Egyptian University Libraries Union Catalog

Union Catalogs are considered one of the most important pillars of cooperation programs among libraries, where they are ones of the most prominent examples of resources sharing and libraries services cost saving. They are cooperative program enables libraries to rationalize expenditure and efficiency and effectiveness utilize their resources and services. The Egyptian University Libraries Consortium has launched an initiation to build a union catalog in May 2007. The Egyptian Universities' Libraries Consortium had built in 2007 a union catalog for the holdings of the governmental universities' Libraries. The union catalog contains (up till 30 December 2010) more than million and half bibliographic records, representing the holdings of more than 300 governmental universities' libraries, that have been executed in four phases. holdings. The development of the union catalog has implemented in four stages. In this context, the study explore these stages, the techniques followed for building the union catalog including the implementation procedures, problems, challenges, and procedures which have been followed to overcome them. The study aims to evaluate the project and document the lessons learned in addition to presenting the capabilities available for librarians and users as well through this catalog, with focusing primarily on the model used in the construction of the union catalog and the impact of this model on building the required infrastructure including hardware and software, beside the library management system used in the automation of academic libraries and the deduplication and fusion of bibliographic records. The study has also explored the distribution of the bibliographic records in terms of copy cataloging and original cataloging and the quality assurance procedures followed to ensure that the bibliographic records are error free or at least the errors would not effect on the discoverability of the records and the study has also discussed the human resource capacity building for executing the project. The study has relied on the case study method in order to assess the project outcome and display mechanisms for the managing such huge and massive automation project beside documenting the lessons learned in terms of planning, financing and implementation procedures and how to take advantage of available resources, whether material or human, and the challenges faced by the project and ways to overcome them.