



# Library Systems

An innovative overview of library automation

50 East Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611-2795, USA

## How to plan effective vendor demonstrations

Vendor demonstrations are an integral part of any automated library system procurement, and should be planned to facilitate meaningful comparison among products. Allowing each vendor to design its own demonstration will result in each emphasizing its unique features, rather than the features that matter most to your library. Here are some tips for getting the most from demonstrations:

- Schedule demonstrations after proposals submitted in response to an RFP have been evaluated. This reduces the number of vendors demonstrating—ideally, there are three or four candidates at this stage—and allows for close study of apparent weaknesses in the products as identified in the evaluation.
- Budget a minimum of six hours for each demonstration unless you seek less than the full spectrum of the product's functionality. Two three-hour sessions best demonstrate today's functionally rich products.
- Remind demonstration attendees to focus on the product, not the personality or skill of the representative.
- Typical demonstrations emphasize the end result of using the product rather than the steps that must be taken to achieve results. Advise each vendor that their representative must deliberately slow his or her normal pace so that participants in the demonstration may carefully observe each step.
- Require each vendor to thoroughly demonstrate each module and submodule the library requires. The modules might be acquisitions, serials control, cataloging, circulation, a patron access catalog, information and referral, interlibrary loan, and so on. Submodules within acquisitions include ordering, claiming, canceling, receiving, funds accounting, vouching for payment, vendor performance measurement, and so on. Circulation submodules include registering a patron, check-out, patron self-check-out,

*See Plan on page 2*

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## New .museum domain name now live

Museums wanting customized .museum Internet top-level domain names are now able to purchase them. The new top-level domain is one of seven being added to the existing top-level domains. The .biz, .info, .name, .pro, .aero, and .coop domains are the others.

More than 500 museums have already requested a .museum domain name as part of an early registration process. No information is available yet on requests by libraries for .info domain names. ■

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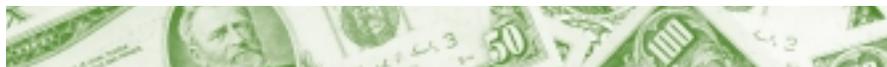
renewal, check-in, holds or reserves, patron notification, overdues processing, billing, collection of fines and fees, and circulation transaction reports. (At this stage, the demonstrator is merely showing the buttons, not what happens behind them.)

- Identify the specific features that appear to be weak in more than one vendor's system and ask each vendor to demonstrate those features so that comparisons among vendors can be made. The weaknesses can normally be identified as features the vendor does not unequivocally commit to in general release.
- Identify up to 10 specific features in each module that are particularly important to your library and ask each vendor to demonstrate those features.
- Have the vendor representative pause for questions several times during

the demonstration. Ask staff to take notes and raise questions at appropriate pauses, rather than constantly interrupting the demonstration.

- Have each participant prepare a written summary of the strengths and weakness of each product as observed during the demonstrations.
- Using the summaries, prepare a list of questions for each vendor to answer in writing.

The major benefit of demonstrations is that they add qualitative measures to the quantitative ones used in the evaluation of proposals. Vendor proposals address the presence or absence of features, but only a demonstration truly reveals the user-friendliness and aesthetics of a product, and whether a product will work in your library. ■



## Dell offers 1.5 Ghz Pentium 4 at \$999

PCs at \$999 are not unusual, but a top of the line model at that price is unusual. Dell's Dimension 4300 PC has a 1.5 Ghz processor, 128 MB of SDRAM (up to 512 MB), 20 GB hard drive (up to 100 GB), 17-inch color monitor, 48x CD-ROM drive, sound card, Harman/Kardon speaker, 10/100 network interface card, Microsoft Windows Me operating system, Microsoft Works Suite 2001, and a one-year warranty.

Substituting a 15-inch color monitor—which is not a good idea, because it offers too small a screen for today's graphics-rich displays—reduces the price by \$100.

For \$799, Dell offers the 1.1 Ghz Dell Dimension 2100. An upgrade to a 15-inch flat panel monitor, which offers a larger display area and better resolution than a conventional 15-inch monitor, adds \$290 to any of the above systems. The PCs are available directly from Dell or through commercial dealers.

**Contact:** Dell Computers  
tel. 877-764-3355  
[www.dell.com](http://www.dell.com)



## MICROSO

The U.S. Department of Justice and Microsoft have reached a settlement in the three-year-long antitrust suit against the company. Terms include giving more power to PC makers to determine how software applications are carried and displayed within the Windows operating system; providing more of Microsoft's computer code to other software firms to facilitate software development that must comply with Microsoft's operating system, and establishing a technical committee to monitor compliance. The settlement does not appear to require the unbundling of the Internet Explorer browser from the operating system—the issue that triggered the antitrust action in the first place.

