

Report of the Digital Resources Committee Chair, December 2006 North American Coordinating Council on Japanese Library Resources

Tomoko Y. Steen, Ph.D., the Chair of the DRC (2005-2006)

This Report summarizes the list of activities initiated by the Digital Resources Committee during my tenure year for April 2005- December 2006, and includes my recommendations to the Executive Committee.

*To maintain its consistency, I used one phrase, “digital resources” for “electronic databases,” “electronic resources” in this report.

Summary

The first year, I spent most of my time improving the DRC website and creating the English Memo to Vendors of Japanese Digital Resources with Mr. Britt (Co-Chair of the DRC for my first tenure year). I also prepared a Japanese translation of the memo with help of a DRC committee member, Ms. Eiko Sakaguchi at the University of Maryland.

For the second year, I spent more time preparing for my successor, the incoming DRC Chair for 2007 by re-organizing the committee members, listing their responsibilities, and actively networking with other Japanese research specialists in Europe and Japan to improve the recognition of the DRC and its activities.

Specifically for outreach, I presented a paper at the EAJRS meeting explaining the importance of obtaining digital resources for the future of virtual reference activities, and at two of the DRC sessions at NCC Open Sessions at AAS Annual meetings, I and the Co-Chair, Mr. Britt, generated many important discussions. I was also invited to write two articles on this topic at two Japanese information technology journals (expected to appear Spring 2007).

Prof. Tutiya (Co-Chair for the second year) and the DRC also initiated a series of systematic communications with Japanese digital resources providers. For example, we organized a discussion session with digital resources providers on September 1—a “grilling session.” We only had three digital resources providers (Yomiuri, Asahi, Nikkei) this time, but all the participants (Japanese library specialists) from Japan and the North America now have much more clearer pictures of differences in conditions of these digital resources providers. The DRC should continue to organize such sessions for coming years.

In connection to this, the committee started to organize a chart to compare prices and regulations and other factors of Japanese digital resources and put such information on the DRC website. Mr. Britt, as the web advisor and information provider for the DRC this year, quickly initiated this project.

I would like to especially encourage the next DRC Chair for continuation of these types of activities.

Committee Members

Due to the changes for each member's responsibilities at his/her own institution/university, and to improve the efficiency of the DRC activities, I reorganized the committee after the AAS meeting in April 2006 following recommendations by the NCC Executive Committee.

<April 2005-April 2006>

Co-Chair: Robert Britt, University of Washington

Secretary: Beth Katzoff, Cornell University

Committee At Large: Eiko Sakaguchi, U. of Maryland, Keiko Yokota-Carter, University of Washington, Laura Wong, The Library of Congress, Tokiko Bazzell, University of Hawaii

<April 2006-December 2006>

Co-Chair: Syun Tutiya, Chiba University

Website/Information Providers: Rob Britt, University of Washington/Tomoko Steen, The Library of Congress

Communicators with Digital resources Providers:

Commercial Digital resources: Haruko Nakamura, Yale University, Keiko Yokota-Carter, the University of Washington

Government Digital resources (NII, JST): Eiko Sakaguchi, the University of Maryland

Communicators with Japanese Librarians:

Syun Tutiya, Chiba University/Tomoko Steen, LC, Yuki Ishimatsu, UC Berkley

The List of Activities

Following recommendations made by Dr. Hammond, I proposed three items as the DRC goals and designed the strategy to accomplish these goals. All of these activities are inter-related and often applicable to more than one goal. I was able to accomplish much toward these goals; however, it is my regret that I could not complete the very last project on making the complete list of Japanese digital resources providers and conditions and pricing for their digital resources before the end of my tenure, the end of December 2006. (Off course, this information needs to be updated quite frequently even after the complete list is on the web.)

<Committee Goals>

- Educating Japanese Studies Librarians
- Working with librarians and library organizations in Japan
- Approaching vendors as necessary to effect changes desired by Japanese Specialist Librarians' communities

Education for Japanese Studies Librarians about New Digital Resources-- Contents and their Contracting/Licensing Issues

1) Memo to the Japanese Digital Resources Vendors

The English version of the memo that the first year Co-Chair, Mr. Britt, and I prepared for Japanese digital resources vendors is also useful to Japanese Studies Librarians for them to use as a guideline when they negotiate with vendors on contracting/licensing issues. With help by Ms. Eiko Sakaguchi who is a DRC Committee member for the last two years, I was also able to complete the Japanese translation of this memo during my tenure year. I also appreciate the valuable comments made by Ms. Tokiko Bazzell, NCC Incoming Chair for 2007. *I have received many compliments on this memo from various sources including the current Chair of CRL.

