn.

PUB DATE 74
NOTE 17p.

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.75 HC-\$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE

DESCRIPTORS College Libraries; *Documentation; Electronic Data

Processing; *Library Acquisition; *Library

Automation: *Management Information Systems: Program

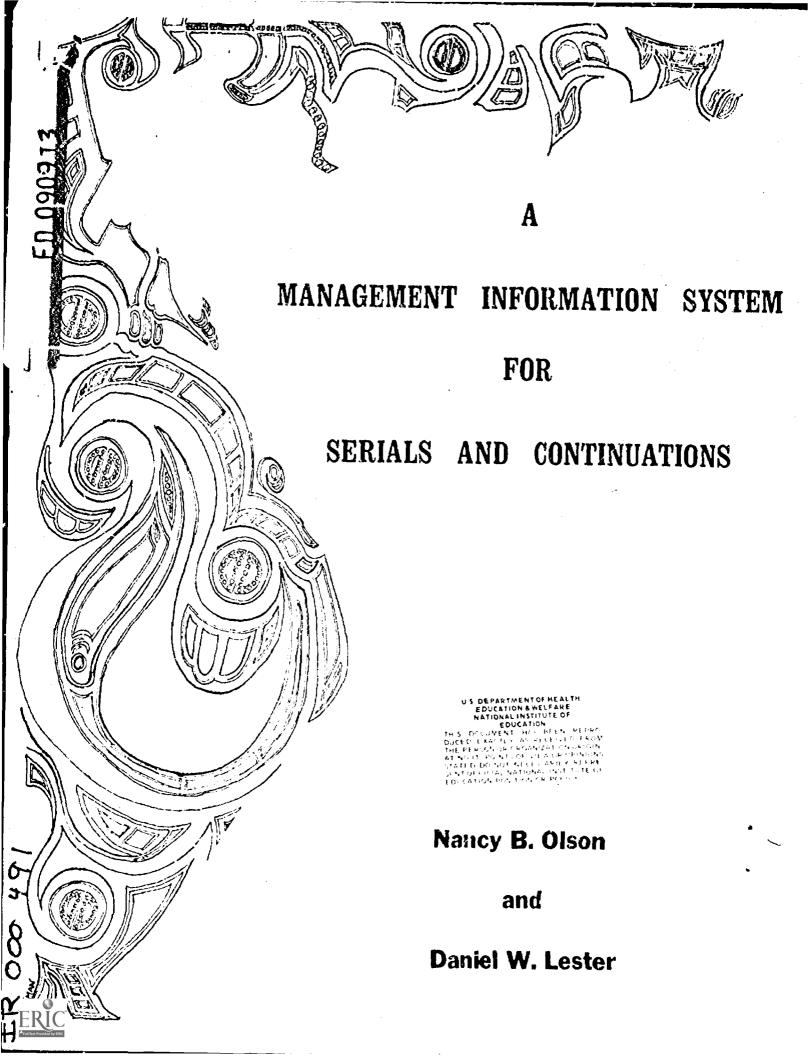
Descriptions; *Serials

IDENTIFIERS Mankato State College; *Serials Control

ABSTRACT '

Cutbacks in funding and personnel required the Mankato State College Library to gain more effective control over its serials collection. The task was to integrate the various data, some unrecorded, on standing orders and serials holdings and to produce for the library directors specialized lists of many types: all titles ordered from a specific vendor, titles to be dropped, and other lists to satisfy administrative needs. In the interest of speed, it was decided to use a computerized system. The record format for serials was expanded from a two-card-per-unit-record system to one that allowed for multiple-line main entries and titles, locations, holdings, internal notes, subscription details, and other fiscal and cataloging information. Records are constantly revised as new, or more complete, information comes in. Along with the production of administrative data, the system can quickly generate lists for public and faculty use and to meet special requests. Lack of outside programing support for the project proved to be an asset, rather than a liability, for having the same person doing the programing and bibliographic work reduced manual checking and handling of data. The appendix includes sample materials generated by the system. (SL)





How can a library handle a drastic budget cut when it has little idea what its annual obligation for standing orders, blanket orders, periodicals, serials, memberships, and other continuations really is? This is the problem we are facing in the Media System at Mankato State College.

