CALIFORNIA DIGITAL LIBRARY SAMPLE BACKGROUND PAPER AND CHECKLIST

Prospectus for developing a request for proposal (RFP) for a system to host California Digital Library (CDL) databases

1.0 Introduction

The CDL is at a critical juncture for building and sustaining access to scholarly information. With the growth in use of networked resources by the University of California community, there is a continuing need to integrate these resources into the information technologies available to the library. For the University of California (UC) and its partners, the system that hosts the CDL databases will be a major component for providing access to the university collections and selected scholarly resources. The CDL databases (formerly the Melvyl System) are presently hosted by a heavily used and mature system that now requires replacement or redesign to fully meet the present and future CDL information access challenges.

From 1998 to 1999 the CDL conducted a technology assessment of the opportunities for hosting the locally mounted CDL databases. A preliminary evaluation of the library automation vendor market indicated that there are vendor systems possibly capable of supplying the functionality for a system to host CDL databases, including the Union Cataloging and Abstracting and Indexing (A&I) databases. A CDL Request for Proposal Steering Committee (RFPSC) has been formed to guide the development of an RFP that expresses the needs of the University community for access to the CDL-hosted databases. The rationale for developing an RFP at this time includes:

- Access to new technologies

    The state-of-the-art for vendor-supported access systems includes sophisticated information retrieval, the ability to store and maintain a variety of bibliographic record types and formats, client-server models with distributed data access, adherence to standards, and cost-effective software and hardware architectures. These technologies should enable us to merge the Union Catalog and California Periodicals database, provide usable interfaces, and create a stable platform for future development.

- Update/replace strategies

    The present system is based on mainframe computer technology that is nearing the end of its productive life. In 2001, the CDL must decide whether to upgrade or replace the present mainframe or to migrate the CDL bibliographic applications to another technology. While extending the life of the mainframe would be possible in the short term, issuing an RFP for a vendor system provides a migration path as an alternative to continued CDL investment in the mainframe.

- Effective use of CDL staff resources

  The present system of centrally hosted databases was developed in-house and has evolved over the last 20 years to effectively serve the university community. It is a large and increasingly complex system requiring periodic reprogramming and maintenance as input sources change and new features are required for search and display. Changes to the system require considerable staff resources. With a fully developed vendor system, shifting a portion of CDL development and maintenance staff to other critical CDL applications should be possible.

To meet the decision points on hardware and staffing, a draft RFP has to be presented to CDL senior management by the end of April 2000. Within this short time frame, the RFP Steering Committee will be seeking the widest possible discussion and comment on RFP issues. The Steering Committee has developed this background paper to introduce the scope and objectives of the RFP and to raise a number of issues for campus comment. Steering Committee members are charged with coordinating comments from their local campuses. In addition, an online survey will solicit comments from online users. Based on the response of the UC user community, a draft RFP will be developed in February that ranks the importance of the desired functionality.

2.0 Scope

The scope of the RFP will place the desired system within the overall context of the CDL and focus the development of specific requirements. Assumptions about the scope of the system include:

- Role within CDL architecture

  The system will be one component in the overall CDL architecture. CDL services will be accessed through multiple systems and interfaces. The role of the system defined in the RFP will be to build, maintain, and provide access to information stored in the Union Catalog and a number of additional databases, such as abstracting and indexing (A&I) databases that are housed locally or accessed across networks. The system must be able to provide links between information in one or more databases to related information stored remotely (such as circulation control information, full text at publishers' sites, and holdings information). The system also must contain server functions to provide information to campuses, university partners, and other organization. Continuing the present model, there may be additional bibliographic databases outside this system accessed through their native interfaces.

- Databases

  The system will continue to host the CDL databases, including:

  - Union Catalog (Merged Catalog and Periodicals database)

    The system will host a merged Melvyl Union Catalog and California Periodicals database that will be mounted locally and built from the output of campus systems.

  - Abstracting and indexing databases

    The system will host some number of A&I databases. These can be mounted locally or accessed remotely (such as through the Z39.50 protocol). The mix of locally housed and remote databases may change over time.

