

AUTOMATED SERVICES COMMITTEE
March 22, 2005
MINUTES

PRESENT

(Voting): Geoffrey Kirkpatrick (BETH), Joseph Makowiec (BRUN), Richard Naylor (COLN), Debbie Shoup (EGRN), Barbara Nichols Randall (GUIL), Jane Minotti (SNLK), Paul Hicok (TROY), Joe Thornton (UHLS), Gail Sacco (VOOR)

9:05 AM Meeting called to order by Philip Ritter, Chair

I. MINUTES

Minutes of the February 22, 2005 meeting accepted as presented.

(NOTE: Many of the following items are explained in more detail in the Automation Services Report which begins on page 5.)

II. DATABASE CLEANUP

J. Thornton noted that the next step in the cleanup is authority control and the removal of duplicate records. R. Naylor asked about the cleanup of the patron database? J. Thornton asked if this should be a higher priority? He will look into the patron reports and make sure that expired patrons are not included in the total figures that the libraries use for their State Annual Reports.

Discussion regarding the procedure and cost for the authority processing. P. Ritter noted that the funds to pay for the processing, pending Board approval, can be taken from the automation reserve account - not from the operating funds.

REQUIRES BOARD APPROVAL

MOTION: J. Makowiec moved to recommend to the Board of Trustees that J. Thornton should obtain pricing from at least three companies for authority control processing and the automation reserve account should be used to cover the cost. R. Naylor seconded. Unanimous.

B. Nichols Randall cautioned that although authority control processing will clean up about 80% - 90% of the database, there will still be hands-on work that will have to be done. She noted that the database won't stay clean if people don't follow the correct procedures.

III. SYSTEM SLOWNESS

J. Thornton reported that there is a problem with correcting the slowness because it follows no predictable pattern. They still don't know why it happens and therefore don't know how to fix it. Some of the Reports are using as much as 50% of the cpu resources when they are running, and this causes a substantial slowdown in the system. However, the Reports should not need that much cpu usage.

The system will be upgraded to Sybase 12.5 during the week of March 28th. This might help with the slowness problem but is a necessary prelude to the next major Horizon upgrade. J. Makowiec asked if this upgrade to 12.5 will have any effect on the computers in the

libraries? J. Thornton responded that all of the libraries are already working with 12.5, UHLS is still using 12.0.

The Technology Advisory Council is working on a way to notify users regarding problems with the system. John Love, at Bethlehem, has developed a webpage that can be continuously kept open while a computer is in use and will monitor system performance. UHLS will investigate use of this tool.

IV. KIDSEARCH

There is still a problem with the limiting algorithm in the program and this causes adult materials to be included in keyword searches. Peter Kowalski (UHLS) and Dynix are working to solve this.

V. SECURITY SOFTWARE

The Technology Advisory Council is investigating bulk purchase options for security software. Several of the large libraries have indicated a preference for a software agreement that would allow them to contact the vendor directly if there is a problem.

R. Naylor noted that COLN has a site license for Fortres "Clean Slate." D. Canzano noted that COHS has "Deep Freeze" and they are very pleased with its performance. She noted that to get a bulk discount on "Deep Freeze," ten or more license have to be purchased. The software works by clearing the computer when it is re-booted.

J. Thornton will ask the Technology Advisory Council to look into Fortres, "Deep Freeze," and "Cornerstone."

VI. REPORTS

J. Thornton demonstrated the Daily Circulation Report that he created as requested at the last ASC meeting. The Report is a comparison chart showing the circulation, within a pre-selected time period, for all of the libraries. This will help libraries to determine if major changes in daily circulation are part of a pattern within other libraries or are a site-specific phenomenon.

VII. LIBRARY VISITS

J. Thornton reported that the Automation Department will discontinue scheduled visits to the libraries. He will continue to make informal visits until he has been to all of the libraries. UHLS staff will continue to respond to requests for assistance and will go out to the libraries when asked.

J. Minotti expressed her appreciation of how quickly the UHLS staff responded to her recent request for help. D. Canzano also expressed her appreciation, noting that the Automation staff were very responsive and helpful.

VIII. DATABASES

Jo-Ann Benedetti and Polly Farrington are working to re-design the online databases and make them easier to use. J. Thornton demonstrated a "draft" design of the databases at: www.uhls.org/uhls/databases/test.cfm. Discussion. The following concerns were expressed:

- the blue letters are very hard to read, especially for people with vision problems, and the blue on the black background is also difficult
- the re-design should be reviewed by the Adult Services Advisory Council and the Central Library Advisory Council
- magazines and newspapers should be listed first, even though this takes them out of alphabetical order
- the presentation was much cleaner and clearer than previous versions

J. Thornton will send the link to the draft to all of the Directors and will ask them to send their suggestions and recommendations to Jo-Ann Benedetti (jo-ann@uhls.lib.ny.us)

Discussion regarding a desire to have statistics on the use of the databases. J. Thornton noted that when the local server (i.e. UHLS) is used for authentication, it can also collect statistics on use. However, these never seem to agree with the statistic offered by the vendors. And, all of the vendors collect their statistics differently. J. Thornton offered an example: in searching for information, he may do one search in EBSCO and find what he needs, locating this same information in Lexis/Nexis may require 30 searches. Therefore, it will look like Lexis/Nexis was used more often when, in fact, EBSCO located the information quicker.

