Smarter Libraries through Technology

Seeking a Balance

By Marshall Breeding

In order to be prepared to write this newsletter and other projects, I'm constantly monitoring many different sources of information for library technology news. My main focus lately has been library automation products and discovery systems, but I keep an eye out for any technology story that might have an impact on libraries. I find it quite a challenge to synthesize all of this incoming information into a balanced representation of what is happening in the library automation industry as it cycles through different phases.

One of my highest priorities is to identify any new products or technologies that show potential for a positive impact on libraries. I'm especially interested in any information on the development of new systems, especially ones that break out of some of the long-established norms in library automation. This isn't to suggest that products or technologies are better just because they're new, but more that new products are important to probe and evaluate. Librarians, like any other profession, seek options from a wide palate as libraries seek new tools to meet their strategic goals. While it's important for existing products to see ongoing development and enhancements, I think that readers would be especially interested in early information on emerging products that offer libraries new alternatives. But does an emphasis on new products and emerging trends do justice to the library tech vendors that churn out new releases of their products year after year and continue to represent the majority of the industry activity?

As I report the news of the library automation industry through this newsletter, my website and other publications, I'm very mindful of trying to maintain a balance among the major themes in play. The current struggle between open source and proprietary systems, for example, can be challenging to navigate. One of the major competitive issues in the industry in recent years is the dymanic of open source ILS products challenging the longstanding proprietary systems. In this phase of the library automation industry, both options remain viable choices and many libraries find themselves at a crossroads where they must decide between one or the other. The volume and tone of how these issues are treated in the professional press, in the blogosphere, and other media can factor into those decisions.

One challenge in reporting on the position of open source software in the library automation industry stems from differences in the ways that the respective players

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communicate. Those involved with open source systems tend to make much more information available than their counterparts that work with proprietary systems, and tend to be more engaged with social media. The inclination to divulge more may emanate from the same principles of openness behind their model of software development, but it also has competitive implications. The more that libraries hear a constant litany of their peers adopting open source automation, the more that they feel reassured that it's a viable approach for them. I observe that firms working with open source systems tend to broadcast every time a new library adopts the products they support, regardless of how small or large, while companies offering proprietary products make public announcements only on a very small portion of their business activities. This disproportionate output of communications could lead to the impression that open source adoptions already outpace those choosing proprietary systems. According to my research, proprietary systems continue to comprise the larger proportion of the industry, especially for larger-scale projects. In economic terms, open source projects still represent a small portion of the industry, though its impact will likely increase in coming years. Events can be interesting initially because they stand out as an exception to prevailing trends; they become even more interesting if they become the new norm.

This month's issue of *Smart Libraries Newsletter* shows how this effort to maintain a balance can unfold. As I review the press releases, announcements made on discussion lists, and activity on social networks like Twitter over a given month, several stories on open source advancements stand out, and led me to develop a piece laying out some of those themes, such as the expansion of Evergreen beyond North America. In the same timeframe, there were a few announcements of larger libraries selecting proprietary systems. So while there isn't nearly as much to write about the latter activities, I think that it's important to include them, to stay in tune with the realities of the industry. Readers should expect open source and proprietary technologies to be treated without bias. In a similar vein, we include a story about a new subscription-based pricing model for self-service equipment offered by 3M. It's worth reporting since it breaks from traditional patterns, and it's yet to be determined whether it may be the beginning of a new trend.

So am I successful in keeping the balance? Since my colleagues engaged with open source projects sometimes suggest that I give too much attention to proprietary systems and those involved with proprietary products worry that I lean too much toward open source, I can believe that I've been at least somewhat objective in the way that I cover the library automation industry.

Open Source ILS Continues to Expand

The movement toward open source library automation continues. Recent months have seen many announcements of libraries selecting both Koha and Evergreen to replace proprietary systems. Keeping in mind that proprietary ILS products continue to dominate, both in new selections and in the overall base of installed systems, open source library automation has gained a strong footing in the industry and has become a common option for most types of libraries.