- Functionality

  The system will contain functions found in the present system as well as enhanced or new functions made possible by newer technologies. Functions may be included in the vendor system or developed by CDL and integrated into the system using programming interfaces. Some functions may be phased in over the implementation period.

- User community

  The patron is the primary user community for the system to host CDL databases. System functions also will be of value for library staff; but this is not intended as a technical processing or integrated library system.

These are general assumptions about the scope of the system to be requested by the RFP. Next are outlined specific objectives that a system must meet.

3.0 Objectives for a system to host CDL databases

The underlying objectives for a system to host CDL databases follow. These objectives are stated broadly and attempt to encompass the complete system. Specific requirements will follow from these objectives as interpreted by the Steering Committee and campus comments.

3.1. The system must be a forward-looking, extensible system built on a cost-effective hardware and software platform for information access to CDL bibliographic databases.

3.2. The system must provide a wide range of information access functions suitable for a large, distributed scholarly community that includes faculty, researchers, students, and staff.

3.3. The system must be able to manage bibliographic records in all common formats (MARC, SGML, XML) and manage or provide links to publications in other formats and media.

3.4. The system must be able to build and maintain a merged Union Catalog of University of California holdings, including the presentation of monographs, serial, and nonprint formats in a unified user view.

3.5. The system must be able to maintain the Union Catalog database through batch input from contributors with no or very limited direct editing.

3.6. The system must be able to locally build and maintain additional bibliographic databases, such as A&I databases.

3.7. The system must be able to incorporate external databases accessed over networks through standard protocols, such as Z39.50.

3.8. The system must be able to expeditiously add new databases, whether mounted locally or accessed across networks.

3.9. The system must provide a common interface to resources under its control and facilitate consistency in data and services. The interface must be Web-based with both basic and expert functions (that is, command line).

3.10. The system must include high-quality retrieval mechanisms that can reliably extract relevant results from heterogeneous databases with satisfactory response time.

3.11. The system must include or interface with personal productivity functions, such as save, print, mail, download, update, and request.

3.12. The system must include the facility to link to other information resources through a URL or other standard linking elements. These standard locators may be in the records or computed at the time of display from information provided by the publishers. The system also must be able to provide links to campus library systems to retrieve holdings and circulation data.

3.13. The system must provide Z39.50 server capabilities to information in locally mounted databases for campus and non-UC use.

3.14. The system must meet strict performance standards for response time and availability.

3.15. The system must provide a platform for future development in response to changing requirements and advancing technologies.

3.16. The system must provide capabilities that allow the CDL to enhance existing functions and add new functions. The system must integrate and interoperate with other CDL components.

3.17. The system must meet ADA requirements for accessibility.

3.18. The system must be standards-based in principle and in practice.

4.0 Developing the RFP

The scope and objectives outlined above are offered as a starting point for deliberating the development of an RFP for a system to host the CDL databases. In concert with soliciting and evaluating campus comments, the CDL will develop a draft RFP. This draft will detail technical specifications for each general objective based on campus input, existing functionality, and UC's purchasing boilerplate.

The RFP will require that functions either be present in the vendor system or be able to be accomplished locally through vendor-supported application program interfaces (API). The RFP is expected to be divided into components to give the vendor the opportunity to bid either on the whole package or on one or more components. The RFP also will be structured to elicit incremental costs for major functions so that the CDL may better evaluate the vendor offerings. Possible organizations include the following:

• Union Catalog

  Group all functions to support building and maintaining the Melvyl Union Catalog, including interface and server functions and merging Catalog and periodicals access. This component would be self-contained and would appeal to those vendors with proven track records for building union catalogs.

• A&I databases

  Group all the functions to support access to additional databases, such as Abstracting and indexing databases. These requirements may be met by loading databases locally or by accessing the databases across networks. This might include the same vendors who might bid on the Union Catalog but also might include another class of vendors that only handle A&I databases.

• Database server functions

  Group all functions associated with locally maintained databases and seek one or more vendors to provide Z39.50 server access to this information. The CDL would provide the interface to access this information. The

vendor system could load the databases locally at the CDL (such as the Union Catalog), provide server access to databases at a remote site (A&I database), or offer a combination of both functions.

