

## The CTLes, France: a Case Study of Best Practice in Collaborative Storage”

Bernadette PATTE, Jean-Louis BARAGGIOLI,

***Abstract:** The CTLes, (Centre technique du livre de l’Enseignement supérieur) unique repository library in France, has been created in 1994 by the Higher Education and Research Ministry in order to provide distant storage for Academic and Research libraries located in Paris and in the Île-de-France region. Up to this year, it has operated at a regional level. Since March 2014, its action turned to a national level. This paper will examine the role of the repository library within the Academic and Research network, focusing on mission and activities. Its main mission is to preserve in excellent conditions low use collections transferred to the facilities. Thanks to that, Academic and Research libraries are in capacity to save space for displaying current collections and for reading spaces. A new facility is to open in 2016, providing 50 linear kilometers and 50 additional linear kilometers will be added by 2025.*

Our purpose is to provide shared preservation programs in various academic fields in order to ensure comprehensive preservation and availability of main printed periodicals collections within our partners’ network.

In order to pool means and resources, the CTLes has been developing a set of tools: a collaborative work platform, a specific database displaying exhaustive information on shared preservation programs and an acquisition policy chart.

This paper will also examine the tools developed towards ours partners. These tools are tangible examples of our advocacy to rationalize storage and to move from a “cold” storage concept to a collaborative model in partnership with our community of libraries.

**Keywords:** Repository library, Collaborative storage, Shared preservation program, Collaborative tools of management, Acquisition policy

### 1. Introduction

The CTLes (Centre technique du livre de l’Enseignement supérieur, or Technical Center for book for Higher Education), is a self-standing public body, controlled and funded by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research. It is administered by a governing board with at its head a director and a deputy director.

It is the only repository library in France—created in 1994<sup>1</sup> in order to provide distant storage with academic and research libraries located in Paris and in the Île-de-France region. As a matter of fact, the lack of premises for university libraries specifically located in Paris and in the Île-de-France region has been significantly considered a pressing concern for decades. Thanks to this repository, those very

---

<sup>1</sup> Décret n° 94-922, 24 October 1994.

academic and research libraries are now in the position to free up and effectively use space for displaying current collections and for offering reading rooms to their patrons.

This paper will discuss the mission and activities of the repository library. It will also focus on the set of tools developed towards our partners' community in order to enhance collaborative work and collection management policy promotion.

## **2. An organizational model inspired from libraries abroad:**

The organizational model has been inspired by some foreign examples: first, in the United States, the Harvard Depository Library, in Southborough, Massachusetts, and second, in Europe: both the National Repository Library of Finland, located in Kuopio and the Reserve Library of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in München.<sup>2</sup> Basically, the idea is to use some affordable storage spaces remote from campuses and to pull materials in off-site, frequently high-density facilities.

Located in Bussy Saint Georges, 35 kilometers East of Paris, the CTLes has been constructed and equipped between 1994 and 1996, with credits from the Ministry of Higher Education and Research. It is sharing with the French National Library a building which has been designed by the architect Dominique Perrault. The CTLes' equipment is entirely composed by two, 12 meter-high industrial stacks and six traditional fixed shelving stacks, in addition to office areas. The total storage capacity of the facility is 76 linear kilometers.

The current storage facility is a combination of high fixed shelves (about 12 meter-high) and fixed traditional stacks. Most of the materials are stored in boxes and sorted by size. For those of them which are stored in high fixed shelves stacks, manual retrieval is processed by an operator using a mechanical order-picker. The services provided are the unpacking, shelving and retrieving of the materials but also basic cleaning, barcoding, labeling, delivery as well as managing of the control data. The repository uses its own materials-control system; it also participates to the *Système Universitaire De Documentation (SUDOC)* catalogue, which is a French collective catalogue, displaying nearly 10 million of bibliographical records relating to all type of materials.

## **3. Mission**

The CTLes's main mission<sup>3</sup> is to provide storage for low-use printed collections transferred to the facilities, providing them with excellent conditions of preservation, in terms of temperature and humidity, and a dust-free environment. Thus, the CTLes is in charge of collecting, processing, storing and delivering materials—of scientific and archival interest which are transferred as deposits or donations from the Academic and research libraries located in Paris and surroundings. In the meantime, the CTLes is able to build its own collections, thanks to some partners' donations. The Center can also provide short-term storage for materials from libraries facing temporary space shortage such as those implied in refurbishing works, for instance. In 2014, we store almost 69 linear kilometers of printed

---

<sup>2</sup> Pascal Sanz, « Conservation et bibliothèque de dépôt de l'enseignement supérieur », *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France* 2000, n°4 : 77-86.

