

All for one, and one for all: Zagreb City Libraires connect librarians

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Abstract:

Zagreb City Libraries (ZCL) are a network of modern and well-organized public libraries, and one of the largest cultural institutions in Zagreb, the Croatian capital city. On educational and cultural level Zagreb City Libraries coordinate and participate in many regional and national initiatives and programs, and they connect librarians from different library types. Zagreb City Libraries are one of the founders of The Training Centre for Continuing Education of Librarians in Republic Croatia, coordinate a several national reading programs and portal, and established National Quiz for Reading Encouragement, which is organized in hundreds of public and school libraries in Croatia and

Librarian experts from Zagreb City Libraries, in collaboration with programmers and IT experts of VIVA info Ltd, developed a software ZaKi for interconnected system support for library management. During 2015, ZaKi was used by 139 public, 70 school, 5 university and 22 special libraries in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina working in one network, jointly making normative and bibliographic data bases.

This paper aims to present methods used by Zagreb City Libraries that collaborate with different types of libraries, in order to distribute knowledge, information and initiatives, thus empowering the community and improving library system in Zagreb and Croatia.

Keywords: Zagreb City Libraries, librarian education, special library programs, empowering community, integrated library system

Introduction

In Zagreb, the capital of the Republic of Croatia, there are the largest and the most important Croatian libraries: National and University Library, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Library, many scientific institutions special libraries, 55 university libraries, 191 primary and secondary school libraries, Croatian Library for the Blind, several important monastery and church libraries, and Zagreb City Libraries – the largest network public libraries in Croatia.

Zagreb City Libraries (ZCL) are a network of modern and well-organized public libraries, and one of the largest cultural institutions in Croatia, they provide library services to around 800,000 residents of Zagreb. Besides these two main libraries, there are also 12 branch libraries with a net of smaller branches on 42 locations. A special service of ZCL is The Bookmobile Service, provided by two bookmobiles serving with 78 bus stops. The Libraries employ around 420 qualified library staff out of which 270 have a university degree.

Zagreb City Libraries are the main centre of sharing knowledge through many organized trainings, they coordinate and participate in organizing many programs for reading promotion on national and regional level, and with some special programs they empower the local community.

To all the citizens of Zagreb and Zagreb County, Zagreb City Libraries provide an equal access to information, as well as a wide range provide to all citizens of Zagreb and Zagreb County equal access to information and wide range of materials, knowledge, world and national cultural heritage, organizing different cultural events for lifelong learning and cultural development.

Through Network Information System and Integrated Library System Zagreb City Libraries link different library types to provide information needs to their users.

Sharing knowledge

Zagreb City Libraries organize workshops, lectures, seminars and conferences that help librarians to improve their professional work, their knowledge and skills in librarianship, literature and culture and to facilitate their work with library users. ZCL organize formal and informal education for sharing knowledge on both regional and national level.

In 2001, Zagreb City Libraries, The National and University Library of Zagreb, The Department of Information and Communication Sciences The University of Zagreb and Croatian Library Association, established The Training Centre for Continuing Education of Librarians (TCCEL). The programming board consisting of the representatives of the four institutions founders was appointed and teachers of individual courses nominated. TCCEL goals are organizing permanent professional development in librarianship, monitoring information needs of librarians and adjusting to it by offering interdisciplinary lectures and workshops for the work in different types libraries. In the first year the TCCEL offered 59 training courses, attended by more than 500 librarians from all over the country. Today, the TCCEL is still the most important provider of continuing professional education for librarians in the Croatia, and 11 instructors/specialists come from Zagreb City Libraries. They share knowledge in different domain of library services, e.g. children and young adults, school and public libraries, cataloging AVE materials, selection and evaluation of e-resources and their usage, new technologies in library services, library advocacy etc.