Evergreen Expands Internationally

The open source Evergreen ILS, initially developed by the Georgia Public Library System for the PINES consortium, has been adopted by a number of additional consortia and libraries within the United States and Canada. In addition to Georgia PINES, Evergreen has been selected by several other consortia in North America, including:

- British Columbia SITKA (69 libraries, including branches)
- Indiana Evergreen (112 libraries)
- Merrimack Valley (Massachusetts, 39 libraries, in implementation process)

- Maine Balsom (10 libraries)
- Niagara Libraries (Ontario, 11 libraries),
- North Texas Library Partners (rural area outside Dallas, 12 libraries),
- Pioneer Library System (Upstate New York between Rochester and Syracuse, 42 libraries),
- Sage Library System (Northeast Oregon, 60 libraries)
- SC LENDS (South Carolina, 49 libraries)
- SPRUCE (Manitoba, Canada, 8 libraries)

In addition to these consortia, Evergreen has been implemented by a number of individual libraries or library systems, most notably the King County Library System, a very large suburban library system in the Seattle area with 46 branches and an annual circulation of over 19 million transactions.

On the domestic front, Evergreen implementations continue to expand. Four additional library systems joined SC LENDS, including the multi-county Allendale-Hampton-Jasper Regional Library System, as well as the public libraries in Colleton, Kershaw,
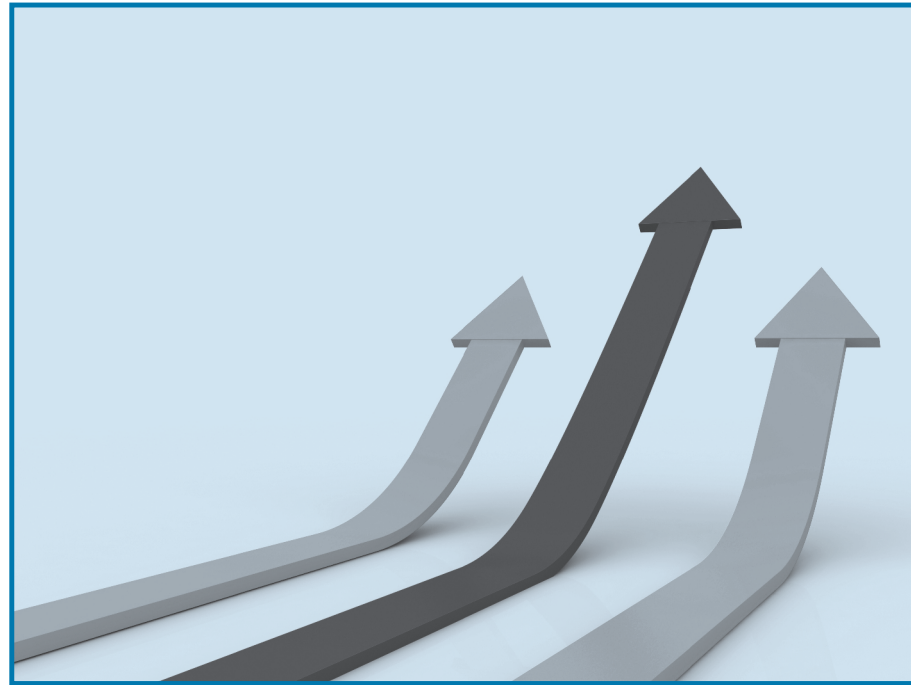
and Williamsburg counties. Equinox Software provides hosting and support services for SC LENDS. The Lummi Library, which serves the 1,254 students of Northwest Indian College in Whatcom, Washington, recently migrated from Athena to Evergreen with support from Equinox.

Additional US Evergreen migrations are in the works. The Massachusetts Library Network Cooperative (MassLNC), for example, plans an implementation of Evergreen that will support three consortia currently operating proprietary systems, including the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium of 35 libraries currently running SirsiDynix Horizon, Central/Western Massachusetts Automation Resource sharing with 155 libraries using Millennium, and the 28 libraries of the North of Boston Library Exchange. This project anticipates a phased implementation with MVLC going live in May 2011 with the other two consortia coming online later in 2011 or 2012. MassLNC issued a Request for Proposal on March 1, 2011 for the development enhancements to Evergreen in circulation, cataloging, acquisitions, label printing, and online catalog. (See http://masslnc.cwmars.org/)

While Equinox Software, including personnel involved with the initial development of Evergreen, ranks as the dominant commercial firm providing support services for this open source ILS, it now competes with other organizations.