The technical committee is the most important element of the settlement. Its membership could act as anything from a rubber stamp on what Microsoft does to a strong body that effectively restricts Microsoft. A similar technical committee had a great impact on IBM's competitive practices a few years ago.

The settlement would expire after five years if Microsoft adheres to the terms set forth by the DOJ. If Microsoft violates the terms during the five-year period, a two-year extension automatically occurs. One of the most controversial elements of the settlement is a provision that gives Microsoft up to one year to comply with the terms of the pact. Enough time, argue some, to redesign some software so it is no longer covered by the agreement.

The settlement was worked out in talks between DOJ and Microsoft without the involvement of the attorneys general of 18

## FT SETTLES

states and the District of Columbia who are parties to the antitrust suit. Several of the attorneys general will likely find the settlement terms inadequate. The attorneys general from Iowa, New York, Connecticut, Wisconsin, and California have already expressed their displeasure about DOJ's less than vigorous pursuit of the case in the past few months.

The settlement is subject to review by the courts, in what is known as a Tunney Act proceeding, to ensure it is in the public interest. The proceeding's duration is 60 days. The attorneys general of one or more of the states could speak out against the settlement in that proceeding.

At press time, many speculated that some attorneys general would pursue the case on behalf of their states. The attorneys appeared to be preparing for that eventuality by retaining Brendan Sullivan, a leading Washington, D.C., trial lawyer.

After all-night negotiations on November 5th between Microsoft and the attorneys general of the states and the District, nine of the states agreed accept some additional changes in the DOJ-negotiated settlement; nine others and the District decided to continue litigating the case.

The District Court will now proceed on two tracks: (1) the Tunney process to determine that the settlement is in the public interest and (2) and a remedy hearing which pits the nine dissenting states and the District against Microsoft. The attorneys general will have until December 7th to propose their remedy; Microsoft will have until December 12th to respond. ■

## NOVELL may rebound

NetWare 6, Novell's network operating system currently in pre-release, is receiving strong positive reviews. The release offers improved scalability, stability and ease of use at a lower cost than Windows 2000 and other network operating systems (NOSs), which does for a network what an operating system such as Windows 95/98/Me does for a PC. For customers who have installed the beta version of NetWare 6, stability—historically NetWare's greatest strength—is better than ever, especially on networks with as many as 20,000 users. The product's browser-based access to network management functions and files simplify the user's experience, and the system is easy to install on an existing network. One university network administrator said, "You can drop it into your existing network without creating a splash...It takes only a few hours to have a server up and running and there is no need to install special software on client machines."

Novell was the most successful NOS vendor until Microsoft's Windows NT 4 swept competitors aside to become the dominant NOS. Given the modest incremental releases and rising costs of Microsoft's NOS products and the enthusiasm of the first implementers of Netware 6, Novell may be poised for a comeback. The key issue is not technology, but whether Novell will overcome its historic timidity to aggressively sell the product. Novell's strategy should be clear by early next spring.

Contact: [www.novell.com](http://www.novell.com)



## Ex Libris partners with University of Maryland in digital project

Ex Libris has signed an agreement with the University of Maryland Libraries to work together to facilitate access to extensive audio and video collections belonging to the University's Performing Arts Library. The University collections contain more than 124,000 musical recordings and extensive audio archives and film and video collections. The agreement calls for the vendor's DigiTool digital asset management product to be developed further to handle retrieval and distribution of

streaming audio and video, as well as any other media that have been digitized or were first created in a digital format.

The agreement is significant because it recognizes that digital collections can, and should, consist of more than digital representations of texts and photographs.

Contact: [Ex Libris USA](http://Ex Libris USA)  
tel. 773-404-5527  
fax 773-404-5601  
[www.exlibrisgroup.com](http://www.exlibrisgroup.com)

# NEW PRODUCTS AND UPGRADES



## CASPR announces LibraryWorld for Mac OS X

CASPR Library Systems Inc., a major provider of PC and Mac-based library applications software, has announced that its LibraryWorld integrated library system is now available for Mac OS X, Apple's new operating system. Since 1986,

CASPR has offered library

products for Apple platforms and is widely believed to have the industry's largest Mac customer base.

**Contact: CASPR**  
tel. 800-852-2777  
fax 408-882-0608  
[www.caspr.com](http://www.caspr.com)

## VTLS launches Chameleon iPortal

VTLS has launched Chameleon iPortal, a single-user interface that casts a wide net for capturing information from multiple Internet channels and search engines. This interface lets users access subscription and external databases, undertake broadcast searching across multiple Z39.50 databases, construct and store canned searches, and access a library calendar of events, enhanced library content, and integrated message boards and forums. Chameleon also offers thesaurus searches to increase the relevance of retrieved items.

