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# Library Systems

An innovative overview of library automation

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## Maintenance rates rise

Librarians are wise to calculate the five-year maintenance cost before comparing the cost of vendor maintenance programs. Maintenance rates for automated library systems have been slowly rising over the past two years. Most vendors now quote annual maintenance rates that work out to about 12% of the undiscounted purchase price of hardware and software. Two vendors quote rates that work out to about 15% of the purchase price. One vendor—the only one that will negotiate the maintenance rate—will accept a rate as low as 10%. (Maintenance rates are proprietary and confidential. Confidentiality is a condition set in each vendor response to an RFP, therefore, one can only generalize about rates.)

Protecting profit, rather than increasing profit, appears to be the motivation for rate increases. Hardware and software prices have come down in recent years, so vendors saw a drop in maintenance income. In response, vendors had to increase the percentage of the purchase price that the maintenance rate represents to restore the level of maintenance revenue and profit.

The escalator clause, a cap on the percentage of increase in the maintenance rate each year for a period of five to seven years, should not be overlooked. A huge difference exists between a yearly cap of 3% on increases in maintenance rates and a 10% cap; only one vendor caps at 3% and three cap at 10%. The majority of vendors cap between 5% and 8%. Before signing a contract, libraries

should calculate the actual effects of rate increases.

The cost of maintenance is only one of several aspects of vendor service to consider. Even more important is what you receive for the money. Among the questions to ask are:

1. **Is the support desk available during all the hours the library is open?** The typical support desk is staffed 16 hours a day, sufficient for customers on the same continent as the vendor, but often a problem for customers on a different continent. A support desk that is open fewer than 16 hours a day may be a problem for a library several time zones away from the vendor's support desk. All vendors offer 24/7 hardware field support at additional cost because that service is actually provided by manufacturers. Vendors operate their support desks 12 to 24 hours a day, but the hours are constantly changing. When a vendor negotiates a contract on another continent (or a contract on a continent that has unusual hours), the vendor may agree to extend support desk hours to cover the most important operating hours for that client. Be sure to check the hours that the vendor is prepared to commit in its proposal to the library.
2. **Does the maintenance agreement provide for support whenever the support desk is open, or for fewer hours?** Some maintenance agreements limit the hours of support. Although

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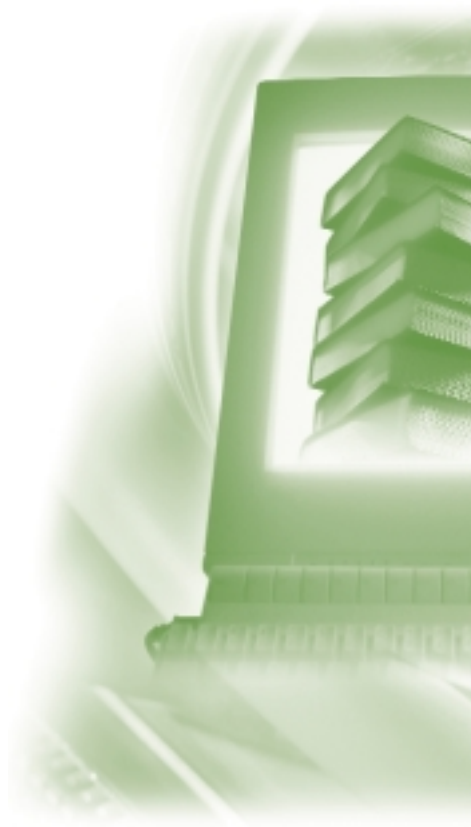
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calls are logged during evening and weekend hours, calls may be addressed only during those hours for which the library has contracted. Although that level of service is common for field support, it is not common, and highly undesirable, for diagnostics and remote fixes.

3. **What is the customer support ratio?** Expect at least one support staff member for each 15 customers. A ratio of one to 20 is a warning signal; a ratio of one to 40 or more should remove a vendor from consideration.
4. **Does the vendor support both hardware and software or does the library have to work with one or more hardware manufacturers?** Dealing with multiple support organizations is not only more burdensome, but there is also a risk of finger pointing among the hardware and software suppliers.
5. **Will the support desk perform remote diagnostics only on the server or also on the network and the desktop clients?** There is a big difference between being

told that the problem is not on the server and being told that the problem exists in a network router.

6. **Does the person who responds to a trouble call have a complete history of all previous calls and their resolution immediately available?** Nothing is worse than having to explain the history of a problem again and again.
7. **Does the vendor reserve the right to change the maintenance program?** Locking in the maintenance rate is important, but the level of service should also be locked in—and subject to the library's right to change the level of maintenance at its discretion.
8. **How do existing customers rate the support?** Telephone calls to several existing customers should provide a good indication of the quality of support. One vendor, which has only modest new-name sales, has retained many of its customers for more than a decade by providing what many in the industry regard as excellent support.