One example of cooperation between Zagreb City Libraries and special libraries is the participation in CSI Colloquia. They are organized since 1999 by Center for Scientific Information (CSI), divided on Library Department and Department for Information Technologies. By developing and implementing new information technologies, the Centre is

trying to meet the needs scientists from the Ruder Boskovic Institute¹, members of the University and other Institutes, as well as those of the citizens. CSI Colloquia are open to public, and over the years librarians employed at Zagreb City Libraires participated as speakers as well as attendees.

On the local level, Zagreb City Libraries organize many various educational programs for librarians working in school and public libraries. In 1955 Zagreb City Libraries established the *Informative Tuesday*. From the beginning it was a system of internal program of sharing information about new books for children. Since 1960 the Informative Tuesday has been held the first Tuesday in month and it is designed for school librarians, as well as librarians for children and young adults. Librarians in charge of the program invite publishers, writers, illustrators and editors, organize reviews for the best editions of books for children and young adults, give reports from professional meetings and conferences, book fairs, thus organizing joint actions to encourage reading. They organize special lectures intended for elementary school librarians as well. From 17 librarians present on the first Informative Tuesday, the number raised to more than 100 participants per meeting.

In 1950 the reference librarians from Zagreb public libraries came with the idea of starting regular meetings in order to share information, detailed presentations of selected book titles or newly purchased books in their libraries, but the idea was realized in 1958 The first *Informative Wednesday* was held with the support of the Section for Public Libraries of Croatian Association of Librarians. During the 1990's the conception of Informative Wednesday has changed. Books are presented by experts in specific areas of science and art, and librarians presented their papers from conferences. Editorial staff in Zagreb City Libraries organize visits for reference librarians. They can visit different cultural institutions (museums, galleries, archives etc.), special libraries, and other types of libraries. In such a way librarians have opportunity to learn about the newest achievements in library information systems. Informative Wednesday is held every other Wednesday from September to July throughout the year.

Internal Thursday is a meeting based on improvement of children's librarians educational skills. Through exchange of experience and practical workshops conducted by professionals, the Internal Thursday helps librarians to get better techniques and methods in visual and performing arts, ecology, ethnology, psychology and pedagogy which they can use in their everyday work. The program is held once a month in one of the branches of the Zagreb City Libraries.

Research and Development Department, as a special Zagreb City Libraries department, performs fundamental and developmental activities for public and school libraries in the City of Zagreb and County of Zagreb. Besides improving the library work, monitoring, supervision, providing professional help and advice, Research and Development Department organizes training and continuing professional education, thematic lectures, workshops and encourages cooperation among all library types.

For many years Research and Development Department organized practical work for students from Department of Information and Communication Sciences and the Department of

¹Ruder Boskovic Institute is regarded as Croatian leading scientific institute in the natural and sciences as well as marine and environmental research. The Institute has over 550 scientists and researchers in more than 80 laboratories.

Education (Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb University), which is held in Zagreb City Libraries network. Since 2015 a collaboration has been established with two other Departments of Information Sciences (University of Zadar) and J. J. Strossmayer (University of Osijek).

Coordination of national programs, portals and online reference service

On the national and local level, Zagreb City Libraries coordinate, organize and conduct various programs to promote library services and libraries to make them more visible in public. Partners in programs are different types of libraries, institutes, NGO's and individuals which are related to reading and books.

Due to the appeal of the Ministry of Culture, in 1995 Zagreb City Libraries began to coordinate the national program entitled *The Month of the Croatian Book* (MCB). This traditional event takes place every year from October 15th until November 15th. Programme Committee consists of librarians, publishers, media and writers representatives. ZCL coordinate production of promotional material (posters, bookmarkers etc.), library programs and activities. Every year all programs are dedicated to an important literary or non-literary theme (for example famous writers, scientists, inventors etc.). The Month of Croatian Book is organized on two levels. Central programs, such as programs opening and closing MCB, round table, one-day national activities (such as Let's Read under the Stars etc.), the National Quiz for Reading Promotion, or for example, the opening of the new library, are maintained at the national level, while local programs are developed and carried out in local libraries. Although programs which promote reading in school and public libraries are implemented throughout the year, during the Month of Croatian Book meetings with writes, workshops, promotions of new books and exhibitions are more frequent than usual.²

