

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF  
REPORT  
ON A  
NEEDS ASSESSMENT  
OF  
STATEWIDE RESOURCE SHARING (SWRS)  
FOR THE  
STATE LIBRARY OF OHIO**

Prepared by  
**RMG CONSULTANTS, INC.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2005 statistics showed that in Ohio there were:

- 251 Public Libraries
- 138 Academic Libraries
- 4,089 School Libraries
- 450 Special Libraries,

and that the Public Libraries spent over \$101 million on materials.

In 2004 Ohio's Public Libraries held collections of over 48 Million Volumes, whose current replacement value has been estimated at more than \$3.6 billion.

Currently the OhioLINK libraries have approximately 47 million volumes in their collections with an estimated replacement value of \$5.8 billion.

In 2007 Library and Local Government Support Fund (LLGSF) for public libraries will total \$457,970,323.70, and

- Libraries Connect Ohio will pay over \$4.2 Million for electronic database subscriptions.
- The Metros and medium-sized libraries (ETM) will pay over \$6.3 for database subscriptions.<sup>1</sup> These are libraries serving populations more than 52,000.

Clearly, Ohio's taxpayers value their libraries. These libraries spend a lot of money; they have a lot of resources, and a rich history of sharing them – so much so that a plethora of resource sharing organizations has evolved, including CLEVNET, SEO, Discovery Place, CACL, CLC, SearchOhio, and OPLIN for public libraries; and OhioLINK and INFOhio for academic and school library communities.

The downside for aspirations to statewide library resource sharing is that the disparate integrated library systems (ILSs) used by these organizations function as resource sharing silos that work very well for libraries that share an ILS with its physical union bibliographic database, but pose significant challenges for a resource sharing solution that attempts to search many ILSs in aggregate and then provide seamless interoperability with them to perform interlibrary loan requests and fulfillment transactions. The challenge for a Next-Generation Statewide Resource Sharing System (SWRS) is to unite the disparate ILSs into an effective network of easily searchable databases with seamless, efficient, and effective requesting, fulfillment, and lending transactions.

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio's Metro Libraries are public libraries of: Cleveland, Toledo, Cuyahoga County, Dayton, Akron, Canton, Columbus, Youngstown, and Cincinnati. Medium-sized libraries: Worthington, Cleveland-University Heights, Geauga County (Chardon), Mansfield, Rocky River, Warren-Trumbull, Batavia, Lorrain, Centerville, Wayne County

Ohio Libraries Share: MORE (hereafter referred to in this report as MORE) was created in 2000 to do just that – to bridge the technological divides among disparate local library and consortia systems in order to deliver the broad vision of bringing together the resources of public and school libraries for the residents of Ohio – “Anyone, anywhere, at any time can borrow anything from any other Ohio library.”

It is now time to develop a strategic plan for the next phases of the Statewide Resource Sharing System (SWRS), and to update its vision to include sharing of all types of library resources, among all types of Ohio libraries -- and better still, to envision quick delivering of library resources to Ohio residents in their homes, schools, and workplaces.

It is time to upgrade or replace the MORE's underlying computer system, VDX (for Virtual Document eXchange -- supplied by FDI that has now been purchased by OCLC PICA), with a Next-Generation Library Resource Sharing solution that includes capabilities:

- For patron self-service search and discovery of Ohio library resources, regardless of format – print, print-on-demand, electronic, multimedia, AV – as well as commercially available resources that match interests.
  - Including federated and faceted searching capabilities.
- For unmediated patron self-service requests of wanted library materials.
- For unmediated patron self-service online purchases of commercially available items from suppliers like Amazon, Borders, Barnes and Noble.
- For delivery of library-supplied materials to locations requested by patrons, with payment options for home and office deliveries.
- For seamless connectivity and interoperability of the Next-Generation Library Resource Sharing System with Ohio libraries' local Integrated Library Systems (ILSs).
  - For seamless integration of patrons' SWRS requests for library materials with the circulation system modules of Ohio libraries' local integrated library systems
  - Through NCIP or some other interface, so that SWRS requests can be handled in the same way – with the same efficiency and workflow (for picking and preparing materials for shipment, and processing them upon return) -- that libraries' Integrated Library Systems handle locally-generated requests.
- For accommodating multiple arrangements and systems for pick-up and delivery of shipments among libraries.

The strategic plan for Statewide Resource Sharing should be framed within awareness of the range of library information resources that can be shared, including subscriptions to databases and the sharing of human resources (as in KnowItNow).

