

PLANNING MODELS FOR AN ILS

The institutions surveyed offer many experiences in planning for and acquiring their ILS. Two in particular stand out as excellent systems to model. These institutions are the South Carolina Department of Archives and History and the New Jersey Historical Society.

Profiles of two institutions

South Carolina Department of Archives and History

The South Carolina Department of Archives and History (SCDAH) is a state agency assigned the role of collecting and preserving the documentary and cultural heritage of the state. The South Carolina Archives is part of its responsibilities. Its mission is threefold: to promote and preserve the documentary and cultural heritage of the state through professional records, historic preservation, and education programs. The department also is responsible for a vital records management program for state and local government agencies in South Carolina as well as the South Carolina Archives.

“The South Carolina Archives is a collection of more than 300 years of historical documents recording the rich and diverse history of the people and government of South Carolina.” Characteristic of the majority of small libraries in the survey, this institution is responsible for collections in a variety of formats and operates a library collection, museum, and archives. Finding and implementing technology that addresses the needs of all three collections is a challenge.

A strategic plan has been implemented for SCDAH for 2001-2004. Goal II specifically states as part of Strategy 4 that the institution is to explore new ways to use technology.

The archive has an interesting history of implementing technology. Originally SCDAH acquired AIIMS (Archives Integrated Information Management System). AIIMS was one of the earliest systems to be launched that addressed the specific needs of archives cataloging. Winnebago 7.0 by Sagebrush Corp. was acquired for the reference room library collections. Both were DOS systems residing on a Novell Netware 3.23 DOS-based server that can be accessed from a Windows NT desktop.

AIIMS consists of 52 relational databases and uses dBase III+ technology. Bibliographic records are in USMARC format and use the USMARC export function. AIIMS uses non-MARC fields for authority, patron, collections management actions; accessions and acquisitions; and container, folder, and item data. This last element is specific to the needs of archival cataloging.

Because the library needed a more traditional set of cataloging data, Winnebago was selected. Winnebago contains bibliographic records in the USMARC bibliographic form and works as a traditional suite for a library collection. The museum collection required yet another set of cataloging requirements not traditionally a match for either Winnebago or AIIMS. It became apparent that a new ILS was needed to address the needs of the collections, especially a system that could accommodate 21st century technology. Forming a consortium was seen to provide great benefit to the institution.

www.state.sc.us/scdah

See the plan at
www.state.sc.us/scdah/stratplan200104.htm.

Source: www.state.sc.us/schdah/aboutus.htm.

Consortia are popular models today for many institutions. "Library consortia are a major factor in the automation marketplace. As library automation companies become larger and more powerful, libraries work to gain purchasing leverage through large-scale contracts. " One of the major advantages of a consortia is that it lowers the cost of the product per library.

Before the decision to form a consortium, SCDAH entertained the idea of replacing the system. This consideration was an in-house process conducted in 2000. At the time, the budget did not have the necessary funding to acquire the technology. During that phase SCDAH had narrowed its software options to ReDiscovery for the museum, Gencat for the Archives, and Voyager by Endeavor for the library. Voyager was selected based on the selection committee's research into and visits to neighboring state archives that were using Voyager.

Because the funding was not available, a new process has started. The current RFP initiative includes working with many institutions to select a system that can be used by all of them. The partnering institutions include schools, universities, and state libraries. They are:

- Various technical schools
- University of South Carolina
- Clemson University
- College of Charleston
- The Citadel
- Francis Marion University
- South Carolina State Library

Because the SCDAH is the only independent archives represented in the group, its particular needs may not be accommodated totally by the system that is selected. The budget also is an issue because it will have to obtain funds for the software from the state. As with the majority of state budgets at this time, funds are tight. In addition to selecting a product, the selection committee will need to establish criteria for the server configuration among the participating institutions.

In the survey sent to the small libraries, SCDAH explained how both the processes it used were organized. The 2000 process used a committee make up of:

- Archival processing supervisor
- Access services manager
- Reference archivist
- Accessions archivist
- Division computer specialists

Source: "Automated System Marketplace 2002," by Marshall Breeding, *Library Journal*, April 1, 2002. <http://libraryjournal.reviewsnews.com/index>.

Its survey response ratings for the vendor and system selection are shown in Table 2, with 1 being the highest ranking and 5 the lowest. (Equal rank could be assigned to any feature.)

Table 2. SCDAH ratings of features

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Rating</i>
Features	1
Interconnectivity	1
Module options	1
Price	2
Sales pitch	2
Upgrade options	2
Training and installation	4

SCDAH needs to purchase the basic suite containing cataloging, acquisitions, circulation, reporting, and the online catalog. At a later date it plans to purchase the imaging module. Endeavor Information Systems had quoted the image server at \$22,500 and a \$750 license fee for the application software per workstation.

