

The Scope of Library Automation:

The UH Libraries' OPAC is supported on two networked minicomputers. The database is already approaching a million titles including all Sinclair holdings, the majority of the Special Collections holdings, Center for Research Libraries in Chicago current holdings, all of the materials added to Hamilton since 1979 and approximately 35% of the Western language materials previous to that date. The database is growing at an average rate of 450-500 records per day and these records are available online, fully indexed, within minutes.

Most of the records remaining to be added to OPAC are for materials purchased prior to 1979. Retrospective conversion is the process by which machine readable bibliorecords for these items are either purchased or created. The UH Libraries are employing optical data storage technology to aid in this process, as well as the more traditional practice of downloading records from remote databases.

The Summer term saw the installation of additional OPAC terminals in both Sinclair and Hamilton Libraries. The Automated Book circulation module came up at the beginning of Fall Semester. This advance allows for more efficient circulation of library materials in general and informs the patron as to whether an item is on the shelf or checked out. The Library is implementing the use of optically stored databases as they become more user-friendly and cost effective when compared with physical storage and communication costs. For example, the video-disk based INFOTRACK workstations provide ease of access to a selected range of periodical literature. The ERIC database from on CD-ROM will soon be available for online searching in the library. Online searching of remote databases ~~are~~ performed by expert searchers through the Library for a minimal charge. The Wong Audiovisual Center located in Sinclair Library has a complete range of audiovisual materials and facilities available, including a Computer Assisted Music Instruction Lab.

The UH Libraries are pleased to announce Remote access to OPAC for members of the University Community. All that is needed is a dumb terminal and access to UHCC either through a direct connection or the use of a modem. At the end of Fall Semester instructions for application will be through the UH Bulletin. Access to this service will require that the user have an authorized ID and password. Remote access is scheduled for implementation on January 11th, 1988.