## Vision Statement

### Elements for Updating the Vision for Statewide Library Resource Sharing:

***“Every Ohio resident can access the print and electronic resources of all Ohio libraries, giving taxpayers the best possible return on investments in the full array of their libraries’ information resources.”***

It is now time to develop a strategic plan for the next phases of the Statewide Resource Sharing System (SWRS), and to update the vision for it to include all types of libraries and library materials in Ohio: e.g.,

- To provide Ohio residents with the best possible access to the print and electronic resources of Ohio libraries, in order to give taxpayers the best possible return on their investments in the print and digital information resources of their Libraries.
- To provide Ohio residents with coherent access both to traditional print-form books and journals in library collections, as well as to digital information resources and information services accessible through the Internet/World Wide Web on computers in library facilities and from users’ computers in homes, schools, and offices.
- The State Library’s vision to provide Ohio residents ready access to the digital library world of the Internet/World Wide Web comes at a time when the fundamental role of free public libraries in our society is challenged by the emergence of electronic information resources that must be paid for at prices not affordable by all.

## Statewide Library Card

**Branding and Marketing a Statewide Library Card  
as the key to  
Easy Access by Ohio Residents  
To  
48 Million Volumes in Ohio Public Libraries, Valued at over \$3.6 Billion**

In articulating, selling, and seeking wider participation and support for the next phases of Statewide Library Resource Sharing, the State Library should explore opportunities for a “Statewide Library Card” that would allow a resident with a card from any library to use the resources of all other libraries. The force of this argument might prove persuasive for special legislative support.

Emphasizing together the ease-of-use for residents to find and receive information from their libraries -- plus the return on taxpayers investments in library information resourced -- could be a winner.

The value of book collections in Ohio’s public libraries is enormous:

- In 2004 Ohio's public libraries reported holdings of 48,633,106 volumes<sup>2</sup>
- Estimating the average purchase price of replacements at \$50 a volume, and library ordering and processing costs at \$25,<sup>3 4</sup>
- The replacement value of Ohio's public libraries' collections could reach \$3,647,482,950.
- The replacement value of Ohio's academic libraries' collection of approximately 47 million volumes is estimated at \$5,875,000,000.

## The Ohio Library Resource Sharing Environment

### **RMG Assessment and Comment:**

- ***Ohio's library resource sharing environment is a plethora of silos.***
- ***Having a big, shared Ohio Integrated Library System for all Ohio libraries in concept could provide easy-to-use resource sharing for residents.***
  - ***Questions of the technical feasibility would be challenging since no working model of a shared ILS of the size required for all Ohio libraries has yet been achieved.***
  - ***The financial challenges might even be greater than delivering the proof-of-concept.***
  - ***The organizational challenges would be daunting.***
  - ***RMG's assessment is that this is unlikely to happen with the immediacy required for an improved SWRS.***
- ***The Next-Generation SWRS System needs to unite rather than divide Ohio's library resource sharing communities.***
- ***For the foreseeable future it should be assumed that libraries will continue to operate local ILSs and participate in library automation consortia of their choosing.***
- ***The Next-Generation SWRS must be built with technologies that work well with the capabilities of local and shared ILSs.***

## Ohio Libraries Share: MORE

### **Public Access Users' Experience with MORE**

#### **RMG Assessment and Comment:**

- ***Other than seeing a brief demonstration of MORE, RMG's only source of information about its use are from the Focus Group notes.***

<sup>2</sup> As self-reported in the 2004 Ohio Public Library Statistics survey.

<sup>3</sup> As approximated from the Bowker Annual Library and Book Trade Almanac (2007, 52nd edition), the average cost to purchase a replacement for a library book (paper, hardback, children's, fiction, non-fiction) is estimated at \$50.00.

<sup>4</sup> Average library processing fees for ordering and processing a book are estimated to range from a low of \$20 to a high of \$35 -- \$25.00/volume is assumed to be the average cost.

