A More Efficient Method for ...

Bar Coding Multi-Volume Series Using Smart Bar Code Labels And Inmagic® DB/TextWorks™

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... from Crew-Noble Information Services

The situation:

The collection has been cataloged before a library decides to implement bar code technology for circulation. Circulation is managed in a Loans textbase with bar code links to a Catalog textbase, where there is one record per title. Each volume of a multi-volume set of the same title needs to have a unique bar code number assigned, and the catalog record must hold each of those bar code numbers in the BAR CODE field. Usually each volume is brought to the computer, an arbitrary bar code label is placed on the volume, and the number is scanned into each catalog record. Is there a better way? Yes.

The solution: use smart bar code labels.

What are smart bar code labels? They are labels printed in shelf-list order using a unique number generated from your existing Catalog textbase. Additional data (for instance, call number, title, volume number and/or copy number) are also printed on the label to help you match each label to its item.

To generate bar code labels with unique numbers for each volume and/or copy for each title, some preprocessing of data must occur. For instance, part of two bar code labels <u>might</u> look like this:

> Environmental Reporter
> 1534 1 1
>
> Environmental Reporter
> 1534 1 2

where "Evironmental Reporter" is the title, 1534 is the unique ID for the record (which can be generated if not already present), and the first 1 is the volume number and the second 1 and the 2 are the copy numbers.

In order to produce these smart labels the records must be modified so that the correct suffixes can be added to the unique ID number. To modify the records use the following steps:

1) Add the following field to your data structure: VolumeAndCopy

If a title has 3 volumes, put 1, 2, 3 as repeating entries in VolumeAndCopy field. This can easily be done by using "Insert a Series" capability within DB/TextWorks.

VolumeAndCopy
- 1
- 2
- 3

Note: The • indicates a repeating entry in the field.

If the same item has two copies of volume 1, the listing should look like this:

VolumeAndCopy
- 1 1
- 1 2
- 2
- 3

Note that there is a space between the 1 and 1, and the 1 and 2.

If there are no volumes, but two copies, then it should look like this:

VolumeAndCopy
- 0 1
- 0 2

2) Provide the textbase to Crew-Noble. We will combine the unique ID with the VolumeAndCopy numbers to produce a set of smart bar code labels for you to use with your collection. Along with the labels we will send you a file to be added to your textbase. The file will have the bar code label data for each record in your collection.

3) Place one bar code label on each item which is actually on the shelf. You will also need to find those items which are not on the shelf and put their labels on them. At that point the entire collection is available for circulation.

To handle new additions to the collection, extra "non-smart" (dumb) bar code labels should be used. Each new item will be brought to the computer where it will be easy both to put the bar code label on the item and to scan the bar code number into the new catalog record, therefore any unique number can be used.   If the item is an additional volume of a multi-volume title that has already been cataloged, the next non-smart label can be used and the number scanned into the BAR CODE field of the existing catalog record.