INFORMATIONAL CHANGES AND THEIR IMPACT IN PLUNGE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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The first computers and other information hardware changed the work of Plunge Public library essentially. New information technologies brought new services, to the library comes new users. Library users get more various services. The image of the library increased. The library became the center of information of the town. The work of the librarians changed too. Now all the librarians have computer in their working place and could not conceive of working without it.

The population of Plunge district is 57 274, the population of the town of Plunge is 24 739.

The Public library of Plunge was established in 1939. Plunge Public library has following departments:

- Completing and ordering of printed matter and methodical
- Service for readers
- Center of information and education of adults
- Literature for children.

The Public library of Plunge has 16 branches in rural area and one branch in the same town. The fund of the library is 70 765. Every year the Library gets approximately 10 thousands of new books. The library has for about 4 000 readers and 36 000 visitors a year. There work 15 specialists in town and 16 in rural libraries.

At the 1998th the public library of Plunge was starting its computerization. The first two computers, two printers and Internet come to Plunge Public library. At first nobody in the library could use these computers because didn't know how to use. New hardware forced need of change in library personnel quality and their new skills and knowledge. In practice any task in the library that was performed in manual mode before has changed; even if walls, buildings etc. are the same, tools, for task realization are completely different. It made a situation difficult for every member of the library staff. New technology was a reason to change person to acquire professional prestige. A lot of librarians meet new possibilities with a big interest. So a few librarians from our library was sent to the computer literacy courses. The other librarians was studying computer by themselves. After month all the librarians could use computers for their need. It changed essentially the work in the library. Librarians could seek information in the Internet for library readers and for themselves. They could answer more readers' queries. Librarians

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could to keep information and other documents in computer. They could write, use e-mail and etc. Internet gives the beginning for searching support funds for the library and write projects.

In 2001 was written the project "Plunge Public library – the center of information and education of adults". The project was based on the implementation of new information and communication technologies. Realizing this project in January of 2002nd in Plunge Public library was opened the Center of information and education of adults. It started a wide program of informal training of adults according to the principle "I learn during the whole life". Plunge Public library gets three new computers, scanner, printer, methodical documents and various electronic dictionaries, learning programs for library readers.

An information service has raised new requirements for librarians. The amount and diversity of information require special information seeking skills and knowledge. For librarians emerges the goal to input their knowledge for creation of the information society in Plunge district. So in the Center of information and education of adults well-versed library staff began working with library users and educating them information technology. They teach library users who want to learn to work with computer. They help them to search information in the Internet, to make e-mail, to write, to copy, to make the tabs and other computer literacy they need. Librarians become as a teachers, consultants, user-educators. Of cause they help not for everybody. Many of computer users are yang people who know about computer and Internet better than librarians and they work themselves without librarians help.

From that time as the library gets computers for library users, they can search information in Internet and write papers, to keep chats. They can use e-mail, to read news from the entire world. They can use various electronic programs, to study foreign language, to scan and do copies they need. It is a big input of librarians to creating the society, of new quality in which all its members will use information and its latest technologies intensively in their daily life activities: work, studies, leisure, communication.

The staff of the library now is high-qualified specialists, they have prepared and fulfilled some projects, meant to educate community and all of them are computer-literate and are ready to teach other members of community computer literacy. But librarians are not technical specialists, engineers, who can work with, complicate computer system, with different networks, operating system and solve various hardware problems.

Changes shortly described above led to separate a new specialization in library profession, and to employ representatives of different professions, rarely found earlier in libraries. First of all it was necessary to employ computer specialist. It was a quite a big problem in our library, because library cannot offer as a good salary for him as many other places, e.g., banks. In spite of that the administration engaged a good computer specialist, who solve problems that arise every day. Computer specialist regularizes all our computers and other technologies, he teaches librarians and library users of computer literacy too.

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Computer specialist helps us to create our library website. Now we have our website and everybody in the world with Internet help can know about our library. The librarians regularly put information about library events, exhibitions and other news in to Plunge Public library website. There are information about library work, departments, collections and etc.

The new library service attracted many new library users. Our computers become very popular among yang people particularly – boys. Many of these boys have never read in the library earlier, but now they spend some hours per day with Internet. Adults students who earlier only borrowed the books and magazines from the library, now they spend much time searching information in the Internet and writing their papers. Computers and Internet for library users originate pay service in our library. It comes the possibility to have the additional money for the library.

