

Cooperation and Best Practice Sharing between Academic and School Library Systems. The case of "Carol I" Central University Library Bucharest

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Abstract:

In the Romanian Library System "Carol I" Central University Library from Bucharest has a special status, that of both academic library and professional and methodological provider for the national school library network. As a result, the organizational mission has to follow through cooperation and sharing, three directions: (a) a common collection management policy; (b) a training policy for academic and school library network; (c) cultivating the social value of the library.

The collection management strategy is achieved together with a team of experts on academic and secondary school curriculum, users' behaviour specialists and acquisitions experts. Both academic and school librarians work together with didactic staffs to develop collections based upon the curriculum. "Carol I" Central University Library respects the IFLA School Library Guidelines and its management plan takes into account the purpose, the long term resources and the intellectual freedom of information. In this respect, a strong set of procedures for increasing and managing the school and academic library collection has been set out. In order to acquire a balanced collection of print, digital and electronic materials, the library builds special studies on users learning styles, users' backgrounds and reading interests.

The training policy is set up based on the need to be fluent in a digital world, in a perfect agreement with the technological evolution, the users' demands and the skills of the librarians. Taking into account that "Carol I" Central University Library is the national methodological center for the Romanian School Library System, a special training program has been created, which includes: face to face and on line courses, national conferences, documentary visits and exchanges of good practices. In this digital era, the best managers are those able to adapt and change library practice in perfect harmony with academic environment and technological developments.

The social value. In a decade inspired by new attributes as social, interconnected, opened, sustainable, the library (no matter public, school or academic) has to enhance and use its technological services more and more, in the benefit of the social sphere "Carol I" Central University Library has a great social implication given by a mixture of actions which brings together children, adolescents, specialists from architecture, arts, music and literature. It offers, year by year in September, suitable packages for its users (literature, architecture, cinema, arts, music, poetry, theatre and workshops) all compressed in a complex experience called The book and arts festival.

Being an unique library in Romania, with know-hows on two different but complementary library systems, "Carol I" Central University Library improved its services to offer the best groundwork and services to the academic and school community. It acts like a living mechanism which raises the level of education and culture of the society.

Keywords: digital collection management, librarians' training, cultural heritage.

I. The challenges of electronic library services

The present paper aims to highlight the new principles that the organizational management has to follow, in order to reshape and adapt the mission of an academic library. In a decade inspired by new attributes as social, interconnected, opened, sustainable, the library (no matter public or academic) has to enhance and use its technological services more and more in the benefit of the society. It has to act as a mechanism that raises the level of education and culture of the community. The fundamental mission of the "Carol I" Central University Library is to support learning, teaching and academic research through collections, services and cultural events. As a natural extent of this mission, our library promotes the local heritage and the national cultural and scientific programs. Through its special history, Central University Library "Carol I" is one of the most important academic and cultural institution of Romania.

The library evolution goes from collection development towards connections development. Nowadays, the documents form is less important, the development of the library being guided by access policies. Issues such as cataloguing, classification and indexing the new media, preservation, circulation, storage, and, in fact, the whole chain of library activities should be reshaped; taking into consideration these specific activities, the horizons of libraries should be broaden accordingly.

The IFLA Guidelines stand as fundamental landmark of the professional evolution that libraries have to follow. In any society libraries ensure the peoples' right to information, providing access to cultural heritage. Culture, perceived as an ensemble of values, traditions, tangible and intangible heritage, religious beliefs, worldviews and the expressions of culture in ways of living – can facilitate the achievement of development goals by supporting social inclusion, resilience, innovation and local knowledge. In libraries, at the moment, information is supported through literacy, locally relevant collections and materials in indigenous languages, and preservation for the benefit of future generations.

The holistic approach of collections assessment begins with sociological studies on information support and user's needs. In this regard, we developed a pilot survey in 1200 high schools in Romania "Teens and New [Social] Media" that analysed the influences of Web 2.0 tools on the individual's social, educational and cultural environment. The conclusions of this survey were that the new technologies made real improvements in the transmission of information and remodelling of interpersonal relationships. Socio-cultural approaches to learning and social networks are based on the concepts of participation, belonging, community and identity building. Social media, added cultural and educational content are now areas of specific identities, around which revolve formal or informal communities of students.

The networks created between users of new technologies have the ability to promote interaction between people, supporting active learning in an environment that places the student at its center. The influences of the new electronic and digital collections on library services affect:

- (a) the format;
- (b) the access to e-content and databases;
- (c) the resources management;
- (d) integration and interoperability;
- (e) digital platforms.

