Library Consortia

Just What Are They, Really?

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Today’s Agenda

- Mission and Purpose of Consortia
- Services Provided
- Governance
- Funding
- Multi-consortia
- Dealing with vendors
- Future of consortia
For our purposes, a library consortium is any organization that helps libraries collaborate.

- Composed of institutions, not individuals
- Not necessarily formal
- Not necessarily a “membership” organization
Library Consortia in America

• In existence for more than a century
• Original primary purpose was to share physical resources
  – Created union catalogs
  – Focused on Interlibrary Loan
• Cooperative Acquisitions Programs

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% Change in Book and Journal Costs
ARL Libraries, 1986-2002

Graph showing the annual percentage change in book and journal costs from 1986 to 2002, categorizing costs into serials and monographs. The graph indicates a steady increase in costs over the years.
% Change in Journal Costs
ARL Libraries, 1986-2002

- Serial Unit Cost (+227%)
- Serial Expenditures (+227%)
- Serials Purchased (+9%)
Explosive Growth: 1990+

Technology
- Availability of commercial databases & new resource sharing systems
- Development of reliable regional networks
- Collaboration on centrally mounted databases
- Arrival of a common client: the Web
- The network becomes robust: “production network”

Economics
- Tight funding
- