



STATEWIDE RESOURCE SHARING

A Collaborative Project of
State Library of Ohio, OPLIN,
Ohio Library Council, INFOhio,
and Ohio Educational Library
Media Association (OELMA)

October 2000

Statewide Resource Sharing Technology Plans

Anyone, anywhere, at any time can borrow anything from any other Ohio library.

In meetings, at conferences, in newsletters, on listserv postings, this idea has been expressed repeatedly throughout Ohio. You've heard from the Statewide Resource Sharing (SWRS) Steering Committee and the Policy Committee about the ideal and the thinking behind it. You've heard about the policy discussions and the underlying goals. The questions that remain are How? And When? The purpose of this newsletter issue is to update you about technology planning to date. We will inform you with more details about technology and about the work of the Delivery Task Force when we know more.

Selecting Technology

Last February the State Library of Ohio issued an RFP for resource sharing technology. We sought software that would enable us to tie Ohio's diverse library catalogs in public and school libraries together into a single sharing system. Dr. Greg Byerly was the consultant who managed the process, and the RFP was created with the input of Pete Bates, State Library of Ohio, Carol Roddy, OPLIN, and Jean Banks representing INFOhio. It was based on the early work of the SWRS Technology Task Force and asked for technology overlay that would:

- Enable patron initiated reserves on books and other material from libraries statewide
- Require little or no staff intervention and mediation
- Work across all the diverse platforms of catalogs and circulation systems already installed, and required as little change as possible in the base technology at libraries
- Leave the master patron and catalog files in the libraries themselves and not create a central file

A committee consisting of Greg Byerly, Pete Bates, Carol Roddy, Jean Banks, and four others—two each from public and school libraries—met to review the responses. In June the committee saw presentations for four teams of bidders. Two of them were invited back for second, one-half day sessions at which they were given opportunities to expand

upon and clarify their bids. After a final day-long meeting, a decision was reached to recommend VDX by Fretwell-Downing.

None of the products gave us everything we asked for. The committee believed that this product gave us the most of what we were looking for, and that it provided a clear, clean, standards-based approach in a manner that will provide a supportable platform for continued development and growth.

Next Steps

We are currently finishing up contract details, and planning implementation. The first milestone will be the installation of a prototype system that links one DRA Classic, one Dynix, and one MultiLIS system. That is tentatively scheduled for January.

First activities for OPLIN are :

- Identify one library of each type for the prototype and testing. We are talking to a variety of libraries already.
- Select the hardware configuration and begin setting up the computer facility.
- Set up the prototype.

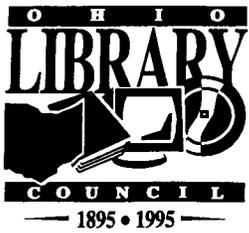
When can you expect to have a look? Once the system is installed, and formal acceptance is complete, we expect to make the prototype available for preview. At about that same time we will publish the implementation schedule and process for participating. Expect to hear more news in February.

What Should Libraries Do?

What we propose to do is complex. Three components will impact the success of this project, from a technology point of view:

1. The central system we have discussed above (that will be OPLIN's responsibility).
2. The degree to which local library systems' vendors have integrated national standards into their systems (that will be the one we have the least control over, but one we hope to influence strongly).

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3. The local library's own implementation—are standards modules installed? Are standard cataloging practices being followed? (That will be your responsibility.)
To fully participate, a library must be automated and must have installed the standards modules available for their systems.

Standards, Standards, Standards

We should expect—indeed we should demand—that our vendors comply with national standards. The key standards most needed for this project are Z39.50 and SIP.

We have discussed Z39.50 for some time now, and many of you are in the process of installing it. Ask your vendor for information about their implementation of the standard. You will want to be able to answer questions about the specific services and attributes it supports.

For unmediated interlibrary loan, circulation standards are also important. To date, there has been no national standard, but NISO is very close to publishing a draft of NCIP which will be based on SIP. What on earth is SIP? SIP, as a newer version called SIP2, was developed for the 3M Self Check modules. If you have Self Check, you have probably installed SIP. You should talk to your vendor about SIP and be prepared to know which messages their implementation supports.

Financial Assistance

As many of you have found, standards modules are not routinely included as part of your library system. They are in fact add-ons for which there is an extra cost.

To assist libraries in bringing their systems into Z39.50 and SIP compliance, the State Library of Ohio is prepared to include standards modules in the LSTA Mini-Grant program. The deadline for mini-grant applications is November 22, 2000. The mini-Grant workshops will take place via video conference on October 11, 2000. Information about that program can be found at <http://winslo.state.oh.us/publib/lstamini.html>. While the web site states that mini-grants will not be used for automation projects, that refers to full automation, not to the addition of standards modules.