

Executive Director's Report

SAILS reached a new record in November – our Internet lines usage reached 89% of their capacity for most of the month. Basically this meant our Internet demand was much greater than our capacity to support it. Our initial attempt to resolve the problem was to fine-tune the shaping on the Packeteer we purchased in the fall but there was a limit on how much that could improve our response time. In early November we ordered a new T1 line which will increase our capacity by 33%. The line should be in place by early December. We expect that the addition of the third line will improve our response time. We will continue to use the Packeteer to prioritize traffic coming and going over our Internet line so that mission critical traffic such as iBistro, VPN connections, and database access have the highest priority.

Also during November the new Directors Station server and software was installed and our first training session was conducted. Directors Station is a data analysis tool that can be used by library directors to measure library and collection usage and trends. Data from the past five years has been loaded into the Directors Station database and it will be updated nightly so reports and statistics should be up to the minute.

We are moving closer to the time when the Classic Unicorn staff client will no longer be supported for all but the school library members of the network. Bob and Kristin have been busy conducting training at libraries and the Cataloging Services Department is now only training in the Java client. If your library hasn't yet been trained your director will be contacted soon so we can schedule a visit. Our goal is to have everyone using the Java client by early 2008 except for our school members who will be moving to the WebClient.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Exec Director's Report	1
Workflows Announcements	2
Tips to update your website	2,3
Consumer Trend Alert	4
Audio books for holiday travel	5
Upcoming Events	6
Network Statistics	6

Highest Circ'd Overdrive Titles—November

- Best Kept Secrets
- The Quickie
- Beyond Reach
- High Noon
- Step On A Crack
- Playing for Pizza
- The Bourne Betrayal
- The Good Guy
- Double Take
- Killer Weekend
- The 6th Target
- Angels Fall
- Up Close and Dangerous
- You've Been Warned
- The Artifact
- The Bone Garden
- The 37th Hour
- The Woods
- Boogers Are My Beat

Global Edit Wizard

In the Java Client, since the recent update, the price option in the Global Edit Wizard is set to 0.00 and will change the price of your items to \$0.00. If you log in as tech and go into the Global Edit behaviors and uncheck the price option, this option will not display when you go to use the Global edit wizard, so it will not change the price to \$0.00.

If you have any questions, please contact Kristin at kslater@sailsinc.org.

Clean Holds Shelf Report

Friday 11/30 was the last day you will have a holds shelf report. From now on all the information about expired available holds will be reflected in your Clean Holds Shelf report which runs daily.

You also receive a report of notices that have gone to patrons telling them their available holds have been cancelled. You don't need to do a thing with that report –it is merely for your information.

Patron Registration —public libraries

When registering a patron or updating a patron record with a new address, **usercat2** must be the town in which the patron resides not the library issuing the card. Usercat2 is used for annual nonresident reports for which your library is reimbursed. Your library wants to be credited appropriately for all circulation transactions.

Is it time to update your web site?

Although SAILS doesn't design websites for libraries, the network does host a number of library's websites and they are important access points to our services. If you haven't updated your website in a while, now is the time to freshen its look.

Eye-tracking studies are hot in the web design world, but it can be hard to figure out how to translate the results of these studies into real design implementations. These are a few tips from eye-tracking studies that you can use to improve the design of your web-page.

1. **Text attracts attention before graphics.** Contrary to what you might think, the first thing users look at on a website isn't the images. Most casual users will be coming to your site looking for information, not images, so make sure your website is designed so that the most important parts of your text are most prominent.
2. **Initial eye movement focuses on the upper left corner of the page.** It shouldn't be surprising that users look at webpages in this way, as most computer applications are designed with the top left hand side as the main focus. You can do your website a favor by keeping this format in mind when creating a design. Remember, while you want to have a personal style, you have to keep the habits of your readers in mind if you want your site to be successful.
3. **Readers ignore banners.** Ads may be the bread and butter of your site, but studies have shown that readers largely ignore banners, often focusing for only a fraction of a second.
4. **Fancy formatting and fonts are ignored.** Why? Studies showed that users had difficulty finding information in large colored letters formatted in this way because visual clues told them to ignore it. Keep your site streamlined and not so shiny that important elements will be glossed over.
5. **Show numbers as numerals.** Readers will find it much easier to find factual information on your site if you use numerals instead of writing out numbers. Remember, you're writing for readers that are going to be

(Continued on page 3)

Is it time to update your web site?