2) Digital Resources Workshops

I organized two digital resources workshops for digital resources provided by Japan Knowledge and the Japan Science and Technology Agency at LC for the Washington DC area and the East Coast librarians to learn about these digital resources and the licensing issues. I plan to have another one by Japan Knowledge in March 2007 due to the demand by regional librarians and Japan specialists who could not attend the last workshop.

3) Creating an Information Website

We have significantly improved our DRC website for educational purposes to both Japanese Studies Librarians and digital resources providers. My final project is to make a chart that lists currently available digital resources and their contents and terms and conditions in this DRC website. Mr. Britt initiated this project at the end of November and I contacted number of vendors and Japanese Studies Librarians to share information, but unfortunately we could not complete the chart by the end of December. I arranged the memo for the Digital Resources Vendors is also accessible from the front page of the NCC.

Working with librarians and library organizations in Japan

To fulfil this purpose, I made a plan to take three major objectives for me or the DRC members to pursue: 1) publish an article on the DRC issues and generate discussion, 2) give talks on the DRC issues at an international meetings such as EAJRS and IFLA and generate discussion, 3) have sessions for Japanese and the North American (and possibly European) librarians to meet in Japan or the US (or Europe) to generate discussions.

1) Journal Articles: I was invited to write two articles by Japanese library and information technology journals, "Jyohou no kagaku to gijyutsu" (情報の科学と

技術) and “Jyohou kannri” (情報管理). Articles are expected to appear this spring.

2) Conference Presentations:

- I gave a talk on “Establishing a Virtual Reference Desk for Japanese Studies” At the EAJRS meeting in Venice in September. I was able to have constructive discussions with European and Japanese participants of the meeting individually.
- I also hoped other DRC members to give a presentation to discuss the DRC issues at IFLA, as I could not attend the meeting due to the financial and time constraint. However, nobody could fulfil the request unfortunately.

3) Sessions or Other Meeting Opportunities for Japanese and North American Librarians

- Meeting Japanese Librarians at the Library of Congress: During my tenure years, I received groups and individuals from Japanese university libraries at the Library of Congress and gave briefings on the Library of Congress activities. On these occasions, I have also brought up the issues on the DRC each time and had many interesting discussions. Because of the institution in which I am based, I had an advantage to have representatives from many Japanese libraries to visit me at the LC. This is much more efficient way to meet and communicate with a large number of Japanese librarians rather than visiting them at each university and institute in Japan. I am happy to arrange such opportunities for the future DRC Chair as well.
- I visited Chiba University and Tokyo University in August 2006 to meet Japanese librarians there to exchange information on the DRC issues.
- With help by the current Co-Chair of the DRC, Prof. Syun Tsutiya, I was able to organize the venter-librarian communication session on September 1, 2006 at Tokyo University—a “Grilling Session.” At this meeting, North American participants were also benefited by being able to meet and discuss DRC issues with Japanese librarians in Japan.

Approaching vendors as necessary to effect changes desired by our community

1) “Basic Guidelines and Requirements for Vendors of Japanese Digital Resources”

As I have explained before, the guideline has been provided to the major vendors of Japanese digital resources and the vendors now at least have a basic idea of what North American Libraries want to accomplish.

2) September1 meeting-“Grilling Session”

This session gave both North American and Japanese librarians an opportunity to communicate with the leading three vendors of Japanese digital resources and demonstrated that libraries have many similar requests on both sides of Pacific.

3) Web Oya

As the first assignment to Ms. Haruko Nakamura as a “communicator to the commercial vendors” in the DRC committee, she met representatives from Oya Zaidan to pass on my requests and obtain the information and regulations of the digital resources in person. She visited them at the beginning of December. Here I elaborated the report from Ms. Nakamura:

1. Question: Accessing the service from outside the Institutional User's premises through remote access facilities are prohibited. Please ask them if this means: no VPN access not passwords & ID access. If they don't understand VPN, can you explain to them how VPN works, and if that is also not acceptable or not?

Answer: No VPN access. Since users in Japan were OK with no VPN access, they do not have any intention to consider the change for now. They surely knew about VPN, but I felt there was some misunderstanding of it. I understand they have a fear of increasing number of access due to VPN, but they were also worried about technical problems associating with VPN, which increase their responsibilities to answer questions to users. I did explain that it was less likely to increase the numbers of access due to VPN and the any technical problem related VPN should pertain to subscribers. However, they were very firm that they would not immediately change the agreement,

2. Question: Article 12 (Prohibited Acts)

The Institutional User may not transit by digital mail or other means any data obtained from the service. As I mentioned to everyone before, this is a hard thing to negotiate. But can you ask if they prohibit you e-mail the information to yourself/own account?

