

Minutes of the 3rd Annual IDS Pilot Project Meeting Wednesday, August 3, 2005

Ed Rivenburgh called the meeting to order at approximately 9:30 a.m. He reviewed a number of housekeeping details and asked IDS project participants to be sure to have their picture taken for the web-site if they have not already done so.

The morning presentations began with a *Review of Results to Date*:

- Over the course of the three semesters that the pilot has been running, we have processed 35,000 loan (book) requests and filled 13,000 of those requests (just over one third of the total).
- In the same three semester period, we processed 41,000 article requests and filled 14,000 of them (just under one third).

Examination of Unfilled Requests:

From stats gathered during the Fall 2004 semester, the Geneseo IDS team extracted a sample of 511 journal requests that were not filled. They have assembled a list of journal titles from which articles were requested more than five times. Ed indicated that this information could be used as a basis for improved coordinated collection development. He suggested that if each of our libraries, for example, were to purchase maybe three additional titles, we would be able to fill a much larger percentage of the total requests we receive from each other.

He also mentioned, however, that we have a serious problem in that we are as yet unable to easily identify what journal titles we each own electronically. If we had this information we might discover that we already own some of the titles being requested that are currently going unfilled. He noted that Mark Sullivan (SUNY Geneseo) has been working on a fix for this problem which he will present this afternoon. Basically, Mark has been attempting to develop a means of searching for journals across our libraries by utilizing SFX technology.

Mark will eventually post an SFX union listing of all of our journals at the bottom of the IDS web-site.

From Fall 04, a sample of 1422 unfilled loan requests was also extracted for examination. Most of these requests had publication dates that fell in the last 15 years and it was determined that by adding the University Centers to IDS, we would up our current fill rate from 1/3 to approximately 2/3.

Turnaround Times Improved:

We have improved average turnaround times during the past year. For example, in Spring 2004, our average turnaround time for loans was 87 hours. In spring 2005, it was 82 hours.

Similarly, in Spring 2004, our average turnaround for journal articles was 62 hours. In spring 2005, we came in at just under our sought after 48 hour turnaround. The average this spring was 47.9 hours.

It should be noted that for both books and articles, we were dealing with larger numbers of transactions in 2005 than in 2004.

Other Changes/Improvements in Past Year:

In the past year, we also jumped from 4 to 12 libraries using ILLiad and from 2 to 10 libraries up and running on Odyssey. Eleven of our libraries have also now set up custom holdings as opposed to only two last year.

Some libraries have begun using OCLC's Direct Request service for monographs and a larger number of libraries than last year have turned on "trusted lender" status with each other. Both of these actions have improved turnaround times for libraries that have implemented them.

ATLAS Rep Presentation:

Via teleconference, at 10:30 a.m., Stephanie Spires from ATLAS spoke to the group about ILLiad/Odyssey Enhancements and how to use ILLiad for copyright clearance. A new release of ILLiad 7.1 is scheduled for later this fall. This version will provide more OPAC support and will do it with an improved interface. The new version will support easier page editing and Stephanie believed that it will also support importing of both TIFF and JPEG files. She wasn't sure about PDF, but indicated she would get back to the group quickly with this information. (NOTE: Later Stephanie notified Mark that the new version of Odyssey will not import PDFs, however, this request is now in the queue of enhancements.)

Stephanie talked about the new stand-alone "FREE" Odyssey package. People who opt to use this package will be able to send to anyone else with Odyssey, whether standalone or integrated with ILLiad.

Stephanie noted that with ILLiad all copyright questions are handled up front. ILLiad provides libraries with a list of the journals from which they have already requested 5 items in a current year, so you know immediately if you are requesting something that will need copyright approval.

IDS Project Assessment for Directors:

At 11:15, the group divided into two concurrent workshops: one on workflow issues/best practices and one on project assessment.

I will first outline discussion at the project assessment workshop and then move on to the workflow workshop.

Several directors indicated that they have found the data provided by the project to be very valuable in talking to staff about issues such as workflow, staffing, hardware problems, etc. A recommendation was made that directors need to be tracking the data with staff or requesting regular updates from staff as there are still a number of libraries that are not meeting the specifications for turnaround time that were agreed upon.

We discussed the possibility of establishing “best practice benchmarks for each separate step of the ILL transaction. As an example, we might say that the time in the first column, which is the time from which a patron places a request to the time that staff in the borrowing library place the request, should generally not exceed 24 hours. A decision was made to take the averages of the times that libraries who are “in the green” are achieving and place those “average times” over each column in the turnaround timing charts. These averages will serve as targets that we can each strive to meet.

There was discussion of how implementation of OCLC’s Direct Request module can speed turnaround times. The libraries that are currently using Direct Request indicated that once it is set up, it serves to free up ILL staff time to focus on other issues.