A decision on how to organize the RFP can be left open during the campus comment period. To help sort the various issues, a number of questions about system functionality are presented next.

5.0 Questions

The campus review period will raise and hopefully resolve issues that need to be considered in the RFP. The Steering Committee developed the following questions to be explored as we proceed with the RFP. The committee encourages the formulation of additional questions as well.

5.1. Value of the Union Catalog as a backup to campus systems

To what extent does the Union Catalog act as a backup to campus systems for disaster recovery and scheduled outages? Should this feature be a requirement of the new system?

5.2. Value of merged Union Catalog records

Do library catalogers rely on the merged Union Catalog record when making catalog decision? Do a significant number of records benefit from additional fields to justify continuing to store campus variations and local access points?

5.3. Value of the Telnet interface

What features of the Telnet interface do you not want to lose (such as speed, command line control)?

5.4. Value of consistent interface

How important is a unified interface for Catalog and A&I databases? How many databases do you use on a regular basis? How many do you use occasionally?

5.5. Value of locally developed productivity functions

How important are services such as update, request, and links to holdings?

5.6. Need for support for multiple character sets

Is displaying diacritics and other special characters important? What languages need to display in the vernacular rather than in their transliterated form? How much need is there to be able to search using non-Roman scripts?

5.7. Value of local data

What level of campus holdings needs to be included in the Union Catalog? What holdings details could be better obtained through links to local systems? Note that this question relates to the question of using the Union Catalog as a backup to the local catalog. To be a backup, there is a minimum of local data that the Union Catalog must contain. Can we identify that minimum?

5.8. Necessary search functions

What search features and functions are important to the expert user? What features and functions are important to the beginning or occasional user? What search functions of the current Catalog do you

regularly use? What are the deficiencies with the existing search functions? What search functions do you like in other systems.

CDL RFP checklist

This checklist is a preliminary list of requirements and functions that are to be included in the RFP for a system to host the CDL databases. Detailed specifications will be developed for each requirement. The purpose of the checklist is to give a broad overview of RFP issues and elicit comments about possible missing elements. The checklist is organized into functional areas.

1. Organizational requirements

    1.1. System will contain all UC holdings.

    1.2. System will contain selected non-UC holdings.

    1.3. Database will be assembled from multiple input sources.

    1.4. System will access local and remote databases.

    1.5. System will be Web-based.

    1.6. System will be standards-based.

    1.7. System will have authentication and authorization consistent with UC technical environment.

    1.8. RFP will be organized into components for separate vendor responses.

    1.9. RFP responses will be from vendors with working systems.

    1.10. System must be cost-effective compared with local development.

    1.11. Vendor evaluation will include field testing of working functions.

    1.12. Vendor evaluation will include benchmarks for capacity planning.

2. Functional requirements

    2.1. Search modes (novice, advanced, experimental)

    2.2. Search-browse

    2.3. Display

    2.4. Default and user specified sorting orders

    2.5. Help/Explain/Tutorial

    2.6. Command line

    2.7. Search history

    2.8. Personal profile

    2.9. Print

    2.10. Mail

    2.11. Download

    2.12. Save (including save across sessions)

    2.13. Sets

    2.14. Update

2.15. Interface to request server

2.16. Links to publisher content

2.17. Links from publisher content to holdings

2.18. Links to local library information including circulation control

3. Database requirements

3.1. Be able to manage all forms of bibliographic records (books and nonbooks)

3.2. Be able to link to nonbibliographic records

3.3. Be able to handle all bibliographic record formats (MARC, XML)

3.4. Normalized input and display

3.5. Batch update

3.6. Merged record

3.7. Locally hosted databases

3.8. Remote databases links (such as 856 fields)

3.9. Z39.50 server functions

3.10. Z39.50 client functions

3.11. Database security

SAMPLES FROM STAFF REQUIREMENTS AND RFQ

This appendix shows how a core list of requirements developed by a Selco topic group became part of the library's official request for quotation (RFQ) for its integrated library system. This model gives request for proposal (RFP) writers an idea of how to translate staff requests (usually written with the special terms of that library) into more formal functional requests in the resulting RFP, RFQ, or request for information (RFI).

