SAILS Network News

Library Network

Executive Director's Report
Good-bye 2005-Hello 2006!

As calendar year 2005 has ended we can look back at some very positive things that have taken place over the past 12 months. The SAILS Systems Staff completed an upgrade of all but one of our major servers – Sirsi production and test, Web server and Email server have all been replaced. This means our internal infrastructure is more than adequate to allow our members to move to the newest releases of software and expand web-based services to their patrons. SAILS negotiated a discounted price with Sirsi for the purchase of the Envisionware PC Reservation and Print Management software for 8 libraries in the network and we will be negotiating similar discounts for additional libraries in early 2006. In April we became the first network in Massachusetts to offer patrons access to downloadable audiobooks and e-books through Overdrive. After some effort we were able to upgrade our version of Unicorn which fixed some problems we had been having and provided some features not available before. Most important, we successfully completed our 5 year strategic plan based on extensive data gathering and input from member libraries and we have begun to make changes in order to improve the service we provide based on that input.

2006 is going to be another exciting year for the network. We are submitting a grant proposal for funds to upgrade our telecommunications network. For those libraries operating on 56K lines this means we will be able to upgrade you to much faster access and every site connecting to us through a Verizon line will have its equipment updated.

We are going to be moving to the latest release of Unicorn that provides a lot of features that we have been asking for. Some sample improvements you will see in iBistro are:

- The ability for patrons to set their own expiration and suspension dates for holds in iBistro.

- Patrons may edit their holds once they are placed, including pick-up locations and suspension dates.
- They will have the option to edit specific holds or all

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holds at one time.

- Patrons will be able to place holds from the hit list rather than having to look at the full details page, (as shown to the left).

There are many other new features that will be available for the staff as well and in the upcoming months we will be highlighting new circulation and cataloging features. As we are a Beta Test partner for this release we look forward to providing our members with a release that offers many of the features which have been requested in the past. As we work through the testing process we will be able to determine when we plan to install this release but at this point it probably won't be until mid-year.

We will be working hard to develop new training tools to help you make a smooth transition to the new Workflows client and will be seeking volunteers to pretest these tools. And as we have done in the past, we will be conducting lots of training sessions on how to use the new software before it is installed.

On behalf of the entire SAILS Network staff, I'd like to thank everyone in the network for your cooperation and good humor during the bumps of the past year. We are committed to improving the level of service we provide you in order to assist you in doing your own job more effectively.

2005 Enhancement Requests

Every year customers of SirsiDynix submit enhancement requests to a common website so other customers can view them and comment on them. In the fall, the enhancement requests that generated the most support are then posted for customers to select their top five enhancements per module. The SirsiDynix Software Development department then reviews the suggestions and decides if the suggestions can be implemented and in what time frame they can be put in place. The voting process has just completed and here are some of the top enhancement requests that were submitted to Sirsi:

Circulation:
#1   The ability to return to the User List when completing after modifying a User Record.
#2   The ability to return to a Search List after submitting a Patron Hold.
#3   In the RENEW USER CHARGES wizard, AND THE CHECKOUT wizard, staff should be notified if a shortened loan period due to imminent privilege expiration is about to occur.
#4   The User Name field becomes broken into separate files (surname, first name, middle name) instead of one text string to allow for better searching and sorting.
#5   Requiring UserCat's before a record can be filed.

Consortia Related:
#1   The ability for System Administrators to manage circulation and hold maps using tools such as Excel.
#2   The ability to run a report listing duplicate ISBN's.
#3   The ability to limit the number of holds by Item type.

2005 Enhancement Requests

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#4   The ability to generate a single report that sends out email notices with the return address of the patron's home library.

Cataloging:

#1   Have edition and format information display in the Search hit list.

There were also suggestions voted upon for iBistro and Reports but the results of the voting are not yet available.

We encourage you to use our suggestion box on the SAILS Staff website (sailsinc.org/network) to submit ideas you have for improving the Unicorn system or network policies. We implement the suggestions we can and submit the software suggestions to Sirsi for discussion. Some of our suggestions didn't even make it to the Enhancement process – SirsiDynix read them and said "good idea – we'll do that" so get your creative juices flowing and send us your ideas!

Envisionware Users Group Formed

SAILS is forming a users group for those libraries who are current subscribers of the Envisionware PC Reservation and Print Management products. The SAILS staff liaison is the network System Manager, Steve Wilson. The Users Group will meet for the first time on January 24 from 10 a.m. to noon. This meeting is restricted to current users of the product. For those libraries that did not purchase Envisionware but would like to attend a demonstration of the product, SirsiDynix will be conducting a half day session at SAILS in February – the final date is yet to be determined. At the same time we will be offering licenses for the products at a discounted price.