ByWater Solutions Makes Gains with Koha

ByWater Solutions, a firm specializing in the support of Koha, was founded in April 2009. The company has seen a rapid expansion in its client libraries since then. ByWater has attracted new libraries moving from proprietary systems as well as those already using Koha and shifting support services from other vendors. In February 2011 the MassCat catalog of the 70 libraries of the Massachusetts Library System announced it had selected ByWater as its new hosting and support vendor. MassCat had been a client of LibLime since 2008. The 33 libraries of the Northeast Kansas Library System shifted their shared Koha system from LibLime to ByWater Solutions in February 2011. Several smaller libraries have selected Koha with support from ByWater so far in 2011, including the Freeport Community Library, moving from InfoCentre; The Brandon Regional Health Authority in Manitoba, Canada, previously using MicroCat; the Macon County Library in Missouri, migrating from SirsiDynix Unicorn; and the Del Norte County Library in California, moving from Library.Solution.

LibLime, now a division of PTFS, also reported several new clients in 2011. Including the Mabee Library at Sterling College in Arkansas, migrating from Horizon, The George School in Newton, PA, which selected Koha with support from LibLime to replace a Winnebago ILS; the Rotunda Libraries, which are a set of departmental libraries at Simon Fraser University; and the Trillium Lakelands School District in Ontario, migrating from individual Circulation Plus and Winnebago systems.

Evergreen Expands to Europe

Evergreen recently gained its first foothold outside the United States. The councils of Stirling and Dunbartonshire have formed a new consortium and have selected Evergreen through an official tender process. These two independent library authorities in Scotland, north of Glasgow, entered in to a partnership to form a new consortium to share an ILS rather than to each implement separate systems. Both the Stirling Public Libraries and The East Dunbartonshire Libraries are currently operating SirsiDynix Horizon systems. Together, the two library organizations serve a combined population of almost 200,000. PTFS Europe will

provide hosting and support for the new consortium.

This selection represents forward momentum for Evergreen. It is an expansion into Europe for this open source ILS. In broad terms, Europe has not seen the same level of activity in open source library automation systems as North America. With the exception of some pilot projects, mentioned below, Evergreen has not previously expanded beyond the United States and Canada. The ability for Evergreen to pass the rigors of an official tender process in the UK may carry even more significance. Procurements by library authorities in the UK must abide by rules that ensure a fair competitive process. The winning response to the tender was submitted by PTFS Europe, which will host the consortium's implementation of Evergreen in its data center in Maidenhead, near London.

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Koha in France

France is another front on the open source ILS arena in Europe worth noting. Primarily through the efforts of a French firm called BibLibre, over a hundred libraries, both academic and public, have implemented the open source Koha ILS. The company reports it works with about 63 libraries including a total of 230 individual branches. BibLibre co-founder Paul Poulain was one of the earliest Koha developers outside of New Zealand. BibLibre has been one of the key firms contributing to the development of Koha and has collaborated with other firms including ByWater Solutions in the United States and

Catalyst IT in New Zealand. BibLibre announced in Feb 2011 that it will provide financial support for the current Koha release manager, employed by Catalyst IT. In Sept 2009 BibLibre partnered with ByWater Solutions to contribute to the support of the documentation specialist for Koha. (see http://www.biblibre.com)

EIFL promotes Open Source ILS in Developing Nations

In the developing world, a non-profit organization called EIFL has sponsored pilot projects involving both Evergreen and Koha. As part of its general mis-

sion of "enabling access to knowledge for education, learning, research and for sustainable livelihoods" EIFL is also involved in licensing content, advocating library-friendly copyright laws, and promoting open access. In support of open source software, EIFL conducts workshops, develops documentation, and develops case studies based on pilot projects. Open source software promoted by the EIFL OSS program include utilities to support persons with disabilities, integrated library systems including Koha and Evergreen, the Greenstone digital asset management system, and information management tools such as J-ISIS.