Answer: As I understand, it is OK for individual to print and use the list, but no digitally store the data as it is.

3.Question: Would you kindly ask them if researchers could cite Oya-database if they are writing a paper and want to put citation.

Answer: Obviously, if a user is using an article, which find in Oya database for one publication, he/she needs to cite the actual article. However, they discourage a user to use a complete list of searched citations.

4) Net Library

Ms. Nakamura also reported on the Net Library with Japanese Book contents that Kinokuniya started to work on with OCLC. The below is the comments and suggestions from Ms. Nakamura. She is suggesting the DRC's discussion session at the NCC open session to bring up this topic.

“Even though the service is just started and not so many books won't be available yet, I was pretty impressed with the service/price and figured many people want to see the presentation. I also got a sense that Kinokuniya was also interested in presenting this service to everyone in next CEAL meeting. They want to hear a lot of feedback in terms of what types of books or publishers in Net Library librarians are interested in.”

5) The DRC Website

The DRC website on the list of digital resources providers, regulations, and costs is also one of the communication tools for the DRC with digital resources vendors. When it is completed, the DRC will encourage the vendors to see the website for themselves to learn about the differences in regulations and prices for their digital resources and other competitors. This site will generate the further understanding of the digital resources market for vendors as well. However, I had much difficulty to persuade individual university/institution to share their sample contracts with the DRC.

Overall Comments, Concerns, and Recommendations

Serving as the Digital Resources Committee Chair for last two years, I realized that this position is indeed a time and energy-consuming position exactly as indicated by my predecessor, Dr. Ellen Hammond. I, too, faced limits in my time to fulfil the duty as the Chair of the DRC, especially because the position is on a volunteer basis and thus all the necessary work was needed to be done outside of my official hours while the amount of responsibly as the DRC Chair is massive.

I also hoped that I had a chance to work closely with the previous DRC Chair, Dr. Hammond at least for 6 months to observe her activities prior to take this position. It is very important to maintain momentum for various activities, and an incoming Chair to be able to continue any projects initiated by the outgoing chair. Still, I was fortunate that Mr. Robert Britt from the University of Washington accepted my invitation to serve as the Co-Chair when I took this position. Mr. Britt shared his experiences with me as a Co-Chair for Dr. Hammond. Without such arrangement, it

would have been harder to learn the overall important issues that the DRC dealt with before I took the position.

Financial issues are also another concern for this DRC Chair position. I had to cover expenses for the trips to Japan for the September 1 meeting, and to Venice for the EAJRS annual meeting, where I had valuable discussions with digital resources providers and Japanese studies specialists in Japan and Europe. While it is important for the DRC Chair to have funding for such travels, I would like to emphasize here that the source of funding for the DRC Chairs and committee members should not come from commercial vendors and digital resources providers in order for them to serve in the DRC without unnecessary bias.

In connection to this, selecting the future DRC Chair, I would like to propose to the Executive Committee to select an individual who is not the sole representative of his/her institution for the digital resources purchases. In other words, the NCC should avoid a situation for this individual to negotiate with vendors and digital resources providers using the power of the DRC Chair in favour of his/her own institution.

To resolve these above shortcomings, I would like to suggest the NCC Executive Committee to consider the following three issues:

- 1) **Momentum:** in order to maintain the continuity of the DRC efforts, the nature and responsibilities of the DRC Chair should be explained thoroughly by the outgoing Chair to the incoming Chair, ideally the NCC arrange an outgoing Chair and incoming Chair to work together for the period for 6 months to one year to have a smooth transition for this position, and avoid disjunction for those on-going projects. Therefore, the tenure of this position should be two and half to three years rather than two, and the last 6 months of the responsibility to be shared between the outgoing Chair and incoming Chair of the DRC.
- 2) **Financial issues:** if the NCC budget permits in the future, the DRC Chair to have some allowance for travels. Such funding would enable the Chair to be more active but independent of the favour of vendors and digital resources providers. Under this condition, the future Chair can contribute to the NCC much more effectively.
- 3) **Selection of the next DRC Chair:** On selecting the next DRC Chair, the Executive Committee should consider avoiding under influence by the commercial vendors or other digital resources providers on the DRC chair— chose individuals who have no direct influence on their own institution's business of digital resources purchase. *Prof. Syun Tutiya suggested this point.