

Quest for predictable budgeting yields comprehensive agreement

Illinois libraries gain unlimited access to multiple OCLC services



Situation

Library users in Illinois have long benefited from the information resources available through ILLINET and a network of regional library systems. These resources include many OCLC services, such as cataloging, online reference and interlibrary loan.

Year-to-year budget uncertainties facing Illinois libraries prompted the Illinois State Library and ILLINET to seek a predictable pricing model for the OCLC services the libraries use.

“Members of the Illinois library community have always been pragmatic when it comes to spending taxpayer dollars,” said Jean Wilkins, who retired as Illinois State Library director in December 2004. “The Illinois State Library, in conjunction with our regional library systems, viewed the group pricing solution as a means to help libraries maintain fiscal responsibility without sacrificing the quality services we’ve come to expect from OCLC.”

Solution

OCLC proposed a three-year Group Services agreement with the Illinois State Library that provides for unlimited, statewide use of OCLC cataloging, resource sharing, content management and the OCLC FirstSearch® reference service. The agreement also established a centralized, FirstSearch-hosted union catalog of the holdings of all Illinois libraries—the Statewide Illinois Library Catalog (SILC). In addition, the agreement is enabling the State Library to migrate the Illinois Digital Archives from a homegrown system to CONTENTdm® Digital Collection Management Software.

AT A GLANCE

- 1,800+ participant libraries at the end of 2004—in time this number may double
- Participating libraries account for nearly 4 million WorldCat searches per year and some 200,000 interlibrary loan transactions
- Library staff have unlimited access to all OCLC cataloging interfaces and access to CONTENTdm Digital Collection Management Software
- Library users have unlimited access to SILC, a statewide catalog with more than 66 million Illinois library holdings
- Library users also have unlimited use of OCLC’s Interlibrary Loan services and access to resources in 7,100 libraries worldwide

Meanwhile, the Illinois State Library convened an advisory council of library leaders from across the state to establish an equitable allocation of each library’s share of the cost for the annual subscriptions to the services included in the agreement. This allocation enabled many smaller libraries to begin using the same cataloging and ILL services used by larger libraries at a price they could afford.

Results

With the agreement’s unlimited cataloging provision, Illinois libraries continue to feed SILC, which also supports library cooperation worldwide. “Illinois’ regional library systems, together with the State Library, have worked diligently to clean up databases around the state in preparation for SILC,” said Wilkins.

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Continued



Wilkins sees “enormous” benefits to Illinois library users with the implementation of the statewide Group Services agreement. Access to SILC gives Illinois library users easy and consistent access to all Illinois library collections. Users can also search regional Illinois catalogs, search through eight subject views and seamlessly expand their searches worldwide through the OCLC WorldCat database.

“This new annual subscription price is a major step in our long history of resource sharing and cooperation in Illinois,” says Jan Ison, Executive Director, Lincoln Trail Libraries System. “With the implementation of SILC, the citizens of Illinois have easy access to the wealth of resources in Illinois libraries—and libraries will be better able to plan ahead with predictable pricing and service.”

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For more information about the Illinois statewide implementation of OCLC Group Services, visit

www.oclc.org/news/releases/200410.htm.

For information about OCLC Group Services, visit

www.oclc.org/groupservices/, call 1-800-848-5878, ext. 6251 or send e-mail to libservices@oclc.org.