Due to high prices, library managers often opt for organizing library consortia, in order to joint resources. "Carol I" Central University Library is part of the ANELIS PLUS Consortia, which allows shared access of full text scientific, bibliographic and bibliometric data bases. Anelis Plus Association represents the interests of information and documentation in the Romanian system of education and research, facilitating the acquisition of scientific electronic resources, generating ground-breaking solutions, carrying out specific activities, among of research and development and innovation.

To support learning and research nationwide "Carol I" Central University Library should encourage in a strong relation with school libraries:

- (a) Shared access to scientific databases through consortia and cooperation with other academic institutions;
- (b) Effective communication with academic and school library staff;
- (c) Curriculum content analysis;
- (d) Users' literacy;
- (e) Librarians' continuous training.

From 2013th through a governmental act, the "I. C. Petrescu" National Pedagogical Library turn out to be a section of "Carol I" Central University Library and, as a result reshaped the personnel and collections structure and extended its mission from academic area to school and special library network.

The Romanian school library collection management takes into account core principles as: *the freedom of information, the purpose of the collection and its relation with the curriculum, the provision resources* (IFLA School Library Manifesto).

At the present moment the collection management of "Carol I" Central University Library is focused towards:

- (a) Research and analysis needs of users;
- (b) Analysis of the types of documents and media information;
- (c) Budgetary resources planning and evaluation.

Through the new branch library, "I. C. Petrescu" Pedagogic Section, that provides documentation and training for teachers' training, and methodological expertise for the school libraries network, considering a set of precise values (*leadership, equal access to resources, integrity, sustainability, transparency and innovation*), "Carol I" Central University Library developed an operational policy that envisioned the diversification of documents, the extension of e-services and continuous training programs.

The E-Content Strategy of “Carol I” Central Library University

Specific objectives:

- The data architecture
- Style and digital content
- Marketing and advertising
- Social media

Technological Direction

- Design and interface
- Interconnectivity
- Data management

Legislative direction

- Compliance with current legislation (Law 8/1996 - copyright and related rights)

The Implementation of Digital Content

- Organizing the content
- Setting policy for publication
- Setting standards for digitization
- Establishing protocols interchange

The action plan includes three directions: the institutional capital (electronic resources, e information, e-documents, and online platforms), the users (academic, cultural and artistic environment) and the branding library e-services (taking into account the diversity of products, the flexibility of services, and the innovative attributes).

The local heritage promotion through digital technologies is also another organisational objective. The Restitutio project reflects the digitized collections of manuscripts and rare old books, newspapers, magazines and serial publications, foreign iconographic resources, audio-visual documents, giving the library users an innovative tool for information research.



“Carol I” Central Library University - Restitutio Digital Platform

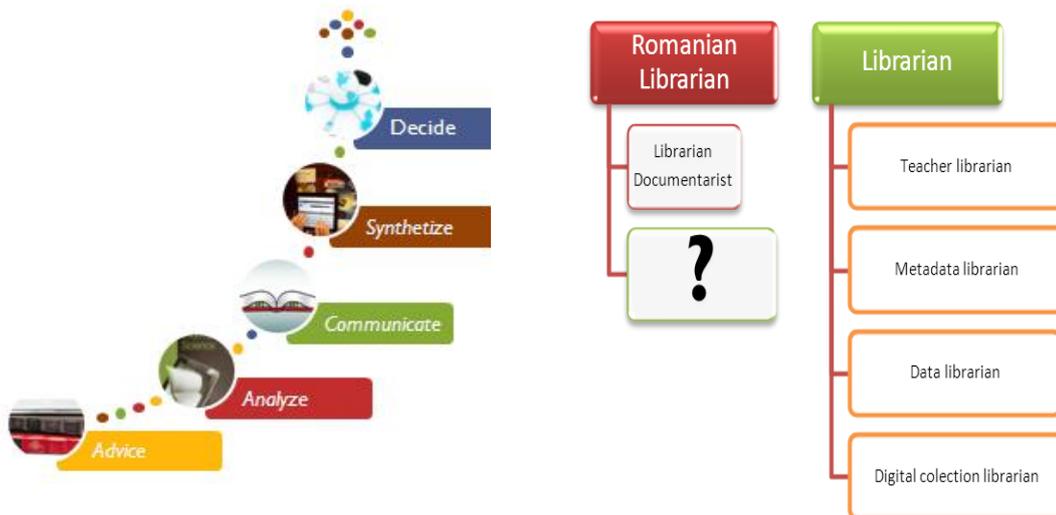
II. "Carol I" Central University Library Bucharest as methodological provider for the Romanian School Library Network

