

World Library and Information Congress: 69th IFLA General Conference and Council

1-9 August 2003, Berlin

Code Number: 186-E
Meeting: 111. Document Delivery and Interlending & Cataloguing
Simultaneous Interpretation: Yes

GOING DUTCH: TOWARDS A MULTITIERED NETWORKED ILL SERVICE FOR THE NETHERLANDS

Johan Stapel
Koninklijke Bibliotheek
The Hague, The Netherlands
johan.stapel@kb.nl



Going Dutch

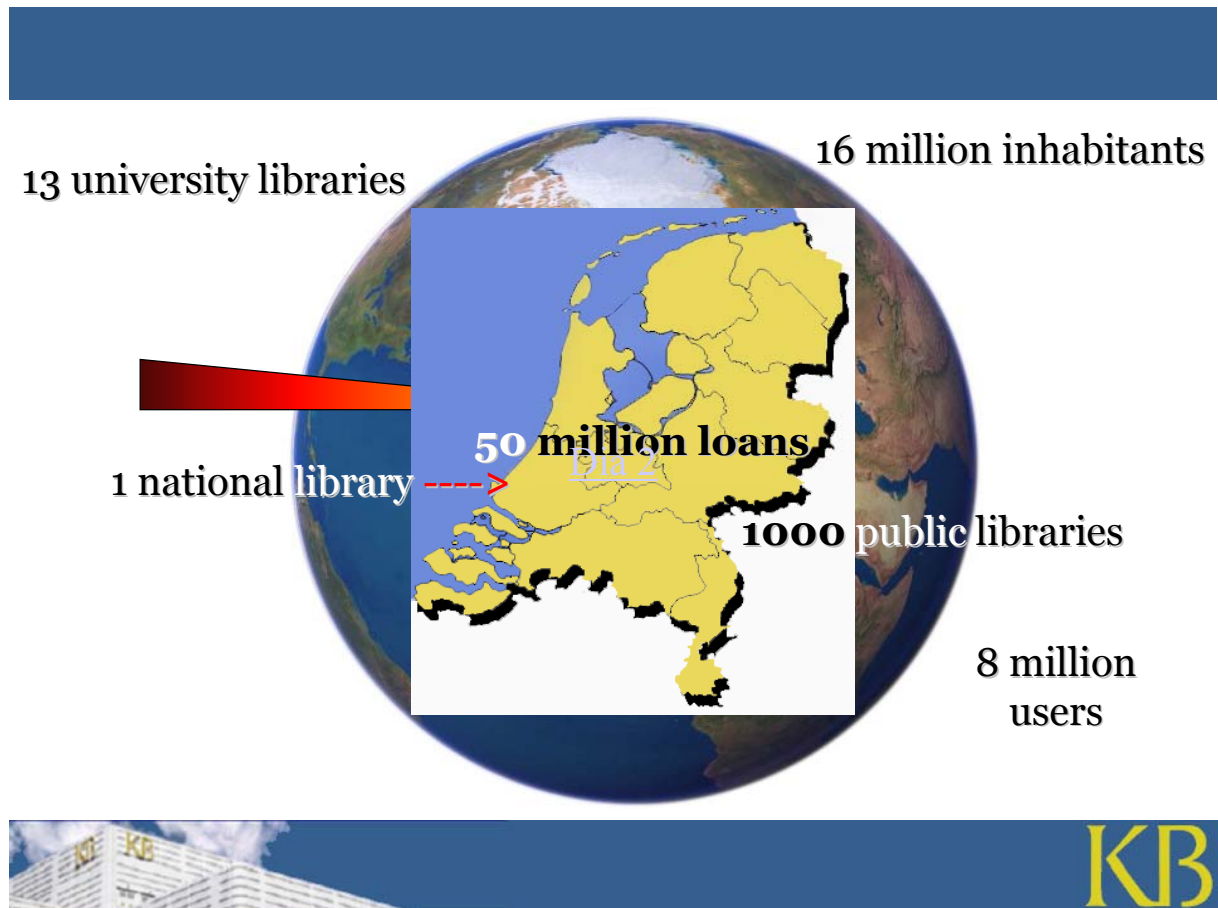
towards a multitiered
networked ILL service for the
Netherlands

Johan Stapel, IFLA 2003



Introduction

Good morning. I am Johan Stapel. I work at the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, national library of the Netherlands. I serve as a national Interlibrary Loan co-ordinator.