(Continued from page 2)

primarily scanning your site, so make it easier for them to find what they need and keep them interested.

6. **Type size influences viewing behavior.**

Want to change how people look at your page? Change the size of your font. Smaller fonts increase focused viewing behavior while larger fonts encourage scanning. Depending on your needs, you may want more of one than the other.

7. **Users only look at a sub headline if it interests them.** Don't put in subheadlines just to stick to a particular format—make sure that they are relevant and interesting. You can also help yourself out by making sure they include keywords that will bring search engines to your site.

8. **People generally scan lower portions of the page.** You can use this to your advantage if you give readers something to latch onto when they're scanning your page. Highlight certain sections or create bulleted lists so information is easy to find and read on your page.

9. **Shorter paragraphs perform better than long ones.** Information on your page should be designed for the short attention span of most Internet users. Keep paragraphs and sentences short.

10. **One-column formats perform better in eye- fixation than multi-column formats.** Don't overwhelm visitors to your site with too much information. Simpler really is better in some cases. Multiple columns will more than likely be ignored by users, so eliminate clutter from the get-go.

11. **Bigger images get more attention.** If you are going to use images on your page, bigger is better. People are more interested in an image where they can see details and information clearly. Just make sure that any image you are using is particularly relevant to your text, otherwise it will most likely be ignored.

12. **Headings draw the eye.** One of the first things readers to look at on a webpage are head-

lines. Make sure yours are unobstructed by other items on the page and that they are engaging enough to draw the reader into looking further through your site.

13. **Users spend a lot of time looking at buttons and menus.** Because of this, you'll want to put in some extra time making sure that yours are well-designed. After all, they not only draw a lot of eye fixation, they are one of the most important elements of your site.

14. **Large blocks of text are avoided.** Studies have shown that that your average Web visitor isn't going to take the time to study large blocks of text no matter how informative or well-written they might be. Because of this, you need to break up these larger blocks of text into smaller paragraphs. Highlighting specific areas and pulling out bullet points can also help to keep user attention.

15. **Formatting can draw attention.** To keep users from skipping over the main and most important points in your content use bold, capitalized, italicized, colored, and underlined text. Use these things judiciously however, as too much will make your page hard to read and send readers away.

16. **White space is good.** While it might be tempting to put something in every corner of your page, it's actually better to leave some of your site free of any text. Sites with too much going on tend to overwhelm users and they ignored a large part of the content. So keep things simple and allow some visual open space for readers to rest their eyes.

17. **Navigation tools work better when placed at the top of the page.** Ideally, you don't want readers to just look at the initial page they came to on your site, you want them to stick around and look at other interesting things as well. You can help send them in the right direction by making your navigation easy to find and use by placing it at the top of the page.

~from VirtualHosting.Com



Consumer Trend for 2008—Snack Culture

There is a growing awareness among librarians that in order for libraries to thrive they need to market their services to potential customers using the same techniques employed by for-profit businesses. In order to do this, we need to be aware of the latest consumer trends in order to determine how we can model our services to match those trends. According to Trendwatching.com, one of the biggest trends for 2008 is something called “Snack Culture”. Snack Culture represents the 'transient sphere' on catering to consumers' insatiable craving for instant gratification. Snack Culture thus embodies the phenomenon of products, services and experiences becoming more temporary and transient; products that

are being packaged to be easier to digest, making it possible to collect even more experiences, as often as possible, in an even shorter timeframe. Snack Culture is not a 'new new' trend, but definitely one that is expected to grow next year.

