

publishing firm. With a feeling of déjà vu I listened to an explanation of how difficult it is to develop a system for the novice; one proposed solution is to allow only the first four letters of a word to be entered (one of the search methods used at the Library of Congress, which does suggest some cross-fertilization).

Whatever the trends, the reality is that librarians and information scientists are playing decreasing roles in the growth of information display technology. Hardware systems analysts, advertisers, and communications specialists are the main professions that have an active role to play in the information age. Perhaps the answer is an immediate and radical change in the training of library schools of today. Our small role may reflect our penchant to be collectors, archivists, and guardians of the information repositories. Have we become the keepers of the system? The demand today is for service, information, and entertainment. If we librarians cannot fulfill these needs our places are not assured.

Should the American Library Association (ALA) be ensuring that libraries are a part of all ongoing tests of videotex—at least in some way—either as organizers, information providers, or in analysis? Consider the force of the argument given at the ALA 1980 New York Annual Conference that cable television should be a medium that librarians become involved with for the future. Certainly involvement is an important role, but we, like the industrialists and marketers before us, must make smart decisions and choose the proper niche and the most effective way to use our limited resources if we are to serve any part of society in the future.

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Data Processing Library: A Very Special Library

Sherry COOK, Mercedes DUMLAO, and Maria SZABO: Bechtel Data Processing Library, San Francisco, California.

The 1980s are here and with them comes the ever broadening application of the computer. This presents a new challenge to libraries. What do we do with all these computer codes? How do we index the material? And most importantly, how do we make it accessible to our patrons or computer users?

Bechtel's Data Processing Library has met these demands. The genesis for the collection was Bechtel's conversion from a Honeywell 6000 computer to a Univac 1100 in 1974. All the programs in use at that time were converted to run on the Univac system. It seemed a good time to put all of the computer programs together from all of the various Bechtel divisions into a controlled collection. The librarians were charged with the responsibility of enforcing standards and control of Bechtel's computer programs.

The major benefits derived from placing all computer programs into a controlled library were:

1. Company-wide usage of the programs.
2. Minimize investment in program development through common usage.
3. Computer file and documentation storage by the library to safeguard the investment.
4. Central location for audits of program code and documentation.
5. Centralized reporting on Bechtel programs.

Developing the collection involved basic cataloging techniques which were greatly modified to encompass all the information that computer programs generate, including actual code, documentation, and list-

ings. Historically, this information must be kept indefinitely on an archival basis. The machine-readable codes themselves are grouped together and maintained from the library's budget. Finally, a reference desk is staffed to answer questions from the entire user community.

Documentation for programs is strictly controlled. Code changes are arranged chronologically to provide only the most current release of a program to all users. Historical information is kept and is crucial to satisfy the demands of auditors (such as the Nuclear Regulatory Commission). Additionally, the names of people administratively connected with the program are recorded and their responsibilities

defined (valuable in situations of liability for work completed yesteryear).

The backbone of the operation is a standards manual that spells out and discusses the file requirements, documentation specifications, and control forms. This standard is made readily available throughout Bechtel. In addition, there are in-house education classes about the same document.

Indeed, the Central Data Processing Library is the repository of computer information at Bechtel. The centralization and control of computer programs eliminates the chaos that can occur if too many individuals maintain and use the same computer program.