EIFL-OSS has facilitated pilot projects and case studies for Evergreen in Nepal, Zimbabwe, and Armenia. The Fundamental Scientific Library of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, a consortium of about 30 libraries currently using an Aleph system has been involved in a pilot project to migrate to Evergreen. According to the project coordinator, a union catalog representing the collections has been successfully implemented, but the individual libraries have not yet moved from Aleph to Evergreen. EIFL-OSS pilot projects involving Koha have taken place at the National Scientific Library in the country of Georgia, at Mzuzu University in Malawi, and the University of Bamako in Mali. (See http://www.eifl.net/foss)

—Marshall Breeding

Library Industry News

SirsiDynix Enhances Horizon

SirsiDynix, the largest company in the library automation industry, supports two ILS products, Symphony and Horizon. Although Symphony ranks as the company's flagship product, thousands of libraries continue to use Horizon. In the last year SirsiDynix has strengthened its support for Horizon, despite announcements made previously that it would focus all new development on Symphony. With the new Horizon 5.7.1 release announced in February 2011, new features have been added across several modules, including acquisitions and circulation as well as a new optional module for stock rotation. According to the announcement, this release also incorporates much of the functionality developed in previous years for libraries in the UK into the core version of the software. SirsiDynix plans a subsequent release of Horizon that will provide support for Web Services, an interoperability layer already available for Symphony, which provides support for external applications such as the company's BookMyne iPhone app.

Bergen County Libraries Pick Polaris

In one of the largest library automation contracts announced so far this year, the Bergen County Cooperative Library System in New Jersey selected Polaris from Polaris Library Systems to replace its incumbent SirsiDynix Symphony ILS. The cooperative includes 75 libraries, extending beyond Bergen County, to also include some libraries in neighboring Essex, Hudson, and Passaic counties. The phased migration is expected to be complete by the end of 2012. The cooperative handles around 12 million circulation transactions annually.

Arlington, VA Implements Millennium for Public and School Libraries

Innovative Interfaces, Inc. announced that it has completed the implementation of Millennium and Encore for both the Arlington Public Library and the Arlington Public Schools. Though the school and public library systems will operate independently, they will present a consistent interface to patrons throughout their common service area. The public library for this mid-sized city of about 200,000 generates over 3 million circulation transactions annually and the school district serves 21,000 students through 35 library programs. Both systems previously used Carl.X from The Library Corporation with AquaBrowser Library as the front-end discovery interface.

Anchorage Schools Implement Library.Solution

The Library Corporation announced that the Anchorage School District is now live with Library.Solution for Schools, migrating from a SirsiDynix Unicorn. The district includes over 100 schools, serves 49,000 students and holds over 1.3 million titles in its combined library collections.

—Marshall Breeding

3M Launches Subscription Program for RFID and Self-service

The Library Systems Products of 3M recently announced that it would begin offering a new pricing option based on fixed subscription fees for libraries interested in implementing its products. The model resembles a software-as-a-service model that allows a library to trade the large up-front costs for their automation system for a fixed annual fee. The subscription model may appeal to libraries with budget situations that are more able to accommodate a monthly or annual fee rather than a large capital expense to purchase equipment with ongoing maintenance fees at a lower price point.

The concept of annualized pricing for technology equipment isn't new. Many libraries prefer to lease personal computers, copy machines or scanning equipment. This option may allow some libraries to implement RFID or other self-service options that they otherwise would not be able to due to the lack of up-front capital. Many libraries find themselves with extremely constrained budgets, but still experience increasing levels of activity and are interested in technologies that might help them keep up with fewer personnel.

The subscription pricing model differs from a leasing arrangement in several ways. The subscription program includes not only the physical equipment, but also service and support, with options to include materials like RFID tags. Unlike a lease, the library does not build equity on the equipment during the subscription. When the term of the subscription agreement expires, the library can exercise a number of options, including initiating a new subscription with more current equipment, expanding or upgrading the system and negotiating a new subscription fee, or ending the arrangement and returning the equipment.

The subscription model will not be limited specifically to RFID equipment, but can also include its electromagnetic security products and barcode-based self-check stations. Any of its own products, or those of Checkpoint that it distributes and supports, are eligible for the program. 3M has a longstanding partnership with Lyngsoe Systems for automated materials handling systems, which are not part of this program at this time.

Although 3M anticipates that many libraries will find the subscription model attractive, its traditional purchase and support pricing will continue to be offered. Subscription pricing only represents a new option.

Libraries considering the subscription model would perform a total cost of ownership analysis that would compare the expenses with purchasing equipment and paying standard maintenance fees with the total expended for that period on subscription pricing. This analysis would need to extend past the years beyond the initial subscription term given the need to continue or renegotiate the subscription, purchase new equipment, or discontinue self-check when the subscription expires.