I will talk to you about the situation regarding interlibrary loan in the Netherlands, with a focus on two specific aspects: firstly, the function of our national union catalogue and secondly, future developments with regard to a possible decentralised model for nation-wide ILL services.

First, something about the context of my story: the library organisation in The Netherlands.

Our country has sixteen million inhabitants. We have one national library, thirteen university libraries and one thousand public libraries, serving eight million users. Annually fifty million loans are processed.

Then some recent developments:

Public Libraries

- ∕ no strong government involvement
- ∕ internet revolution

Open Gate To Knowledge

- ∕ 2001 Library portal **bibliotheek.nl**
- ∕ 2003 Collaborative digital reference service
- ∕ 2004 Collaborative ILL service



Public libraries

Since the abolishment of the specific public library law, back in the 1980's, there is no strong involvement of the national government in the strategic development of the public library work. Policy development became a decentralised activity on the local or regional level.

But, in recent years, public libraries have become more aware of the necessity to co-operate. In order to survive the Internet revolution, it was agreed that libraries needed to focus on utilising ICT, in order to transform themselves to a so-called Open Gate to Knowledge, a centre for life-long learning.

The emerging influence of the Internet as a channel for information and communication has lead to the creation of a national virtual

public library portal website, *bibliotheek.nl* in 2001, which now contains a collaborative digital reference service, launched in March 2003. Plans for next year include a collaborative ILL service.

I will talk about that later on.

University Libraries

- /// from collection to connection
- /// UKB consortium: licence agreements

National Information Infrastructure

- /// shared cataloguing
- /// union catalogue
- /// ILL system
- /// evaluation of centralised model

2003 Extensive survey



University libraries

Academic libraries also face major challenges, triggered by the rapid change of the nature of information: from printed to electronic information, from collection to connection. The university libraries cooperate in the UKB consortium, which has been successful in negotiating license agreements with publishers of electronic journals. The consortium's initiatives to realise innovations in scientific information - for example in digital archiving - are supported by a special national body.

In the recent past, UKB libraries owned the self-created National Information Infrastructure, based on a shared cataloguing system and

a union catalogue, connected to an ILL system. In 2001 it was agreed to give OCLC PICA - who did the software development - complete control over the shared cataloguing system and the ILL-system.

Currently, university libraries are in the process of evaluating the benefits of the centralised cataloguing and interlibrary loan model. To assess the existing ILL-system architecture and plan future developments, an extensive survey is being done on the functionality of the ILL-system, especially with regard to periodical literature. The final research report will be available later this year.

So far my introduction. I'd now like to dive a little deeper into ILL in the Netherlands.

NCC/ILL

Netherlands Central Catalogue Inter-Library Loan System

- /// 460.000 periodicals
- /// 14 million monographs
- /// 450 participating libraries
- /// UKB delivers 90%
- /// No free access
- /// pre-paid ILL accounts



NCC/ILL

For twenty years, we have a union catalogue with automated interlibrary loan and document delivery functionality, the Netherlands

Central Catalogue Inter-Library Loan system, NCC/ILL. The system is based on a central system for shared cataloguing. The database covers 460 thousand periodicals, and about 14 million monographs in the collections of more than hundred libraries, including the national library, university libraries, polytechnic libraries, special libraries and a group of public libraries with research collections. There are 450 library organisations with access to the NCC/IBL-system.

The libraries from the UKB-consortium are the main suppliers: they take care of 90 percent of all deliveries (copies: 96%, loans: 72%).

Unlike the situation in other countries, like in Denmark, the Dutch national union catalogue cannot be accessed freely. Libraries buy access to the union catalogue through OCLC PICA. Libraries may then authorise end-users to access the union catalogue from home. This is done by providing them with pre-paid ILL accounts, which may be used for requesting interlibrary loans and copies of journal articles.



