SAILS Network News
Library Network

Broadband For Libraries

The Need for Broadband for Integrated Library System Applications
(an excerpt from a presentation at the Massachusetts Opportunity Online Summit)

Until recently the inclusion of Integrated Library Systems (ILS) in a discussion of the need for broadband at the library would not have been considered. Typically the ILS was a locally housed system with the vast majority of the activity being carried on within the library building or via leased private data circuits.   But that type of traffic is shifting from private to public networks. How libraries access their ILS, how libraries connect to vendors for support services, and a change in user expectation about the types of information that should be represented in the public catalog is creating a demand for broadband that can support all types of library applications.

The SAILS Library Network provides a broad range of computer based services to 50 public library services outlets located in 38 communities in Southeastern Massachusetts. Demand for broadband access has never been greater as the economy has soured and the public's use of library Internet access has grown. For many of our libraries staff functions are competing with public Internet usage using private leased lines that connect to the Internet at the SAILS central site. This means a single data circuit is being used for circulation, cataloging, and acquisitions as well as supporting catalog searching and public computing. For the lucky libraries that have separate Internet connections they can separate staff activities from public computing. Regardless of network topology we have noted during peak times our usage can reach 95% of capacity.

We anticipate that the need for bandwidth will grow within the next several years. ILS software is moving towards the Software as a Service model. Soon the ILS software will not be locally hosted but be in a server farm only accessible via Internet. This means that browser based staff clients will be connecting staff workstations to a central computer system via broadband. This eliminates the need to support dedicated data circuits connecting to a central computer center but it puts a greater burden on the libraries' internet connection.

Added to that new demand for a robust broadband connection is the fact that libraries are becoming increasingly dependent upon the Internet for day to day operations - to connect to book distributors, database and electronic content providers, and interlibrary loan services.

The model for library staff training will be changing. Very few libraries have sufficient staff to allow them to leave work for hours to travel to another location for training. On

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demand web-based training may prove to be the only cost effective method to ensure that staff members are comfortable with new technologies and services. This type of web-based training can incorporate You-tube video training clips, voice over IP teleconferencing, and interactive instant messaging.

These demands for broadband will be competing with the 21st century OPACS, or User Discovery Platforms. In October 2008 the SAILS Library Network was awarded a grant to evaluate Web 2.0 User Discovery products. The ultimate goal of the grant is to select the product that most closely matches patrons' expectations. The network posted a survey on its current online catalog to ask patrons how they used the existing product and what they would like in a new product. More than 5,600 patrons responded with ideas and suggestions. This survey was then followed with a series of focus groups asking patrons to comment on their expectations when using the online catalog. A total of 62 participants in 5 locations participated in the focus groups. The participants included students and faculty from a community college and public library patrons ranging in age and varying levels of computer expertise. The common denominator was that all participants were users of our existing catalog and had volunteered to participate in focus group.

The SAILS results mirrored a similar study conducted by OCLC in May 2008 (OCLC Study - Online Catalogs.) It was very clear that a traditional OPAC containing only bibliographic descriptions of materials held by the library was no longer acceptable.   Users expect information elements beyond author, title and subject. They want to be able to view tables of contents, summaries, excerpts and cover art. They want to view video and sound clips for media owned by the library. They want more links to full-text content. Users were particularly interested in seeing online reviews and ratings and they wanted to be able to contribute their own opinions about what they have read.   They also expect the inclusion of a "did you mean" function to help them when they are unsure of spelling and terms. In March 2009 50 percent of the catalog searches with zero results on the SAILS opac failed because of spelling errors.   In evaluating all the patron comments it was clear Google and Amazon have shaped their expectations and a common comment was "they do it why can't you?"

To provide this type of enhanced search experience, we will have to expand our current catalog enhancement subscriptions to include much more bandwidth intensive content. We are also adding a subscription service that can take failed searches and provide real-time spell checking. During a thirty day trial period SAILS averaged 4900 queries to the spell-check service per day. In a typical month SAILS users search the catalog 184,600 times from within one of our member libraries. With the new user discovery platform that we will be launching each one of those searches could be pulling in data from several sources to obtain enhanced content and some of that content could include streaming media. Each one of our member libraries will need to have sufficient bandwidth to ensure acceptable response time to their patrons who are searching the new user interface.

Within a single building a library's broadband connection can be used for voice over IP telephone service, catalog access which includes plug-ins to various service providers, technical service activities, circulation, staff training, public computing with its heavy demands for streaming media and Wifi connectivity for patrons with their own computing devices. All of these activities take place simultaneously and all of them are mission critical.