Most of the major vendors in the industry are introducing portals, which should be widely available for general release in 2002. The Public Library Association plans a program meeting on portals at the ALA Annual Conference this coming summer and *Library Technology Reports* will devote its November/December 2002 issue to the topic.

**Contact: VTLS**  
tel. 800-468-8857  
fax 540-557-1210  
[www.vtls.com](http://www.vtls.com)

## NISO ballots digital talking book standard

The National Information Standards Organization (NISO) has released the proposed national standard for the digital talking book (Z39.86-200x) for review and comment, and for ballot by its voting members. Comments and ballots are due by Dec. 17, 2001. The draft standard, which can be downloaded for free from NISO's Web site, is designed to enable a powerful and flexible reading system to make electronic resources accessible to print-disabled readers.

NISO will take several months to reconcile negative ballots, make revisions, and publish the final standard.

**Contact: NISO**  
tel. 301-654-2512  
[www.niso.org](http://www.niso.org)

## EBSCO Online enhances usage reports

In response to numerous requests, Ebsco has enhanced usage reports, the reports that allow libraries to analyze user search behavior and electronic journal usage statistics. A new activity summary report provides general usage statistics, including the total number of online sessions logged by users, the number of times users accessed journals, tables of contents, abstracts, and

# NetLibrary needs CASH infusion

NetLibrary, a major supplier of e-books to libraries, acknowledges it has been seeking investors to provide the company with much-needed cash, but that it has not been successful; nor has it found another company willing to acquire it. NetLibrary is now seeking to curtail costs by reducing staff and salaries, and eliminating some services to protect its core e-books business. For example, netLibrary will no longer provide promotional materials to customer libraries.

NetLibrary's financial problems come at a time when its \$100 million in venture capital has run out and new capital is difficult to find. Despite its lack of financial success, netLibrary has many significant achievements to its credit: it has persuaded hundreds of publishers to make more than 37,000 complete titles available in e-book form; it has assisted scores of publishers in the necessary conversion to e-books format; and it has signed up more than 5,500 libraries and other organizations as customers. ■



full-text articles. A new complete journal activity report shows a comprehensive list of all journals, subscribed and unsubscribed, accessed by a library's users. The reports can be filtered by a range of IP addresses.

Libraries need thorough details about the usage of electronic resources to decide which titles to drop and which titles to add to their virtual holdings. Knowing which branches generate the most activity in a multi-branch library

is important for making adjustments in the distribution of workstations.

Ebsco's move may trigger similar improvements in the usage statistics made available by other online reference services. Such developments would be welcome, as libraries have too long been frustrated by the lack of comprehensive journal usage data.

Contact: [EBSCO Online](http://www.ebsco.com)  
[www.ebsco.com](http://www.ebsco.com)

## Digital resources in WorldCat pass 500,000 mark

More than 500,000 records describe electronic resources in WorldCat, OCLC's bibliographic database. Digital resources are defined as items that are accessed via a URL. Digital resources include not only electronic full-text reference and journal publications, but also manuscripts, digital art, oral interviews, and so on. WorldCat records may be used as cataloging aids or as links to the digital resources by libraries that subscribe to OCLC cataloging or FirstSearch.

Contact: [OCLC](http://www.oclc.org)  
tel. 800-848-5878  
[www.oclc.org](http://www.oclc.org)



# INGRAM AND OCLC TO PROVIDE PRE-RELEASE VIDEO CATALOGING

Ingram Library Services and OCLC have signed an agreement for Ingram to supply pre-release videos to OCLC for cataloging and inclusion in Ingram's BookMARC cataloging database and OCLC's WorldCat.

Libraries will be able to obtain full MARC records for videos as part of Ingram's processing service or by accessing WorldCat in their own cataloging departments. Ingram will provide the videos to OCLC up to 12 weeks before release, so the bib-

liographic records should be available before scheduled video release dates.

**Contact:** [Ingram Library Services](#)  
tel. 800-937-8100  
[www.ingramlibrary.com](http://www.ingramlibrary.com)  
OCLC  
[www.oclc.org](http://www.oclc.org)

## 802.11 gains ground

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) 802.11 standard for configuration of wireless local area networks (LANs) appears to be displacing Bluetooth and HomeRF. Originally developed for office LANs, 802.11 is being widely installed in homes, rather than the less expensive Bluetooth or HomeRF. The major reason appears to be that laptop users want to be able to move from office, to home, to hotel, or to Starbucks with the capability of connecting to a high-speed network. Installing an 802.11 LAN at home makes more sense than to risk lack of compatibility outside the home. Starbucks' decision to go with 802.11 in their retail locations made the decision almost obvious.