Since 2002 Zagreb City Libraries are present at *Interliber - The International Book and Teaching Appliances Fair* in Zagreb, as coordinator of library activities. In six days of the fair ZCL organize 40 workshops in average, and other activities as well, with approximately 1000 participants. Program is thematically linked to the Month of the Croatian Book. Special attention is given to children and young adults, and entire program is made for them. Content of the program is developed by children librarians from school and public libraries from different Croatia regions, and carried out in collaboration with kindergartens, schools, organizations, institutions and volunteers. The basic intention of libraries is to present library activities to fair visitors. Zagreb City Libraries announce schedule of events online, while photos and video clips taken during the workshops are available on Facebook and YouTube Zagreb City Libraries channels.

National Quiz to Promote Reading is another national program which connect school and children's departments of public libraries from all Croatia, and beyond the borders wherever Croats live. Since 1998 *The Croatian Centre for Children's Book*³ and City Library Department for Children and Young Adults organize National Quiz, and it is carried out through Month of Croatian Books. Winners from each school or public library, accompanied with their librarians, come to the closing ceremony, which is organized in Zagreb. Every year the Quiz is related to the topic of Month of Croatian Books. Initially, the Quiz was published

²<http://www.kgz.hr/hr/dogadjanja/mjesec-hrvatske-knjige-2015/24791> (20.5.2016.)

³Croatian Centre for Children's Book was established in 1993, aiming to promote Croatian children's book in country and abroad. On 1995 the Centre become the Croatian section of IBBY, International Board on Books for Young People. Centre is located in City Library (ZCL).

in printed form, but since 2011 it is held online.⁴ The Quiz held in 2015 was attended by more than 2,400 children from 245 libraries, while the closing ceremony was attended by more than 500 children and their librarians.

*Book Night*⁵ is an annual celebration of reading and books that takes place on 23th April, following the World Book Day, Copyright Day and the Day of Croatian Book. In Croatia, Book Night is held since 2012, connecting institutions, organizations, non-profit and interest groups and companies engaged with books and publishing, in order to promote reading. Many programs are organized during the Book Night: exhibitions, workshops, quizzes, theater performances, music events and other creative activities. Program is supported by Ministry of Culture, and the Programme Committee consists of representatives of Zagreb City Libraries, Community of Publishers and Booksellers (Croatian Chamber of Economy), Book Block - Initiative for a Book, National and University Library in Zagreb, Association for the Protection publisher's right, and Modern Times - portal for the book and reading culture. In 2016 Book Night took place in more than 219 cities and towns across Croatia, and some of participants were public and school libraries, regional librarian societies, kindergartens, bookstores, publishers, antique shops, cultural centers, homes for the elderly, Hydrological Institute, Society of Croatian Literary Translators, National Archives in Zagreb, museums, Faculty of Philosophy (University of Zagreb), Croatian Academy of Sciences and Art, Croatian Association of Music Libraries, archives and documentation centres, Croatian Heritage Foundation, Croatian Music Institute, Croatian Audiovisual Center, Croatian Writers Society, National Theatre, Institute for Tourism, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore, Lexicographic Institute, and many others. In 2016 Zagreb City Libraries participated in Book Night with 76 programs.

The project *Reference online service Ask a Librarian*⁶ in public libraries in Croatia began in 2004 as a pilot project. Zagreb City Libraries initiated the project and coordinated it from the beginning. Whatever reference online services already existed in special and scientific libraries, their experience could not be transferred directly to public libraries. During the first year of the project fifteen public libraries participated from all parts of Croatia. Until the end of 2015 more than 130 librarians from 20 public libraries are involved in online reference service and they all went through special training. As a project coordinator, Zagreb City Libraries constantly organize education of reference librarians working on the project by attending seminars and workshops as well as e-learning. Every six months the evaluation of the results and the functioning of the services is carried out. During the 2015 more than 40 referent librarians from Zagreb City Libraries replayed to 5660 questions.