Topic group core requirements for acquisitions and serials

Acquisitions core requirements

- All transactions will occur in real time rather than in batch modes.

- The system should be flexible, allowing member libraries to choose the functions and features appropriate for use within individual library systems.

- The system should be fully compatible with major vendor software systems including, but not limited to: Baker and Taylor, Ingram, Follett, Mackin, and so on.

- The system is expected to be fully Windows-compatible and user-friendly including, but not limited to, the following features: on-screen displays, drop-down menus, and split screens.

- The system is expected to provide thorough documentation and online help.

- The system is expected to support the creation of customizable user generated reports including, but not limited to, cancellations, backorders, errors, and transactions.

- The system is expected to make possible the sharing and displaying of information between the various modules including, but not limited to cataloging, serials, circulation, and so on

- The system should allow for various levels of security based on a user's authorization.

- The acquisitions function of the system is expected to use the system's bibliographic database through the use of templates and not require the creation or maintenance of a separate file of bibliographic records.

- The system is expected to have the flexibility to handle all types of orders in any format including, but not limited to:

  - Firm orders

  - Standing orders

  - Subscriptions

  - Continuations

- Serial orders

- Gifts

- Prepaid orders

- The system is expected to allow creation of order records by a variety of methods including, but not limited to:

  - Use of information from any bibliographic or order record already in the ILS

  - Acceptance of MARC-format-compatible electronic records obtained via Z39.50 or from another source

- The system is expected to be able to receive and process electronic transmission of acquisitions data.

- The system is expected to support the electronic transmission of order information to vendors and the receipt of order acknowledgement or confirmation information from vendors.

- The system is expected to provide the ability to track all stages of an order, item by item, from request through receipt and payment. Cancellations should automatically remove online catalog holdings display.

- The system is expected to make possible the receiving and processing of a large field of information in machine-readable form. Receiving invoices, especially with major vendors, is expected to be automatic and electronic.

- The system is expected to make possible the editing or canceling of the vendor, fund, quantity ordered, quantity received, price, and any other library-selected fields at any time, including the point of receipt and before electronic transmission. Any changes to fund or order amounts also are expected to automatically adjust appropriate fund balances.

- The system is expected to handle invoicing for all order types and to have the flexibility to accommodate many situations including, but not limited to:

  - Cancellations and returns

  - Receipt of part of an order

  - Receipt of items with or without and accompanying invoice

  - Receipt of gifts

  - Receipt of memorial or donated funds

  - Receipt of items ordered against a deposit account

  - Prepayments and receipt of prepays

  - Applications of multiple credit memos to an invoice or a single credit memo to multiple invoices

  - Foreign currency

  - Credit card transactions

  - Ship-to and bill-to addresses

  - Multiple search capabilities

- The system is expected to provide the capability to budget and monitor book and serial purchases either in a different manner or at a more detailed level than that provided by the institution's financial manage-

ment system. The system should provide the ability for integration with the institution's financial management system.

- Fund accounting is expected to be fully integrated with the acquisitions and serials management control functions. Encumbrances and payments in the serials module are expected to be reflected in the fund and subfund records of the acquisitions module and payment information is expected to appear in the serial record.

- The encumbering and disencumbering of funds and subfunds and the adjustment of fund balances is expected to be performed automatically and dynamically in response to creation of orders, cancellation of orders, and payment of invoices. The system is expected to allow for flexible changing of allocations and transferring between funds and between subfunds.

- The system is expected to have a single file of vendor information, with library or consortium-defined fields, available to all member institutions. The file is expected to include, but not be limited to:

  - Public data, such as vendor name, address, telephone number, e-mail (Fields are expected to accommodate a nine-digit ZIP code and non-U.S. information.)

  - Institution-specific (secured) data, such as FEIN numbers, account numbers. (The vendor file is expected to secure sensitive institution level information from display.)

  - Sufficient fields to contain multiple addresses for the vendor and its contact people

  - Note fields

  - Links to vendor websites

  - Multiple ship-to addresses

- Each library should be able to create vendor records or to add local information to the union vendor record. Data in a vendor record is expected to be able to be changed or deleted at any time following parameters established at the system level.