The 21st century public library is more heavily dependent upon the Internet than ever before. For the first time internal operations require the same type of robust connectivity as public services. In order for libraries to continue to provide the services their users expect, they must have access to reliable and affordable broadband offering them the bandwidth necessary to meet all of their needs.

Returning items from decertified libraries—reminder

While it is true that patrons from decertified libraries may not check out items from most of the public libraries in the network they are able to RETURN items to any library in the network. When you discharge the item it will be sent to the proper destination and all decertified libraries still receive delivery from SEMLS.

Tools you Can Use to Promote your Events and Library.

Facebook: SAILS has a page on Facebook. If you're on Facebook, do a search for SAILS, Inc. and look under "pages". You should be able to find it. If you find it, become a fan! If you become a fan, you can post events, news stories, etc. about your library! The postings get broadcast to all of the other fans of the SAILS page! Currently, the Lakeville Call is a fan and if more people become fans, your message can get to lots of people.

Calendar widget: want your patrons to be able to get your calendar feed on their Facebook profile, in iGoogle, MyYahoo, etc? If you give me the URL of the RSS feed you have with EventKeeper (or other calendar feed you have), I'll add it to the SAILS calendar widget. Currently the only libraries I have are the Holmes Library and Norfolk because Ric from Plymoth Rocket was nice enough to set these up for me to use for testing. If you want me to set this up for you, please let me know.

The widget is available at: http://sailsinc.org/LibraryAnnouncements.asp

You can see how it works. The tabs will be in alphabetical order and when they get to large for the window, I'll figure something else out.

An interesting SEMLS event (online) is the Facebook Users Group on 7/15. More info is at: http://tinyurl.com/qxnhku

So, if you're interested in making use of some of these tools, let me know and I'll be happy to help you set things up for you or a staff member. Good, cheap (inexpensive) publicity!

~ Laurie Lessner

llessner@sailsinc.org

Proper formatting of email addresses

We are going to be relying much more heavily on email notification for holds, overdues, etc. in order to cut back on postage costs. I have noticed a large number of these notices bouncing because the patron's email address is improperly formatted. Please note the following:

1. Never enter a space within an email address. Email addresses must be one string of characters. For example jsmith family@aol.com should have been entered jsmithfamily@aol.com.

2. Email addresses must enter in a .net or .com or .edu or .gov etc. If you enter an email address that just consists of the user's name it won't be delivered.

3. Don't enter anything but a valid email address in the email field. Never enter the word None or NO EMAIL in the email field. Don't enter telephone numbers in the email field.

4. Check your typing before you file the patron's record. If you enter more than one @ sign in the record it can cause major system problems when we try to send email to that person. There have been a number of records filed with Comcast and Verizon spelled incorrectly.

The SAILS staff try to monitor bounced email messages and we also try to scan the patron database for obvious mistakes but we can't keep up with the volume. Please ask everyone who enters patron information to be very careful and double check their work. If you notice an email address entered incorrectly, please help out and fix it.

Free Audiobook Software Expands iPod® Compatibility at Libraries and Retailers

OverDrive-supplied best-selling downloads from Stephenie Meyer, Nora Roberts, James Patterson, and more to play on Apple® devices

(Cleveland, OH) - May 27, 2009 - OverDrive (www.overdrive.com) today announced that digital audiobook catalogs from leading publishers will be compatible with iPod® and other Apple® devices after a simple upgrade of OverDrive's free, easy-to-use audiobook software. Starting in mid-June, millions of new and existing users with Windows® PCs will be able to install OverDrive Media Console version 3.2 with enhanced transfer functionality for iPod, iPhone^{TM}, iPod touch®, and iPod nano®, as well as Zune® and thousands of other portable devices. Participating publishers include Random House Audio, Hachette Audio, Penguin Audio, BBC Audiobooks America, Brilliance Audio, Tantor Media, and many more.

OverDrive Media Console's enhanced Transfer Wizard will expand the largest selection of iPod-compatible audiobook titles for libraries by making the vast majority of existing audiobook titles on library download websites playable on Apple® devices. Retail customers at Borders.com, WHSmith.co.uk, and BooksOnBoard.com will also benefit from the free upgrade. Best sellers such as Stephenie Meyer's "Twilight," Malcolm Gladwell's "Outliers," John Grisham's "The Appeal," and Chuck Palahniuk's "Pygmy" from libraries and retailers in OverDrive's global network will become iPod-compatible downloads, along with highly-anticipated releases like Dan Brown's "The Lost Symbol" and Tami Hoag's "The Trouble with J.J."