Meeting Cancellation Policy

With winter weather upon us, we know there will be times when the roads become too treacherous for travel. We have a large number of meetings scheduled this winter so we wanted to remind everyone about our meeting cancellation policy:

Meeting Cancellations

Meetings or workshops may be cancelled due to a system emergency or inclement weather. If the meeting is cancelled 24 hours or more before scheduled start time an email notice will be sent to the SAILS Universal email list.

Emergency weather cancellation procedures:

- After 7:00 a.m., a message on the answering machine of the SAILS office (508-946-8600) will update you on the status of meetings for that day.
- School snow closings in Middleborough will cause an automatic cancellation of meetings.

Please note that we have begun assigning snow dates for as many of the winter meetings as possible and those snow dates are identified on the calendar. People who are signed up for a workshop that has been cancelled will automatically be signed up for the next available workshop.

OCLC Perceptions Report

"Books" is the library brand. Information consumers like to self-serve.
These and other findings are presented in "**Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources**," a report issued December 6, 2005, by OCLC. The report, based on surveys of information users across six countries administered by Harris Interactive on behalf of OCLC, is a follow-up to the 2003 OCLC Environmental Scan: Pattern Recognition, a report that describes issues and trends that are impacting or will impact OCLC and libraries.

Awareness of electronic databases and electronic materials at the library is low. Awareness of library Web sites and online library catalogs is high. Respondents were asked to indicate if their library provides various types of electronic resources. Results indicate that awareness among respondents is low for most of the library's electronic resources. For example, 58 percent of all respondents are not sure if their library offers access to online databases. Of the eight library electronic resources evaluated, respondents show the highest level of awareness for the library Web site and online library catalog. At least 60 percent of respondents are aware of these resources. A slight majority (55 percent) of respondents are aware that their library has online reference materials. In the other five categories, most respondents are not sure if the library has the electronic resources. For example, only 38 percent of respondents indicate the library has audiobooks, and just 34 percent indicate they are aware that their library has electronic magazines/journals.

A typical response to the question *If you could provide one piece of advice to your library, what would it be* was

> "I think public libraries provide a very good service to the public but with using the computer it makes it easier for me to find information I would need on the Internet without having to leave my house."

If you haven't read the report, take a minute to either download the report (free) or purchase a copy, and peruse it with a highlighter. The results may surprise you. Copies of the report are available at http://www.oclc.org/reports/2005perceptions.htm.

Information Consumers' Perceptions and Habits
#### (from the OCLC Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources (2005)

- Respondents use search engines to begin an information search (84 percent). One percent begin an information search on a library Web site.
- Quality and quantity of information are top determinants of a satisfactory information search.
- Search engines are rated higher than librarians.
- The criterion selected by most information consumers to evaluate electronic resources is that the information is worthwhile. Free is a close second. Speed has less impact.
- Respondents do not trust purchased information more than free information. The verbatim comments suggest a high expectation of free information.
- Library users like to self-serve. Most respondents do not seek assistance when using library resources.
- Library card holders use information resources more than non-card holders, and they are more favorably disposed to libraries than non-card holders.
- Age matters sometimes. Sometimes it doesn't. Responses are sometimes consistent across U.S. age groups, suggesting age-independent preferences and practices. Familiarity with e-mail is an example. In other areas, responses vary considerably by the age of the respondents. For example, young U.S. respondents are much less likely than those over 65 to agree librarians add value to the information search process.
- The survey results are generally consistent across the geographic regions surveyed. Responses from the United Kingdom showed the largest range of variations from other regions surveyed.

Group Purchase Opportunities

SAILS will be submitting a Shopper Card order on January 31 for interested libraries. The Shopper Card set includes a wallet library card and key chain card preprinted with a patron barcode and individual library name address and telephone number.

Delivery of the cards should be mid-March so if you have purchased these in the past it is an ideal time to check your inventory. If you have never purchased these in the past, patron response has been very positive and the barcodes are more durable than using barcode labels.

We will also be submitting an order for book and patron barcode labels on January 31. There is no minimum order for an individual library but we must submit an order for a total of 25,000 labels in order to ensure the price of $16.67 per thousand plus shipping.
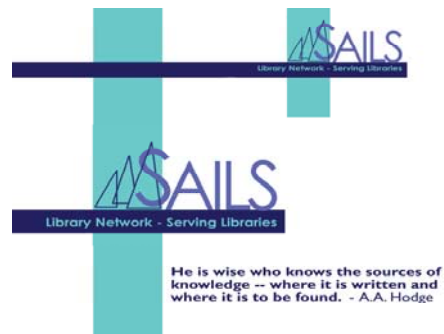
Orders should be submitted using the SAILS Order Form on our website at http://sailsinc.org/forms/order_form.asp. To submit an order for shopper cards select the option for Patron Cards with your library's name. When submitting an order for barcodes please enter a specific quantity. We don't know how many are on a roll.