Directors also looked at the “trusted lender” chart and noted that not many of us are, as yet, trusting each other to provide quality copies in a timely manner. Directors questioned why this might be the case. Turning on this status is generally left in the hands of ILL staff who see the copy that others are sending. Directors are reluctant to step into this area as they are not the people on the front line. There was some speculation about whether staff members are being too conservative in their decision making. It was recommended that director’s discuss this issue with their ILL staff. There was some feeling that if we tried using the “trusted lender” status more frequently and problems occur, we will probably hear from dismayed patrons rather quickly, and could, at that point, contact the lending library staff to make them aware that the copies they sent on were problematic.

Matt Goldner, who heads resource sharing and other areas at OCLC, talked to the group about OCLC’s plans, in the near future, to provide “Direct Request” ILL for journal articles as well as books. OCLC is currently working on a model that will insure that “direct requests” made for journal articles will go only to those libraries that own the

specific volumes and issues needed to fill the request. The module will employ a very detailed level of knowledge about holdings information included in bibliographic records to build lender strings, thereby minimizing the times a request goes to a library that ultimately does not own the specific article needed.

Matt indicated that libraries that have never batch loaded their journal records on OCLC's WorldCat, or who have been negligent in keeping their records up-to-date, will soon be able to either load them from scratch or update them in WorldCat for FREE.

Everyone enjoyed a lovely lunch, provided to us by DH&L, the LAND Courier service, and then we returned to our concurrent workshops.

The Director's group began to look at problem records which staff had provided, in an effort to see if we could identify patterns or trends that would demonstrate where items are slowing down in their transit from one library to another.

Mark Sullivan noted that the "extremes" had already been extracted from the records we were examining.

A goal of processing requests within 24 hours of receipt was seen as an acceptable norm for most of our libraries.

There was unanimous agreement that leaving a request untouched for several days and then indicating that you are unable to fill it is "really bad form". We all agreed that if you can't get to it in a reasonable time frame, you need to "just say NO", but say it quickly and move the request on to the next library.

An emphasis was put on the need for Directors to be involved in looking at the data with their staff and working to solve turnaround problems. Many of the issues that may cause slow turnaround are not solvable by staff. If equipment is defective or staffing is too tight, staff members need the director's help to deal with the issue. We discovered later on, when we rejoined staff, that indeed there is quite a bit of frustration out there that people are not always receiving the help they may need.

Several directors talked about the efforts their staff is making to cross-train personnel between ILL and Circulation for backup purposes. A circ staff member working the evening shift may sometimes be able to focus attention on ILL if things are slow at the desk. At least one library is using evening and weekend adjunct librarians to fill some of the slack, when the ILL office is officially closed.

A concern about Direct Request which was expressed is that such a large percentage of the requests we each receive have erroneous information in the citation. Without staff examining and correcting misinformation, we will all start to receive more problem requests. While there was agreement that this is certainly a fact of life, it was

acknowledged that the value of faster turnaround with a large percent of the transactions we place probably outweighs the negatives.

The concept of “good enough” sometimes being “good enough” also came up. For faculty and grad students, a longer turnaround time may not often pose a serious problem, but for undergraduates, a wait of several days is rarely going to be “good enough”.

It was noted that Director’s interest in the project may spur staff interest in learning more about various options and in improving on present processes and procedures. For the vast majority of staff, the desire to do their best is evident.

We agreed to use times that the “green” libraries are averaging as guides for all libraries in the project. Mark Sullivan will compile these and add them to the web-site charts.

We agreed that using direct request and trusted sender status helps speed turnaround times.

The need to update local holdings information in our journal records on OCLC was acknowledged if we are going to move toward direct request for journal articles. This prompted an interesting discussion of how any of us might approach adding records for our electronic journal holdings to WorldCat, or even to our own catalogs. For direct request to work for journals, the system would need to be able to search against records for both print and electronic holdings. Serials Solutions may have, or be working on, a solution to this problem. It was also suggested that since students rarely use our catalogs to locate journals any more, a separate listing of journals might be more useful. How “Direct Request” of journal articles might, or might not, tie into universal borrowing through the SUNY Union catalog came up as a question, as did pulling data regarding all of our serials holdings from the Union catalog, rather than doing it independently, library by library. Carey Hatch will explore these questions with members of SAC.

We discussed the need for contracts for electronic journals, or the databases in which they are accessed, to include language that allows free “intra-library” lending within SUNY. This language has apparently already been developed and will be shared with IDS participants.

Finally, we also revisited the concept of having each of our libraries purchase a few of the journal titles for which IDS has received many requests. The University Centers reminded us that if they are part of the group, they may already own some of these titles.

Mary Alice Lynch, NYLINK Executive Director, gave us an update on the LAND service. She indicated that efforts to link LAND, as a state-wide service, with local 3R’s delivery service hubs has so far not proven successful. The group expressed a sentiment that the 3Rs should understand the need for a NYS “state-wide” service. While the local services, where available, have served a purpose for some of our libraries in the past, the current need is for a service that is comprehensive of the whole State.

