



Automated Services Committee

March 27, 2007

MINUTES

PRESENT

Voting: Tim Burke (APLM), Geoffrey Kirkpatrick (BETH), Joe Makowiec (BRUN), Richard Naylor (COLN), Debbie Shoup (EGRN), Margaret Garrett (GUIL), Judy Felsten (RCSC), Jane Minotti (SNLK), Paul Hicok (TROY), Joe Thornton (UHLS), Gail Sacco (VOOR)

Nonvoting: Jo-Ann Benedetti (UHLS), Mary Fellows (UHLS), Marcia Middleton (APLM)

9:00 AM Meeting called to order by Philip Ritter, Chair

I. Minutes

Minutes of the February 27, 2007, meeting accepted as presented.

(NOTE: See the Automation Services Report that begins on page 5 for more information. The following deals only with those issues where there was significant discussion and where the ASC took some kind of action.)

II. Visitors

P. Ritter acknowledged the attendance of J. Benedetti and M. Fellows who will report on their respective Advisory Council's recommendations concerning AquaBrowser.

III. AquaBrowser

J. Thornton reported that he contacted the Onondaga County Public Library to ask about their experiences with AquaBrowser. He was unable to contact anyone at the Queens Library. G. Sacco reported that she was also unable to speak with anyone at Queens. J. Thornton spoke with the Systems librarian at Onondaga who told him that AquaBrowser was not getting substantially more use than their traditional search engine and the librarian did not have any strong opinion one way or the other regarding the value of AquaBrowser.

G. Kirkpatrick reported that Jeanne Biggins at BETH spoke with a librarian at Onondaga who told her that AquaBrowser was more popular with men and children while the staff at the library used the traditional search engine.

M. Middleton noted that they should not be thinking about this as the best tool for the library staff but as the best tool for patrons, especially those patrons who do not typically use the online catalog because it offers too many choices.

G. Sacco reported that when the VOOR staff tested AquaBrowser, they did not always find all of the information that was available using Horizon. They were also concerned with the accuracy of the results they received in AquaBrowser.

G. Kirkpatrick noted that he has never liked the way that results are returned in a search in Horizon - the way that results are listed doesn't make sense. He noted that in AquaBrowser, the functionality of the typical search is still available as a choice. He feels that the one-box search (as in AquaBrowser) is what people are coming to expect due to Google and Amazon searching.

M. Fellows noted that AquaBrowser functions in a way that teens and kids are familiar with - the one-box search. The Youth Services Advisory Council reviewed AquaBrowser and their responses to it were mixed. She feels that offering AquaBrowser to younger patrons would help library credibility. Since AquaBrowser can work with several different levels of automation, the functionality won't disappear with an upgrade or migration - as happened with Kids Search in Horizon.

J. Benedetti reported that the Adult Services Advisory Council also reviewed AquaBrowser and found that it returned poor results in an author search. Looking at it from a patron's viewpoint, they found it difficult to use. The Advisory Council unanimously recommended that UHLS use their financial resources in another area rather than invest in AquaBrowser.

M. Middleton noted that having AquaBrowser would allow libraries to offer it to patrons as a searching option. She thinks that the mediated search links are a powerful and useful tool since the links have been evaluated by information professionals - they can lead patrons to other online sources.

P. Hicok noted that patrons want single box searching and spelling variations but he does not think that they are interested in all of the nuances offered by AquaBrowser - it's too confusing and complicated.

MOTION: G. Sacco moved that UHLS should not purchase AquaBrowser. J. Felsten seconded. After further discussion, R. Naylor moved to table this motion for three months while more investigation takes place. J. Thornton seconded. **Motion to table passed with one NAY vote.**

Some facets of AquaBrowser that need further investigation include:

- can it be turned on for individual public access computers? i.e. can it be turned on for computers used by kids and teens and turned off on those computers used by adults?
- should UHLS be spending money on this now when there is likely to be a

migration to a new automation system in the near future with, at this time, an unknown cost?

- reference services staff and youth services staff at libraries using AquaBrowser should be contacted for their experiences. The ASC suggested that the members of the Adult and Youth Services Advisory Groups should contact their peers in libraries using this feature and ask them who made the decision to purchase it.

IV. Sirsi/Dynix Announcement

J. Thornton reported that Sirsi/Dynix will no longer work on an upgrade for Horizon. Instead, the next version of library software will be called "Rome" and is actually based on the Sirsi Unicorn system. Moving to this system would not be an upgrade, it would be a major migration - as it would be to any new system.

Discussion about our options. R. Naylor suggested that the contract with Sirsi/Dynix should be reviewed to see if they can legally turn off the Horizon system after they stop supporting it. J. Thornton mentioned that there are some open source library automation systems that are being developed such as the Evergreen system. He noted that there is plenty of time to make a decision regarding an automation system vendor.

V. Other Business

G. Sacco asked how the information on the HIP bug mentioned in J. Thornton's automation report was communicated to the libraries. He noted that the report was sent to all of the Directors and included with the ASC minutes. However, this type of information can also be added to the web WIKI that he is developing.