Since 2006 Zagreb City Libraries are a part of the national project *Portal of public libraries*⁷ which contains addresses of all public libraries in Croatia, information about them, links on their websites, Croatian and European legislation documents related to public libraries. The portal presents projects that are implemented in Croatian public libraries, digital collections, digital local history collections and all news related to public libraries. The editorial board of the portal consists of seven members, three of them are from Zagreb City Libraries, including portal coordinator.

⁴<http://www.knjiznica.hr/kviz/> (20.5.2016.)

⁵<http://nocknjige.hr/index.php> (20.5.2016.)

⁶<http://www.knjiznica.hr/pitajte-knjiznicare/> (20.5.2016.)

⁷<http://www.knjiznica.hr/home.php> (20.5.2016.)

Zagreb City Libraries participated at the *Night of Museums*⁸, organized by the Croatian Museum Association. Night of Museums began in 2005 as a City pilot project which included only six museums in Zagreb. Since 2007 Night of Museums has turned into a national event which includes more and more museums and cities, and in 2015 it included 220 museums, galleries, archives, libraries and bookstores from 110 cities with more than 260,000 visitors. In 2015 visitors could see 290 exhibits and participated in more than 90 museum workshops, 40 lectures, 70 musical events and 46 literary evenings.

Zagreb City Library special programs for the community empowerment

Through many programs Zagreb City Libraries are trying to empower members of the community and to give them equal opportunities in access to information, knowledge and culture. For more than eight years the program contributes to the quality of life and social integration of children with special needs, young people and adults with disabilities and aims to present library as a meeting place.

Since 2007 Zagreb City Libraries have been implementing the project *Library Wide Open Doors* to promote reading, lifelong learning and social inclusion of children and young adults with special needs and disabilities. Project includes Play session and Storytelling for inclusion of children with hearing impairment, speech impairment, reading and writing difficulties which are realized with professionals from special institutions for children and young adults with disabilities. It also includes a program *Let's meet the musical instruments*⁹ for the blind and partially sighted children and youth, which includes lectures, concerts, talks with artists and learning about instruments by the sense of touch. Program of Musical educational meetings for blind and partially sighted children are realized in cooperation with students from Zagreb University Academy of Music and Croatian world wide famous musicians. In 2007 *The Library Wide Open Doors* project won the Second Prize in the ERSTE Foundation Award for Social Integration in Central and South Eastern European countries. In 2015 the project was attended by 33 centers, organizations and institutions for children, youth and adults with disabilities, and had more than 7,800 participants.

Zagreb City Libraries conduct program *65 plus*, which is intended for a social inclusion of senior citizens and their active involvement in cultural and social events. In that program elderly patrons are not only users but also their creators, they become students open to new information and teachers who share knowledge and experience. Parts of the project are: delivery of books and magazines to elderly patron's home in Zagreb, creative workshops, workshops of information and digital literacy, lectures for children and exhibitions.

*Book to the roof - network to empowering homeless*¹⁰ is one of the projects Zagreb City Libraries which support the principle of equal opportunities in access to information, knowledge and cultural goods. The project was created in 2009 by ZCL, in collaboration with the Volunteer Center Zagreb. Project objectives are to get knowledge and skills for homeless to provide active involvement in social and cultural activities and the labor market, to change stereotypes of libraries as places where patrons just borrow books, and present them as institutions prevailing prejudices and breaking social barriers for those who are on the margins of the society. The project includes four programs: information literacy workshops, socializing homeless as part of an informal volunteer initiatives *Heads up*, monthly meetings

⁸<http://nocmuzeja.hr/> (20.5.2016.)

