

Mn/DOT EXPRESS FOCUS

FOCUS

LIBRARY SERVICES

July 1995

Volume 1, Number 3

A new name, a new vision

Mn/DOT's library is changing. We have a new vision and a new way of doing business. These changes are reflected in our new name and logo.

This issue of FOCUS shows you where we've been, where we are and where we plan to go. We want you to know—when you're connected to the library, you're connected to the world.

A new vision for our library is needed to respond to the department's increasing emphasis on research, learning and innovation and to respond to the continuing development of the University of Minnesota's Center for Transportation Studies (CTS).

Since its founding, Mn/DOT's library has been the only publicly supported transportation library in the state. That has changed with the opening of CTS and the need to provide library services to its customers.

On the advice of its Information/Outreach Advisory Committee, CTS will provide library services and has included space for a small library in the design of its new building.

Two essential elements in

MINNESOTA

TRANSPORTATION

LIBRARIES

A joint program of the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies, and the Minnesota Local Road Research Board

providing library services are a strong collection of information resources and someone who knows the scope and the limits of these resources. To provide that human element for its customers, CTS is hiring its own librarian.

The Advisory Committee and CTS staff realize that most of the strong collection of information resources they need already exists at Mn/DOT's Library. They decided that it makes little sense to duplicate these resources at CTS and that it

is wiser to explore ways of putting these existing resources to use in serving their customers.

Likewise, it makes sense to add the information resources needed to support CTS programs to the existing collection, since these resources will also be needed by Mn/DOT employees to support our expanding research and learning activities.

The concept of two libraries at two publicly supported institutions working hand-in-hand to provide transportation-related library and information services to the state's transportation community is what has inspired our new vision and our new logo.

Information at your fingertips

Pick up any newspaper, magazine or advertisement, and you can read about the new millennium.

With its arrival comes the dawn of a new age, the age of information, where everyone will have instant access to any information from anywhere in the world with

little or no work or thought involved in getting it.

And, we sure won't need libraries to store any of it, will we?

With a computer on every desktop, in every home, and a laptop to carry with you in between, getting information is no prob-

lem. There are bulletin boards, on-line services, databases and CD-ROMs. There are touch screens, graphical user interfaces, intelligent agents, gopher servers, and web browsers.

...Wait a minute. If all of

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Behind the scenes

Not apparent to most library users is the support work that "holds the place together."

Acquisitions

One area of support is the ordering of and paying for the books, magazines, audio and video tapes for the library collection.

With a global society the process becomes more challenging as we order items from foreign countries that require payment in their own currency. A recent purchase from the United

Kingdom required pound sterling and involved phone calls to a bank for exchange rates and processing advice.

Also behind the scenes is producing and distributing *Recent Acquisitions*, which alerts our customers to newly acquired items.

You may choose from this listing of books, reports, videos and bibliographies, and the library will send them out as they become available. We encourage users to return borrowed materials promptly as there are often others waiting to use the same item.

Newspapers

Among other behind-the-scenes activities is the newspaper clippings service that the library maintains on transportation-related topics.

Newspapers from the St. Paul-Minneapolis Metro Area and around the rest of

Minnesota are scanned for appropriate articles that are compiled into daily and weekly clippings packages.

Filed by subject, these articles are sometimes the only source of information for a particular topic.

Cataloging

Located away from the public area of the library is Technical Services, where we process and add materials to Mn/DOT's on-line catalog.

The Mn/DOT catalog is part of the PALS system (Project for Automated Libraries System), a multilibrary system administered through Mankato State University.

PALS provides access to all state agency library catalogs as well as the State College and University System and the Community Colleges.

To build the on-line listing, the library's acquisitions go through a process called cataloging. When we catalog an item, we examine it for information important for library users to access it such as title, author, publisher, date and subject terms or keywords.

This information is then translated into a machine-readable format and loaded into the On-line Computer Library Center (OCLC) network, composed of more than 17,000 libraries in the United States plus libraries from 50 other countries.

Adding our cataloging records to the international OCLC network means people around the world may use documents and research reports produced by Mn/DOT and by the Center for Transportation Studies.

Mn/DOT EXPRESS FOCUS

July 1995 • Volume 1, Number 3
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This issue of Mn/DOT EXPRESS FOCUS is brought to you by Mn/DOT's Library, Minnesota Department of Transportation.

ADDRESS IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS regarding Mn/DOT's library services to: Pam Newsome, Library, MS 155, Room B-23 Transportation Building, St. Paul, MN 55155 or call 612/296-1494.

CONTACT THE EDITOR OF EXPRESS FOCUS, Mail Stop 150 Transportation Building, 395 John Ireland Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155-1899, 612/296-0840, if you would like to purchase an issue to describe your activities. This publication is available in alternative formats by request. ©1995 Mn/DOT.