<sup>3</sup> Jean-Louis Baraggioli, « Le Centre technique du livre de l'enseignement supérieur » in *Bulletin de l'Association des bibliothécaires de France*, n° 30 (2006) : 15-16.

materials, or 3 million items in total. There are three different statuses for the collections stored in the CTLes' premises:

- Donations, which represents 48% of the total. The CTLes de-duplicates holdings in order to maintain one reference collection and to rationalize storage;
- Collections warehoused, whose ownership is still libraries' 50%. In that case, the CTLes is providing remote storage, and charges corresponding universities and Academic Research institutions with a set fee: 4, 74€per linear meter and per year, VAT included);
- Finally a tiny proportion, 2%, of temporary storage, for collections, needing storing for a very limited time period.

Subsequently, the CTLes takes up the mission of delivering documents—via the interlibrary lending system—first and foremost to our partners in Paris and surroundings within 24 hours, by a daily shuttle. Document delivery service operates also by regular mail, in France and all over the world. In 2013, more than 10000 items have been loaned; we expect for this year 2014 a dramatic increase of this activity.

Last but not least, the CTLes fulfills the mission of providing expertise about preservation, collections transfer and de-duplication issues.

Those are traditional tasks a repository library is expected to fulfill. In addition to them however, the CTLes plays a key role in pooling initiatives such as shared preservation programs.<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of these programs is to maintain exhaustive, available and extensively identified serials collection in various academic fields. In this specific context, the responsibility of preserving the collections is shared within a network of academic and research libraries. Since 2004, the CTLes has been conducting a program related to the topic of medicine. This ongoing program involves 27 Academic and Research libraries, including CTLes. It has processed nearly 10 000 periodicals within the span of the last ten years. So far, 2 linear kilometers have been relocated, representing 150 000 periodical issues or 290 square meters of standard shelving stacks. This program is expected to end by next year (2015). Another program running by now, is related to the field of the Performing Arts. So far, 5 Academic and Research libraries are involved in this project, and nearly 400 periodicals have been already identified and processed.

As mentioned before, the total storage capacity of our facility is 76 linear kilometers. By 2014, almost 69 linear kilometers of collections are stored—3 million printed materials in total. Considering that the annual increase of collections is currently of 4 linear kilometers a year, we can safely say that the CTLes is close to saturation.

In 2010, an official report<sup>5</sup> stated that the CTLes should be extended by 100 linear kilometers to offer a relief to the lack of space within university and academic libraries located in Paris and Île-de-France

---

<sup>4</sup> Pascal Sanz, « De la fourniture à distance des documents à la conservation partagée », *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France*, n°4 (2003) : 33-37.

<sup>5</sup> Bernard Larouturou, *Pour rénover l'enseignement supérieur parisien : faire de Paris la plus belle métropole universitaire, c'est possible !*, Rapport à Madame la ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la recherche, février 2010: 39.

region. The goal is, to free up space for reading rooms, learning environments and collaborative working places for students. As I've mentioned previously, French universities have been suffering dramatic lack of space for students, for decades now. This was brought about for two main reasons. Firstly, the number of students has constantly been increasing for the past twenty years<sup>6</sup> (more than 7% in the 5 past years). Secondly, the university curricula, specifically in science, technology and medicine studies, are requesting more and more collaborative academic works using digital technologies. These factors have had a tangible impact on the use of academic libraries; new specific needs of library spaces are required to cater to the new needs of their users. Such libraries are involved in the process of re-thinking and re-organizing their services, emphasizing the needs of their users more than the display of their collections, mostly available on line.

The report shedding light on the predictable saturation of CTLes premises helped build impetus towards the construction of an additional building in order to increase significantly its own total storage capacity.

#### **4. A new building by 2016:**

Programming and pre-designing the new premises was on the agenda from spring 2011 to summer 2012.<sup>7</sup> The new building is to take place in the actual site, where sufficient land building is available and will be equipped in two phases by 100 linear kilometres, : 50 linear kilometres when it opens and 50 in addition ten years later.