IX. TERMINAL SERVICES

The Automation staff are testing Windows Terminal Services, a program that can speed up the performance of the Horizon stafpac and could be especially useful in the smaller libraries where computers sometimes get "hung up" in various processes. The program transmits just the screen changes to the client computer while the process goes on only on the UHLS server. G. Kirkpatrick reported that he tried the program a few times, and found that there was a great increase in speed.

X. DAY END PROBLEMS

J. Thornton reported that running the Day End Processing has been an on-going problem. It is an extremely long process and has been failing on a regular basis. Correcting this is a priority for the Automation Department.

XI. HORIZON, HIP UPGRADES

Horizon 8.0 will be available in September 2005. J. Thornton recommends not installing any of the interim upgrades, but waiting for this major upgrade in the Fall, although we are evaluating Horizon 7.4 and HIP 4.0 on test servers. He noted that 8.0 sounds like a worthwhile upgrade and suggested that UHLS might want to obtain it as soon as it is available, or very shortly thereafter.

XII. OTHER BUSINESS

G. Sacco asked about the problem that VOOR is experiencing where VOOR patrons are requesting books and are not being matched to VOOR materials but are receiving materials from other libraries. G. Kirkpatrick noted that this is probably a problem with the I-type that was entered for the VOOR books. Patrons and books are only matched to each other if the book is within the new I-types. G. Sacco will check with her staff to make sure that they are cataloging the books correctly.

Discussion regarding the reserve queue issue that was being discussed via the email listserv where it appears that someone might be manipulating the Horizon database to move patrons up or down in the queue on a reserve book. G. Kirkpatrick explained that sometimes what looks like queue jumping is due to the merging of records as part of the database cleanup process. When two bib records, each with reserves, are merged, the reserves no longer show up in reserve date order.

B. Nichols Randall noted that there is a "recall" feature in Horizon that will allow a library to bring a book back to the owning library, even if there is a long reserve list.

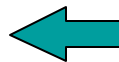
10:15 AM meeting adjourned.

NEXT MEETINGS:

Tuesday, April 26th at 9:00 AM

Tuesday, May 17th at 9:00 AM

Tuesday, June 28th at 9:00 AM



NOTE DATE CHANGE, May 24th meeting canceled

Heidi A. Fuge

3/22/05

Automation Services Report March 22, 2005

Database Cleanup

We created a report of bibliographic records that have the same ISBN number, and a report of all records that should have a 245 \$h subfield (based on values in the 000 and 008) but don't. The ISBN report will help us eliminate duplicate bib records in the catalog, and the 245 \$h report will provide better descriptions of the records to patrons.

We deleted 26,000 bib records that had no item records attached and that had been in the catalog for at least thirty days (to allow time for catalogers to process newly imported OCLC records)

System Slowness

Dynix spent three hours last week making changes to our Sybase (database management system) configuration, in an effort to solve the sporadic problem we've had with system slowness. We have not had a severe performance problem since the changes were made, but neither have we seen the improvement that we hoped for. We will upgrade Sybase to version 12.5 next week. This may improve performance somewhat, but it's a necessary upgrade in any case, to prepare for future Horizon upgrades.

KidSearch

We've made great progress with Dynix's help, but are not finished yet. Keyword searches still return non-kids items. Peter Kowalski continues to work with Dynix on this problem.

Security Software

The Technology Advisory Council is evaluating two PC security products - *DeepFreeze* and *CompuGuard Cornerstone*. Both are designed to protect PC's against "damage typically inflicted by user error, malicious intent, and harmful Internet dangers such as spyware, viruses, and Trojans and other malware." (from the CompuGuard site). We will recommend one and solicit requests for a volume purchase.

Reports

We added a *Daily Circulation (all libraries)* report to the web reports page (<https://horizon.uhls.lib.ny.us/reports/>)

Library Visits

The Automation Services Department has found the visits we've been making to the libraries over the past year to be somewhat useful, but not an optimal use of our time. While we will always go immediately to any library that requires our presence, we feel it would be a

better use of our limited resources to cancel the monthly visits.

Databases

We worked with Jo-Ann Benedetti and Polly Farrington (consultant) to improve the appearance of, and ease the access to, our online databases. There's still more work to be done, especially in the area of authentication.

Terminal Services

We continue to test Windows Terminal Services as a potential bandwidth saver and performance enhancer for the Horizon stafpac clients. UHLS staff has started to use this service, and BETH, COLN, and EGRN have volunteered to test it more thoroughly before the end of this month. We had a problem with printing, which we solved, but otherwise the service looks promising.

Day End Problems

Every Thursday morning at 2:00 we run a utility called DBCC (database consistency check) that requires exclusive access to the database, and so breaks the connections to all active Horizon processes. Every night we run Day End Processing at 11:30, to generate notices, update statistics, etc. The time that it takes each job (DBCC and Day End) to complete has increased steadily, and we now have a situation where DBCC starts before Day End has finished, and runs so long that it interferes with other jobs that are scheduled to run every morning. To address this, we're moving DBCC to Sunday morning, which will require monitoring and occasional weekend work by our department to fix problems if they occur.

Horizon, HIP Upgrades

We're evaluating Horizon 7.4 and HIP 4.0 to see if the added benefits justify an upgrade prior to the release of Horizon 8.0.

CatExpress Update

For the nine months we've used CatExpress so far our total is 20,278. If the current rate continues we'll end the year (5/31/05) at 27,037.