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User Services

While on-site use is diminishing, use via on-line media continued to grow. As shown by an on-line survey, users were largely satisfied with the NL's services. At the same time, the survey served to define users' requirements, which will become the base of the NL's amended range of services.

The 'User 07' project

In its 2007 – 2011 strategy, the NL has undertaken to bring its services even more into line with the requirements of its main users. The 'User 07' project enabled us to identify their wishes. A far-ranging on-line survey, which was conducted in the Spring of 2007 by the KONSIO Institute of Consumer and Social Analyses, outlined the direction in which the NL must develop its services. Users are basically satisfied with the current services; however, they also wish for the cataloguing of periodicals at article level, the expansion of catalogue entries by additional information such as lists of contents, the digitization of newspapers and periodicals, comprehensive information on contents and new offers as well as the ability of providing additional feed-back. The way in which the NL is able to meet these requirements in a concrete manner will be defined in the follow-up 'ServicePlus' project which was started at the end of 2007. This project will also define the new design for the public rooms.

Circulation

In 2007 the number of documents loaned decreased slightly – 77,636 documents were loaned (2006: 83,031). The decrease is particularly with regard to printed items, while consultation of micro-films was stable. It proved possible to maintain the delivery time target (maximum 30 minutes for documents from the underground stacks). Around 60% of the documents lent out were ordered on-line, but about 40% had to be manually ordered because the relevant works were not yet listed in Helveticat, the on-line catalogue. These are mainly periodicals. Next year the priority is to add the most requested periodicals to Helveticat.

Users' cards were changed for the first time since the introduction of Helveticat. This was necessary as a uniform corporate design was introduced on 1.1.2007 for the whole of the Swiss federal administration. At the same time the NL used this as an opportunity to review its data-base. As a result, the number of registered users dropped from 19,694 in 2006 to 6,264 in 2007. The number of active users, i.e. those who ordered at least one document electronically, decreased from 3,708 to 3,409. The actual number of active users is higher, since people who only make manual orders are not included in the statistic.

In 2007 items were loaned for exhibitions in Zürich, Geneva, Lugano, Bonn and Düsseldorf as well as other locations.

Reference

In the on-line survey mentioned above, the quality of reference services was measured for the first time. Using a scale of 1 – 6, the survey awarded the excellent overall score of 5.4 for reference services.

While the number of items of reference requests fulfilled fell from a total of 15,246 in 2006 to 12,743 in 2007 (of which 3,820 were specialised and 8,923 general questions), the requests for more extensive research increased from 916 to 1,088. Occupancy of work-stations decreased from 67% to 44 %. The introduction of wireless Internet access in 2008 and targeted information for students in the Bern region could make the work-stations of the NL more attractive once again.

The quality of the reference services was further improved by a large number of individual activities. Amongst other institutions, the University of Bern Library, the Cantonal Library of the Grisons and the Geneva Botanical gardens participated in 'Virtual Information on Switzerland' for the first time. The library science collection was specifically expanded in collaboration with the University of Bern; the Internet 'Switzerland' Clearing House is now available in Italian and for the first time complies with the conditions for access by the visually impaired. The Swiss serials portal now has a new free text search facility and also indicates for the first time the institutions in which foreign periodicals are archived on a permanent basis.

Information services

The number of photos made for external clients doubled in 2007 compared with 2006 (1,109 compared with 542). The demand for copies rose slightly – from 40,325 to 42,419. A total of 8,482 people took part in guided tours, training, and events or exhibitions in the NL (2006: 10,226). As the NL now mounts its main exhibition in the winter, the number of visitors is divided between two calendar years. The Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel received 9,010 visitors. The *Patricia Highsmith* exhibition, which the NL held in 2006, was expanded and displayed again in the year under review at the Strauhof in Zürich where it was seen by 1,864 visitors.

The number of unique hosts accessing our web-site www.nb.admin.ch increased significantly, rising from 205,603 to 290,821¹¹. The online catalogues received 216,231 enquiries; this number was recorded for the first time in 2007. If one considers the strong demand for web facilities alongside the drop in on-site visits, it is clear that the overall facilities of the NL continue to be actively in demand but that remote access, as is the case with most libraries, is increasing in significance.

In the Photo- and Reprography Service, processes were reorganised so that when clients place an order they can be told immediately how long it will take to be delivered. This provides greater clarity for clients and a reduction in delivery times.

One of the biggest tasks for the Reprography Service was an internal order – the preparation of 258 high resolution digital photographs for the *Tell im Visier* publication. This publication and the exhibition of the same name ('Tell in Focus') represented the cornerstone of the NL's winter 2007/2008 events programme (for more on this, see page 18). Alongside this demanding project (in terms of the resources used) were also the no less successful smaller events such as the 'Museumsnacht' (Museums' Night) in Bern or the evening events (soirées) of the Swiss Literary Archives (see page 17).

Guided tours and training courses (arranged on request) were also in demand in 2007. As usual, all trainee information and documentation specialists in Switzerland visited the NL; in addition there were a number of foreign delegations including experts from Russia, Armenia and Georgia.