ILL statistics NL

	Loan	Copy	Total
NCC/ILL-system	150	380	530
Document Delivery	20	300	320
Public Libraries	1.000		1.000
CD Rotterdam	150		150
Total (in thousands)	1.320	680	2.000



ILL statistics

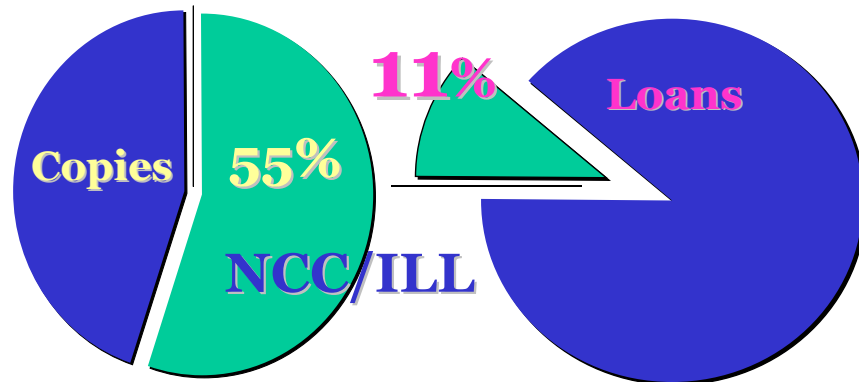
Statistics show that the NCC/ILL-system is mainly used for requesting and delivering copies of scientific journal articles. In 2002, the NCC/ILL system processed a little more than half-a-million ILL-transactions, about 75 percent of them are article copies. Against 380 thousand article deliveries, there were 150 thousand loan requests.

However, there is much more ILL in the Netherlands. A large part of the scientific information is requested and delivered outside the national ILL-system. Large technical libraries, like the Technical University Delft and NIWI process up to 320 thousand requests, mostly for article copies.

Interlibrary loan between public libraries is enormous. An estimated 1 million books circulates between libraries, mostly in the Dutch regional and provincial territories. This might be only a relative proportion of the total number of loans in public libraries, fifty million, but imagine the logistics and administrative organisation connected to this activity, imagine the sheer number of transport buses moving these millions of books through the Dutch countryside.

Also to be mentioned is the interlibrary loan of sound recordings, a centralised service, operated from Rotterdam. The CD Rotterdam, which has one of the largest cd-collections in Europe, delivers around 150 thousand objects a year.

Size ILL = 2 million items



So to conclude: the actual size of ILL within the Netherlands is around two million items. The established National Information Infrastructure, which runs on the NCC/ILL-system, covers only a relatively small part of the total number of ILL transactions: 55 percent of all document deliveries and 11 percent of all interlibrary loans.

So far, the current situation. Now, it'd like say a little about what the future of ILL might look like in my country.

Future?

- /// Information behaviour is changing
- /// New remote library services
- /// Virtual Public Library: Bibliotheek.nl



Future?

We see that the information behaviour of people is changing. Finding information on the Internet, ordering products and paying online for services is quickly becoming a normal part of life.

With so many potential library users now becoming experienced Internet users, libraries should accommodate new remote services.

In the Netherlands, public libraries had an initial backlog in providing remote, Web-based services to their users. This is now changing quickly, empowered by the creation of a virtual public library, Bibliotheek.nl.

www.bibliotheek.nl

- /// Central entrance with added value
- /// Develop collective services
- /// Acquire digital content



Bibliotheek.nl aims to be a portal site, a central entrance for any citizen, with added value for library users and the professional library community. Since its foundation, Bibliotheek.nl accommodates a central searching facility to a number of full text online sources, including newspapers, library catalogues and reference databases. Last year it was decided that public libraries should pay money to the Bibliotheek.nl management to develop collective services and acquire digital content. Bibliotheek.nl 's budget will rise from 3.2 million Euro in 2002, to 6.4 million in 2003 and 9.6 million Euro in 2004.

Al@din

Collaborative digital reference service

- /// Multitiered networked facility
- /// Routing to close-to-home library
- /// Geographical and political borders are dissolved
- /// Transparent and reliable service



Al@din

As I mentioned, this year has seen the launch of a nation-wide question answering service, Al@din, which is a real milestone event. It has created a multitiered, networked facility that joins the forces of a 1000+ workforce.

