

ARTICLE FOR NOTISEs

Detroit Area Library Network, DALNET

In January, 1984, a group of libraries in the Detroit area began meeting with Wayne State University Libraries to explore the feasibility of automating jointly. The goal of the joint project is a shared automated library system, with a union catalog containing location and status information for materials in all participating libraries.

The libraries involved in the initial planning were the Detroit Associated Libraries (Detroit Public Library and the McGregor Library of Highland Park, Michigan), the University of Detroit Libraries, Wayne County Community College Learning Resource Centers, and several area hospital libraries. Oakland University Library in Rochester, Michigan joined the planning group in 1985. All these libraries have a long history of cooperation with one another. Since they are all located within the tri-county metropolitan Detroit area, sharing an automated library system has exciting potential for improving service in each library and resource sharing among the libraries, while reducing, or at least containing, automation costs for all.

This group of libraries worked together with Wayne State University Libraries to:

- identify the requirements of a shared automated library system;
- issue a joint RFP and evaluate vendor responses;
- identify contract negotiation issues with the selected vendor;
- and,
- establish a legal entity empowered to govern a joint automation program.

During 1985, the Detroit Area Library Network, DALNET, was incorporated as a non-profit corporation. A set of Bylaws outlining the role of the officers and describing the make-up and voting rights of the governing board was developed, and, after many revisions, was approved by the library directors. Jim Williams, the Associate Director of Libraries at Wayne State, has chaired the group since the spring of 1985, through the development of all the legal documents needed.

In October, 1985, contract negotiations were initiated by Wayne State University with NOTIS, the automated system that was selected to meet not only Wayne State's requirements, but also those of the other DALNET libraries. Wayne State has become the host institution for managing the central site of the planned joint automated library system. Wayne's contract with NOTIS, signed in December 1985, provides for the addition of other DALNET libraries to Wayne's NOTIS installation. Wayne State's role is also to be the "pilot" site for the implementation of each NOTIS module, so the other DALNET libraries can benefit from Wayne's experience.

In December, 1985, the MVS version of NOTIS was installed on a shared IBM 3081 mainframe computer at Wayne State's Computing Services Center, with a 4,300 record test database. By April, 1986, the software had been relocated to its current home on a dedicated IBM 4381 Group 2 machine, bought by Wayne State Libraries and housed at the Computing Center. A service level agreement was written, detailing the responsibilities of the WSU Libraries and the Computing Center in the operation and maintenance of the NOTIS central site installation. The experienced staff at the WSU Computing Center manages the NOTIS facility, including its growing telecommunications network.

While Wayne State was ordering and installing peripheral equipment and creating loader specifications, the DALNET Database Committee, chaired by Charlene Wecker of Wayne State, began planning for the addition of each institution's OCLC records to the NOTIS system. Wayne State had, through competitive bidding, selected Blackwell North America to process its OCLC archive tapes for loading into NOTIS. In 1986, the Database Committee issued an RFP for the tape processing needed for several potential DALNET libraries. Tape processing contracts were subsequently entered into by Wayne State with BNA on behalf of four libraries. Work has already been completed by BNA for two of the four contracts.

By Fall 1986, a draft service level agreement was developed for other DALNET libraries to join Wayne State's NOTIS installation. The agreement includes detailed listings of the responsibilities of Wayne State, as the host institution, and of the library signing up. It includes a draft implementation schedule, payment plan, and training program, which each library then negotiates with Wayne State. Upon signing, the library becomes an official DALNET member. Wayne State also received approval from its governing board to join DALNET. On October 31, 1986, Oakland University became the first institution to sign the agreement to participate in a joint NOTIS installation with Wayne State.

In November 1986, Wayne State made LUIS available in its two largest libraries, the Purdy/Kresge Libraries (humanities and social sciences) and the Science and Engineering Library. A demonstration database of 301,000 records representing Wayne's OCLC monographic cataloging from Fall 1975 through June 1985 was loaded. In December 1986, cataloging and authority work for all new titles went into production at Wayne State.

Plans are now being implemented to load Oakland University's 200,000 record OCLC monographic database into NOTIS this spring. The decision was made to treat DALNET as a single institution group, with each library a separate processing unit, to enable joint indexing and display of bibliographic records and to provide access to a shared authority file. The DALNET hospital libraries may form a single

processing unit, since most have their OCLC records created by the same processing center.

In February, 1987, three more libraries completed negotiations with Wayne State, obtained approval from their governing boards, and signed the service level agreement. They are William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Botsford Hospital in Farmington Hills, and Wayne County Community College in Detroit, with six campuses throughout Wayne County.

Now, with five official member libraries, the DALNET goal of a shared automated library system in the Detroit area is becoming a reality. Much hard work has yet to be done, but an incredible amount has already been done. The dedication and commitment to cooperation of many Detroit area librarians has built the foundation for this new automated library network called DALNET.

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