The initial architectural patronage had to take in account the constraints of the area as well as those related to the existing building: the new premises are supposed to be well integrated in the existing ones, designed by the architect Dominique Perrault, who was in charge of the new National French Library construction project, in Paris. Moreover, the new building will lean the existing facility, the construction works must be led very cautiously in order to let day-to-day working going on. An architectural design competition was organized in summer 2012 and the architect firm "Antonini & Darmon, Anthony Roubaud, Architecte" who were nominated, made an extremely convenient proposal. The future building will be composed of two independent wings linked together and with the existing repository. Four storey-stacks will be installed in both sides of the new building and by means of walkways and elevator, it will provide fluid horizontal and vertical communications. Moreover, the project presents some interesting sustainability aspects: studies are currently running on the eventuality of utilize geothermal energy; in the same way, landscaping of the surroundings is forecast in order to fit into the environment.

The architectural project was sustained by a collective work with the CTLes staff, set upon the existing organisational systems and processes and through an accurate need analysis. It made it clear that there were some malfunctioning due to either the original conception, almost twenty years ago, and evolutions of the CTLes mission. So it was required to adopt flexible stacks implantation with a

---

<sup>6</sup> Benoît Lecoq, « Publics, usages, espaces : en finir avec les cloisons ? », in *Bibliothèques d'aujourd'hui*, ed. Marie-Françoise Bisbrouck, Paris : Le Cercle de la librairie, 2014, 25-34.

<sup>7</sup> Bernadette Patte, « Le développement d'un silo à livres : l'extension du Centre technique du livre de l'enseignement supérieur », in *Bibliothèques d'aujourd'hui*, ed. Marie-Françoise Bisbrouck, Paris : Le Cercle de la librairie, 2014, 62-68.

combination of compact mobile shelving – double and simple height – and fixed shelving according to different materials stored and differentiated treatments required: sorting, de-duplication, picking for ILL activities....

As a result, the new premises will be equipped by 10 linear kilometres of fixed shelving dedicated mostly to collections warehoused, and, specifically, oversize documents. Compact shelving stacks will be divided in simple height, more than 60 linear kilometres for collections donated and those relating to shared preservation programs; double height compact shelving, about 38 linear kilometres, dedicated to store theses and dissertations. Replacing fixed shelving stacks by compact mobile ones in the future is a possibility, since every storey will be equipped by rails in order to face further needs. It appears also a necessity to provide sufficient space for processing materials and convenient horizontal and vertical communications as well, as the processing chain will remain in the existing building.

The works are to begin last trimester of 2014, the end and delivery of the whole building is due to the beginning of 2016.

Up to this year, the CTLe has been operating on a regional level, strictly speaking. However, since March 2014, its mission turned to the national sector and this new direction was confirmed by a decree (March 10<sup>th</sup>, n° 2014-320). Meanwhile, its expertise on shared preservation program was recognized and strengthened.

#### **5. With extended mission:**

When it was created, the CTLe had in its mission to develop actions in the field of shared preservation<sup>8</sup>. A survey<sup>9</sup> led 10 years after the opening of the Center, some important points: despite of the recurrent lack of space, most of the university libraries located in Paris and surroundings, were still maintaining massively identical retrospective collections of serials. In addition, the survey discussed the advantage to store collections whose ownership was transferred to the CTLe, and the saving of space it would represent. This main concept was extended to a project on shared preservation among partners, who would share the responsibility of preserving and maintaining serials collection with the goal of de-duplicating holdings highly represented in those libraries. Thus, regarding the availability of these collections online, these actions could lead to concerted acquisition programs within the academic network.

Up to this year, the CTLe has been currently running two shared preservation programs, one relating to medical periodicals and the other one regarding Performing arts. These 2 programs involve only Academic and Research libraries located in Paris and the Île-de-France Region. It operates now within the whole network of French Academic and University libraries. Some new participants, such Lille 3 and Poitiers Universities libraries, have yet declared their interest in joining these programs.

---

<sup>8</sup> Hubert Dupuy, « Un outil de conservation partagée », *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France*, n° 3 (1992) : 25-33.

<sup>9</sup> Pascal Sanz, « De la fourniture à distance de documents à la conservation partagée », *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France*, n° 4(2003): 33-37.