If you have questions about any of these items, please call or email Debby Conrad (dconrad@sailsinc.org) before submitting your order.

If I still worked in a library...

I'd create a temporary online exhibit for The Incredibles

Today I saw a headline from my RSS feed for Slashdot which told about a new MoMA exhibit for Pixar called, "Pixar: 20 Years of Animation". The Slashdot comment told of a downloadable audio track (PodCast) you can listen to on your MP3 player while walking through the exhibit. You can listen to a shortened version of the exhibit online, with an audio track that gives a little taste of what you'd find at the museum. I went into iTunes and did a search for moma and found the podcast which they have listed and available as a free subscription. I subscribed and saw that they have an audio file for each digital painting on exhibit. I downloaded a few to listen to and they're actually the same audio tracks they have in their online exhibit. I also noticed in iTunes that, for $1.99, you can download a short film from Pixar. The Pixar website has a cool set of slides which shows and tells the process of creating a animated film.

So, now that I gathered my materials:
MoMA's online exhibit—http://www.moma.org/exhibitions/2005/pixar.html
Pixar's "How We Do It" show—http://www.pixar.com/howwedoit/index.html
My purchased Short Film; Jack-Jack Attack
Appropriate audio files; Pixar 678 Story - The Incredibles, Pixar 679 Color Scripts - The Incredibles, Pixar 684 World Works-- The Incredibles

If I worked at a library, I'd devote a listening station for people to view the short film and listen to the corresponding, appropriate audio file. I'd then create a website that is actually on the computer, rather than on a web server. This could be done simply by using text links to the files stored on the computer, or as graphical web page, complete with previews of the animated short.

~ Laurie

SAILS Staff

Debby Conrad, Executive Director
dconrad@sailsinc.org
(508) 946-8600 x11

Laurie Lessner, Manager of Electronic Services
llessner@sailsinc.org
(508) 946-8600 x30

Todd Mercer, Systems Associate
tmercer@sailsinc.org
(508) 946-8600 x14

Jennifer Michaud, Network Cataloger
jmichaud@sailsinc.org
(508) 946-8600 x15

Kristin Slater, Manager of Bibliographic Services
kslater@sailsinc.org
(508) 946-8600 x13

Claudette Tobin, Cataloging Associate II
claudette@sailsinc.org
(508) 946-8600 x16

Steve Wilson, Systems Manager
swilson@sailsinc.org
(508) 946-8600 x12

Upcoming Training & Meetings

Upcoming Training

Detailed descriptions and registration information, are available on the SAILS website.

Beginning Cataloging Training
01/23/2006
9 am SAILS Meeting Room

Upcoming Meetings & Events

PubPac Meeting
01/04/2006
9:30 am SAILS Meeting Room

Circulation Meeting
01/10/2006
9:30 am SAILS Meeting Room

TixKeeper Demo
01/17/2006
10 am SAILS Meeting Room

SAILS Membership Meeting
01/17/2006
11 am SAILS Meeting Room

Tech Services Meeting
01/18/2006
10 am—noon SAILS Meeting Room

Envisionware Users' Group
01/24/2006
10 am—noon SAILS Meeting Room

SAILS Network Statistics

FY06 Overview	December	November	October	September	August	July	Total FY06
Total Intranetwork Loans		46,823	51,855	50,257	54,680	41,289	244,904
Total Items Circulated		337,987	365,704	346,568	407,995	366,421	1,824,675
OverDrive Circulation		292	290	252	249	235	1,318
VirtCat Items Borrowed		869	905	974	986	774	4,508
VirtCat Items Loaned		376	422	493	456	286	2,033
Cataloging Requests		2,776	2,821	3,213	3,089	2,227	14,272
WebDewey Sessions		75	101	78	57	83	394
MARC Records Added		3,870	3,911	4,102	4,021	2,638	18,542
Patrons Added		3,229	5,051	6,607	5,175	2,977	23,039
Holds		36,442	39,072	34,240	37,812	29,586	177,152
Total MARC		939,503	937,387	935,599	933,555	931,459	
Total Holdings		3,389,617	3,382,767	3,378,431	3,374,787	3,367,637	
Total Patron		530,282	528,807	526,471	523,262	522,864	