

Why consider remote storage?

Some thoughts to warm up...

Ulrich Niederer

CERL Seminar

18/19 November 2019, The Hague

Common reasons

- ... your stacks are filled up, and an extension on site is not possible
- ... you want to use stack space for something different, like public space
- ... your stacks pose preservation problems
- ... your stack space in the city centre is too expensive

A concept with a long tradition

- Alexandria Library:
remote storage for 48'000 scrolls in the Serapeum Temple
- 1902: Ch. W. Eliot (HUL): «The division of a library into books in use, and books not in use, with different storage methods for the two classes of books”
Library Journal, 27 (1902), pp. 51-56
- First actual remote storage facilities in the 1940ies

...but what is 'remote'?

- in the same city?
- in the countryside, but sort of close by?
- really, how far is too far?

Remote storage in Europe



United States, and elsewhere

- Situation USA, 2012
 - About 60% of ARL member libraries have remote storage facilities (most of them of the so-called 'Harvard type')
 - ca. 90 remote storage facilities
 - of individual libraries (Harvard: HD, Yale: LSF, ...)
 - of several libraries = cooperative (RECAP, PASCAL, ...)
- Canada: comparable to the US
- Australia: CARM and CARM2
- Asia: Japan, Hongkong, ...

A final question

- individual or cooperative?
- Advantages and disadvantages
 - Cooperative usually means “rr” for some libraries
 - Clear cost advantages for cooperation

Answers from a concrete example

- CSLS in Büron, Switzerland
 - cooperation of 6 libraries (academic and public)
 - high density: high bay, automated, oxygen-reduced
- All kinds of storage needs of all participating libraries
- Preservation
- Cost
(but full cost calculation and comparability is important!)
- Logistics
- Development potential

... and remote special collections?

- similar questions, only more pronounced
- plus questions of transport damages
- Example CSLS:
 - some libraries have parts of their heritage collection in Büron
 - the Central and University Library keeps the most valuable volumes (incunabula, manuscripts) in Lucerne, but has a large part of their 17th to 20th century special collection in Büron
 - but careful preparation:
 - acid free cardboard boxes
 - careful packing of containers
 - tuning of all moving units (robots, conveyor belts, lifts)

Now for the real questions! and thanks for your attention.

ulrich_niederer@bluewin.ch