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FOR CHANGE OF ADDRESS, please send the old mailing label with computer number identification and new address to Tari Boelman at the editor's address. Tel: 612/296-3581.

Mn/DOT library

In one year – 1994:

Reference questions answered.....	4,000
Items checked out.....	7,000
Issues of periodicals routed.....	48,000
New items added.....	900
Interlibrary loans requested.....	1,000
Pieces of AV equipment lent.....	1,500
Newspaper articles clipped.....	3,000

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Following the trail.....

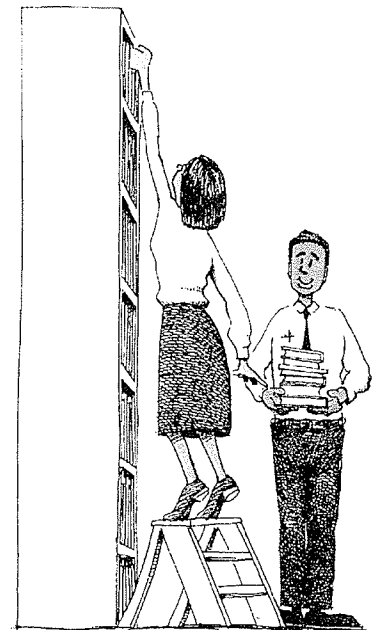
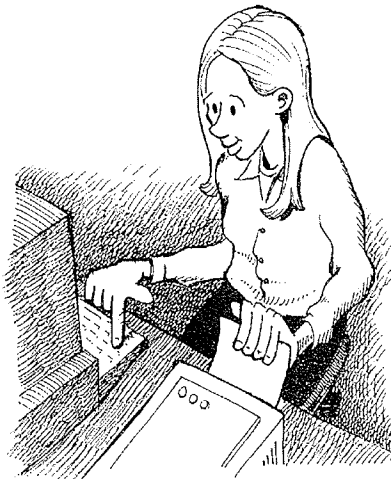


1

Mn/DOT identifies several strategic issues to study. Two researchers who are working on those issues need to know what other people have written on them. They come to the library for assistance.

2

A librarian talks with the researchers about the topics until they reach a mutual understanding of just what they need. The librarian searches the PALS online library catalog and the TRIS (Transportation Research Information Service) database to identify relevant books, articles and conference papers.



3

The researchers read the citations, which include brief summaries of the published items. They find some of the articles that they want to read on the library shelves and then ask for help with obtaining the rest.

4

The interlibrary loan specialist checks the remaining requests and finds a few more on the library shelves. But there are still several that we don't own. She searches these titles in local and national on-line library catalogs to find other libraries that own them. Requests to borrow items that are held by other libraries are transmitted via the computer, and we receive them by courier or mail.



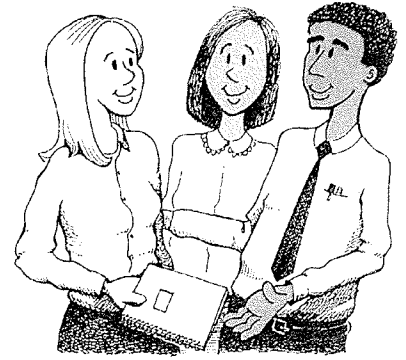
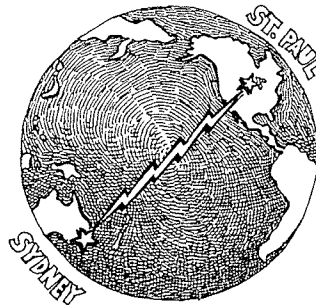
?

5

But there is one item that is not held by any other library—a conference paper given at an Australasian Transportation Forum conference held at the University of Sydney, Australia. Should we mail a request to that University and hope for a response? Will they send an invoice payable in Australian funds? Will it take months to resolve this?

6

Knowing the spirit of cooperation that exists among the specialized transportation libraries, the Mn/DOT librarian first contacts the library manager at the Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) via Internet mail to ask if she has access to these conference proceedings.



7

The ARRB librarian not only has the conference proceedings in her collection, she promptly copies the desired paper and mails it to us. Another successful transaction is completed, with a little help from our international friends!

...of an information request

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*We're
here to
serve
you*



Periodical routing

The Periodical Routing Service is one of the Mn/DOT Library's most widely used methods of disseminating information. The periodicals, which represent a large portion of the materials held by the library, are routed to all interested individuals before they ever make it to the library stacks.

More than 440 customers use the service. Those who use the routing service are able to choose from a list of more than 350 periodical titles (out of the 140,000 periodicals in print). These publications represent government newsletters and reports as well as business and trade publications.

The number of items routed has steadily increased over the past several years, from 36,005 in 1991 to 47,726 items routed in fiscal year 1994. That's a 25 percent increase in only four years.