## DUBLIN CORE STANDARDS GAIN APPROVAL

The National Information Standards Organization (NISO) and the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI) have announced the approval by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) of the Dublin Core Metadata

Element Set (Z39.85-2001). DCMI began in 1995 with an invitational workshop in Dublin, Ohio that brought together librarians, digital library researchers, content providers, and text-markup experts to improve discovery standards for information resources. The original Dublin Core emerged as a small set of descriptors that quickly drew global interest from a wide variety of information providers in the arts, sciences, education, business, and government sectors.

Metadata is structured information that describes, explains, locates, or oth-

erwise makes it easy to retrieve, use or manage an information resource. The Dublin Core was originally developed to be simple and concise, and to describe Web-based documents. The current standard defines fifteen metadata elements for resource description in a cross-disciplinary information environment. These elements are: title, subject, description, source, language, relation, coverage, creator, publisher, contributor, rights, date, type, format, and identifier.

Commenting on the approval, Stuart Weibel, Executive Director of DCMI,

## SWETS BLACKWELL and PROQUEST agree to link journal files

Swets Blackwell and ProQuest have signed an agreement to allow both companies to provide their customers with access to the other's electronic journal files. ProQuest subscribers will be able to seamlessly access the nearly 6,000 full-text electronic journals in SwetsnetNavigator, and Swets Blackwell subscribers will have access to ProQuest's ABI/Inform database.

A library that subscribes to both companies' services will have access to nearly 200 more business and management journals. ProQuest customers who subscribe to ProQuest's MEDLINE will have access to some 1,500 additional health sciences journals.

Contact: Swets  
[www.swetsnet.nl](http://www.swetsnet.nl)

ProQuest  
[www.umi.com](http://www.umi.com)

said: "The approval of Z39.85 formalizes a long period of consensus building representing the efforts of hundreds of people, and all participants can take pride in what this community has built." The NISO committee was chaired by John Kunze (University of California/National Library of Medicine) and included Rebecca Guenther (Library of Congress), Marjorie Hlava (Access Innovations, Inc.), Clifford Morgan (John Wiley & Sons Ltd.), and John Perkins (CIMI Consortium).

The Dublin Core Metadata Initiative is an organization dedicated to promot-

ing the widespread adoption of interoperable metadata standards and developing specialized metadata vocabularies for describing resources that enable more intelligent information discovery systems. DCMI will act as the maintenance agency for the Dublin Core Metadata Element set standard.

This standard is available for free downloading or hardcopy purchase at [www.techstreet.com](http://www.techstreet.com).

For more information about DMCI, go to [www.dublincore.org](http://www.dublincore.org) ■



## RFID sales build

RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) tracking system sales are building. Although fewer than 50 sites were installed more than a year after Checkpoint and 3M introduced their products, at least nine sales occurred in August 2001. Checkpoint appears to be the market leader with well over 80% of the market. VTLS, a vendor of automated library systems, has also introduced a tracking product.

Most installations are small, primarily in branch libraries. The University of Connecticut Library (Checkpoint) and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Library (3M) are the only sites that label more than 1 million items each.

The Santa Clara Public Library, a library that uses Checkpoint's system with an Innovative Interfaces automated library system, has put much information about RFID technology and its decision to adopt it on its Web site (<http://library.ci.santa-clara.ca.us/rfid>).

Contact: Checkpoint Systems Inc.  
101 Wolf Drive  
Thorofare, NJ 08086  
tel. 800-257-5540  
fax 609-848-0937  
[www.checkpointsystems.com/lib](http://www.checkpointsystems.com/lib)

3M Library Systems  
3M Center, Building 225-4N-14  
St. Paul, MN 55144-1000  
tel. 800-328-0067 (in Canada 800-364-3577)  
[www.3m.com/library](http://www.3m.com/library)

**iBistro****iBistro sales soar**

Sirsi Corp. has signed more than 140 customers for its iBistro electronic library product. The customer base has grown by about 40% in the past three months. The vast majority of the purchasers are public libraries, but among the academic institutions using iBistro are Brigham Young and Stanford Universities.

**Contact:** Sirsi Corp.  
101 Washington St. SE  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
tel. 256-704-7000  
fax 256-704-7007  
[www.sirsi.com](http://www.sirsi.com)

**Geac****Geac eliminates short-term debt**

Geac Corp. continued its climb back to financial health by paying off the last of its short-term debt. It made a final payment of \$2.8 million in late September, bringing the total repayment made over nine months to \$100 million. Geac has also raised \$27 million by selling 6 million common shares to a syndicate of underwriters.

Geac now plans to focus on expanding its share of the various markets it has targeted, including the library automation market.