- The system is expected to display order status with flexible library options to control the display.

(RFQ excerpt, prepared by Diane Mayo of Information Partners, Inc., and reprinted with permission.)

Functional needs: Acquisitions and Serials

- Describe the system's compatibility with major vendor software systems including, but not limited to: Baker and Taylor, Ingram, Follett, Mackin, and so on.

- Describe how the system supports the electronic transmission of order information to vendors, the receipt of order acknowledgement or confirmation information from vendors, and electronic receipt of invoices. Explain in detail how the system provides these functions for multiple, separate ordering libraries, each with its own funds and vendor account numbers. What safeguards ensure that the electronic files are posted to the correct accounts?

- Describe how the system supports electronic invoicing, including annual renewals and supplemental invoices, for serials.

- What limits exist on the number of order records that can be associated with a single bibliographic record in a single ordering year and over longer periods of time?

- What are the limits on the number of funds and subfunds or the size of fund and subfund records?

- What number of locally defined fields and free-text notes in variable-length fields are available for various predefined functions, such as ordering, receiving, cataloging, check-in, and so on?

- Describe any interfaces available for exchanging data with local accounting systems. Explain in detail how the system provides these functions for multiple, separate ordering libraries, each with its local accounting.

- Describe how the system supports retention, archiving, and retrieval of order data for as long as the local library desires.

- Can the fiscal year beginning and ending dates be adjusted for commitments and expenditures? Describe how this adjustment is accomplished.

- Does the system allow more than one fiscal year to be open at a time? Is there any limit to the number of simultaneously open fund accounting years?

- Describe the system's rules-based method for fiscal year rollover. How can each library choose whether or not to automatically carry over funds and commitments into a new fiscal year? The carryover routines should include options to roll over only encumbrances, and add in new allocations, retain open and standing orders, and other features related to end-of–year fiscal transactions.

- Describe how Selco members can define fiscal years differently for different funds.

- Describe all standard reports and statistics available with the acquisitions and serials modules. What data elements are available for creating ad hoc reports locally?

SAMPLE AGENDA AND TOPICS FOR CONSULTATION WITH CUSTOMER LIBRARIES

This sample agenda and topic list excerpt from North Carolina State University's (NCSU) 2001-02 integrated library system (ILS) purchase process provides a good idea of how to plan for consultations with the customers of a prospective vendor.

Sample agenda

Agenda: January 7-8, 2002

NCSU Libraries

Ad Hoc ILS Transition Committee

Visit with XXXXXXX

Manager, Integrated Library System

XXXXX University

Monday, Jan. 7, 2002

8:30 am – 10:00 am	Overview of NCSU Libraries and General Discussion with ad hoc
	ILS Transition Committee and Information Technology Advisory Committee (Include general experiences with [vendor] with regard to documentation, training, and customer service.)
	Location:
10:00 am – 10:15 am	Break
10:15 am – 11:15 am	Functional Issues with [vendor]/[ILS]: ACQUISITIONS/ SERIALS
	Location:
11:15 am – 12 noon	Functional Issues with [vendor]/[ILS]: FINANCIAL
	Location:
12 noon – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:15 pm – 2:15 pm	Functional Issues with [vendor]/[ILS]: CATALOGING
	Location:
2:15 pm – 3:15 pm	Functional Issues with [vendor]/[ILS]: CIRCULATION/ RESERVE/ILL
	Location:
3:15 pm – 3:30 pm	Break

3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Functional Issues with [vendor]/[ILS]: PATRON SERVICES AND PUBLIC ACCESS
	Location:
4:30 pm – 5:00 pm	Wrap-up with ILS Transition Committee and plans for Day 2
	Location:

Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2002

8:30 am – 10:30 am	Functional Issues with [vendor]/[ILS]: DATA CONVERSION, TECHNICAL, REPORTING, AND OTHER GENERAL ISSUES
10:30 am – 11:00 am	Other issues and final wrap-up

Topic excerpt

III. Circulation & Reserves

Circulation:

Staff-only issues

- Provide help with the system and circulation procedures as you go.