The power of an institution in a modern country is revealed by its ability to transform the society and the human behavior, to harmonize energies to foster understanding, cooperation, to streamline progress. "Carol I" Central University Library has a unique status, coordinating both the school and higher education library system. Some of its purposes are: to analyze the level of information literacy, the level of access to technological resources and abilities of users and teaching techniques used in Romanian libraries and information and documentation centers. It is a learning organization that relies on a mix of skills consisting of: teachers and researchers skills, librarians' skills and the most important users' skills. Knowledge Economy claims complex qualifications so that during the research on continuous training led by "Carol I" Central University Library, we have found that there are major gaps in abilities levels comparing to the European market, there are companies that do not have appropriately trained staff and, the most obvious, the investment in the human resource training is considerable lower.

The continuous training via electronic instruments reshaped the teaching and training methods. New actors and new roles appeared that support continuous education based on remote means of communication. Promoting ICT's in higher and school education remains an integral part of the European Program for Lifelong Learning. The information technologies in university education support teaching and learning practices and promote innovation also. We are talking about a learning development, influenced by personal experience and interaction with the others that transform the individual emotionally and mentally, during a social exchange process.

An alternative to online training in Romanian library system has a realistic motivation: allows to the geographically and also economically disadvantaged librarians or those constrained by the working program the access to knowledge, and is also an efficient solution to keep informed and trained a network of almost 2000 librarians.

In a society with fewer investments in the technological system, in continuous learning, an online training alternative for librarians is the best solution to keep all the information concerning the theoretical evolution of the field, the professional abilities and legislative procedures up to date. The 21st library specialist is well-defined by a professional conduct and a distinct set of abilities, a theoretical background, and valued expertise.