THE PROBLEM

It happened because we experienced a decade of rapid growth in budget, materials, and numbers of students, faculty, and librarians. "In the old days", when one person handled ordering, receiving, and check-in of all materials, the standing orders were not recorded anywhere. The librarian knew what they were, he had ordered them and recognized them on receipt. There was always enough money to pay for them as they arrived.

Then he left.

As the system grew rapidly, supplemental legislative allocations to build the collection for accreditation by various agencies increased the materials budget to over \$600,000 per year. Little extra money was allocated for additional personnel to verify orders, receive materials, or process books. Additional funds would often be released near the end of a fiscal year and would have to be spent within days. To develop the collection rapidly, many items were placed on standing order or as other types of annual obligations. There wasn't time or staff to keep adequate records of these orders, and there was little urgency to do so as the money was always there to pay the bills. The need for better control of these items was long recognized and various people made attempts at improving the system, but other pressures were greater.

Then the tide turned,



Student errollment dropped. Supplemental funds from all sources were reduced or eliminated. Staff cuts including professionals, clerks and students began. The Media System didn't know what it was obligated to pay each year.

THE SOLUTION

To assist in gaining control of standing orders and other types of annual obligations, the media system had available in the library a complete unit record system with which we had been producing a periodical list for two years; a remote job entry terminal to the college's Univac 1106; one librarian with several years experience in library automation and serials; and one librarian with a little experience in serials, automation, and one course in programming. We also had several lists and files of supposed standing orders and many people in the system who "knew" of specific standing orders, or a depository account or details of a membership.

Our task was to develop a system to gather all this information, to clean it up, and to come up with some totals as well as with accurate lists of the various types of orders. We were also asked by the Media System Directors to provide specialized lists of many types: all titles ordered from a specific vendor, titles to be dropped, materials to be ordered direct from the publishers each year, and other lists to satisfy administrative needs.

Our first decision was to use the computer to manipulate the data and produce updated lists in various formats containing all known information about each entry far faster than could be accomplished manually. Our next decision was to expand the basic record format we had developed for periodicals. Our major limitation was the unavailability of programming support from outside the Media System.



Our record format was expanded from a two-card-per-record unit record system to one that allows for multiple-line main entries and titles; locations, sub-locations, form of material, call number, and holdings for each of as many as nine subscriptions per title; cross-references; internal notes; public notes; annual price, number of subscriptions, vendor code, department code, serial type, publication status, receipt status, and other fiscal and cataloging information.

An eight digit serial identification number was assigned to each record to keep the entries in alphabetical order and to serve as the record number that was punched in each card. A three digit card type and continuation code was used, giving a theoretical maximum of 999 cards per record. The serial identification number appears with the record on every type of printed output for easier reference by those submitting corrections, and for use in future update programs. This type of record-building proved fortunate since we have been forced to continually add new types of internal notes. We have easily added codes and notes such as TO BE DROPPED, for instance, and produced a total list with these entries identified for the user, as well as selectively printed lists of only the entries with each type of note or code.

This past year we have coded and keypunched the records from each known standing order list and file; added call numbers and holdings from the card catalog and shelf list; checked the resulting list against the serials shelf list and added anything that might possibly be a standing order. In addition, we checked the total list against the past year's purchase orders, adding anything that was remembered to have been purchased on a continuing basis, as well as adding purchasing information for existing entries; and checked the list against Cumulative Book Index for prices and series information.



We are checking all incoming possible standing orders against the list, also. The lists are constantly being revised as entries are changed, new entries added, and dead, monographic or duplicate entries climinated. Many people have been questioned concerning detrils of memberships, depository accounts, blanket order, and subscription plans. This information is added as gathered, usually in the form of internal notes with the name of the person or source. Meanwhile, academic departments have been evaluating sections of a list arranged by call number to decide which titles are to be dropped.

We are producing on a regular basis alphabetic lists by main entry containing all information concerning non-periodicals for use by the receiving, cataloging, and bibliography sections. For public reference use this data is combined with the periodicals data to provide a comprehensive serials list which contains those parts of each record needed for public use. We also provide lists arranged by classification number for use by bibliographers and reference librarians; as all serials are classified, this provides a temporary substitute for a subject list of serials. Specialized lists and exception remorts, such as all entries for multiple subscriptions or items costing over \$50.00, are produced on demand. Edit lists are produced as needed.