⁹<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ut2bRIvjEjg&index=1&list=PLncORpiO3Nsw0OmkfDy96QaGy1VKJ Ntq>

¹⁰<http://beskucnik.kgz.hr/> (20.5.2016.)

Bring a friend and promotion programs. Meetings *Bring a friend* socializing homeless, organizers and participants in the project and their friends, with the aim of establishing and expanding the network to topple prejudice. During 2015, the program was attended by 794 visitors, a blog project has recorded 15,068 visits. Project was presented by project coordinator and the user of project, a former homeless, on video-conference organized at the Mid-year meeting of IFLA Section for Library Services to People with Special Needs held in February 2015 in Zagreb. At the IFLA conference in Cape Town in 2015 the project coordinator had presentation entitled *Do they have the right to information? Library services for the homeless, prisoners and people with mental disabilities*. The project received a donation from the international non-profit organization Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL), as part of their Public Library Innovation Programme (PLIP).

The Zagreb City Libraries Pilot project *E-citizen* started in 2015 as a respond to the increasing citizens' need to use the services provided by state and city government. Zagreb City Libraries, together with The Ministry of Administration arranged training for librarians to transfer knowledge and skills to help all library members and non-members to learn how to use a new administration at e-services.

Zagreb City Libraries coordinate *Bibliocycling*, a project that encourages reading, promotes the library as a place for socializing and entertainment. This project started in 2014, it is launched and implemented by the students of Library and Information Sciences of Faculty of Philosophy (University of Zagreb). In September of 2015 bikers have visited several libraries in small towns from Opatija to Pula and conducted workshops for children, organized meetings with writers/authors, read and represent works for children and young adults, and encouraged them to creative expression and critical thinking through reading and interactive games.

Project *Through the Library to Graduation* is implemented in cooperation with libraries of eight high school student dorms in Zagreb. Through the tutoring lessons in Croatian language and literature, quiz from the Croatian language and culture, and different thematic events (lectures, workshops etc.) high school students are being preparing for graduation.

ZAKI – Network Information System & Integrated Library System

A very important cooperation between the Zagreb City Library and other types of libraries is by using ZaKi - Network Information System and Integrated Library System. In mid 1990s cataloguing specialists from Zagreb City Libraries begin to create bibliographical and authority records data base, and since 1997 the same librarian experts, in collaboration with programmers and IT experts of VIV@info Ltd., developed a software entitled ZaKi for interconnected system support for library management.

Network information system ZaKi provides support for all library procedures: acquisition, processing and circulation of library materials, as well as revision and discarding. Network processing of library materials saves time and human resources, enabling that a record made in any library of the network is accessible to all libraries. In Croatia, except ZaKi, they are six network information system but the ZaKi is most widespread among public libraries, and it is also used by many school, university and special libraries. Zaki allows download other libraries records, convert and modify them.

During 2015, ZaKi was used by 139 public, 70 school, 5 university and 22 special libraries in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina working in one network, jointly making and using normative and bibliographic data bases.

Conclusion

Zagreb City Libraries organize formal and informal education for sharing knowledge on national and local/regional levels. Research and Development Department providing professional advice for public and school libraries, organizes thematic lectures, workshops etc. to help them to improve their knowledge and skills. Zagreb City Libraries on both national and local levels coordinates, organizes and conducts various programs to make libraries more visible in public. Through the coordination and implementation of programs, projects and activities Zagreb City Libraries encourages cooperation among different library types, share knowledge, encourage reading, promote books and libraries and traditional and virtual library services.

To all citizens of Zagreb and Zagreb County Zagreb City Libraries provide equal access to information and wide range of materials, knowledge, world and national cultural heritage, organize different cultural events for lifelong learning and cultural development.

Through Network Information System and Integrated Library System Zagreb City Libraries link different library types thus providing information needs to their users.

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