

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the application of CD-ROM technology at the University of Nairobi Library, focussing on bibliographic searching for cataloguing, retrieval, acquisitions, and information. Both advantages and disadvantages of CD-ROM are discussed with a view to ascertaining what the technology can do and what it cannot do. Advantages include the high disc capacity, as well as the ability to integrate with other software packages. It does not require telecommunications links. Among the disadvantages is lack of complete compatibility, frequent updates, and expense of mastering among others. It is argued that CD-ROM can provide a solution to some of the information shortfalls in developing countries and that the University of Nairobi Library can take advantage of the technology. Various relevant databases are discussed and these cover most of the disciplines offered at the University. The majority of these are on agriculture and related subjects and this is particularly important to Kenya which is an agricultural country. Since Kenya does not have packet switched telecommunications facilities for the transfer of data electronically, it is argued that CD-ROM can be used as an alternative to on-line. It is cheap in the long run, has sophisticated software and does not require much training.