Moreover, there is an increasing demand from the potential participants to develop programs in broader academic fields, such as Philosophy, Geography, Mathematics and Physical education and sports for instance.

Our purpose is to promote collaborative work in order to build and maintain reference collections distributed within several institutions, spread all over the territory in order to ensure comprehensive preservation and availability of main printed serials collections.

So far, a Steering committee composed of representatives of the Ministry of Higher education and research, ABES (National bibliographic agency for the higher education sector), the CTLes and various University libraries involved in the process has been constituted.

## **6. Conclusion Remarks:**

The main mission of the Steering committee is to provide strategic advice and support for coordination and harmonization of the ongoing programs and the future developments. The Steering committee also coordinates the various Technical committees that are operating in the different academic fields. In addition to this organizational model, the CTLes has been developing a set of tools displayed within our partners' network, in order to pool means and resources. A collaborative working platform provides all information about needs and intends of libraries belonging to our network: gaps in collections, redundant holdings, statements and figures relating to collections transferred and relocated. The CTLes has also developed a database displaying exhaustive information on shared preservation programs. This database centralizes exhaustive information which is specifically appropriate in running pooled preservation programs: gaps in collections, the physical state of material, the holdings of any participant, the identification of the institution holding the responsibility for maintaining and preserving the whole collection.

Last but not least, an acquisition policy chart has been established, done in cooperation with some main academic libraries which are especially relevant in terms of collections transferred, collections given to the CTLes, or interlibrary lending requests. With this chart, our goal is to ensure our collection policy and to be able to discuss our partners of our interests in acquisition and divestments for our own collections, in order to play an entire part in the national cartography of reference collections. These tools are tangible examples of our advocacy to rationalize storage and to move from a "cold" storage concept to a collaborative model in partnership with our community of libraries.

## **Bibliography and References :**

1. Jean-Louis Baraggioli, « Le Centre technique du livre de l'enseignement supérieur » in *Bulletin de l'Association des bibliothécaires de France*, n° 30 (2006): 15-16.
2. *Bibliothèques d'aujourd'hui*, ed. Marie-Françoise Bisbrouck, Paris: Le Cercle de la librairie, 2014.
3. *Building on Experience: Learning from the Past to Plan for the Future: Documentation of New Library Building in Europe*, ed. Inken Feldsien-Sudhaus, Gottingen: Universitätsverlag, 2008.
4. Marie-Françoise Bisbrouck, « l'évolution de l'espace de travail en bibliothèque universitaire », *Documentaliste, sciences de l'information*, n°3 (août 2009):41-44.
5. Hubert Dupuy, «Un outil de conservation partagée », *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France*, 37, n°3 (1992): 25-29.

6. Bernard Larouturou, *Pour rénover l'enseignement supérieur parisien : faire de Paris la plus belle métropole universitaire, c'est possible !*, Rapport à Madame la ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la recherche, février 2010: 39.
7. Benoît Lecoq, « Publics, usages, espaces : en finir avec les cloisons ? », in *Bibliothèques d'aujourd'hui*, ed. Marie-Françoise Bisbrouck, Paris : Le Cercle de la librairie, 2014, 25-34.
8. Bernadette Patte, « Le développement d'un silo à livres : l'extension du Centre technique du livre de l'enseignement supérieur », in *Bibliothèques d'aujourd'hui*, ed. Marie-Françoise Bisbrouck, Paris: Le Cercle de la librairie, 2014, 62-68.
9. Lizanne Payne, *Library Storage facilities and the Future of Print Collections in North America*, Report commissioned by OCLC programs and research, published online at: [www.oclc.org/programs/publications/reports/2007-01.pdf](http://www.oclc.org/programs/publications/reports/2007-01.pdf).
10. Pascal Sanz, « Conservation et bibliothèque de dépôt de l'enseignement supérieur », *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France*, 45, n°4, (2000): 77-86.
11. Pascal Sanz, « le Centre technique du livre de l'enseignement supérieur : politique actuelle et évolution à long terme », *Liber Quarterly*, (2001): 315-324.
12. Pascal Sanz, « De la fourniture à distance de documents à la conservation partagée », *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France*, 48, n°4, (2003): 33-37.
13. Bernard F.Reilly, *Developping Print Repositories: Models for Shared Preservation and Access*, Washington,D.C: Council on Library and Information Resources, 2003.