The committee planned to have 22 copies of the software available for 60 full-time and seven part-time staff. Some of the staff would not necessarily work with the system especially those in historic preservation and administration.

The yearly maintenance fee would have been \$11,415 in 2000 with all upgrades and patches guaranteed. The system would have taken care of the needs of cataloging, access, and collections management. The committee also had selected the Z39.50 client-server.

The additional software programs being used by the institution include Microsoft Access for indexing and databases, Sindex for indexing microfilm, and Gain for the records management center storage.

Its ideal system would be:

“... a windows version of AIIIMS, which would have a Web catalog and allow us to catalog our reference room books. We can search on the container/folder/item level and to do so in a library system will require data entry as holdings or item information, which will be harder to enter than in our current system. There might be a few other things we would change, but AIIIMS' core features are what we are looking to replicate in another system. ReDiscovery was our second choice to Voyager in 2000. Whereas both systems would have basically meet our needs, we chose Voyager because of the size of the company and the fact that both the Georgia and Alabama State Archives had purchased Voyager. Endeavor seemed to have the largest number of independent archives as customers of all the library systems available.” (Survey of the SCDAH, 2002-2003)

Its answer is revealing of the need that is apparent for many similar small libraries.

The budget for the 2000 process was to come from a one-time special appropriation from the legislature. The budget process for the current RFP is slightly different as is the configuration of the committee. For the current RFP the budget has not been finalized. One idea is to have funding from each of the participating institutions or a grant for the group.

The committee makeup also is different. For the current process the committee is composed of seven representatives chosen from the technical schools and the other seven participating institutions each selected a representative, making the

total 14 committee members. This committee is the official evaluation team. Titles of the representatives include library directories (tech schools), systems librarians, and heads of cataloging units.

Summary

SCDAH is responsible for a collection of a wide range of materials documenting the history of the state and encompassing current state and local government records. The archives, museum, and library constitute the profile of the small library in a special setting. A separate software system is required to meet the individual needs of the three major components of the institution—museum, library, and archives.

SCDAH began a process to identify such a system in 2000. Because of lack of funding, the process had to be aborted. During that time the committee that was formed from the members of the archives and the IT department identified an ILS for the library, a software system for the museum, and a third ILS for the archives. During the first process, the committee visited sites, saw demos, and narrowed its choices to Voyager, ReDiscovery, and Gencat.

A new process has begun. The RFP is in the works and the approach is different. A consortium is being formed that includes technical schools, colleges, and state units. The members of the evaluation team represent these institutions and are drawn from the administration and the professional expertise. Voyager is the strongest candidate and funding is being identified, although the concept for the funding structure has not been completed.

New Jersey Historical Society

The New Jersey Historical Society (NJHS) fits the definition of the small library for the purposes of this study. This statewide, private nonprofit institution includes a museum, library, and archives. The mission is to collect, preserve, and interpret the rich and intricate political, social, cultural, and economic history of New Jersey for the broadest audience.

The society was founded in 1845 and is the oldest cultural institution in the state. Two main collecting units exist—the library and the museum. The library is responsible for manuscripts, books, maps, broadsides, pamphlets, and mass-produced prints. The museum collects a variety of three-dimensional objects including paintings, furniture, costumes, prints, tools, and ceramics.

The programming includes making the library accessible to the public, an exhibition program, and many resources for teachers, genealogists, and other visitors. Public programs focus on adults and children and include theme programs, self-guided viewing, and an introduction to the history of NJHS.

The library is responsible for information in many formats. The genealogy holdings are especially rich and include city directories, compiled genealogical materials census records, tax records, military records, newspapers, maps, and county records.

The NJHS model is an especially interesting example of a planning process. NJHS received a grant from the Mellon Foundation to develop a plan to determine the best route to take in obtaining a system. NJHS was trying to determine what would be best: to purchase a system for itself, share resources with another institution, or explore other possibilities.

www.jerseyhistory.org

The foundation for the grant was a 1995 assessment of the library that also was funded by the Mellon Foundation. The report addressed the collections care and handling. Needed improvements in housing were addressed in preparation for the society's move into a new facility. Once the move had been completed and the needed changes implemented, NJHS was ready to concentrate on access to the collection.

A second grant was received from the Mellon Foundation in 2000 to develop an automation plan. The access system had to address the needs of the library and the museum, each with a unique set of needs for cataloging the holdings. The plan included developing two committees for specific tasks, site visits, and a formal final report. The two committees formed were the internal and the external committees.