The subscription arrangement will be customized for each library. The equipment involved will naturally be selected to meet the needs of the library, which will determine the cost of the subscription. According to **Joan K. Detloff**, Core Portfolio Manager for 3M Library Systems and leader of the launch of the subscription model, 3M wants to build in flexibility, not just in terms of the equipment included, but also in the length of the subscription term and it payment options. Subscriptions can be paid monthly, quarterly, or annually depending on the preference of the library.

3m has launched the subscription program in the United States only, though its international subsidiaries may follow at later date.

—Marshall Breeding

Library Technology News in Brief

Excerpted from Press Releases Posted on Marshall Breeding's Website (http://www.librarytechnology.org/)

EBSCO Discovery Service Continues to Expand as Credo Reference Content Becomes Searchable through EDS

IPSWICH, Mass. — March 8, 2011 — EBSCO Publishing (EBSCO) and Credo Reference, the online reference service, have extended their partnership allowing the reference content from Credo Reference to be discoverable within EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS). Metadata from Credo General Reference, Credo Topic Pages and Publisher Collections will be added to the EDS Base Index. The addition of this rich and extensive content will impact searchers using the EDS single search interface by providing reference content and overviews of top research topics within discovery.

Content from Credo General Reference which includes select, highly-regarded titles from more than 70 publishers, will

be accessible through EDS. The nearly 10,000 Credo Topic Pages provide overview, background and connections to additional library resources—promoting information literacy as users begin their research process. The agreement also includes Credo Reference Publisher Collections which offer a growing list of highly-regarded, subject-specific reference titles. To further expand their search, EDS users will have the ability to search the full text of these resources—delivering an extensive array of results alongside additional library resources. In addition, libraries will have the option to activate a Credo Reference widget in EDS that will provide quick access to Topic Pages as well as the rest of Credo's content.

Credo Reference Chief Executive Officer Mike Sweet says more and more people looking for reference information want a simple, familiar and fast search experience so working with a discovery service like EDS makes sense. "At Credo, we continue to assess the needs of our libraries and users. Indexing our content in EBSCO Discovery Service provides a way to meet users where they are." EBSCO has well-established relationships with an extensive array of publishing partners making their content readily discoverable via EDS for the benefit of all parties involved.

Credo Reference joins a long list of platforms, publishers, and other content partners who are taking part in EDS to bring more visibility to scholarly content, such as: the British Library, Baker & Taylor, NewsBank, Readex, LexisNexis, Alexander Street Press, ArXiv, Oxford University Press, American Psychological Association, ABC-CLIO, ingentaconnect, Government Printing Office, JSTOR, ECONIS and Mergent. For mutual customers, Web of Science and H.W. Wilson are part of a growing list of information sources available to EBSCO Discovery Service users.

Digital Library Federation Launches New Web Site

March 7, 2011. The Digital Library Federation (DLF), a program of the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), today launched its new Web site at http://www.diglib.org.

The site provides a dedicated space for the DLF community, while also serving as a resource and communication hub around important ideas and trends developing in the broader digital library community.

"The new DLF site will facilitate conversations, raise awareness, and provide a space for collaboration," said DLF Program Director Rachel Frick. "It is where you learn not only what is being done, but also how to actively contribute to the effort. The site is a dynamic resource, and we welcome input, ideas, and suggestions for content."

"This is an exciting step in expanding communication between DLF and the broader digital library commu-

nity," said CLIR President Chuck Henry. "Engaging this community will be essential as we explore models of collaboration that increase efficiency while also enhancing the infrastructure and services for scholarship and teaching."

Capita acquired Talis Information Limited

March 4, 2011 —Capita Group Plc (`Capita') today announces the acquisition of Talis Information Limited (`TIL') for a consideration, on a cash-free, debt-free basis of £18.5 million, plus up to a further £2.5 million depending on TIL's profit performance in the year to 31 March 2012. The acquisition will add valuable new expertise and capabilities to Capita's existing products for the academic and public sector.

With a range of around 100 academic and public library clients, TIL is a market leader in its sectors, providing management software and managed services. TIL made an operating profit, on a pro forma basis, of £3.5 million on turnover of £7 million for the year ended 31 March 2010.

Paul Pindar, Chief Executive of Capita said: "The acquisition of Talis Information Limited will enable Capita to offer a wider set of services to the further and higher education markets and to local authorities, where we have a strong client base."

TIL employs 42 staff, all of whom are based in Birmingham.

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