



20 November 2007

OCLC MEMBERS COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

TO: OCLC Members Council Delegates, Alternates,
and Network and Service Center Executive Directors
C: OCLC Board of Trustees, Strategic Leadership Team, and Staff
FROM: Richard Van Orden, Program Director, Members Council
SUBJECT: Minutes of October 2007 Members Council Meeting

Introduction

With President Sandy Yee (MLC) presiding, more than 225 delegates, alternates, Board members, network and service center directors, guests, and OCLC staff convened 21-23 October at the Members Council Meeting in Dublin, Ohio. This meeting's purpose was to discuss innovation in the creation and delivery of information services within the framework of the annual theme of "***Moving Forward with New Understanding: Our OCLC Collaborative, Its Services and Each Other.***" With a meeting focus of "***Our Governance Structure — where do we go from here?***," delegates also discussed the ongoing work of the Governance Committee and reacted to recent developments and reports related to network and service center distribution of OCLC services.

The Global Discussion Group, Executive Committee, the Finance and Nominating committees, and New Delegate Orientation met during the afternoon prior to the Opening General Session that started at 6:00 p.m. on 21 October. Library and service groups also convened during the three days. (Video webcasts, audio podcasts, minutes, and presentation slides of various discussions are available on the Members Council website at <http://www.oclc.org/memberscouncil> under past meetings, 2007-2008.)

Members Council Business

Representing the Task Force on E-book Integration, Chair Patrick Wilkinson (WILS) introduced the following resolution on Sunday evening, 21 October. At the Business Meeting on 23 October, the resolution was passed unanimously by delegates.

Members Council Resolution for OCLC Global Collaborative Actions on E-books

WHEREAS, it is a key objective of OCLC to become the premiere e-content provider of choice and that global collaboration for that purpose is beneficial to libraries, museums, archives, similar institutions and their users; and

WHEREAS, the OCLC Executive Committee of Members Council charged the Task Force on the Integration of E-books to investigate how libraries and OCLC can best integrate e-books into library services and collections; and

WHEREAS, the Google Library Project and other mass digitization efforts will transform the discovery and delivery of books, the traditional library brand; and developments among publishers and vendors in the commercial e-book market show renewed efforts to make e-books a robust format; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force on the Integration of E-books produced a report that was reviewed and discussed by Members Council at the May 2007 meeting,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Members Council recommends the OCLC Strategic Leadership Team carefully analyze the document and report back to Council by May 2008 on the following action items:

1. **E-content Synchronization Program.** OCLC's interest in e-books extends beyond its interest in NetLibrary. Its efforts in its e-content synchronization are important and should be encouraged. OCLC should leverage the maximum advantage from this program for the benefit of the OCLC Cooperative and libraries worldwide.

2. **NetLibrary.** It is critical that OCLC thoroughly evaluate NetLibrary's current effectiveness, content and access strategies, and position in the marketplace. One goal should be to "simplify and unify" the e-content made available. It should make changes so OCLC can be a world leader in the provision of e-content. This evaluation is vital and needs to be done as quickly as possible.

3. **E-Content Advisory Council.** OCLC must quickly establish an advisory council for e-content. The council should include broad representation.

4. **Audio Books.** The investigation of audio books was outside the charge of the Task Force. Yet, it is clear that there is a growing market for audio content. OCLC should investigate creative methods to provide this content to users in the most convenient means possible.

5. **Leadership Role.** The lack of interoperability is a major obstacle to the robust acceptance and use of e-books. OCLC should play a leadership role in facilitating the implementation of e-book standards across the marketplace that would lead to greater interoperability of e-book formats and reading devices.

Information 3.0

Stephen Abram, Vice President of Innovation at SirsiDynix, opened the meeting with a provocative presentation titled, "Information 3.0—What's Next?" in which he challenged delegates to embrace new technologies and new ways of thinking to reshape the future of libraries. Mr. Abram is a noted library thought leader with extensive experience in library technology and trend forecasting, new product conceptualization and market development. He has more than 25 years in libraries as a practicing librarian and in the information industry.

Mr. Abram described baby boomers as the “whiniest generation,” and noted that his grandparents lived through two world wars, a depression, interstate highways, refrigeration, electricity, television, airplanes—so double-clicking on the Internet is just not that hard in comparison.

Still, he noted that the pattern for libraries and learning is changing, “and OCLC, SirsiDynix, some of the bigger cooperatives and some of the bigger networks have got to take a leadership position” in this change.

“I think we look too much at the trees instead of the forest,” said Mr. Abram. “How do we create a learning experience? How do we make learning happen? Now that we know we inherit a suite of learning styles on our genome—in that mathematicians inherit their mathematical ability, actors inherit their acting ability—and we’re sitting there with our little cohort of friends in the library world who are all text-based learners, trying to build text-based systems and text-based repositories, and text-based Web sites and text-based search engines” to address these learning needs.

He suggested that libraries need to focus on how people are learning and how they want to learn so that libraries can provide the right environment to facilitate learning.

“Are we actually thinking through what ultimately has to happen in how learning happens?” asked Mr. Abrams. “If we know that people are pre-coded in their genetics to actually receive information in different ways, and we know that 20 percent of the population are effective text-based learners, are we ready to ignore the other 80 percent? Are we going to deal with the complexity of the human condition instead of complicated search strategies? And are we asking ourselves hard enough questions?” Mr. Abram also urged libraries to put more staff members out in front of library users, whether in a physical library or a virtual world.

“The vast majority of libraries put their staff in the back office meeting the library’s needs for their pain points and absolutely not in the front office where they can make a difference in their community,” he said. “And if we aren’t putting our staff out on the social Web—with their tags, with their Facebook account, with their MySpace—if they’re not integrating with the social space where 80 percent of all the users who matter are, how quickly are we running away from relevance by doing that?”