"iPod-compatibility instantly adds value to digital media catalogs powered by OverDrive and further expands the collection to the millions of iPod owners eager to download from the library," said David Burleigh, director of marketing for OverDrive. "A simple software upgrade is all it takes to allow the transfer of thousands of additional bestsellers to the popular media player."

Once OverDrive Media Console version 3.2 is installed, most titles in a library's OverDrive **WMA Audiobook collection will instantly become iPod-compatible for users with Windows PCs**. The growing collection of iPod-compatible, Mac®-friendly OverDrive MP3 Audiobooks will still be available to help libraries better serve patrons with Apple computers.

OverDrive Media Console version 3.2 provides a superior audiobook listening experience with easy-to-use navigation features and expanded support for direct transfer to iPod, Zune, Creative players, and thousands of other devices. OverDrive music and video downloads from the library are also optimized for use on the OverDrive Media Console. Windows PC users can obtain the new version of the free software when it is released through their library's download website or at http://overdrive.com/software/omc.

OverDrive provides download services for more than 8,500 libraries, retailers, and schools worldwide with support for PC, Mac, iPod, Sony® Reader, and virtually any MP3 player. To see if your public library is a member of the OverDrive network, visit http://search.overdrive.com. OverDrive also operates the Digital Bookmobile (www.digitalbookmobile.com), a high-tech 18-wheeler traveling North America on behalf of public libraries to raise awareness about free library downloads.

Attention OverDrive Library Partners!
'Outreach Program' Contest

Promote your OverDrive download collection-
Win prizes for best campaigns
Promoting your download collection inside and outside the library is essential to increasing awareness and circulation. OverDrive is offering an opportunity to win a $2,500 collection credit and a case of MP3 players for doing just that. We want to see how your library is promoting your OverDrive download collection in the library and around your community. Creativity counts!

Who can participate?
Open to all OverDrive partner libraries, including main and branch locations, as well as libraries participating in an OverDrive shared collection.

What are the prizes?
We will be awarding prizes to the libraries with the most effective and creative campaigns. Examples include, but are not limited to, an in library display, website link, social networking campaign, patron training session, school program, and many more.
Grand Prize: $2,500 collection credit,
10 Creative MP3 players
2nd Place: $1,500 collection credit
3rd Place: $1,000 collection credit
4th Place: $750 collection credit
5th Place: $500 collection credit

Winners may also be featured at the OverDrive Booth at ALA Annual 2009 and the next Digipalooza user group conference.

How can my library enter the competition?
Email a picture, link, document, or presentation to show us how you are promoting your download collection to partnerservices@overdrive.com by **Tuesday, June 30**. Please include your library name, OverDrive system or consortium you are participating in, and an explanation of your campaign.

Get going
Don't miss this opportunity to participate in a fun contest that will raise awareness about your download collection, and you just might win. Remember, the deadline to enter is **Tuesday, June 30**.

Questions?
If you have questions or need more information, please contact your Partner Services Associate or partnerservices@overdrive.com.

Happy Outreach!
The OverDrive Partner Services Team

Here are some examples:

St. Charles City-County Library District (MO)
Inside the Library Displays

Delaware County Library System (PA)
Outside the Library Delivery Van

Outside the LibraTacoma Public Library (WA)
Website Promotion

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Upcoming Events

- 6/2/2009 **Technical Services Meeting**
  10 am to noon, SAILS

- 6/9/2009 **Circulation Users Group Meeting**
  9:30 am to noon, SAILS

- 6/17/2009 **SAILS Membership Meeting**
  10 am to noon, SAILS

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

Network Statistics

	April '08	April '09	Total FY'09
Total Intranetwork Loans	59,834	58,348	594,742
Total Items Circulated	366,575	381,169	3,812,419
OverDrive Circulation	837	1,281	10,547
Tumblebooks	1,692	1,396	29,433
VirtCat Items Borrowed	1,020	1,188	11,396
VirtCat Items Loaned	612	604	5,713
Cataloging Requests	4,449	3,845	43,616
WebDewey Sessions	105		779
MARC Records Added	4,001	3,973	41,617
Patrons Added	3,003	3,445	38,245
Patron placed holds	47,493	46,850	489,313
Total MARC	1,001,459	1,068,683	
Total Holdings	3,509,703	3,630,694	
Total Patron	415,610	436,557	
Total Uptime	99.99	99.99	

June 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				