- System is put together in such a way as to enhance staff's ability to provide service—does not hinder staff's ability to provide service through its inflexibility and poor design.

- Client scripting.

- Ability for canned reports to be exportable.

- Explore touch screens/mouseless—how does this work with being able to use Netscape and Microsoft products?

- Make the system appear module-less—that is, enable circulation employees to use all of circulation and item manipulation functions from same screen rather than jumping from menu to menu and module to module.

- Explore different levels of staff-side security and what can and cannot be done.

- Ability to see all charges and discharges for duration of session—this is an enhancement of the current PowerTerm feature of scrolling through the last 10 entries for the system.

- Circulation stats that can be manipulated and used for patron type, Library of Congress class, time of checkout, type of checkout (self-check, renewal, online renewal), and so on.

- Effective money handling and money reports.

- Useful, accurate, easy-to-do patron loads.

- Report creation tools that don't drain system.

- Ability to capture in-house use statistics (the browse stat count if you discharge and item that is not checked out).

- Ability to search for and report nonbarcoded items on the barcode field.

Issues that affect staff and borrowers

- NISO Circulation Interchange Protocol (NCIP)

- Ability to work offline and then upload charge data

- Unlimited note fields for patrons and fine records

- Ability to link to MS documents from patron record

- External linking and reporting (such as to BIP for replacement cost)

- Show volume information on staff side of catalog

- Keep history of charge for duration of borrowing time period (For example, if a patron first checks out a book on 3/1/01 and renews it 12 times, all dates for renewals and the original due date are kept with the charge record.)

- Keep longer history on items returned—of course, this record affects privacy concerns

- Record of paid money transactions and transferred transactions

- Investigate receipt printing

- Keep routing function, but make it easier to navigate

- Integrate with PeopleSoft financials

Issues that primarily affect borrowers

- Effective notices (including via e-mail) with large degree of customization

- OPAC has a "being shelved" status for items that are recent returns (Ability to change the duration of this message—for example, set it for two or three days at the end of the semester and only one day at all other times)

- Add or subtract item statuses as needed—can we at least have a Search Status?

- New Book status with an automatic switchover to Available after two weeks

- Real-time requesting and request item feature for recalls

- Send overdue notices before due date (assuming electronic notification)

- Ability to renew items via online system; up-to-date item is declared lost or recalled

Reserves

- Ability to see what periodicals are checked-in and which ones have not arrived.

- Ability to easily see when issues are at bindery and when they are expected back.

BIP: Books In Print

- Accurate representation of what current issues are available

- Reserve and Circulation modules should mimic each other in as many ways as possible—check-out, patron lookup, item lookup, and so on

- Item lookup in the circulation or reserves module also should include the reserves information if appropriate

- Global masking and unmasking of e-reserves (easy lookup of masked e-reserves)

- Not have separate e-reserves and reserves modules

- Ability to produce statistics such as how many items have been added to reserves in a given time period—canned report?

- Keep the linking of e-reserves from the online catalog

- Is there a way to provide better checkout history information for reserves to better understand usage? (For example, an item may have been put on reserve in 1986 and have 25 transactions, but knowing when those transactions took place would be nice.)

- Ability to create item records

GLOSSARY

Key terms used in and around the RFP:

Acceptance tests: Newly trained library staff hammer away at the system, identify problems, and when satisfied, sign off. Signing off officially states that the system performs to specifications and a milestone payment may be due.

Alpha test: The first trial implementation of a new system, often conducted in-house, with vendor staff and invited users testing the system.

Best test of a system: A live operation with real data and under real conditions. No matter how much is pretested, unanticipated problems invariably arise in a live operation. These unexpected problems are why final acceptance of a system should officially occur a few months after the system goes live.

Beta test: A trial implementation of a prerelease of a new system on-site at selected client sites. Libraries are often given discounts to beta test software—on the understanding that it may not work. The beta testers' suggestions will be incorporated into the released version.

Boilerplate: 1. Canned responses to RFP questions that are modified slightly for different clients without having to be rewritten from scratch. 2. Canned sets of specifications for systems, used in an RFP to describe functions and requirements.