Innovation at Worthington Public Libraries

As the Gale/Library Journal 2007 National Library of the Year, Worthington Public Libraries is committed to embracing new technologies and new ways of thinking about service to users. Meribah Mansfield, Director, and Members Council delegate from OHIONET, spoke to delegates about innovation at the library she has directed to such national prominence.

Worthington Public Libraries serves more than 60,000 residents from its community north of Columbus, Ohio, and just east of Dublin. The libraries—two branches—are currently undergoing renovations that will build on their success. The renovations include: group study rooms; living rooms with browsing areas; a café with beverages and food; more computers; a separate remote reference room where staff can focus on communicating with users electronically; teen areas; automated materials handling and circulation systems; self-checkout and self return; and a drive-up window for pick-up of reserves.

"We have a blog so that the public can track the renovation progress and our teens are helping us design their areas with social networking tools such as voting on what chairs they want," said Ms. Mansfield. "We're also developing a new customer service model. We're doing roving reference like many of you are probably doing. And we're staffing a welcome desk to help orient our patrons to all these changes."

Ms. Mansfield pointed out that her staff is very much engaged with library users—whether they're in the library, in schools or online. "Our staff is out with the public most of the time, either in the library or out in preschools, day-care centers, elementary, middle and high schools, businesses and working with city government. They are committed, excited librarians."

"Our staff has produced podcasts, videos of our programs for our 'Programs to Go' Web site. We're on MySpace, YouTube and flickr. Staff use wikis and blogs to communicate with the public and with each other. I don't hire librarians who don't live and breathe social networking."

Ms. Mansfield acknowledged that her colleagues on Members Council are likely to have implemented many of the forward-thinking practices that Worthington Libraries has employed. So she directed part of her presentation to some things libraries are unable to do now, but might be able to do with help from OCLC and the collaborative model it created when it was founded 40 years ago.

Ms. Mansfield said that WorldCat Local, the service that will allow libraries to combine the cooperative power of OCLC member libraries with the ability to customize WorldCat.org, might provide the solution for local discovery and delivery of services that users want.

OCLC President's Report

Jay Jordan, OCLC President and CEO, provided an update on OCLC's activities and plans for the future. Mr. Jordan discussed efforts to extend the cooperative, noting that OCLC opened an office in Beijing in July. He said that international content in a variety of languages continues to be added to WorldCat at an impressive rate. This growth is attributable to improvements in batchloading processes and OCLC's new technological platform, which has Unicode capabilities and supports 12 language scripts.

Mr. Jordan noted that in the last six months, OCLC has made a series of organizational moves designed to execute its strategy.

"Our goals are to achieve global integration of our various services, remove redundancies and identify critical gaps in our product offerings," said Mr. Jordan. He said OCLC has built teams of employees from various geographic regions and given them clear lines of authority; aligned OCLC user-facing activities in three major geographic areas: The Americas, Asia Pacific, and Europe, Middle East and Africa; and created global engineering and global product management divisions—with eight engineering centers in Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

"Going forward, we want to provide local, group and global nodes that work together seamlessly and symbiotically as we continue to pursue our mission of furthering access to the world's information and reducing costs for libraries," he said.

The Future of Bibliographic Control

Karen Calhoun, OCLC Vice President, WorldCat & Metadata Services, engaged delegates in a lively interactive discussion about WorldCat and the future of bibliographic control. Having perused a variety of pertinent “top 10” lists available from library and information science sources, she reviewed a combined list of 10 top trends in global librarianship and asked delegates to list their top three trends in technical services. Ms. Calhoun cited three significant trends as:

- Pressure on technical services budgets, staffing and space
- Changing, complex technical services landscape
- Public, international debate on the future and value of bibliographic control

Ms. Calhoun polled delegates on important questions such as, “Do you believe there is a trend of not fully replacing cataloging staff when incumbents leave?” and “How do you see the trend for the outsourcing of non-electronic resources in your department?”

Seventy-two percent of the delegates saw the outsourcing trend increasing and 20 percent rated it as staying the same. In her concluding comments, Ms. Calhoun outlined existing and proposed OCLC services such as “next-generation cataloging,” an emerging service to re-use publisher and vendor metadata but also to augment brief third-party records through WorldCat data mining.

Ms. Calhoun concluded with a new vision for re-engineered, technology-based OCLC metadata services to help libraries capture significant staff savings in selection, acquisitions and cataloging for redeployment to new strategic initiatives to serve their communities. Delegate input at this session assisted in identifying future needs for metadata services and what OCLC can do to help meet those emerging needs.

Reports and Resolutions

Delegates also heard reports from:

- Bill Crowe, Spencer Librarian, University of Kansas, and member of the OCLC Board of Trustees, who led a discussion about the ongoing study of OCLC governance.
- Jamie LaRue, Director, Douglas County (Colorado) Libraries (BCR), and Chair of the Nominating Committee, who reported briefly on the committee’s deliberations and encouraged delegates to submit a Members Council Leadership Interest Form.
- Larry Alford, Vice Provost for Libraries and University Librarian, Temple University, and member of the OCLC Board of Trustees, who talked about the upcoming election of two delegates from Council to the OCLC Board.
- Rick Schwieterman, OCLC Executive Vice President and CFO, who provided an update on OCLC NetLibrary activities.
- Chip Nilges, OCLC Vice President, Business Development, who presented delegates with an update on the OCLC Content Strategy.

Adjournment

Members Council adjourned on 23 October at 11:30 a.m. until 10-12 February, 2008 in Dublin