In 2003rd Plunge Public library gets a few new computers from Culture ministry. These computers were dispensed to all Lithuanian libraries for the realizing Lithuanian Integral Library Information System (LIBIS). These computers were intended for working in LIBIS. Now there are four computers in the completing department and one computer in service department for making records to the biggest Union Computer Catalogue and for complement the books in LIBIS and two computers in bibliographical reading room for making records of the articles from the district newspapers. It very changed our work. Earlier librarians from completing department and bibliographers wrote records on paper cards using pens – now they have a special program (LIBIS) and do it with computer. All these work saves LIBIS program. The Plunge Public library is integrated into unified library information system and exports records to the Lithuanian National M. Mazvydas library where is the Center of LIBIS. As a result we have Union electronic catalogue of the books and articles we have in all Lithuanian libraries. It is a beautiful if we can use it. We can look is in any Lithuanian library the book we need and in what library it is. We can found books in various subjects we need. Earlier librarians had to call to each library and to ask or to look to bibliographical index books. There are books of bibliographical index and books of subject bibliographical index in the Public library of Plunge, but to use them is not so comfortable and so fast as to use computer catalogue. It changed bibliographical work very much. Now many readers' queries we can answer using Internet and this LIBIS program. The search of information is faster. We can found information, which we could not found without the (LIBIS) program. For example: we can do require written one word and we get all articles where are about this word. All the libraries makes bibliographical records every day and exported them to the joint catalogue every week. So we have very new information about all significant articles written in Lithuanian newspapers, magazines and books. LIBIS changed our work in all essentials: our work changed, service changed and become more efficiency and more quality.

The work with computers and Internet is paid in Plunge Public library. Many readers come to use computers and pay for service. But there are many people who cannot to pay. Economic situation in the town is rather complicated – 10,6% of population is unemployed, many people get only minimum salary for their work. Social problems are

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serious and it is not easy to solve them: 54 problem families in the town and 120 children grow in them. Their information literacy is very low. Following the data of the research done by Open Lithuania Fund 31% of Lithuanian population can use computer, 19,5% have searched in the Internet, 31% do not know what the Internet is and what possibilities it offers. In Plunge, the town, which is far from the capital, in periphery, these indexes, is even lower, as the level of poverty is higher, potential of intellect is lower. Most people of Plunge lack motivation why knowledge is important and why it is necessary to learn to use a computer, they do not realize that information is value that can help to solve most problems.

Considering that problem in 2004th librarians from Plunge Public library wrote the project "Free Internet for social infringeable groups of population in the Public library of Plunge". This project was meant for members of community of Plunge, firstly, for so called extreme and mostly unsafe groups of people – the unemployed, disabled, pensioners, children and youth from poor and problem families, inmates of Children's Home. It was the joint project among Plunge Public library, and Rotary clubs from Plunge and Belgium city. The project wins we have got a big total of money. Realizing the project was opened the center of Free Internet for welfare recipient people. This center – it is four computers, scanner, printer and duplicator. Welfare recipient people can to use them for free.

Now every day in to Free Internet center came many yang people from poor families, disable people, unemployed and pensioners. To the Plunge public library came the new library users, new readers, who have newer visited the library earlier. The number of library users increase. This center helps to solve very serious problems in town, such as separation of various social groups of people and young people being busy. In the process of creation of information society it is extremely important to give equal possibilities to use modern information technologies to all the members of the community (now part of people due to poverty cannot afford personal computer or use the Internet services they have to pay for).

As a result of this center:

- Information literacy increase in the town of Plunge;
- Social separation between separate groups of people decrease;
- Digital literacy improve the life of socially infringed groups: it help looking for a job, changing profile of work, satisfying the needs of communication;
- It helps to solve problem of children and youth being busy.

Changes to the library are going very fast. Librarians have to be in time with new information technologies. They are researching information needs of the library users, doing analysis how are using the various documents in the library and in accordance with these analysis librarians are forming a fund of electronic and other documents. Library fund constantly changes. We get the books but more and more we get electronic documents. In future there will be completing electronic books, distance learning program and other electronic documents for library users.

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Now the librarians are making computer catalogue of the books we have in our library. They just did 8740 records (till April 1st). Librarians will finish that work in a short time and the fund of the Plunge Public library be fully integrated into information system of the country. After these work all Lithuanian libraries and other users will know what books there are in Plunge Public library.

There are many regional ethnographical materials, albums, photography, typescripts and handwriting documents in the bibliographical department. About some of these documents librarians have written in the library website, but it should be great use if we make the records of these material and bring them into Union Catalogue. I think it will be in a future.

Plunge Public library every year was arranging various events, conferences, now librarians mostly are arranging seminars for adults: teachers, librarians other specialists and businessmen. Seminars give them an actually information they need. For example, this year in September the Center of information and education of adults organize the seminar "The vista of using of new technologies". Sometimes the Center organized international seminars in which librarians are trying to make useful social contacts with specialists from abroad. Foreigner specialists have more experience of working with new informational technologies, and information changes in their libraries are faster.

Every time the Plunge Public library was culture center of town community. Here - culture events, exhibitions, meetings are organized, various public organizations gather for their activities. Now the library has become the center of information and education, library solves serious problems of community.

Seven years ago in Plunge Public library was only two computers and two printers. All librarians shared them. Library users had no possibilities to use computers. It was not comfortable. Now we have 24 computers. 10 of them are for our library users other – for library staff. The last year library had 5070 visits in the Center of information and education of adults, visitors used Internet for 2100 time and librarians answered 820 readers' quires using Internet. These numerous are increasing every year. Changes are increasing very fast too. New technologies occupy our library, came new library users, new events, the library staff is the same but it have to work and to create conforming to all changes.