We have not yet been able to predict all of the types of special reports that have been needed. As new budget crises develop, new types of lists are needed and will be produced. These special reports are always needed urgently. Our first experience of this type was a request for a list of all current periodicals in call number order to be duplicated and distributed to faculty for them to select subscriptions to be cancelled. This list was needed within two weeks of the request. At that time, our only indication



in the keypunched record of a current periodical was the presence in the holdings statement of a hyphen followed by a space, the traditional openentry format. So we programmed to build records, search the holdings for this combination of characters, sort the selected records in call number order, and print a report.

There have been many experiences of this type. Our ability to meet them demonstrates, we think, the definite advantages of having librarians familiar with serials doing the systems design, the programming, the editing, and the report design, as well as keeping the whole operation moving as efficiently and rapidly as possible under the conditions.

This one example also illustrates another advantage of our system over a manual system; the ability to produce an extensive specialized list within a short period of time. In the above instance about 6650 records were checked by the computer to find the 3127 current titles; then the current titles were sorted by call number and printed. A report that would have taken weeks of clerical labor was produced in less than two hours. The program took about a week to write, but it has since become a basic program on which many others have been built. Still, the whole project was completed more accurately and in less time than would have been possible manually from the existing records.

The other point that should be stressed is our use of the computer to assist in cleaning up the data. We began with titles and call numbers and have added more data as information is received and revised, as prices are added, as main entries are corrected. The system is constantly expanding in types of data, in number of entries, and in types of output.

We have been quite concerned with the appearance, legibility, and conciseness of our output reports. We have several basic formats which are



varied as needed for specific reports. If a report is to be printed for distribution, we are also concerned with minimizing reproduction costs, if possible. We are always careful, however, to produce a readable, useful report; it makes little sense to save a few dollars on reproduction costs if the result is a poor product.

The system has grown from a two card unit record periodicals book catalog to one including documents, serials, standing orders, other continuations, and the periodicals holdings for four other colleges. The data base now includes over 11,000 titles of all types.

Lack of outside programming support has not been the liability we originally thought it would be, in fact, it has usually been an asset. All programming is done in ANSI COBOL and is basically modular. Having the same person collecting and editing the data and also writing the programs has been an advantage to us. Our operation is small enough to do this, as a full-time programmer couldn't be kept busy with our present level of automation. The person doing both the programming and the bibliographic work can spet idiosyncracies in the data that need to be considered in programming and knows the programming techniques that will reduce manual checking and handling of the data.

Although the development of our management information system is continuing now and will probably never cease, we feel that we have already begun to realize a return on our investments in planning and programming. The system has assisted in data collection and editing, provided new information and reports for library managers and library users, and provided techniques to climinate duplicate effort and files throughout the Mankato State College System.



APPENDIX

Reports Produced

Serials Worksheet

Sample Pages

Continuing onligations -- public list

Continuing obligations -- internal list

Continuing Obligations -- by class numbers with sub-totals

Continuing obligations -- individual subscription price greater than \$100



REPORTS PRODUCED on a regular basis or as needed.

For internal use (with part or all of public information plus details of purchase, retention, cancellation, etc., as available) in alphabetic order unless stated otherwise.

· Coding list

Proof list -- periodicals

Proof list -- continuing obligations

Current periodicals

Current periodicals; by class number

Current periodicals; by class number with those to be canceled so marked and with appropriate sub-totals and summary

Periodicals master file on card stock

Edit lists: records without titles

records without class numbers

records without holdings

class numbers improperly punched

Continuing obligations (non-periodical serials plus memberships, depository accounts, service plans, blanket orders)

Continuing obligations; by class number with probable and questionable obligations so marked and with appropriate sub-totals and summary

Continuing obligations to be canceled with totals

Questionable obligations with totals

Probable obligations with totals

Standing orders to which we have more than one subscription Continuing obligations with individual prices greater than \$100 per year



REPORTS PRODUCED

For public use; alphabetic order unless stated otherwise.

Periodicals; Mankato only

Periodicals; 5 colleges

Serials; Mankato only

Serials; 5 colleges

Periodicals; by class number

Valley Campus branch library holdings

Valley Campus; by class number

Planned for Spring and Summer, 1973

Current periodicals by vendor with relevant information and totals.

Current periodicals by department charged with relevant information and totals.