The internal committee or the Information Technology Group was chaired by the library director and included the special collections librarian, curator of manuscripts, collections manager, curator of education, and director for programs and collections. The internal committee developed a list of system requirements based on the automation and information needs of the two collections. Consideration had to be given to the two collections, their cataloging needs, and the access to the information by staff and the public.

The sacred cow was the MARC format. Using websites, the committee developed a list of historical societies with OPACs addressing museum and library collections. A list of system requirements was made and revised in consultation with the external committee. In addition it developed a timeline for the project and a list of questions for the site visits.

The external committee was composed of people with technical expertise, experience in selecting an ILS, and knowledge of database management. These members included representatives from New York University, The Folger Shakespeare Library, and The Library Company of Philadelphia. Both committees played significant roles in developing and carrying out the planning strategy.

The library, responsible for manuscripts, maps, broadsides, photographs, rare books, diaries, deeds, business records, organization papers, and architectural drawings had unique cataloging requirements different from those of the museum. The museum holdings include furniture, costumes, three-dimensional objects, and ceramics, and required different cataloging standards and search strategies. The system requirements list focused on the following areas:

- Search strategies
- Page display
- Compatibility
- Help screens
- Functions
- Company requirements

Access systems were already employed in the library and the museum. The library was entering records for manuscripts in OCLC and RLIN. Some book records also were in OCLC. An intranet set was used to post finding aids for manuscripts collections, vertical files, and photograph inventories.

The museum, holding a collection of 35,654 pieces, was using Snap! for Windows (Version 2), a system from Willoughby Associates, Ltd. The system was especially helpful in preparing an inventory before moving into the new

building. The system operates on a LAN connecting four computers in the museum. It uses a museum nomenclature and identification fields geared toward museum-related objects.

To most effectively use the time at the site visits, the committee developed a list of questions. These questions focused on the following areas:

- Time involved in the selection process
- Technical processing issues related to bar coding, data dumping, retroconversion, and migration
- Vendor relations
- Databases
- Searching
- Upgrading issues
- Cost

Once the institutions were identified, the site visits were scheduled. The institutions selected to visit were: Maryland Historical Society, Virginia Historical Society in Richmond, and Western Reserve Historical Society. The visits were conducted in November and December 2000. Each visit helped answer questions and also raised important issues. Most of the issues related to retroconversion, on-site training, response time to problems, and planning. Briefly, each of the visits is detailed below:

- The **Virginia Historical Society**, a nonprofit, private research institution with a museum, archives, and library, conducted a study and hired an outside consultant to help it select the right system. The society is using Quadra Star, a system originally designed for records management system. The system has been edited to allow the society the necessary cataloging fields for its museum, archive, and library materials.
- The **Maryland Historical Society** houses archival, museum, and library collections. It is a nonprofit, private research institution open to the public. A system was needed that could handle three types of collections. The selection was made and Eos International was selected. Eos International has a solid market in the special library area.
- The **Western Reserve Historical Society** is a private research institution housing museum, library, and archival collections on the history of north-west Ohio. In addition to the collections, it operates historic sites. In the beginning the idea of a consortia was developed but later abandoned. The society went with a product from Ameritech Library Services, later Dynix Corp. Horizon, and began the process of training, converting, and establishing the work flow.

Challenges in finding one system to accommodate the library and a MARC-format-oriented culture, a museum and a collections management culture, and an archives culture with detailed finding aids was a theme in all three instances. NJHS faced the same challenges and learned valuable lessons from the site visits:

- Take the amount of time needed to do the job.
- Spend time with the vendors.
- Make sure communication with vendors is clear and involves all the key people in the initial startup of the project.

The idea of forming a technology partnership between institutions with shared interests was developed. The result was a proposal from the Newark Public Library to share its ILS. Epixtech was the system manufacturer. That company is now called Dynix Corp.

The decision to develop a joint system with the Newark Public Library was an excellent fit for many reasons. It gave NJHS the ability to partner with a system already established that had all the features it needed. The system provided a means of sharing the collections with another similar institution, and it also provided some element of cost-sharing. NJHS pays an annual maintenance fee to the Newark Public Library. It will work toward the future when all elements of the collections are available and can be accessed through a federated search.

Summary

NJHS began a plan to acquire a stand-alone OPAC. A grant from the Mellon Foundation provided it with the ability to create an in-depth plan with many key experts participating in it. Its planning process involved two committees, site visits to key institutions, and the concept of consortia. It was able to make an informed decision to partner with another similar institution. This partnership provided it not only with a more high-powered ILS beyond its original expectations, but the partnership also provided it the opportunity to share resources, publicity, and cost with another group.