MLN News
December 2001—January 2002

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Thoughts About Technology Planning—an opinion
Our business strategies and our selection of library-management-tools are guided by what we want our libraries to *do* and *be* for our communities. Computers, software, and data or voice networks are several types of tools we use to fulfill business requirements, that is, delivering library services and materials to our users. When all is working like it should be, users' needs drive our business planning, and business planning in turn guides our technology planning.

Sometimes it's easier to talk about ends rather than means, the piano rather than the music. It's intriguing but misdirected to focus on the Web, integrated library systems, data communications, etc., to the exclusion of thinking about what our users need. As MLN works to prepare its new five-year plan, I'll trust you, the Montana library community, to concentrate our thinking on the music. /s/ Bruce

OCLC Cost-Sharing Proposal
First, a little background: MLN has negotiated a three-year deal with OCLC for cataloging and interlibrary loan services. We are in year-one; next year, fiscal year 2003 (FY03) will be the second of this multi-year contract. The cost-sharing proposal pertains to FY03 and FY04, although the Networking Task Force may recommend that we modify the formula in FY04 to reflect what we've learned in FY03.

There are two kinds of OCLC libraries in Montana, libraries who contribute original cataloging to the OCLC WorldCat database (we call these 'full cataloging libraries') and libraries that use WorldCat for copy cataloging (these are called 'CatExpress libraries'). Copy cataloging is the process of 'grabbing' MARC (MAchine Readable Cataloging) records and downloading them to add to a local online catalog, or to produce printed catalog cards.

We have agreed to pay OCLC about $467,000 in FY03. About three-quarters of this amount, let's say $347,000 is paid by full cataloging libraries, their participation in this statewide contract gives them a discount over what they would have paid had they purchased these services elsewhere. CatExpress libraries pay the remainder, approximately $120,000. Prior use determines how the $347,000 is split up among full

cataloging libraries; the cost sharing formula described below determines how the remaining $120,000 is divided among CatExpress libraries.

The Networking Task Force's goal is to divide these CatExpress libraries costs in a manner that is:

- Fair to each library (the old formula was based on how many copies of LaserCat your library had been receiving)
- Affordable for all participating libraries
- Sufficient to the task of meeting our obligation to OCLC

For CatExpress libraries, the new formula breaks costs into a base rate added to an amount based on the number of cataloging-related transactions.

Base rates vary by the size of the library, based on their number of users. The base rate for smaller libraries is proposed to be $350, for larger libraries $500. Libraries are compared to other similar-typed libraries, differentiating larger academic libraries from smaller academic libraries, larger public libraries from smaller public libraries, and so forth. We have used the following median user populations to divide libraries by size:

Academic	425 enrollment
Public	3,134 service area population
School	303 enrollment
Special	300 users (estimated)

We estimate that we will raise about $80,000 from base rate moneys; this leaves approximately $40,000 to raise from libraries' proportional share of OCLC transactions.

Transactions include all of last year's (FY01's) CatExpress transactions (essentially, every time the ENTER key is pressed), plus adding holdings using LaserCat. Interlibrary loan or deleting holdings *are not* included in this formula.

Libraries' OCLC costs are a combination of base rate *plus* transactions. 'Normal' (non-retrospective conversion) use of CatExpress should add a modest transaction-related amount to their base rate. Heavy use of CatExpress as a retrospective conversion (RECON) tool can add considerable costs for those libraries involved in big RECON projects; this is money well spent, but can be a significant cost nevertheless.

We plan on posting anticipated costs after we've reviewed this model and our data. Notice for this posting will first be sent out over the wired-mt mail list. You can find information about subscribing to wired-mt at:
http://montanalibraries.org/MLNWiredMTFAQ.htm

Shared Catalog Status
As you probably know, the Western Montana Shared Catalog Project folks picked Sirsi, over Endeavor and epixtech, for their shared catalog. As of this writing (11/16/01) the contract is not finalized; we are discussing final wording of the contract. I expect this issue will be resolved in early December, and the contract signed.

Suzanne Reymer and Bruce Newell will be traveling in eastern Montana with Rick Branham, Sirsi's Montana representative, demonstrating the Sirsi product. We are scheduled to be in Lewistown Wednesday, November 28, and in Miles City on Friday,

November 30. All are welcome to attend these demonstrations, which will be held at the public libraries.

A modest proposal: Since the Western Montana Shared Catalog Project will soon include libraries from across the state, perhaps it should be renamed. I have tentatively begin calling it the "Montana Shared Catalog".

