

A new logo and image

Systematics launch into their second decade of service to Australian librarians

SYSTEMATICS Information Systems Pty Ltd, specialists in library, records and information management software, have recently celebrated ten years of trading and growth by launching into 1992 with a new corporate image.



Friday, 28 February marked the introduction of Systematics' new logo and brochure material. Ms Frances Bluhdorn, President of the NSW Branch, spoke as Guest of Honour, and Alderman Greg Bartels, Mayor of Willoughby, launched the new image at a celebration in Systematics' Sydney office.

The company's business expanded 60% in 1991, which significantly broadened the products and services

available to clients throughout Australia and the South Pacific. The company now offers a sophisticated Help Desk and technical services including gold and modem support, and is focusing on product management.

Systematics specialise in the development, installation, training and support of programs such as CAIRS, Pro-Cite, TINLIB, INLEX/3000, Minisis. Each of these programs offers information management solutions; however, the precise nature of the client's requirements determines which is the most appropriate program. Once this is known, Systematics is then able to tailor the program to suit client's specific needs.

For further information contact Systematics on (02) 411 3255 in Sydney or (06) 253 2561 in Canberra.

Anthony Meggitt

Managing Director, Systematics

UK reviews public libraries

Preparing for the next century

THE UK Arts Minister Tim Renton has ordered a review of the public library service to set out options on how it may operate into the next century. It will be a major follow-up to the last Government review, *The Libraries' Choice*, published in 1978, which set the way for change in the 1980s.

In a speech to the Public Libraries Group annual conference in Torquay, delivered on his behalf by an official, Mr Renton said: 'I have asked my office to analyse the developments of the last ten years and to prepare—after consulting with you—a forward looking report on options for the public library service as we move to the next century. I aim for this report to be completed by 1993.

'In addition, I hope the review will provide advice on some of the areas that are being discussed at this conference.'

One of the main challenges facing libraries at a time when there are so many competing forms of information and leisure activities would be to ensure they were providing the services the public want. Mr Renton told the conference.

'How do you get the customers into your library, how do you look after them when they are there, how do the customers find access to the books they want quickly, how do you make certain that the customer who is not a regular visitor is not frightened off by a certain mystique?

'I have been deeply impressed by developments in some of the local

libraries which I have visited. I equally know of libraries where time appears to have stood still and where you might expect to find William Thackeray as the latest best-seller on the shelves,' he said.

'Perhaps the Library Association should take on the task of drawing up a model Library's Charter, a ten commandments of what the customer is entitled to and can reasonably expect, within a reasonable budget.

'It is also important that consumers are given more opportunity to express their views on their local library and the priorities given to the different services.'

Speaking of the Government's role in the public library service, Mr Renton said reports about inappropriate library closures or unnecessary reductions in services disturb him.

'Libraries should not bear a disproportionate share of cuts. Nor is it acceptable that libraries are used as political footballs for councils who wish to hit out at government.

'In some cases cuts in local libraries may be an aid or a catalyst to the process of change. But where that is not the case, and cuts appear to strike at basic service and statutory responsibilities I am of course prepared to step in and investigate.

'In that context I am pleased to announce a strengthening of my Department's advisory service. From Spring 1991 we will have one other full-time library adviser.'

(Arts and Libraries, 24 Oct 1991)

The Moscow Centre for Gender Studies

The first ever women's studies research group has been set up in the (former) Soviet Union

THIS CENTRE, at the USSR Academy of Sciences, is the first ever women's studies research group in the (former) Soviet Union. Before *glasnost* such research was not permitted, and feminism was a completely taboo topic.

Now, eighteen months after getting started, the MCGS has ten researchers, two rooms and one PC. The women who work there have varied backgrounds and interests, including economics, psychology, sociology, philosophy and history. In addition to their academic work, they are all active in the Soviet Union's small but growing women's movement.

The first gathering of non-party, independent women's groups was held in Dubna (near Moscow) in March this year, attracting 200 women from all over the USSR. The MCGS organises seminars and lectures by visiting western feminists, and runs training courses for women on popular topics like assertiveness skills and how to set up a small business.

From the start of 1992 the cash-strapped Soviet government will no longer fund the Academy of Sciences, so all departments of this prestigious institution are looking for alternative sources of funds. The MCGS is currently trying to set up its own library, but since it has no hard currency, this effort is totally dependent on western donations.

Nadezhda Krylova, an economist, is coordinating the library project. Next time you're weeding, think of the MCGS before discarding books on women's/gender issues – the women in Moscow would be very grateful for any materials, or some professional advice on collection development, or a friendly word of support (they read English just fine).

You can contact Nadezhda Krylova at the Moscow Centre for Gender Studies, 27 Krasikova Street, Moscow, 117218, USSR.

Elena Leonoff

Librarian, Paxus Corporation