A number of magazines pass through the library daily, with special attention given to those with time-sensitive information. This means they are sent to the next person on the routing list the same day they are returned by the previous user. Other periodicals are sent out on a rotating basis.

Timeliness in receiving information is a major concern to our routing customers, and we are always looking for ways to improve. One experiment that we recently tried was a

table-of-contents service.

Copies of tables of contents from a selected group of periodicals in high demand were sent to interested individuals, who could then request copies of articles. In the four months of the trial service, we processed requests for almost 1,400 articles.

Perhaps in the near

future, there will be ways in which information from periodicals can be accessed on the computer network.

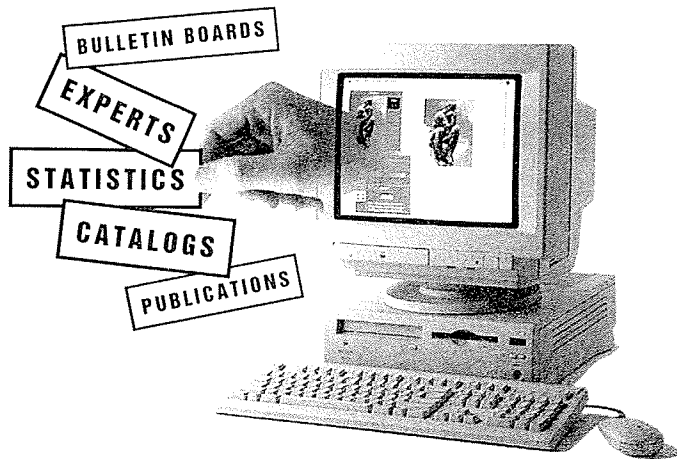
In the meantime, we will be switching to a new database system to manage and update our routing lists, and we welcome any questions or suggestions that you have.

Library services

Reference	612/296-1494, OV pjn000, pam.newsone@dot.state.mn.us
or	297-4168, OV ahm000, anne.mackereth@dot.state.mn.us
Interlibrary loans	612/296-2385, OV ogn000
Periodical routing	612/296-4706, OV dmh700
AV equipment loans	612/296-2385, OV ogn000
Library partnerships	612/297-4532, OV jcb100, jerry.baldwin@dot.state.mn.us
Fax number.....	612/297-2354

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Connecting with the world



We are already connected to a wide world of resources via several different methods.

When you request an item that we do not have in the library, we can obtain it from other libraries and sources throughout the country—and the world!

We use global computer networks, including Internet, to help us locate reports and other materials to support you in your work.

By accessing these networks, along with bulletin boards and other sources, we can obtain materials more quickly than ever before. In addition to retrieving printed items, we can obtain items published in electronic format.

For example, a patron requested a federal government report that he wished to share with 20 of his co-workers. Complete with graphs and tables, it was downloaded from the Coast Guard Bulletin Board in two hours. Delivery can take all sorts of forms: paper copies, OfficeVision notes or Internet e-mail messages—to name just a few.

The Mn/DOT Library functions as an “information bank” through a form of con-

nectivity that involves borrowing and lending. We send electronic requests to borrow items for you through the same international computer network into which we catalog our collection.

Recently, we have sent information requests to England and Australia, and have received requests from Spain, Denmark and Nova Scotia.

The pursuit of information is alive and flourishing around the world, and the Mn/DOT Library staff strives to keep abreast of the ongoing changes to meet your needs.

Information at your fingertips (cont'd from page 1)

this is so easy, you might ask, how come you still have to wait for the library to route a magazine to you or put you on a waiting list for a book?

The answer: most of the world's information is still printed and distributed on paper and will be for the foreseeable future. And, much of the hype about electronic wonders is just that. Most are still difficult to use and costly to implement.

But, that doesn't mean the library isn't doing what it can to use electronics to get information to you quickly and conveniently.

We've been searching remote databases for many years, and we use e-mail, fax and OfficeVision to communicate search results and answers to your questions quickly.

Still, we want to do more. We have plans to provide more services to your desktop PC in the near future. These include:

- Access to our on-line catalog along with the catalogs of other state agencies and universities.

- Network connections that will let you use CD-

ROM services purchased by the library, such as the Transportation Research Board's TRIS database.

- Pointers from the department's Gopher and World Wide Web servers to transportation-related resources on Internet.

We're also investigating the soft- and hardware we'll need to let you dial in from any PC with a modem to access these same services.

Even with all this new technology, we're not forgetting that sometimes the best service the library offers is just a quiet place to work away from the distractions of your own office, or a table and chair to use while browsing through books, reports and magazines to keep up with the news.

So, with all the remodeling and moving going on in the Transportation Building, we're hoping we can find somewhere suitable to provide a larger, quieter, and more comfortable space for you to use your library resources.

Meanwhile, if you have any ideas or comments about our services or where we're heading, call us.



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