Questions asked by patrons are routed automatically to a close-to-home library, but will in effect be answered by the network. From the user's point of view, there is the convenience of having a recognisable, easy-to-use service, delivering answers within twenty-four hours.

An interesting effect of Al@din is that the project has shown that geographical and political borders can be dissolved by effective use of available technology. Through the network, distributed forces can be joined on a national level, creating a transparent service end-users can rely on - just like you would expect from any Internet-based service, be it commercial or not.

Network model?



Network model?

I think the network model can also be applied to interlibrary loan systems.

As you may know, in the Netherlands, nation-wide library co-operation has been very successful. Initiated by a group of university libraries, Pica has developed a shared cataloguing system, which has worked for twenty-five years and still offers libraries in The Netherlands, Germany and France the benefits of cost-effectiveness. It is hard to imagine a future without some kind of centralised cataloguing facility.

For our other co-operative library system, the NCC union catalogue, the future is not so clear. True: the central ILL-system works very effectively, especially for distributing scientific information between academic libraries. But: the major part of Dutch ILL is processed in distributed regional circuits, somewhere in the public library network. Despite the co-operative spirit that has delivered a central system to

be proud of, 90 percent of all interlibrary book loans are *not* done through the NCC/ILL system.

Of course, ideally, there should be one single database with high-quality bibliographic descriptions, which can be accessed freely for searching.

But creating a nation-wide ILL-system, based on a union catalogue with complete central registration of library holdings, covering all libraries, is an illusion.

I think, that, parallel to the digital reference experience, the next step for ILL is, to create a transparent service, a one-stop-shop for end-users. A service that joins a number of well-organised but distributed systems that are operated by a distributed workforce.

The leading principle is that, from a library user's perspective, it doesn't matter where the book he wants to borrow comes from, as long as he can order it easily from out of his domestic environment and get it on clear and uniform conditions, of course preferably next day on his doormat.

Technology

- /// Standards for searching and linking
 - /// Z39.50
 - /// OpenURL
- /// Standards for identification
 - /// single sign-on identification
 - /// national library card



Technology

Network technology has created standards, like Z39.50 and OpenURL, which make it possible to search multiple sources and to link from any source database to any target database.

Interoperability of systems with regard to so-called single sign-on identification should also not be too much of a problem, especially when public libraries succeed in implementing a unified and smart national library card.

So how to build a decentralised, networked ILL system?

Networked ILL-system

- ⚡ Create central administration and routing
- ⚡ Use existing networked information infrastructure and inter-operability standards
- ⚡ Use NCC/ILL-system as a last resort



Networked ILL-system

Let's suppose that vital local and regional bibliographic databases can be connected and be searched, the next major step is creating a central facility that handles the administration and routing of ILL transactions, preferably on the basis of the international ISO-standards for ILL.

Designing such a system shouldn't be too difficult, at least in a technical sense. After all, in the field of automated ILL, OCLC PICA and the Dutch university libraries have gathered thorough knowledge and experience in building and developing nation-wide ILL functionality.

So, instead of inventing wheels, the focus can be on being smart in using existing networked information infrastructures and inter-operability standards, and implementing a unified service model.

The best-practice-experiences of the AI@din service may serve as a blueprint, especially when it comes to organising the service logistics

in such a way that books are delivered in principle by the networks that are closest to the home of the patron. Within this distributed ILL model, the existing NCC/ILL-system should serve as a last resort, just in case a publication is not available within the public library network.

'Going Dutch' is an expression used when sharing the bill after a nice dinner with friends. There's also this expression 'having a Dutch party', which implies that when you come to the party, you have to bring something - that is: something to eat or drink, not just an empty glass...

I think that building a distributed multitiered ILL service is a beautiful and feasible challenge for libraries that are eager to develop services that meet the expectations of modern day library users.

Let me put my money on that, and tell you more about the outcomes at a later date.

I thank you for your attention.

Johan Stapel

johan.stapel@kb.nl