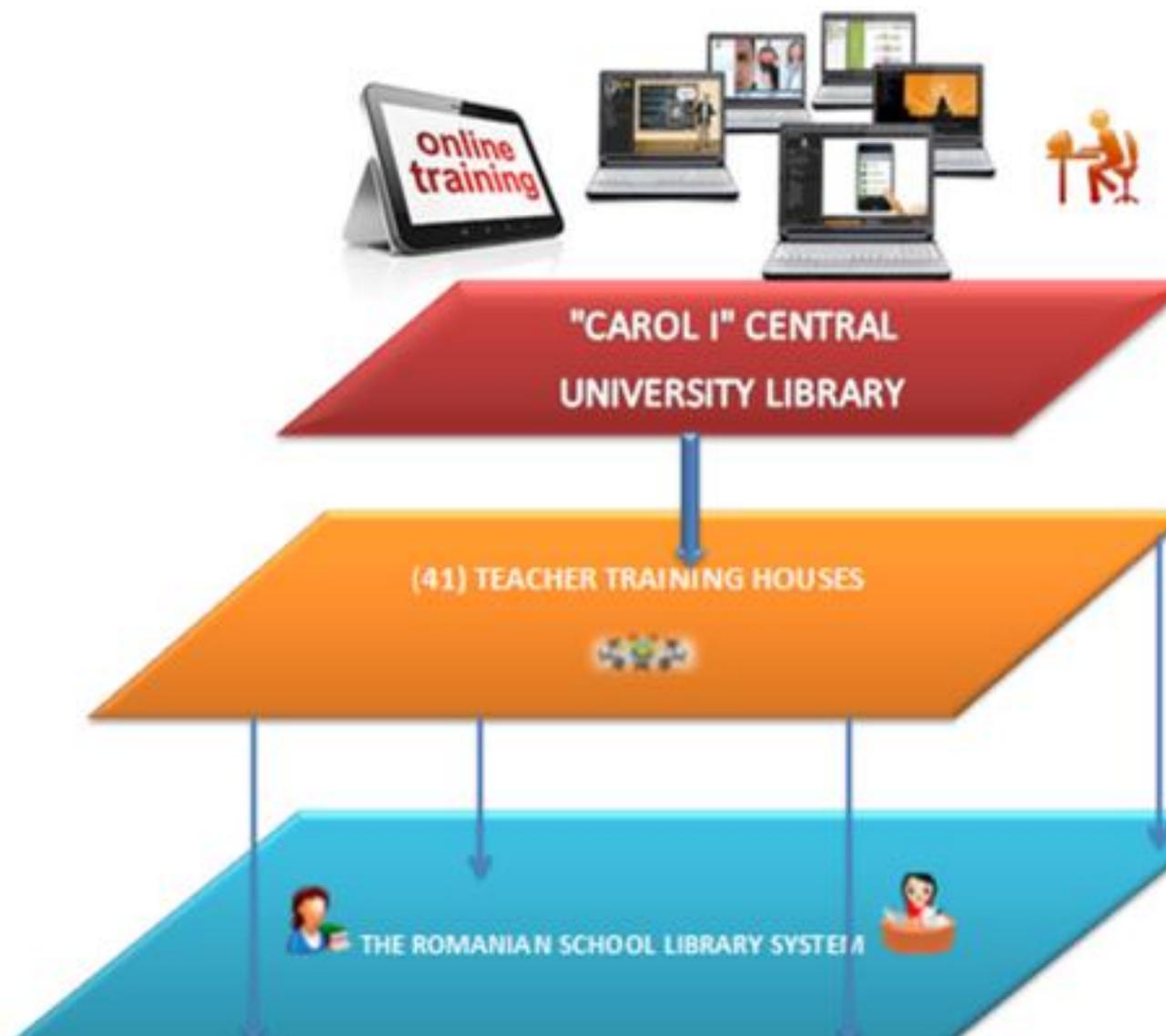


"Carol I" Central University Library develops mainly the traditional training methods but supports and reassures the distance learning or online alternatives. There are various studies concerning the opportunity offered by technologies use in libraries; literature emphasizes the shifting role of librarians generated by the increased interaction with users. The traditional library services integrate the online alternative in order to facilitate the access and develop the electronic skills of the specialists.

The present structure of the Romanian School Library System is coordinated at national level by "Carol I" Central University Library through "I. C. Petrescu" Pedagogical Section, and locally by the libraries of the teacher training houses (41 in Romania for each county) institutions with methodological and continuous training mission.

"Carol I" Central University Library provides a diversity of training programs such as:

- (a) scientific and methodological presentations;
- (b) Internal and external ICT stages;
- (c) Conferences and workshops;
- (d) Documentary visits;
- (e) Exchanges of good practice and professional skills.



III. "Carol I" Central University Library - sharing information, culture, skills

"Școala Altfel" is a non-formal education program developed by the National Ministry of Education and Research through the Romanian Schools Network. This year the partnership between "Carol I" Central University Library and participating schools developed under "Know more, to be better!" theme.

The event involved both students and teachers in extracurricular activities exploring their talents and skills in various areas. Activities connecting librarians have brought new value to the entire school community; appreciate through skills, cohesion, and team spirit.

The students discovered the history of the library, the encyclopedic structure of collections, the old and rare books, and the restoration of valuable items. Students in secondary schools have learned to cherish the books and found that the library promotes reading, and provides only interesting experiences. Books are always a source of wisdom and open up a whole universe of knowledge.



School pupils visit at the Teachers' Reading Room



Old and rare books presentation

"Carol I" Central University Library in partnership with the "Carol I" University Foundation launched in 2015 the 4th edition of the cultural festival *Books & Arts Festival*. This periodical event brought the streets of downtown literature, architecture, cinema, painting, poetry, music, theater and creative workshops. More than 15000 visitors enjoyed cultural activities, such as: book launches, public debate on educational topics, film, jazz and blues concerts, plays, exhibitions.



Books & Arts Festival “Carol I” Central University Library



Vivid statues in front of the "Carol I" Central University Library

European Night of Museums a significant event patronized by the Council of Europe, UNESCO and the International Council of Museums was this year in its 12th edition. Romania is affiliated to it and „Carol I” Central University Library, joined by four years of this highly successful project.

The most important objective of this unique event is to promote the local and national treasures of the European countries and also to underline the pedagogical function of museums and library collections. EUROPEANA portal www.europeana.eu is the most well-known example of heritage promotion through electronic and digital means of communication. On this occasion, during the Bucharest International Poetry Festival was held 8th edition of "Poetry and Jazz Marathon", broadcasted by the Romania Cultural Radio.



European Night of Museums at "Carol I" Central University Library



Poetry and Jazz Marathon 2016

Recommandations :

- Critical studies on electronic library services ;
- Studies on the professional skills efficiency;
- A better communication between decision makers from education, culture and business;
- Evaluation of performances;
- Online training alternatives.

From one geographic area to another and from one library to another there are different degrees of integrated practices concerning the electronic resources in the library services. Libraries are learning and research spaces turning more and more into social and public spaces. In this regard, the organizational policy of "Carol I" Central University Library is dedicated to users, creating specific educational and cultural contexts without losing sight of the issues with perceptive professional and technological value that attract visitors. Despite the difficulties, there is a mature evolution from one year to another, from the databases development to the electronic periodicals and book digitization we gather know-hows; besides, "Carol I" Central University Library become a fundamental cultural and social actor shaping society and civilization, being a well-defined knowledge provider in Romania.

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