As we wrapped up this portion of the day, Ed asked that we all impress on staff the need to review their data on a regular basis.

Ed also noted that in 2004, Carey Hatch and OLIS have, with SAC's approval, provided us with some funding to enable unlimited ILL through OCLC, without increasing charges to our individual libraries. Given the changes in OCLC pricing, this will no longer be necessary. A suggestion has been made that we use these dollars in the year ahead to bring in a consultant to help establish directions for the future. This will be a topic for discussion at the annual fall meeting of the A&S library directors. (As the writer of these minutes, I would like to suggest bringing in someone like Tom Sanville, who has provided leadership for the OhioLINK project for the past several years. While Ohio is very far ahead of us, partly because they receive significant dollars from the State, they have much to teach us about issues such as universal borrowing, direct request of articles, coordinated collection development, etc.--MB)

At 2:00 p.m., the group reconvened together and session reports were delivered by Michelle Parry from Oswego and Janet Potter from Oneonta.

I am appending notes from Michelle's report to these minutes and the content of Janet's report is basically covered in the preceding section of these minutes.

LAND Delivery Service Report – Carrie Nyc

Carrie Nyc, who manages NYLINK's LAND Delivery service, talked about recent improvements and outlined results of a survey of participants from which information has been compiled.

We are doing better with our courier service. From the survey, with 74 respondents, the courier received a 90% approval ranking. There were a total of 13 suggestions made by respondents to improve the service. Carrie noted that a suggestion made to allow libraries to select their own pick-up/delivery times is not an option. She has also received complaints about the zip ties, but since they do seem to be making material more secure in transit, we will stick with them for now. Some noted that they are not using them.

A suggestion was made to expand the number of daily pick-ups to two per day, but this would double the cost. It has also been suggested that electronic tracking of items would be a plus, but, given current membership in LAND, this would cost an extra \$782 per year per library.

While NYLINK is not able to put the suggestions mentioned above in place right now, there are several improvements in the process of being implemented. These include the following:

- Courier has begun to more regularly notify Carrie when they are unable to deliver within their normal time frame; Carrie will then notify the library or libraries that are affected.
- Courier is attempting to address lags experienced when they hire new drivers. Procedure manuals have been put together for each hub for the new driver's use.
- Manifest form is being altered to include information that the libraries have asked for as well as information that the courier needs.
- Labels are being standardized - - web manager at NYLINK is looking at forms which would be printed from NYLINK's web site; this will be up and running soon.
- A date field is being added to labels to help the courier track where (in which area of the State) problems are occurring when they do occur.

Carrie showed a chart comparing, from April to July 2005, how often the courier is stopping within a half hour of their scheduled "pick up" time at each library. The chart demonstrated clear improvement over this period.

LAND has 3 new members for a total now of 80 libraries.

Delivery times for all LAND libraries are posted on the IDS web-site.

Universal Borrowing Report – Carey Hatch and Maureen Zajkowski

Carey indicated that SUNY has renewed its contract with ExLibris for an additional five years and that he has been working with ExLibris and SAC on developing a system for Universal Borrowing.

Maureen gave a brief demo of the ExLibris Universal Borrowing module, in its "out of the box" state using a subset of the SUNY Union Catalog. SUNCat, as the Union Catalog has been named, currently includes the holdings of 44 SUNY libraries, including two University Centers, and it is being updated weekly. When asked if Colleges could begin linking to the Union Catalog from their web-sites, Maureen discouraged it, as the web interface is still not fully completed.

The demo of the Universal Borrowing didn't work well and Maureen noted that OLIS staff are working hard at this juncture to understand the module and configure it in a manner that will eliminate problems they are experiencing.

Carey indicated that the use of the ExLibris Universal Borrowing module is just one of three different options they are currently exploring to enable Universal Borrowing. A decision about direction will be made in the early part of 2006 and will be based upon

how the ExLibris module shapes up by then. Carey noted, however, that the concept we had of Universal Borrowing, back in 1999, when the first contract was negotiated with Ex Libris, has changed in the intervening years, partly as a result of the IDS project. Universal Borrowing, back in 1999 meant borrowing monographs. There was never a plan for the inclusion of journal article borrowing (either print or electronic), and yet the need to include this piece in any model we pursue today seems desirable. There are several paths we can travel to add this dimension to the project, and these will clearly be on all of our agendas in the coming few months.

SAC will be meeting in both September and October this year to work on these issues.

Closing

Mary Alice Lynch wrapped up the meeting with congratulations to project participants for their collaborative efforts.

Ed noted that Geneseo has the IDS project running off a new server and that they are mirroring the project on a second server so that if one goes down, the back-up will pick up the data collection right away. He is also looking to mirror the project on a third server that would be located off the Geneseo campus. Carey mentioned ITEC as a possibility.

Next year's IDS summer conference will take place on August 8 & 9, 2006. The group has grown so large and the agenda so full that we will probably move to a day and a half long format.