

TO: SOPAG

FR: Claire Bellanti, Chair, Resource Sharing Committee

RE: CBS Implementation: Status and Issues

DATE: February 24, 2004

At SOPAG's request, RSC members have prepared a report on the status of the Consortial Borrowing System (CBS) from the campus perspective, including the current status of Fretwell-Downing's VDX functionality, an exploration of the campus workflow issues we have identified, a summary and a proposal to SOPAG and CDL.

Background:

In October 2000 the UC Libraries, under the leadership of the California Digital Library (CDL), developed a request for proposals (RFP) for a system that would function as a consortial borrowing system. The system would create a single workflow for ILL requests, provide temporary tracking functions for materials while they are in the loan process, support a wide range of administrative reports and establish an end user interface allowing patrons to personally track and manage their ILL requests. When fully implemented the system will replace OCLC and DOCLINE for materials routed within the University of California and integrate requests from a number of sources including the CDL Request Resolution Service; external sources such as OCLC, RLIN, DOCLINE; and external ISO-compliant systems. It will also direct requests to other external systems when appropriate. Finally, it will provide all campuses with a more complete ILL management system than any other currently in use among the UCs. In the fall, 2001 Fretwell-Downing, Inc. was awarded the contract for the CBS using their VDX (Virtual Document Exchange) product.

Current Status of the CBS:

VDX was first partially implemented at UCLA, UCSB and SRLF in October 2003, and at UCB and NRLF in November 2003.

Training by UC staff is scheduled for each of the other campuses, and it is expected that most campuses will be using the system by winter, 2004 with full adoption by all campuses by spring 2004.

VDX has been partially adopted in the following manner at the campuses:

1. UCLA and UCSB – all borrowing is handled within VDX, even non-CDL requests, when the request meets OCLC system requirements. Lending is carried out through VDX only for campuses borrowing through VDX.
2. SRLF and NRLF are lending to all UC's that use VDX for their borrowing requests.
3. UCB and UCSF are currently processing lending requests only and will move to borrowing after tests with OCLC are completed.
4. UCR is targeted to begin lending and borrowing as on February 25.
5. UCSC is currently lending (as of February 17) and will be borrowing in March.
6. UCSD is targeted to do a live test at the end February and go live on March 1 with both lending and borrowing.
7. UCD Shields/PSE is targeted to go live before the end of February; the Health Sciences Libraries have target March 1.
8. UCI has scheduled training and is targeted to go live with lending on March 1.

Until all campuses are using VDX, ILL Departments still must use OCLC for requests to non-VDX campuses and pay OCLC charges. Once VDX is implemented on all campuses, OCLC charges will decline substantially, but will still be required for all requests that cannot be filled within the UC consortium.

Functionality Update:

UC is running on VDX version 2.6. Version 2.7 is due in February, but it will be tested before moving it into production.

1. Desk-top Delivery – Fretwell-Downing and Infotrieve have just announced an agreement. UC will license the ARIEL JEDDS function for the campuses for the purposes of using it with the VDX product. The software already exists within VDX to use ARIEL to produce a seamless delivery.
2. De-duplication of requests – Currently VDX allows duplicate requests to be sent through the system. The functionality to remove duplicate requests is available in version 2.7, due in February 2004. However, the live campuses say that the duplicates are fairly easy to spot on the VDX pick-list and the OCLC profile puts them in the review queue, so the live campuses have been able to work around this issue.
3. OCLC requirement for “control numbers” – currently only requests that contain an OCLC, ISBN, or ISSN are accepted by OCLC. This prevents VDX from automatically processing about 40% of the requests that cannot

- be fulfilled within VDX. In version 2.6, MELVYL's resolution server is able to add the OCLC control number to the requests to increase the percentage that can be forwarded to OCLC. That will help solve some of these problems. Additionally, CDL is learning the finer points of configuring VDX so that requests without any of these three numbers can be forwarded directly to specific lenders within OCLC.
4. Barcodes on pick-lists – Barcodes will print on picklists in version 2.6.
 5. DOCFINDER – The VDX functionality to search a local OPAC for fulfilling lending requests from OCLC needs to be configured for each OPAC and each campus within VDX. UCSB will test the first configuration of DOCFINDER. There is the possibility of like systems (all III libraries) using the same interface.
 6. VDX User Interface – patron self-service inquiry and renewal requesting is available through VDX but the appearance may need to be modified for patrons. UCSC and UCSB will provide specifications to CDL for the configuration.
 7. Statistics – CDL has developed a first pass at a statistics report. That sample has been sent out once to campuses for comments; it does not break down items borrowed from OCLC by partner, and may not have everything each campus requires. Mary Heath has sent it again for comments to campuses.
 8. Other Reports – CDL will be hiring an SQL consultant to build other basic reports: copyright, overdue notices, billing notices. It may be that the consultant will use a JAVA program rather than Crystal Reports. The consultant is expected to start before the end of January and initial reports may be available a month later.
 9. DOCLINE – Fretwell-Downing is eager to work with the National Library of Medicine to insure a smooth interchange of requests between the systems, and they have approached NLM with proposals. However, NLM has not set a date for implementation. Medical Libraries will need to run DOCLINE separately from VDX until NLM agrees to developing an ISO compliant system and testing it with VDX.

