

VIETNAM

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF VIETNAM

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PROCESS OF COMPUTERIZATION IN THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF VIETNAM: RESULTS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

1 BACKGROUND

The National Library of Vietnam (NLV) was established by the General Governors of Indochina on 29 November 1917. The first name was Central library of Indochina. The present name has been changed to National Library of Vietnam after the people's revolution in August 1945.

2 COLLECTIONS, USE & BUILDINGS

The collection now has 1,200,000 volumes of books, 9,500 titles of national doctoral dissertations of Vietnamese citizens, 10,000 titles of Vietnamese and foreign serial publications. Annual increasing of collection is 30,000 volumes of books. Users of NLV at present are 10,000 peoples. They are students and specialists of all areas of National economy, sciences and culture. However NLV takes on the function to serve all Vietnamese citizens. In 1994, the Government of Vietnam allocated a budget of USD 5 million to reconstruct old buildings and construct 3 new buildings of NLV. Each new building consists of 6 stories. Total floor area of all buildings of NLV is 16,000 square meter. In full capacity, over 3,000,000 volumes of books can be accommodated with a seating capacity over 1,000 seats in 8 reading rooms:

- ?? General books reading room.
- ?? Open Stack for new books on Vietnamese for 4 latest years.
- ?? Newspapers and Magazines Reading room.
- ?? Microfilm and microfiche's reading room.
- ?? Open Stack for books sponsored by the Asia foundation.

- ?? To provide professional guidance to all library systems nationwide; especially public library system and carry out R & D projects on library and information sciences...
- ?? To coordinate library activities such as acquisition on foreign periodicals and books, union catalogues, and carry out interlibrary loan... In late 1997, NLV was given additional function: to build and manage WAN of public library system in accordance with Resolution No 579 by Ministry of Culture and Information.

4 PROCESS OF COMPUTERISATION IN NLV

In the new development stage of Vietnam, knowledge and information are becoming more and more important resources - one of the main motives for the economic development. The main duties of any library and information centers are: selecting, acquiring, organizing and providing the knowledge and information to users. Automation or computerization of library processes and services has made helping library able to provide information's unlimited to the items that the library can not do in a conventional way.

However, computerization of Vietnamese libraries, especially in NLV, has not developed as fast as other ASEAN countries. Until middle of 1980s, NLV is lacking on the knowledge about information technology, especially specialists in the field of computerization. The first PC was introduced in NLV in late 1986. At that time, NL of Australia supported NLV one PC (Olivetti) and Ms Helen Jarvis, an Australian IT Specialist, organized a short training course in Hanoi for some librarians from NLV on using PC and technique of creation of database.

After this course, NLV had applied IT in some library activities:

?? ***THE CREATION OF MARC***

Be adopted UNIMARC NLV has created MARC for its own and Public library system. Now this MARC comprises different format to different forms of Materials: Monographs; Serial; Doctoral Dissertations, Articles... But it still haven't had formats of sound recording, maps, AV material... All databases of NLV are basing on CDS/ISIS.

?? ***TRAINING***

Training of librarians on IT and its applications for NLV and public libraries is an important duty of NLV. In 1987 - 1988, NLV organized some courses on basic IT for librarians of NLV. Topics of those courses were: Basic knowledge about computer and information technology, CDS/ISIS and creation of databases. Almost all librarians of NLV were trained on the same topics for several years.

Since 1992, in accordance with the Resolution of Ministry of Culture and Information, NLV began organizing training courses on IT for provincial libraries of Vietnam.

Topics of those course were changed from times to times: At the first time, it shares the same topics of course for librarian of NIL. At the last time, librarians were trained on: how to access to INTERNET and on-line databases, web and skill of creation of Website v.v...

In 1992, NLV began to set up LAN with 4 servers and 15 computer stations.

In 1995, Public library system set up WAN with NLV as the center of the Network and provincial libraries were linked to NLV. However this WAN operated with bad effects because information infrastructure of the country is still poor, librarians with information technology skills are still scarce and the cost of data communication in Vietnam was very high... That's why WAN was reconstructed in 1997 and 2002. Until now district and village libraries of our country have not computerized yet.

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THE CREATION OF DATABASES

Those networks are providing digital information resources of NLV and provincial libraries. Information resources of NLV and provincial libraries on those networks at present are bibliographic databases.

NLV has created some databases:

- SACH (BOOK). The Database includes records of books in Vietnamese and Latin languages from 1950 to now (180,000 records), except books from 1917 - 1950 and books in Cyrillic, Chinese, Japanese characters. The present database is considered as National bibliography system of Vietnam.
- Database serial publications includes records of nearly 10,000 titles of serial publications, acquired by NLV since its establishment to now. This database contains newspapers and magazines in Vietnamese and foreign language, including serial publications in Cyrillic characters.
- Database LA includes records of 5,360 doctoral dissertations of Vietnamese citizens defended in Vietnam and also abroad. This database contains half total of thesis's storing in NLV.

NLV is building some databases: Articles; Materials of library and information science; Materials about Culture and Arts...

Provincial libraries also set up some databases, especially databases on documents about local studies and local famous personalities.

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THE ORGANISATION OF IT CONFERENCE, SEMINARS

Experiences and knowledge on IT of librarians of NLV and provincial libraries have attained also from the conferences and seminars. After 12 years of application IT in public libraries, NLV organized a nationwide conference on IT application with participation of directors and librarians of 61 provincial libraries in the year 2000. The conference gave appreciation on the results of IT application in NLV as well as public libraries and orientations for future development. After this conference, Regional library Associations (RLA) (VN have 7 RLA) organized the same seminars with the objective: application of those orientations in local level.

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IT SERVICES

library, all library operations (acquisition, circulation...) will be automatic. Library management systems has to meet all the international standards (Z39.50, ISO 2709, Unicode...). The Project also includes the creation of NLV Website as follows <http://www.nlv.gov.vn>.

- ?? To accomplish retrospective conversion of all book in NLV into Database SACH (BOOK) and to create some other databases.
- ?? To digitalize important documents of NLV. Documents - one parts of cultural heritage of VN. In order to preserve and effectively use those documents (on-line) NLV has planed to digitalize old and rare documents of its own collection. This work will fulfill in two directions:
- Digitalize Vietnamese important documents.
 - Digitize important documents in foreign languages, especially documents in French about Vietnam or/and Indochina.

The Project of digitalization of old and rare materials of NLV sponsored by the French Government will be signed in the near future.

Under this Project, the French Government will provide needed facilities using for digitalization of materials as scanners of oversize materials, microfilm scanner, file scanner, electronic material archive machine, photocopy machine, computers and other sub facilities.

- Link to Internet on leased line.
- Establish common standards for all libraries and information centers of Vietnam.

6 CONCLUSION

The process of computerization in National Library and public library system of Vietnam has achieved initial results and provided fundamental conditions for changing their role, functions and image in society. However NLV has to work harder for the target to become one of the first leaders among ASEAN countries in library computerization in late 2010s.

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