MLN Gateway Move

Mike Price, MLN's IT Guy, has moved the MLN Gateway, our OCLC SiteSearch application and the software we use to present the MLN Gateway, onto a new server. We're sharing space with the Discover Montana site, and we are very pleased with the performance of the SiteSearch application. We are equally delighted by how easy it has been working with Information Technology Services Division, part of the Montana Department of Administration. Special thanks to Dawn Pizzinni and Benny Helms.

WorldCat Use Statistics

Reporting Period: March 2001—September 2001

OCLC FirstSearch Usage Statistics

Reporting Period: September 2001

Overview--Inst Lvl--Sub/Hyb Indv Acct

Institution : MONTANA STATE LIBR
Symbol : MZB

	Sep	Aug	Jul	History Jun	May	Apr	Mar
Authorizations	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sessions	941	932	837	742	960	816	743
Session Turnaways	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
% Session Turnaways	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Searches	3056	2802	2217	2288	2780	2359	2397
Documents Ordered	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Port Limit	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Avg Ports	2.46	2.40	2.24	2.08	2.40	2.43	2.31
Max Ports	10	9	8	8	9	8	10
Port Capacity 0 - 25%	58.87	62.12	64.64	71.43	61.46	59.93	65.28
Port Capacity 26 - 50%	37.41	34.01	33.33	26.42	35.10	37.01	31.36
Port Capacity 51 - 75%	3.19	3.22	1.79	1.89	2.81	2.70	2.15
Port Capacity 76 - 99%	0.43	0.64	0.24	0.27	0.63	0.37	0.67
Port Capacity 100%	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.54

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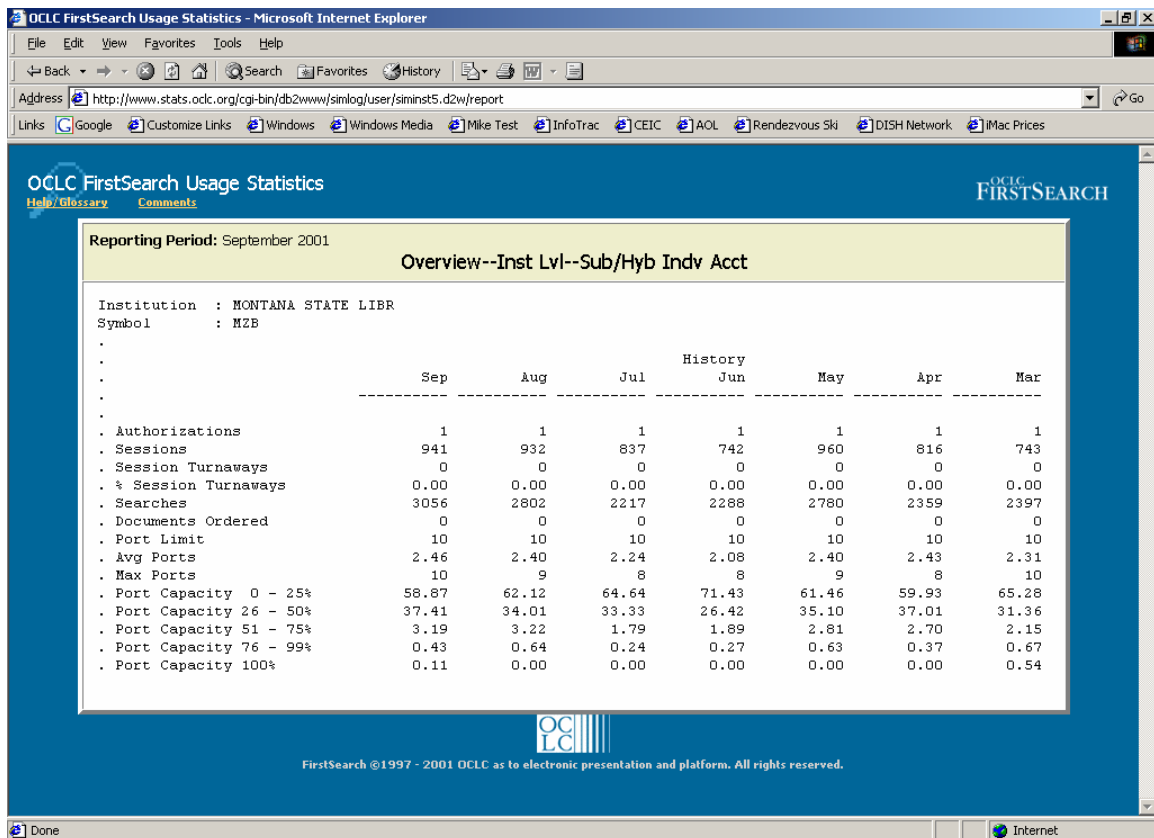
Figure One: Screenshot from OCLC report

As you can see from the figure above, search activity is steadily increasing. While we turned no one away from WorldCat, on average we used an increasing amount of our ten available simultaneous sessions. This is a good thing and supports what I hear from Montana librarians; folks are finding WorldCat and finding it useful. October statistics are not yet available, I'll be anxious to see if this trend continues.