How does this relate to libraries? Obviously you can't take all your books and package them into 100 page packets like the very popular 100 calorie snack packs but there are some things that can be done to provide that instant gratification thrill using products available through SAILS:

On-line patron registration – a small number of libraries in SAILS allow patrons to complete on-line patron registration forms but those forms don't interact with the Unicorn system and don't provide the person completing the form any access to our resources. We can now allow patrons to register on-line and immediately receive a temporary user id that would allow them to place holds, download Overdrive books, access online databases, etc. Lakeville Public Library has volunteered to test this new functionality and we will be reporting on it in the next few months.

On-line bill payment – it's 2 a.m. and a patron wants to download an audio book but he is blocked because he owe fines. Today the patron would have to wait until the library opens to clear the fine and then return home to download the book. With the E-commerce functionality in Unicorn, that patron could pay the outstanding fine, clear his record, and checkout the title 24x7 from home, work, etc. whether the library is open or closed.

Immediate gratification – Many people would rather buy a book than wait months for the library's copy. Rather than lose those potential patrons to other providers, we can provide a link to Amazon.com or Barnesandnoble.com directly from the catalog record in the OPAC – making the library catalog a user's first stop instead of the last stop. Combine that with enhanced content such as readers advisory services available through Novelist and users can get an immediate and rich online experience.

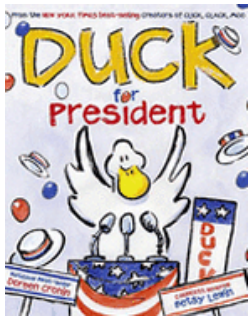
Video On Demand – There are an increasing number of services that allow people to download videos to their computer. Overdrive now offers downloadable video just as it offers download books. With the addition of this format to our existing content, patrons would have access to free video content just by having a library card.

Can you think of other services that can be offered or packaged to meet the instant gratification desires of so many people? Let us know how we can help you meet the latest 2008 trend.

Traveling for the Holidays? Bring along audio books the whole family can enjoy!

Almost all of the titles below are available for download through [Overdrive](#) and for loan in SAILS libraries. The nice part about these downloads is that they're small, since the play time is usually ten minutes or less. Click on the links to view holdings and place holds in iBistro. Overdrive records are not currently in the system, but when they become available, we'll be adding them into the SAILS catalog.

The links to the catalog were created using the [Link Builder](#) tool on the SAILS website.



Cronin, Doreen. [Click, clack, moo cows that type](#). [Weston, CT] : Weston Woods : Scholastic, 2001.

Cronin, Doreen. [Duck for President](#) [S.l.] : Weston Woods, p2004.

Hoban, Lillian. [Arthur's Christmas cookies](#) New York, NY : Caedmon, [1992], p1990.

Marcellino, Fred. [I, Crocodile](#) [Weston, CT] : Weston Woods ; [S.l.] : Scholastic, c2001.

Marshall, James, 1942-1992 [Merry Christmas, space case](#). New York : Dial Books for Young Readers, c1986.

McMullan, Kate. [I stink!](#) [New York] : Weston Woods Studios : Scholastic, c2004.

Moss, Lloyd. [Zin! zin! zin! a violin](#) [Weston, CT] : Weston Woods : Scholastic, 2001.

O'Connor, Jane. [Fancy Nancy](#). New York : HarperCollins, 2005.

O'Connor, Jane. [Fancy Nancy and the posh puppy](#). New York : HarperCollinsPublishers, 2007.

