

Revised and endorsed by University Librarians, 24 February 2010

16 February 2010

TO: University Librarians

FROM: NGTS Executive Team [Laine Farley, Martha Hruska, Bruce Miller (chair), Brian Schottlaender, Ginny Steel]

RE: Next Generation Technical Services – next steps

The NGTS Phase One team reports¹ are the outcomes from the environmental scans done by each of the four NGTS Resource Task Groups (teams). Those reports identify a broad array of issues facing technical services within the UC Libraries and articulate associated parameters, problems, and possibilities. These are the issues about which we are thinking and which should be considered for framing the next phase of planning and for modeling new directions. Choices, priorities, and action items are not specified within the team reports.

Detailed discussions about the reports among the NGTS Executive Team, Steering Team, and Task Groups identified overlaps and synergies and gave focus to the issues that must be resolved first in order to move us furthest along. The NGTS Executive Team has identified four priority areas for ongoing analysis and potential action. These four items have the most potential to be operationally transformative, to provide significant cost savings, and to provide enhanced access to a greater array of information resources.

The NGTS Executive Team seeks guidance from the ULs regarding the four recommendations. With endorsement from the ULs, the NGTS Executive Team will first charge the appropriate groups to outline proposed models for achieving the specified priorities. The resultant proposals will be analyzed and vetted with the goal of developing specific actions plans to be endorsed by the ULs. The intention is to move rapidly through the planning process and to move to action as soon as is reasonable. Time lines will vary among the recommendations.

¹ A summary of the issues identified in the NGTS Phase One team reports is appended to this document. Complete text of the reports is posted at:

<http://libraries.universityofcalifornia.edu/about/uls/ngts/>

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

Develop a financial infrastructure that facilitates intercampus business transactions in support of collaborative and systemwide processes and purchases.

This issue is fundamental and surfaces throughout all of the reports. Consensus is that the issue is a major barrier that prevents us from moving ahead.

Proposed Action: Charge a task group composed of representatives from relevant stakeholders (e.g., library business officers, library acquisitions officers, information technology managers, campus business officers, etc.) to develop a plan to better enable collaborative and systemwide (i.e., both inter-campus and intra-campus) use of funds that have been allocated to individual campus libraries by reducing barriers in UC systemwide and campus-specific business and financial policies and procedures.

Recommendation 2

Develop an operational infrastructure and technical services that can function at an enterprise level in support of efficient, non-redundant, and collaborative collection services.

This recommendation is purposely stated broadly to ensure that we pursue a transformative and holistic response to a number of distinct but overall related issues and ideas. The most important aspect of this recommendation is the concept of enterprise level.

In assessing this recommendation, it is very important to understand that we would not be served well by isolated and overly explicit actions. For example, the need for a systemwide ILS was repeatedly expressed in the environmental scans. However, the review discussions made it clear that “systemwide ILS” is more accurately shorthand language for “enterprise level technical services systems that share a common database that would enable greater efficiency and effectiveness”. In other words, the optimum response might be found in a solution other than a systemwide shared ILS. Another issue was expressed as a call for “expanded usage of the RLFs”, but a closer look suggests that the fundamental issue is the need to explore options for focusing expertise and finding economies of scale, the outcome of which might be space needs for relocated services and collocated expertise. The broad issue of enterprise-level services subsumes specific issues such as ERMS, the Shared Cataloging Program, a systemwide shared approval plan, and the need for more effective tools to support systemwide collection development and management for the collective information resources of the UC Libraries.

Proposed Action: Charge a task group composed of selected technical experts and senior library administrators to develop scenarios for enterprise-level services that would support collaborative life-cycle management services for the collective information resources of the UC Libraries. For each scenario, the proposal should include estimates of transition costs, timelines, an outline of points of effectiveness, and an assessment of benefits.

Recommendation 3

Redefine baseline information access for materials in non-Roman languages, special collections, archives, and digital formats with the focus on end user needs and effective and efficient processes. Propose new modes for organizing and providing access to these materials. Focus on outcomes that provide access to materials that are currently in cataloging backlogs.

This recommendation evolved from recognition that “good enough” is justifiable if end-user access is an outcome. The issue is fundamental to all categories of library information resources, but it is especially significant for materials in non-Roman languages, special collections, archives, and digital assets where traditional processing modes have not kept up with the rate of acquisition. The result is very large processing backlogs and hidden collections. One NGTS team member observed that the most transformative thing we could do would be to simply provide access to these unprocessed collections because we would effectively double the size of the UC collection.

Because traditional cataloging processes do not scale effectively for these materials, we should consider streamlined levels of bibliographic description and new modes of processing that manage larger quantities of materials while, nonetheless, increasing access for the end user. Areas to be explored include paring away non-essential descriptive information and using emerging technologies to provide access, e.g., digitization coupled with automated search tools.

Proposed Action: Charge a task group composed of selected technical experts and senior library administrators to propose new modes of organizing and providing access to the full range of materials that currently are not being cataloged or otherwise curated. The goal is to effectively eliminate backlogs and to enable end user access to a much broader scope of the collective information resources of the UC Libraries.