Statistics Input Online
Mike Price has been working with Diane Gunderson, building an online means for public libraries to enter their annual statistics. It should be available in December 2001. Montana public libraries will be able to enter these statistics using the same Internet address and passwords they use to update their Montana Library Directory information: http://montanalibraries.org/Directory/mldHome.asp We hope libraries find this process to be more efficient than filling out paper forms. Down the road, libraries will be able to query this information and find, for example, tables comparing materials budgets or circulation counts for similar-sized libraries.

Training
The MLN/OCLC training sessions are winding down for the fall. The biggest attendance, relative to classroom size, was at the Dawson Community College site during mid-November.

Class Name	Totals	Dawson Community College	Great Falls Public Library	Manhattan School	Missoula Public Library	MSU-Billings Library	The Summit in Kalispell
CatExpress	99	22	23	12	20	13	9
ILL Protocols	81	18	20	11	16	8	8
MLN Gateway & WorldCat	95	21	22	12	16	10	14
Web-Based ILL	122	24	28	21	21	17	11

We learned several things this year, or, at least, we invite your comment on the following tentative conclusions regarding training:

- Taking training to trainees is a great idea
- The eastern part of Montana really wants training opportunities
- Small classes are good classes
- Five solid days of classes makes one weak; we should limit training to one- or two-day sessions
- It might be useful to have separate sessions for beginners and more advanced practitioners of the library arts
- Fast, reliable, and affordable Internet connections are an absolute requirement
- All the class laptops have to be fast enough to keep up with the instructor, and others in the class
- Montana librarians value humor and flexibility on the part of the instructor
- On-site follow-ups from consultants do a lot to cement classroom learning

Planning status
We are making progress on the Montana State Library long-range plan, of which the MLN plan is a component. We will post a draft on the MLN web site (http://montanalibraries.org) in January or early-February.

Next NTF meeting
January 7, 2002, at the State Library in Helena. This meeting promises to feature the final OCLC FY2003 cost-sharing discussion, and, will hopefully result in a recommendation as to how MLN should proceed in fulfilling its OCLC contract obligations.

Recipes from Training [from Andrine Haas, Dawson Community College]
"I was asked to post the following recipes to wired-MT, both were served during breaks in the MLN/OCLC training held here in Glendive last week. And it was great training -- Thanks Sam and Suzanne!!"

Cookie Dough Brownies

2 c. sugar
1-1/2 c. flour
1/2 c. cocoa
1/2 tsp. salt
1 c. oil
4 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla
1/2 c. chopped walnuts

Combine sugar -- salt. Add oil, eggs, and vanilla; beat at medium speed 3 minutes. Stir in nuts. Pour into greased 9"x13" pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Cool completely.

Filling:
1/2 c. margarine
1/2 c. brown sugar
1/4 c. sugar
2 Tblsp. milk
1 tsp. vanilla
1 c. flour

Cream margarine and sugars. Add milk and vanilla and mix. Add flour and beat well. Spread over cooled brownies. Chill until firm.

Glaze:
1 c. semisweet chocolate chips
1 Tblsp. shortening
3/4 c. chopped walnuts

Melt chocolate and shortening until smooth. Spread over filling. Sprinkle with nuts, pressing down slightly. Chill. Can be cut fairly small --they're rich.

Seasoned Pretzel Mix

24 oz. pretzel rods, broken into bite-sized pieces**
1 12-oz. bottle Orville Rederbacher butter-flavored popcorn oil
1 pkg. Hidden Valley Ranch original dressing mix (I use the one you mix with buttermilk)
1 tsp. garlic salt

Mix oil, dry dressing mix, and garlic salt. Pour over pretzels in a large pan. Bake one hour at 250 degrees, stirring every 15 minutes. Drain on paper towels, if desired.

** I use about 10 oz. of the pretzel rods (or bite size pieces, if you can find them) and fill in the rest with broken melba toast, mini twisted pretzels, tiny Ritz crackers, Chex cereal, oyster crackers, or whatever else I have on hand.