**Contact:** Geac Computers, Inc.  
tel. 800-825-2574  
fax 800-759-0126  
[www.geac.com](http://www.geac.com)

## REED ELSEVIER SELLS BOWKER

Reed Elsevier has sold Bowker to Cambridge Scientific Abstracts, apparently after determining that products aimed at libraries, publishers, and booksellers do not bring the level of return the company realizes from its STM (science, technology and medicine) publications. Cambridge, in turn, has agreed to transfer publishing rights to up to 10 reference titles, primarily directories, to Information Today Inc.

Reed's resources helped Bowker put many of its publications on the Web. Given Cambridge Scientific Abstracts' commitment to online products and services, the electronic delivery of Bowker products is likely to accelerate. Bowker will operate as a separate division within Cambridge and will remain based in New Providence, N.J.

**Contact:** Bowker  
[www.bowker.com](http://www.bowker.com)

Cambridge Scientific Abstracts  
[www.csa.com](http://www.csa.com)



## SMART Technologies drops whiteboard prices

SMART Technologies, a major manufacturer of whiteboards, boards on which users can write with a finger or stylus and capture the text digitally, has significantly dropped (20%) the prices on its SMART Board 560 (60-inch diagonal) and 580 (72-inch diagonal) models. The former is now list-priced at \$1,599 and the latter at \$1,999. A three-year warranty is included.

The causes for the price decrease are twofold: as white boards are more widely adopted, manufacturing costs have been reduced, and the addition of new competitors in the market mandates more competitive pricing.

Libraries can reduce the price another 25% by applying for a SMARTer Kids Grant from the SMART Kids Foundation.

**Contact:** SMART Technologies  
Tel. 403-228-8559  
[www.smarttech.com](http://www.smarttech.com)

SMART Kids Foundation  
tel. 403-228-8565  
[www.smarterkids.org](http://www.smarterkids.org)





## Endeavor opens office in Australia

Commemorating its seventh anniversary as a company, Endeavor opened an office in Australia just outside Sydney. In addition to sales, the office will provide local support to the 73 libraries in Australia and New Zealand that use the company's products. Among those customers are the National Library of New Zealand and the Monash University Library—the latter is among the largest libraries in the southern hemisphere.

**Contact:** Endeavor Information Systems  
tel. 800-762-6300  
[www.endinfosys.com](http://www.endinfosys.com)

### Innovative announces transition

Innovative Interfaces announced on October 15 that Jerry Kline, co-founder and president of the company, has reached an agreement to purchase all shares in the company held by Steve Silberstein, the other co-founder. Upon closing of the transaction, probably before the end of December, Kline will assume full ownership of the company. The company was founded in 1978 and ranks second in the market in revenue and third in the number of installed systems.

### U.S. District Court judge urges DOJ-Microsoft settlement

Judge Colleen Kollar-Kottelly, the new District Court judge assigned to the Department of Justice versus Microsoft case, has urged that the parties undertake intense negotiation to reach an out-of-court settlement. If they fail to do so, she will begin hearings on a remedy in March 2002. On October 9, the Supreme Court rejected the company's appeal to review the findings of the lower court. The findings stand; any further legal process will be limited to the matter of the remedy.


On another front, the DOJ is being urged to move against Microsoft for bundling its Windows Media Player with the Windows XP operating system, effectively doing to Real Networks' Real Player what Microsoft's Internet Explorer previously did to Netscape. ■

## Rx for data accidents

One of the best investments you can make in software for PCs is rollback software, which restores a hard drive to an earlier state after files have been lost or damaged due to human error or a virus. One of the best products for high-end PCs, those rated at 500 MHZ or better, is Roxio's GoBack 3 Deluxe. Launching the program from the system tray and choosing a "Safe Point" restores the hard drive to an earlier state. GoBack keeps a comprehensive log to use if the exact point at which things went wrong is not known. Files may also be restored individually without disturbing other changes.

GoBack runs in the background and requires no intervention, but it consumes 32MB of hard drive space. If mounted on a machine rated at less than 500 MHZ, it significantly reduces performance, but more powerful machines won't be affected unless many of the files are graphics, audio, and/or video.

GoBack is compatible with all Windows 9x, Me, NT 4, and 2000 operating systems. It is priced at \$50 but can often be found at computer stores for up to \$10 less. For more information, go to [www.roxio.com](http://www.roxio.com). ■



## OPEN SOURCE EXPLAINED

Although most people know about Linux, few appear to be aware that Linux is just one of many open source software solutions. Open source refers to software in which the source code is freely available for others to view and modify. Typically it is created and maintained by developers scattered among many organizations, so no single vendor can make it a proprietary product. That does not mean that some vendors may not exert great influence. Take Linux as an example: IBM is spending more than \$1 billion this year on Linux development, production, sales, and support—possibly equal to what all others together will spend and one-half of all expenditures worldwide.