Implementation Issues:

Implementing a consortial borrowing system has proved to be a complex and involved process that is still ongoing. First, CDL and campuses have had to set up the software for resource sharing within the UC environment, customize many choices by campus, learn what is compliant with the ISO ILL protocols, and obtain fixes from Fretwell-Downing according to UC requirements. On the local level, VDX has required major changes in workflow, organization and

structure. It has made a tremendous difference to staff to have a UC ILL person (UCLA's Jennifer Lee) doing hands on training on the campuses and working directly with CDL staff. The ability to see the system working in the local environment has given the UC ILL staff the confidence in the software's functionality.

Twenty years ago, the adoption of OCLC's ILL Subsystem substantially changed ILL units similarly. Although organizational restructuring has occurred within ILL departments due to budget cuts and the introduction of other ILL software in recent years, this is the most all encompassing change in two decades, which will affect all of the UC campuses. ILL staff have embraced the improvements promised by VDX, but have been deterred from detailed planning and implementation by continuing uncertainties about the delivery of critical system features which have made it difficult to clearly understand the functionality of the system. However, RSC believes this is an extraordinary opportunity to completely review internal ILL services with the ultimate goal of streamlining staff functions and enhancing patron service.

In order to continue the transition to a successful implementation campus ILL units and administration need to consider the following issues:

1. The benefits and drawbacks of decentralization/centralization of ILL units on their campus: for instance, many campuses have created separate ILL units to overcome delays created by sharing one OCLC symbol. The implementation of VDX allows ILL units to explore workflows in new ways, focusing on efficiencies and possibilities, breaking free from burdensome procedures and dated technologies that never worked very well, even at their inception.

2. The impact of existing ILL management systems such as CLIO: Campuses need to determine if two parallel systems are needed, if one can completely replace the other, if there are any advantages to maintaining and operating two systems. In some cases, existing systems provide more functionality than is currently provided with VDX (although almost the entire contract required functionality is there, but some configuration and testing is needed). Some parts of existing systems may not be immediately replaced by VDX, such as billing/accounting, and a variety of statistical and other reports, which campuses may now easily generate. Campuses will need to decide the feasibility of maintaining two systems in order to continue to be able to take advantage of these functions, or the need to move completely to the new system and

discontinue some functions. Those campuses using DOCLINE will definitely need to consider maintaining an existing system.

3. Continued use of OCLC and DOCLINE: Until later versions of VDX (2.7 and above) are implemented campuses may need to process ILL requests in two streams instead of one. Cost to continue using OCLC will remain at varying levels from campus to campus until full implementation. As indicated above, DOCLINE has yet to release an ISO compliant version that will work with a system such as VDX, thus campuses which also use DOCLINE may be required to use both DOCLINE and VDX for some time to come.

4. Continued increase in Request activity and impact on ILL staffing: *Request* was implemented between 1999-2000 and 2001-02; during that same period *Request* transactions grew from 36,000 per year to 193,000, an increase of 436% (from the UL's Collection Management statistics). In addition, overall intercampus lending activity increased 26% between 1999-2000 and 2002-2003. UC's investment in systems (specifically the development of *Request*, UC-Elinks and now VDX) has improved ILL response time, and it has also made intercampus borrowing more convenient for users. Thus, it has driven growth in ILL transactions and workload. The savings from these systems is largely in borrowing operations. There are no appreciable savings in the physical aspects of lending, such as retrieval, packaging, mailing, copying and scanning. However, ILL staffing has not increased at the same rate, and in some campuses there has been a decrease in ILL staffing. For that reason, the continuing increase in workload is beginning to have an impact on the ability of limited numbers of staff to maintain two-working-day turnaround time agreed to in the UC ILL Code (Part A., Section V.c). The implementation of VDX has the potential to cause a greater increase in turnaround time in the short term, while staff learn to use it and solve the problems inherent in new software.

Summary:

The VDX software had never before been developed for an operation of the size, complexity, and needs of the UC. The product has finally reached the point where a number of campuses are using it, despite some remaining limitations as described to above. These limitations, along with the magnitude of the change, and the stress ILL units are already under due to the continuing explosion in volume, combine to make a campus' transition to VDX very difficult.

Nonetheless, a number of campuses are now using VDX, and those that are not yet live with VDX are actively planning to make the transition in the very near

term (evolution of existing ILL operations makes the change more intensive and potentially difficult for some campuses). While it is evident that it will take some more time before both the VDX product and our use of it progresses to the point where we see all of the cost savings, improved efficiencies, and improved patron service that informed the entire push to a consortial borrowing system, significant progress has been made, and with the continued support of the ULs and SOPAG, we are cautiously optimistic that the promise of VDX will very soon begin to be fulfilled.

Next Steps:

1. Jennifer Lee's (UCLA) work with CDL, campus visits and campus training have made a tremendous difference in our ability to move forward on the implementation. CDL staff does not have actual ILL experience, and that has been critical for progress in the last three months. Jenny's part-time appointment ends in three months. By that time, all campuses should be running on VDX and the next critical release will be implemented. After that, reports will need to be refined and new releases will arrive on a regular basis. **It would be helpful to have an ILL practitioner working with CDL on a 20% basis while we continue to develop VDX.**

2. Assessing current workflow and procedures is an extremely important next step for each ILL unit. Right now, most are focused on getting VDX to work. Our remarkable success with *Request* is continuing to create more demand for these services. In order to keep pace, ILL units will need to find ways to streamline and use VDX capabilities to its fullest extent. **RSC encourages SOPAG to consider assistance to UC ILL, perhaps in the form of a consultant or workshops, to help ILL and public services managers revise their workflows and procedures.**