Recommendation 4

Coordinate NGTS activities with the work of SOPAG and the Collection Development Committee in developing strategies for re-visioning collection development for the 21st century. Ensure that all forms of digital materials are included.

Both NGTS Team 3 (UC Unique Collections) and NGTS Team 4 (21st Century Emerging Resources) identified the need for specific policy guidance for the acquisition, management, preservation, and provision of access for all digital materials. Such policy would include digital materials that are currently managed within special collections, archives, digital assets, and mainstream collections regardless of source, including licensed materials, digital documents, web sites, data sets, CD-ROMs, e-books, and other unique and possibly transitory digital information.

CDC has done considerable work in re-visioning collection development and is continuing that work with a presumable outcome of a comprehensive collection development policy for the University of California Library Collection². Logically such comprehensive policy would incorporate all manner of information resources regardless of format or source, i.e., digital materials would be included. It would be counterproductive to start a separate initiative under the auspices of NGTS, even if special attention were given to coordination. NGTS will focus on redefining acquisitions, description, and preservation policies and workflows and will coordinate with the CDC process as it evolves in order to develop specific strategies in support of the values expressed in “The University of California Library Collection”.

Proposed Action: The NGTS Executive and Steering Teams will track relevant CDC activities and will facilitate NGTS support and action as needed.

² “The University of California Library Collection: Content for the 21st Century and Beyond.” Endorsed by University Librarians July 2009.
http://libraries.universityofcalifornia.edu/cdc/uc_collection_concept_paper_endors ed ULs 2009.08.13.pdf

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

Selected specific issues were identified in the data gathering process that had obvious actions with immediate benefits and no obvious conflict with the potential outcomes from the larger planning process. The NGTS Steering Team, with guidance and endorsement from the Executive Team, has accordingly initiated the following action charges:

- HOTS – prepare a detailed plan for UC systemwide shelf ready services with implementation in the first half of FY 10/11
- HOTS – develop a plan to eliminate cataloging backlogs for non-Roman materials for review and approval by the Exec Team in May 2010
- LHR Joint Task Group (joint with NGM Implementation Team) – identify requirements and best practices for creating, maintaining, and updating Local Holding Records (LHRs) for serials as needed for NGM and SCP and in support of NGTS transformative change.
- In development – a charge to a small group to investigate the current practice of using and managing URLs and other types of identifiers in MARC records and to make recommendations on whether UC should standardize on a particular type. CDL needs guidance in a timely way regarding the future of PURL and related services.

RECOGNITION OF WORK TO DATE, ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

The NGTS process has been very productive. Many important issues have been articulated. Careful attention was given to every idea. Discussions were held with much thoughtfulness. Because of the goal to achieve the greatest impact and transformation, the NGTS Executive Team has purposely focused only on the actions that will encompass the highest priorities and that will have the most impact.

There are a number of less significant, but not unimportant, issues and ideas that were not explicitly included in these recommended actions. During discussions with the NGTS teams, the Executive Team strongly encouraged that these additional issues be taken to the appropriate SOPAG All Campus Group for further action. Many of the NGTS team members also have ACG appointments. We anticipate that those individuals will take appropriate issues to their ACG for action that is appropriate within the purview of the charge to that ACG.

Summary: Issues identified in NGTS Phase One reports

The NGTS Phase One team reports summarize the environmental scans done by each of the NGTS task groups (teams). The reports identify a broad array of issues facing technical services within UC and articulate associated parameters, problems, and possibilities. Those issues are summarized below and provide quick reference to the complete reports.

This is not a set of recommendations. There are no implied priorities. Some of the issues are very big in scope. Some are minor. Some are already being resolved within existing collaborative procedures. Close examination reveals numerous areas of overlap among the reports.

Team 1: Commonly Held Content in Roman Script

- Develop a financial infrastructure that facilitates shared purchasing and intercampus business transactions
- Identify and implement a consortial ILS (integrated library management system)
- Identify and implement a consortial ERMS (electronic resource management system)
- Expand the infrastructure at the Regional Library Facilities to include more technical service and document delivery operations
- Expand technical services to support shared collections and collection management
- Create a systemwide collaborative and comprehensive government documents collection
- Coordinate print serials management systemwide
- Review and improve the infrastructure for the Shared Cataloging Program
- Investigate and implement shelf ready services systemwide
- Implement systemwide cataloging policies

Team 2: Commonly Held Content in Non-Roman Script

- Surmount current requirements that language expertise in both selection and cataloging be collocated
- Rely on vendors for quality (outsourced) cataloging records.
- Determine what “good enough” means for cataloging
- Implement real cross-campus collaboration in sharing workflows, resources, funds, and collections

Team 3: UC Unique Collections

- Shared strategies for processing and cataloging unique materials
- Systemwide coordinated implementation of standards, guidelines, and training

- Shareable content creation and management utilities
- Systemwide support for born-digital special collections, archives, and UC scholarship

Team 4: 21st Century Emerging Resources

- Expand metadata expertise beyond MARC format
- Collaborative collection development and description of harvested websites
- Pilot projects for harvesting blogs and online newspapers
- Research data curation
- Improve access to, and ensure preservation of, ebooks
- Improve access to ETDs (electronic theses and dissertations)
- Preserve content on CD-ROMs that accompany books