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German National Library

Annual Report 2014

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The organisational structure of the German National Library was fundamentally changed on 1 October 2014 at the half-way point in the Strategic Priorities 2013 - 2016. Since the Deutsche Bücherei Leipzig and the Deutsche Bibliothek Frankfurt am Main merged to create the present-day German National Library, the core library areas have been served by two departments: one in Leipzig and one in Frankfurt am Main. Over the last 25 years the library has taken a number of incremental steps aimed at converging the two historically separate institutions into one organisation based at two sites. Nevertheless, by mid-2014 only four of the total of eleven departments were organised on a cross-site basis. Four departments were still mirroring each other's operations at both locations, and three departments only existed at one of the sites. The large mirror-operation departments accounted for a large part of the DNB's core business. The work was distributed to avoid duplication, however the separate structures repeatedly gave rise to a need for coordination and harmonisation.

The library introduced divisions in the form of a matrix structure in 2010 in addition to the linear structure. The organisational change implemented in 2014 bundled the work areas in the divisions to create cross-departmental and cross-site domains within the linear organisation. Departments, as subdivisions of the domains, are now also organised and managed comprehensively. This means that individuals are attached to each topic area who carry responsibility and who are identified both internally and externally as the official people to contact. The result was the creation of the three domains - Acquisitions and Cataloguing, User Services and Collection Management, Information Infrastructure and Preservation - which now carry out all the relevant activities for books, periodicals and text-based online publications. Other types of materials such as sheet music and sound recordings plus the archival documents and museum objects of the German Exile Archive and the German Museum of Books and Writing are not yet included.

How are the Strategic Priorities and the organisational structure linked? Is concentrating on organisational matters merely an exercise in navel gazing which takes time and energy away from more important library-related issues? From our experience in the last few years, it took much more time and energy to coordinate - repeatedly - the two separate decision-making structures.

The main change is that the principle of “one field of activity, one responsibility” has been established. Further objectives in introducing the new organisational structure were to unify as many procedures as possible and orient them more closely towards digital media publications, to yield synergy effects in the future, to shorten decision-making chains and to increase responsiveness as a result.

The information, publishing and media world, which the German National Library is part of, is changing rapidly. The library has always responded to such changing circumstances and engaged in further development as a result. This pending change process is not therefore really new, it merely represents a further stage in the ways in which the methods, processes and services are adapted to reflect changes in the environment. Changes which prompt the library to take action include the views of the staff and employees, the financial framework and the search and retrieval possibilities presented by the machine-readable files of digital media in catalogues and on platforms. Added to these are the changes in the behaviour and expectations of the users and in the ever-growing quantity of publications.

The statistics show that there has been a further increase in the number of media publications. There are no signs of any reduction in the volume of printed publications and sound recordings despite the growing number of online publications which are subject to the legal deposit regulation. The overall quantity can no longer be managed using conventional intellectual processing methods. The need to set priorities is growing. Where should our focus lie? What should we discontinue? Where can we make cuts? What can we do without? And what ramifications do such changes have for the legal mandate? It is ultimately the digital media which are necessitating - and also facilitating - new processes and new organisational forms. New procedures are required for the entire processing chain - from acquisition and cataloguing through to public access and long-term preservation. It is becoming increasingly clear that automated processes can usefully also be deployed for physical media and to help save resources. And so the following question is now being posed on a daily basis: What levels of automation and quality are required for which areas in order to cope with the volume of publications and above all to exploit the benefits of digitally available media? Because users want rapid and, where possible, digital access to information. They have become accustomed to heterogeneity and fuzziness; they begin their searches using the major search engines, in social networks etc. A new, user-oriented definition of the quality of library work has become necessary and possible.

The new organisational structure introduced in 2014 for the twin site institution is aimed at finding tailor-made responses to these developments and challenges based on clearly defined responsibilities and decision-making structures. And so the precept of “one field of activity, one responsibility” is to be introduced on as many different hierarchy levels as possible over the coming years as a fundamental organisational and management principle.

The new organisational structure is reflected in this annual report, for example in the structure of the reports from the different domains. On the following pages you will also find details of all the achievements of the German National Library and its employees during the last year. How it has responded to changes in the law concerning out-of-commerce and orphan works, how it has intensified the dialogue regarding memory institutions’ tasks in the future, the wide range of educational activities and events it has organised - and much more besides. Because that is the main priority: conducting the daily routines in a professional manner while remaining open to new developments. Dealing with continuous and rapid changes in the environment and responding to these by making internal changes will remain an ongoing task. Form follows function.

Reports

Report of the Acquisitions and Cataloguing domain

The Acquisitions and Cataloguing domain is responsible for building up all the collections of the German National Library and for the bibliographic indexing of media publications. The collections increased to almost 30 million media publications in 2014. The acquisitions of physical and non-physical media publications during the year amounted to roughly one million units, including approximately 460,000 online publications. The German National Library and its automatic delivery methods have assumed a pioneering role worldwide. Regular deposits of e-Papers also increased to roughly 27,000 issues per month. By the end of 2014 approximately 1,200 websites were subjected to selective web harvesting. In cataloguing, roughly 190,000 printed volumes, sheet music items and sound recordings were descriptively catalogued in 2014. DDC subject classes were given to around 160,000 titles and subject headings and/or Dewey Decimal Classification notations given to 100,000 titles to facilitate topic-based searches. The automatic indexing of electronic publications began in April 2014. The aim is to enrich the bibliographic data with terms from the Integrated Authority File (GND). On 1 July 2014 the recording of authority data in the Integrated Authority File (GND) was changed to RDA standard. Over a transition period of three months all other network partners also adopted the new cataloguing code. The first milestone of the RDA project was therefore reached on 15 October.