Libraries that decide to make a wireless LAN available to patrons should now definitely go with 802.11. The choice between 802.11a and 802.11b, which offers greater bandwidth, is more difficult. New laptops have dual-mode chips that support both versions of 802.11; older machines support only one. ■

## USB 2.0 promises faster transfer rates

Most PCs sold in the past two years feature a Universal Services Bus (USB), a port that handles the transfer of information between the PC and its peripherals. Today's USB 1.1 standard limits transfer rates to 12 Mbps per second, far slower than the 400 Mbps rate possible using FireWire, a bus offered on most Apple and Sony systems, and on some other PCs. USB 2.0 promises a data transfer rate of 480 Mbps.

Intel is already providing space for a USB 2.0 controller chip on its Pentium 4 motherboards. Gateway has already begun installing the chips in some of its PCs. No firm release date has been set for USB 2.0, but it should be early 2002. The cost of the port will be incorporated into the price of the PC. USB 2.0-capable hard drives, CD-RW, DVD-RW, and DVD-R drives are expected to be available by mid-2002. ■

## EDI-XML bridges loom on horizon

Data exchange formats EDI and XML may yet prove to be compatible. Developers are turning to EDI-to-XML bridges to preserve 30 years of EDI (and EDIFACT, its international successor) standards development and implementation, and to take advantage of improved computer-to-computer connectivity. These bridges convert existing electronic data interchange (EDI and EDIFACT) formats and definitions into XML that can be understood by XML-based systems. Unfortunately, the bridges are industry specific, so that the pioneering work in one industry does not give other industries—such as libraries—a head start on their own EDI-to-XML bridges.

The National Information Standards Organization (NISO) is the appropriate standards setting body for the library community, and has not yet appointed a committee on EDI-to-XML. ■

## ANSI

## ANSI approves Dublin Core metadata set

ANSI, the American National Standards Institute, has approved the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set (Z39.85-2001) as a standard. Metadata is structured information that describes, explains, locates, or otherwise facilitates the retrieval, use, or management of an information resource. Dublin Core was originally developed to describe Web-based documents, but it is becoming popular to describe all electronic resources. The standard defines 15 metadata elements: title, subject, description, source, language, relation, coverage, creator, publisher, contributor, rights, date, type, format, and identifier.

Dublin Core development was begun in 1995 at an invitational workshop hosted by OCLC. The National Information Standards Organization (NISO) subsequently appointed a standards committee. On completion and approval by NISO's voting members, the standard was submitted to ANSI for formal approval.

More information is available at <http://dublincore.org>. Copies of the standard are available for free downloading at [www.niso.org](http://www.niso.org). ■

## IEEE

## 10 G ethernet ratification expected

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) is expected to ratify the 10 G (Gigabit) Ethernet standard by June 2002. So sure are vendors in the industry that the draft standard will be ratified, they have already announced products that conform to the standard. Development work has already begun on a standard for 40 G, and 100 G is deemed feasible for the not-too-distant future.

The standard's implication for libraries will be reduced costs for products with lesser bandwidths, including Fast Ethernet (100 Mbps) and 1 G Ethernet, as 10 G becomes available. Not only are libraries not likely to need 10 G in the foreseeable future, they would be unwise to invest in network interface cards (NICs) with 1.2 GB of RAM, the amount necessary to handle one second of buffering at 10 G. The most likely application for 10 G is as a campus backbone for a university or corporation. ■

# WEB GROWTH SLOWS



The rate of growth in public Web sites has begun to slow, according to OCLC. The OCLC-sponsored Web Characterization Project, an annual random sample of Web sites for the past five years, has identified 3.1 million sites, a 6% increase over the previous year's total. From 1997 to 2000, the public Web increased by about 700,000 sites a year, but it increased by only 200,000 sites between

2000 and 2001. A public Web site is defined as a distinct location on the Internet offering unrestricted public access to content via Web protocols. Public sites make up about 36% of the Web as a whole.

Analysis of public Web sites suggests that the international character of the Web has changed little in the past several years. Organizations and individuals in the United States provide more than half the sites, German organiza-

tions and individuals provide 5%, Canadian and Japanese organizations and individuals provide 4% each; all smaller percentages of sites originate in scores of other nations. More than 75% of sites provide some or all information in English.

Although only 2% of sites contain sexually explicit material, that adds up to 74,000 sites.

More information about the project is available at [www.oclc.org](http://www.oclc.org). ■

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