VI. Announcements

P. Ritter reported that he has some initial information regarding the US Library Hardware Sustainability Access Grant Program sponsored by the Gates Foundation to help libraries upgrade their public access computers. In April, the full information will be released. The grant is a two-year project with a 25% matching requirement the first year and 50% matching requirement the second year. There are sixteen UHLS libraries that are currently eligible to participate in this program (eligibility is determined by the Gates Foundation) those libraries are:

Albany County: APLM, APLD, APLH, APLN, APLP, COHS, COLN, MEND, WTVT,
Rensselaer County: BRLN, PTRB, POES, RENS, TROY, TROL, TROS

By May 11th, these libraries, if they want to participate, must run a TechAtlas script on their public access computers to determine if these computers need to be upgraded/improved. Jonathan Koppel attended a workshop on the TechAtlas program and UHLS automation staff will be available to help the libraries.

June 15th is the deadline for any proposals to upgrade eligible computers. The funds will be disbursed in August.

Discussion. Does this project apply to dedicated OPAC terminals? P. Ritter will investigate.

G. Sacco reported that Lorraine Smi has retired from VOOR and she asked that any information that would have been sent to Lorraine should be sent to Gail until a new staff member has been trained.

10:30 AM meeting adjourned.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, April 24th at 9:00 AM

Heidi A. Fuge
3/27/07

Automation Services Report

March 27, 2007

Horizon & HIP upgrades

On 2/16 we upgraded to Horizon 7.3.4 and HIP 3.0.8. Since the last ASC meeting (2/27), SirsiDynix installed the *KidSearch* custom programming on our upgraded HIP. The custom programming to change the messages that display when a requested item is checked in has not yet been done. This will be billable (about \$600). We have not yet heard whether the upgrades solved the problems with Acquisitions ordering.

Several libraries reported a significant increase in printed hold and overdue notices after the upgrade. We discovered that a previously unused flag needed to be set in TeleCirc after the upgrade. We made the change and have had no further reports of problems.

Daylight Savings Time

We experienced only minor problems with the change in the Daylight Savings Time schedule, and have heard of no problems in the libraries. We had patched our Solaris and Windows servers to handle this change.

Schodack / EGRN

We wrote several reports for a Schodack committee person trying to determine the library usage patterns of Schodack residents.

Fortres Grand Time Limit Manager

Rawdon demonstrated *Fortres Grand Time Limit Manager* at POES on 3/8 and at COHS on 3/19. COHS has been using this application for a while and so far is pleased with it. It's a PC-based tool that is used to implement usage policies on public access computers. It costs \$25/license and is most suitable for small libraries.

Public Web Browser

From Rawdon:

If your library uses Public Web Browser (PWB), please note that the original license from UHLS will expire on April 28, 2007. UHLS has renewed the license for another 2 years.

If you have OPAC only computers, it is likely you have PWB installed. You

will need to update the registration number in the pwb.ini file [as shown below]. If you are not sure how to change it, please contact support@uhls.lib.ny.us.

[Browser]

RegisteredTo=Upper Hudson Library System

RegistrationNumber=1 24100435 30252514 10986C8 2

Expiration Date: April 29, 2009

Snow Day(s)

As we discussed at the last ASC meeting, on snow days we will add calendar exceptions (Closed – Snow Day) for every library that contacts us, and also for every library that is listed as closed on *timesunion.com*. Please note that retroactive calendar exceptions may not forgive all fines that accrued on the closed day, depending on the timing. For example, a few libraries told us on 3/17 that they had closed on 3/16. If a patron had an item due on 3/16 and was unable to return it because the library was closed, she would still be fined because the system did not know about the snow day when Day End Processing ran at 11:30 p.m. on 3/16.

New report

As part of the plans for closing the APLN branch, we wrote a report to show where a specified library's patrons have checked out items within a specified time range (no more than thirty days previous, though). This report might be useful to other libraries. We did not put it on the web reports page yet, though, because it takes a minute to run and slows other system functions. We may run it monthly. The report can be run (temporarily) from <https://horizon.uhls.lib.ny.us/reports/cl.html> (same username/password as the intranet).

Also, the Reports Subcommittee will meet again on 3/26 at 9:00 at UHLS.

UHLS Calendar

At the last ASC meeting we discussed the *UHLS Calendar* that's on the UHLS home page, and is largely unused. We changed the link to go instead to a view of the UHLS Meeting Room Schedule. More work needs to be done on this project, but it's useable as is.

ALTM - terminal services

Rawdon has been working with ALTM to connect their staff workstations to Horizon through Terminal Services, rather than through locally installed Horizon Windows clients.

APLN

Rob and Joe attended a meeting at APLM to discuss the closing of the New Scotland branch in June. The closing will require changes to Horizon, web pages, the courier schedule, and other functions of our department.

HIP bug

TROY discovered a bug in the way some results are displayed in the HIP. For example, an author (browse) search on "Yount, Lisa" returns 27 items. When you view them, A to Z women in science and math appears near the end of the list because the "A" is skipped and the sort starts with the word "to." We reported this to SirsiDynix. Their reply, in part: "It has been logged as a bug. This is a defect has been reported with Horizon Information Portal version 3.0. It may be fixed in a future release."

Gates grants

Rob has started to visit libraries as part of a Gates training grant and is very pleased with the receptiveness of the library staffs and the progress of the project.

Jonathan will attend a workshop on the use of *TechAtlas*. From Phil: "...regarding the latest Gates Foundation initiative: The US Library Hardware Sustainability Access program, the State Library is sponsoring TechAtlas workshops so your member libraries who are on the Gates-generated eligibility list can learn to use this technology utility. TechAtlas must be run on all public access computers in each eligible member library by May 11, 2007. The Gates Foundation has stated that libraries that don't run the TechAtlas utility will automatically be removed from the eligibility list." Our department will assist any library that asks.