Bug: A flaw in the software.

Checklist RFP: A request for proposal that lists each desired function and feature followed by columns marked with responses for vendors to check off. Checklists are quicker for both the vendor and the library's selection committee but can be misleading if either party forgets to include anything.

Contract: A legal agreement between the vendor and the library for the purchase, installation, testing, and training associated with the new system. The contract outlines the payment schedules and responsibilities of both parties for performing various parts of the work. The vendor's RFP responses and the library's RFP questions will have legal force if the contract is ever disputed.

Conversions (also known as test database loads): Representative records from the patron and MARC databases used in the old system (if any) are test loaded into the new one. The vendor may charge for this service. Some existing transaction records also might be loaded. Training can take place using the test database.

Customer support: Trouble desk or similar staff, including a customer support engineer or field engineer, who look after a client once a sale is contracted.

Demos: Based on the RFPs, a handful of vendors are asked to demonstrate their systems on campus. Sales people may bring along sales support staff to assist.

Dog and pony show: A sales demonstration or conference presentation designed to show off the functions and features of the system (also called the sales demo).

Feature: 1. An outstanding or innovative aspect of the system. 2. A characteristic of the software that is technically correct, but that does not accomplish the desired result (also called an undocumented feature).

Final acceptance: The library signs off on the entire system. A milestone payment will almost certainly be due.

Functions and features document: A secondary marketing tool outlining the work the system can perform (functions) and the bells and whistles (features) that make it stand out.

Glossy: Term that describes a primary marketing tool designed to attract attention to the product but that is sketchy in detail.

Hardware and software support: When the system is live, the provisions of the hardware and software maintenance agreements in the contract come into force. The sales representative likely passes the site off to a project manager or customer support representative, who will serve as the site's contact from then on. The library should appoint one person (normally the systems librarian) to act as liaison.

Letter of intent: The library usually issues a letter announcing its agreement to enter contract negotiations with the selected vendor for the purchase of a system. Simultaneously, the vendor generally issues a press release announcing it has reached an agreement to enter contract discussions with the library.

Live: With the full databases loaded, the system goes live, perhaps in a few branch libraries to start. A milestone payment may be due when the system successfully goes live.

Migration path: Even while buying a system, the library should consider how to handle eventual migration to another system, new releases, or improved hardware. An escrow agreement can ensure a smooth migration path in the event of vendor bankruptcy or system obsolescence.

Milestones: When the vendor completes various stages of the installation, the library must pay certain amounts. The library may hold up the payments by refusing to sign off on the work done by the vendor. Some contracts include performance bonds—if the vendor fails, it loses the performance bond.

Project managers: Library staff member and vendor staff member who are responsible for the system implementation and serve as primary go-betweens.

Release number: A number assigned to a major change in the software (for example, Release 1.0 is the first major software issue of the product).

Request for information (RFI): A brief description of a library's requirements for an integrated system, sent to many potential vendors, with a request for descriptions of products that might be suitable for the library. Glossy brochures and demo disks usually accompany the vendors' responses.

Request for proposal (RFP): A formal, detailed definition of a library's requirements for an integrated system, sent to a small number of likely vendors, requesting detailed automation proposals and bids. The RFP response becomes part of any subsequent contracts. Manuals and examples of reports generated, and so on, usually accompany the completed proposals.

Sales support: Programmers, engineers, or librarians who support the vendor's sales force before and during the contract negotiation phases.

Selection committee: An ad hoc committee including library staff, library board members (or university faculty), and administrators who

define selection criteria, examine proposals, and recommend purchases of library management systems.

Targeted RFP: A request for proposal that asks vendors if they can emulate the functions and features of another known vendor. Such an RFP is often a library's attempt to lend credibility to a skewed election process. Most vendors will not respond to this kind of request.

User group: A formal or informal group of representatives from sites using a particular vendor or product. Collectively, they can lobby the vendor to incorporate new functions and features into subsequent releases of the software or to fix long-standing bugs.

Version or revision number: A number designating a revision, with bug fixes, to a major software release (for instance, Release 1.2 would be Release 1.0 with fixes).

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