As long as no one has proprietary rights over the source code, competition will keep the cost of open source software well below that of proprietary products.

Other examples of open source software are the MySQL relational database management system, Apache Web server software, and Gimp and Bluefish software for the creation of graphics and Web content.

An open source automated library system even exists. The system, developed by the Horowhenua Library Trust and Katipo Communications of New Zealand in four frantic months to avoid Y2K problems with the library's aging system, is known as Koha ([www.koha.org](http://www.koha.org)). It includes acquisitions, cataloging, circulation, and patron access catalog modules. The software runs on PCs and PC LANs. The Technology Resource Foundation in the United States has built an open

source system based on Koha and is offering free downloads from its site at [www.trfoundation.org](http://www.trfoundation.org).

Open source software usually is not as functionally rich as proprietary software because it has not had millions of dollars and years of labor invested in it, but it is worth considering if someone with technical expertise is available to install and maintain it. Although companies exist such as IBM, which sells complete solutions, and the much smaller Red Hat, which sells user-friendly shrink-wrapped packages, the vast majority of products are distributed via downloads from Web sites.

Those interested in more information about open source should visit [www.oss4lib.org](http://www.oss4lib.org). The site, maintained by Dan Chudnov of the MIT Engineering Library, includes a list of open source software and systems designed for libraries. ■

## Nimda represents new wave of computer threats

Nimda, a computer danger that used Web sites, e-mail, and other means to spread through networks in September, represents a new wave of computer threats, threats that combine worm, virus, and Trojan characteristics and also exploit software vulnerabilities. It spreads with or without human help.

More than ever, libraries should apply security patches to servers as soon as they are issued, often as frequently as once a week; libraries should download antivirus updates at least once a week and whenever there is an announcement of a major computer threat.

Libraries should also consider having two categories of PCs for patrons, those that can be used to access the Internet and those limited to the patron access catalog. The latter will continue to be usable even if a Nimda-like cocktail affects the other machines. ■



## MICROSOFT

Microsoft's new volume licenses went into effect on Oct. 1, 2001. Lost in the barrage of criticism of the new prices is the fact that academic, charity, and government purchasers have a better option than for-profit purchasers. Libraries that want a volume license for five or more users should investigate Open License 6.0. Separate agreements exist for academic, charity, and government purchasers; academic and school libraries should look at the academic license, public libraries should look at the government license.

# Oracle CONTINUES TO DOMINATE DATABASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM MARKET

The latest figures collected by Gartner Dataquest reveal that Oracle continues to have a market share of 42% in the database management system market. IBM is a distant second with 29%, and Microsoft—which has been gaining in market share at the expense of Sybase and Informix—has nearly 13% of the market. Sybase has slipped to 4% and Informix to 3%. Informix has been acquired by IBM and may be reinvigorated by an infusion of cash. All other vendors together account for about 9%.

Some vendors offer more than one database management system. With these vendors, it is wise to consider selecting one of the three most widely used systems. When a vendor offers only one choice, and that choice is one of the less popular database management systems, it is a good idea to negotiate provisions for a possible future change in management system. ■

## ProQuest seeking early English book project participants

ProQuest is seeking as many as 100 libraries to participate in a project to convert its collection of 125,000 English Books Online to searchable texts. The collection includes titles listed in Polard & Redgrave's Short Title Catalog, Wing's Short Title Catalog, and Thomason Tracts. The years of coverage are 1475 to 1700.

The first phase of the project would convert some 25,000 titles at a cost of \$7.5 million. If the project succeeds, each of the participants would pay \$10,000 per year for five years to mount the electronic product on its server or access rights to a server provided by another entity.

Details about the project and sample texts can be accessed at [www.lib.umi.com/eebo](http://www.lib.umi.com/eebo). ■

## LICENSING ALERT

Libraries should proceed cautiously in moving to Windows XP because many uncertainties surround the new operating system. A suit by either Real Networks or the U.S. Department of Justice could force a recall of the operating system and changes to it. (See the related Microsoft article in this issue.) It may also be an interim product.

Information leaking from Microsoft hints another new operating system is in the works. Code-named "Longhorn," the new operating system would be issued in 2002 and would replace

Windows 2000 and XP. Finally, an evaluation by the Gartner Group, a major market research firm, concluded that Windows XP is a minor upgrade to Windows 2000. Singled out as new was the "remote assistance feature," a Symantec PC Anywhere lookalike. PC Anywhere is available at considerably less cost than the upgrade to XP.

Information on pricing licenses is available at [www.microsoft.com/licensing/programs/open/default.asp](http://www.microsoft.com/licensing/programs/open/default.asp). Information about PC Anywhere is available at [www.symantec.com/pcanywhere](http://www.symantec.com/pcanywhere). ■

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