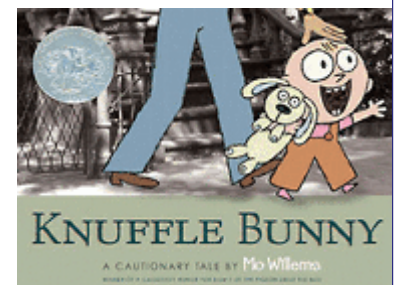
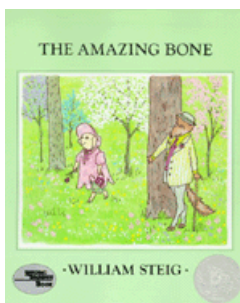
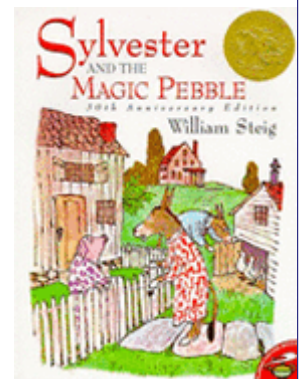
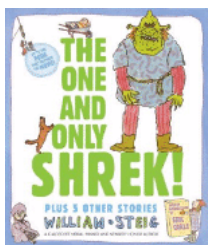
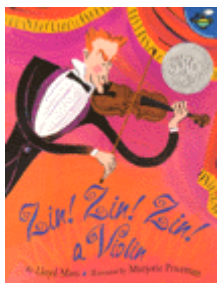
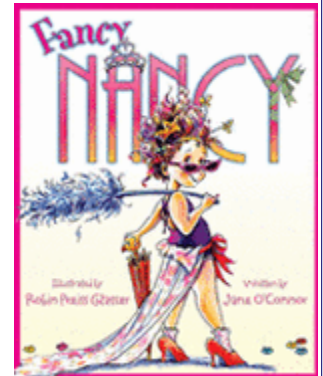
Osborne, Mary Pope. [Magic tree house collection](#). New York : Random House Audio, p2002.

Steig, William, 1907-2003 [The amazing bone](#) [Weston, CT] : Weston Woods, c1976.

Steig, William, 1907-2003. [The one and only Shrek! plus 5 other stories](#). New York : Audio Renaissance, p2007.

Steig, William, 1907-2003. [Sylvester and the magic pebble](#) [Weston, Conn.] : Weston Woods, c2004.

Willems, Mo. [Knuffle Bunny a cautionary tale](#). [Norwalk, CT] : Weston Woods, 2006.



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Upcoming Training & Meetings

Upcoming Training

Detailed descriptions and registration information, are available on the [SAILS website](#), including all the OverDrive sessions.

Serial Training (Java Client)—Full

12/6/2007
 9 am to noon, SAILS Meeting Room

Beginning Cataloging (Java Client)

12/11/2007
 9 am to noon, SAILS Meeting Room

Virtual Catalog Training

1/17/2008
 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, SAILS Meeting Room
 1 pm to 4 pm, SAILS Meeting Room

Upcoming Meetings & Events

SAILS Office closed: 12/24 @ noon, 12/25 & 01/01

SAILS Board Meeting

12/19/2007
 10 am to noon, SAILS Meeting Room

PubPac Meeting

01/07/2008
 10 am to 11:30 am, SAILS Meeting Room

Circulation Policy Committee

01/09/2008
 10 am to noon, SAILS Meeting Room

SAILS Membership Meeting

01/16/2008
 10 am to noon, SAILS Meeting Room

SAILS Network Statistics

	October '07	September '07	August '07	July '07	Total FY08
Total Intranetwork Loans	58,884	54,148	65,349	61,618	239,999
Total Items Circulated	378,790	346,764	402,127	418,201	1,547,592
OverDrive Circulation	730	681	710	691	2,812
VirtCat Items Borrowed	1,334	1,138	1,244	1,259	4,975
VirtCat Items Loaned	655	635	639	634	2,563
Cataloging Requests	4,297	3,132	3,563	2,632	13,624
WebDewey Sessions	124	90	91	80	385
MARC Records Added	4,062	3,229	3,804	2,811	13,906
Patrons Added	3,766	6,878	4,508	4,215	19,367
Holds	45,848	43,799	48,070	48,737	186,454
Total MARC	992,043	989,400	987,510	985,258	992,043
Total Holdings	3,508,705	3,496,507	3,490,470	3,485,377	3,508,705
Total Patron	432,165	430,581	436,020	443,269	432,165
Total Uptime	99.91	99.97	98.05	99.65	
TumbleBooks	2,025	1,849	3154		5,228