Report of the User Services and Collection Management domain

The User Services and Collection Management domain provides all the services required for facilitating comprehensive use of the media and all related information. A total of 207,083 visitors used the library's reading rooms. The number of times digital media were accessed rose by almost 53 per cent, whereas the use of analogue holdings fell by 1.4 per cent. In the field of catalogue enrichment, the figure of 1.2 million digitised tables of contents was surpassed. These were accessed roughly 23.8 million times. The technical platform for the showcasing of virtual exhibitions presented "Arts in Exile" and two other exhibitions.

Report of the Information Infrastructure and Preservation domain

In 2014 the Collection Management division and the Information Technology department were combined to create the Information Infrastructure and Preservation domain. It is responsible for all (information) technology services of the German National Library and for all work aimed at preserving the holdings and ensuring their ongoing usability. The technical infrastructure was expanded in 2014 and a second storage system installed to cope with the rapid increase in the amount of electronic media being ingested. A systematic software development process was introduced to optimise the IT architecture. The technical infrastructure of the bibliographic systems was also completely overhauled. The domain also provided technical support for implementation of the RDA cataloguing code, for development of a newspaper portal featuring new search possibilities and for work on the Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek. Preservation planning conditions were improved e.g. through the establishment of a measurement station, the creation of storage space and a quarantine room. Contamination and acidity levels were measured in specific media units and groups of holdings. A data view containing preservation information which is connected to the central bibliographic system was also set up. In the field of preservation and restoration, just under 4,000 media units were processed in the period under review. In addition, more than 12,000 damaged books were digitised.

Report of the Central Administration domain

The Central Administration domain managed a budget of EUR 47.6 million in 2014. A newly developed evaluation catalogue was used to carry out more than 250 job assessments under the new remuneration regulations. In Frankfurt am Main, the reconstruction and modernisation work on the exhibition area was completed. Key aspects of the legal consultation and appraisal work of the Legal Counselling domain included the "Arts in Exile" project and the virtual exhibition of the German Museum of Books and Writing in Leipzig.

Highlights

Rights clearance and out-of-commerce works

The German National Library attaches a great deal of importance to respecting copyright. Yet it also has a mandate to provide maximum accessibility to Germany's cultural heritage and accordingly has an interest in releasing the full texts of digitised media publications for global use. For instance, it has worked to clear the rights for more than 22,000 digitised exile monographs. In the process it developed an efficient work-flow which can also be used for other types of media publications. Two new legal regulations came into force in 2014 which permit memory institutions to digitise large quantities of holdings and make them available for use in cases which would not previously have been possible for copyright reasons. The first applies to orphan works for which a diligent search for the copyright holders has to be carried out and documented; the works themselves must be entered in the Register of Orphan Works at the Office of Harmonization for the Internal Market (OHIM) via the German Patent and Trademark Office (DPMA). The second applies to out-of-commerce works which were published before 1966 and for which privileged institutions such as libraries have purchased a licence. In a procedure based on this law, the German National Library will now function as the main interface between digitising institutions on the one hand and the collecting societies VG Wort and VG Bild-Kunst on the other. Both amendments provide the German National Library and other institutions with clear legal procedures for granting global accessibility to large parts of its digitised holdings in the future.

Future workshops

The digital revolution is presenting libraries with enormous challenges. Accordingly they now need to re-appraise and re-interpret their responsibilities, and re-consider the best ways of fulfilling them. The spectrum ranges from general socio-political role definitions through to complex technical and legal questions. In its efforts to find meaningful modern solutions within this process, the German National Library is engaging in a broad-based dialogue about the future and has further strengthened its commitment to this debate. Accordingly it has initiated a series of "future workshops": it organised the international "Crossing Borders – The Future of Access" conference in April 2014 and is providing targeted support for consultation amongst experts, partners and user groups in various smaller event formats. This series is ongoing. As libraries will be operating increasingly on a cross-border basis in the future, it will be crucial to strengthen links to international cooperation partners.

Education and communication work

The German Museum of Books and Writing (DBSM) and the German Exile Archive 1933 –1945 (DEA) present history in a contemporary context in their education and communication work. This

was once again in evidence in 2014 in various new exhibitions, events and collaborations. The DBSM offers a range of special theme modules on media history for specific groups of visitors and undertakes different types of educational work with its various further training events. Its higher education work includes cooperation events, block seminars and teaching assignments. With its exhibitions, events, guided tours, lectures and publications, the DEA makes the subject of exile accessible to a wide audience. Because of the way in which the collection is conceived, the main focus is on forced emigration during the Nazi period, yet the educational work explores a broader picture of exile. Parallels are drawn, for instance, between historical and modern experiences of exile.

Key facts and figures

697,9 full time equivalents
total budget: 49.858.000
total holdings: 29.723.899 items
new acquisitions: 1.009.281 items
users per day: 702
orders per day: 2.139