- **RMG believes that the Next-Generation SWRS System requires an improved user interface for searching capabilities – like those in current discovery products such as AquaBrowser, Encore, Primo, and WorldCat Local – that clearly shows to the user the different types and formats of available resources (e.g., print, electronic, multimedia, e-books, online databases), as well as a simpler interface that explains choices for users to:**
  - **Request wanted library materials**
  - **Request delivery, and input addresses**
  - **Select to purchase print and electronic resources**
  - **Make payments online.**

#### **Problems between VDX and Local Library Integrated Library Systems**

##### **RMG Assessment and Comment:**

- **The types of difficulties experienced with MORE's lack of seamless connectivity and interoperability between VDX and local ILSs must be overcome by a Next-Generation SWRS System.**
- **If effective searching of the local systems of participating libraries and consortia cannot be achieved, then the feasibility of extracting bibliographic and holdings data from local systems to create and maintain a physical union database should be assessed. This would allow quick and efficient search and discovery of holdings of many libraries – more than can be well handled by a “virtual catalog” achieved by concurrent searching of many (in Ohio's case, hundreds) ILSs.**
- **The problems of interoperability between a Next-Generation SWRS System and local systems must be overcome through interfaces that work, in order to allow a library to fulfill local system and SWRS requests in the same way with its local ILS workflows. An interface between an SWRS System and a local ILS could be standards-based (e.g., using NCIP), or custom built – as were the early interfaces between disparate ILSs in the library automation industry.**
- **Achieving and maintaining seamless interfaces between two systems – an SWRS System and a library's local ILS – needs cooperation between the two systems' vendors. Even if wanted interoperability can be achieved through special efforts of one vendor without the help of the other vendor, maintaining the interface through changes in either system likely will prove to be an ongoing challenge. If a Next-Generation SWRS System is to interoperate with the many brands and hundreds of installations of disparate ILSs in Ohio libraries, then there needs to be effective working relationships between the vendors of those ILSs with the SWRS System vendor to create and maintain required interfaces.**
- **RMG advises that Ohio libraries may have to intervene with their ILS vendors to obtain needed cooperation from them with the vendor of a Next-Generation SWRS System in order to establish needed interfaces and interoperability. Some ILS vendors may perceive collaboration with the Next-Generation SWRS System vendor to be a strategic and financial issue, and in such cases cooperation might be difficult and/or expensive to achieve.**

#### **Searching and Requesting with MORE**

##### **RMG Assessment and Comment:**

- **Other than seeing a brief demonstration of MORE, RMG's only source of information about its use are from the Focus Group notes.**
- **The Next-Generation SWRS System should provide easier to use searching and requesting for both library customers and staff.**

### **Fulfillment with MORE**

#### ***RMG Assessment and Comment:***

- ***Other than seeing a brief demonstration of MORE, RMG's only source of information about its use are from the Focus Group notes.***
- ***The Next-Generation SWRS System should provide easier fulfillment for staff: single pull-lists, efficient workflow and processing based on that of the local ILS.***
- ***The Next-Generation SWRS System should track and manager fulfillment times.***
- ***The Next-Generation SWRS System should give customers options for expedited fulfillment: purchase of materials and resources, clear designation of options for download of e-resources, etc.***

### **Delivery with MORE**

#### ***RMG Assessment and Comment:***

- ***RMG's only sources of information about MORE delivery are this table and the Focus Group notes.***
- ***RMG notes there multiple delivery systems and arrangements among Ohio libraries, and that with the Next-Generation SWRS these should be reviewed to determine possibilities for efficiencies and savings.***

### **State Library and SWRS Organization and Staffing**

#### ***RMG Assessment and Comment:***

- ***RMG recommends that a SWRS Strategic Planning Project Organization and Process be implemented together.***
- ***RMG suggests that the State Library review the following sample for a SWRS Planning Project Organization and adapt it as useful.***