Continuing obligations by vendor with all information and totals.

Continuing obligations by department charged with all information and totals

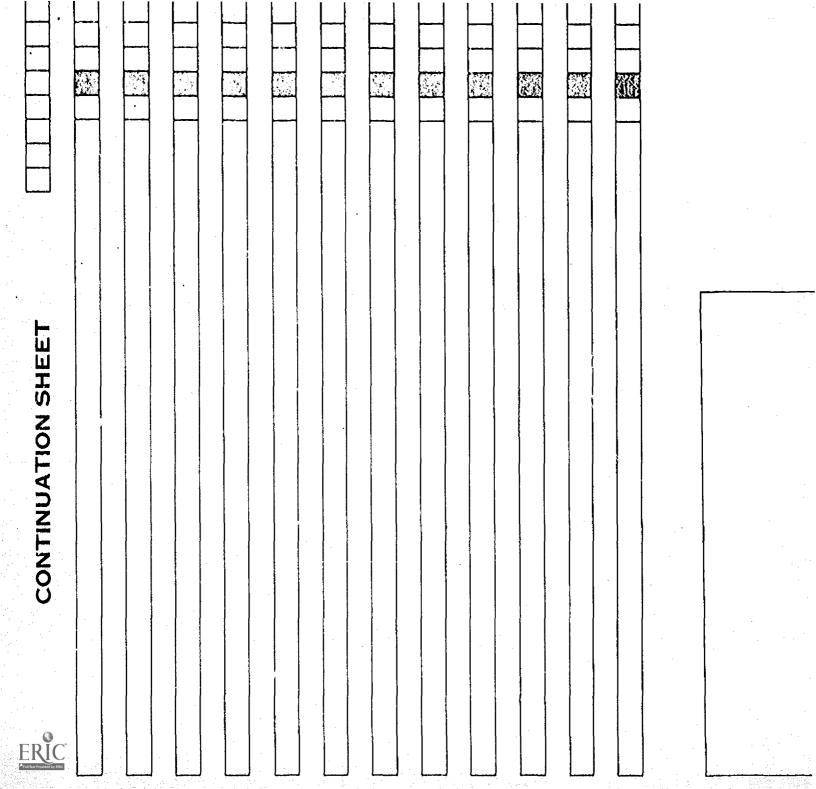
Continuing obligations check-in forms.

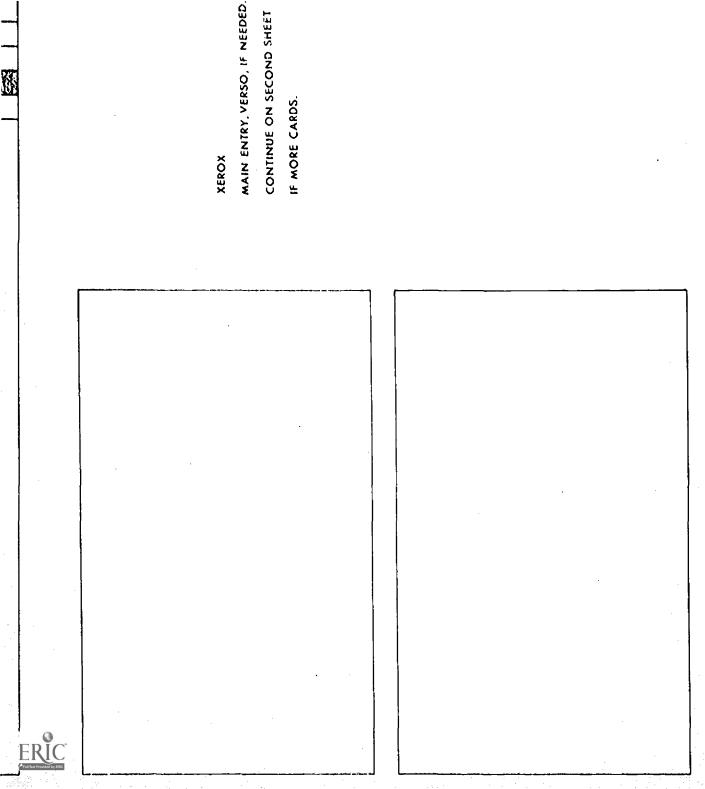
Continuing obligations check-in weekly status reports.



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