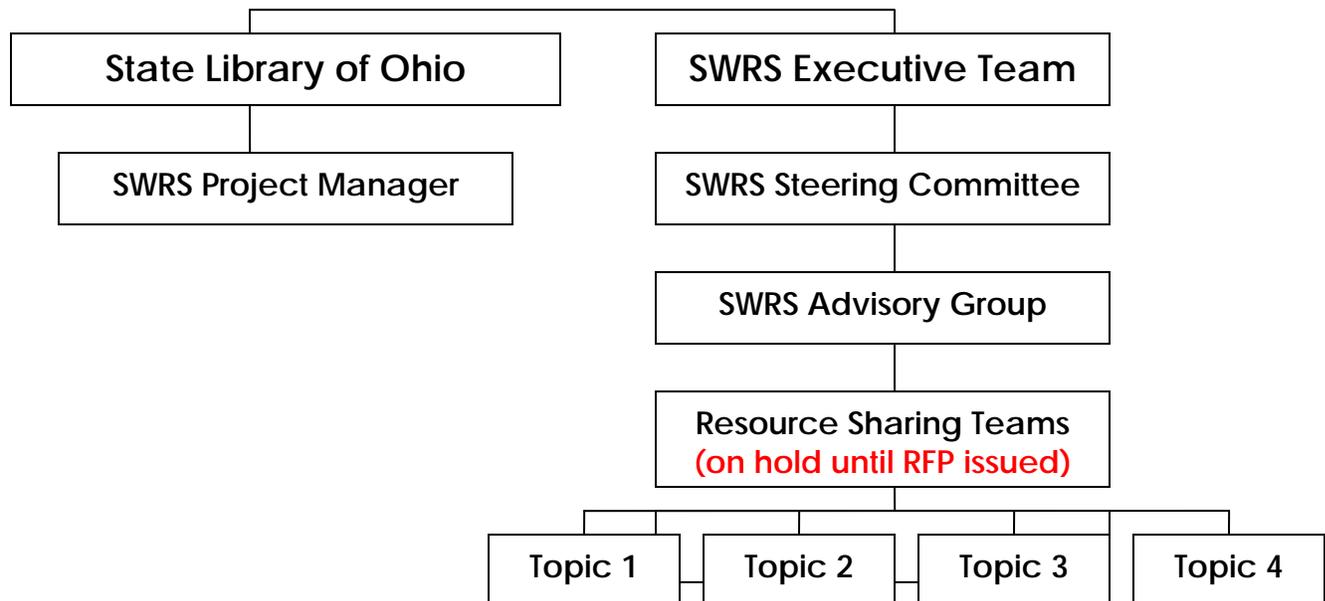
### **SWRS Communications Plan**

#### ***RMG Assessment and Comment:***

- ***RMG recommends that a SWRS Planning Project Organization and a SWRS Communications Plan be implemented together.***
- ***RMG suggests that the State Library review the following tables that are intended to provide a "Template for an SWRS Communications Plan" and adapt them as useful to produce a "SWRS Communications Plan"***

## Appendix A

### Statewide Resource Sharing Strategic Planning Project Organization



- (a) The SWRS Executive Team
- Ideally would be 7 to 9 individuals, to optimize communication and decision-making.
  - Smaller team made up of Steering Committee members.
  - Called together infrequently to make decisions and set policy.
  - Decisions and recommendations of the SWRS Executive Team would be made to the State Librarian and ultimately to the State Library Board.
- (b) The SWRS Steering Committee
- Will include key State Library personnel and major stakeholders and players from the Ohio library community.
  - Some members are drawn from the SWRS Advisory Committee to represent that body.
  - Will set the vision for SWRS.
  - Will recommend policies and guidelines for SWRS.



- (c) The SWRS Advisory Group: Volunteers
- Can be as large as needed to ensure representation of all Ohio libraries and resource sharing organizations, projects, services, etc.
  - Will assist in evaluation of SWRS solutions and make recommendations to the SWRS Steering Committee
- (d) The SWRS Project Manager
- A State Library employee or contractor who will coordinate the activities of the SWRS Advisory Group and manage the activities of the Resource Sharing Teams.
- (e) Resource Sharing Teams: On hold until RFP is issued.
- Resource Sharing Teams will be created on specific topics to provide needed information and to perform tasks as requested by the SWRS Advisory Group. (e.g. interlibrary loan policy, statewide card, delivery, electronic resources)
    - To include representatives from:
      - CACL
      - CLC
      - CLEVNET
      - Dayton Metro Library
      - Discovery Place Libraries
      - Open Source
      - Ohio Libraries Share: MORE
      - SearchOhio
      - SEO
      - INFOhio
      - OhioLINK



## Appendix B Statewide Resource Sharing Communication Plan

1. Distribute Focus group notes (done)
2. Distribute Trends (done)
3. Post summary/gleanings (done)
4. Post complete notes (done)
5. Statewide Videoconference on November 14<sup>th</sup> (done)
6. Meet with Ohio Library Council (January 28, 2008)
7. Attend meetings (including Board meetings) of library organizations
  - Regional Library Systems (RLS)
  - Metro Directors
  - ETM
  - OPLIN
  - OHIONET (Dec. 7, 2007)
8. Post updates to the OPLIN, OhioLINK, INFOhio, SEO, and ohlib listsevs
9. Post updates for library community to respond to on blog
10. Send update emails
11. Post announcements on the State Library web site
12. Hold monthly videoconferences (as needed)
  - Preliminary schedule:
  - December 19
  - January 23
  - February 20
  - March 18
  - April 23
  - May 21
  - June 18
13. Meet with Office of Information Technology (as needed)
14. Meet with Office of Budget Management (as needed)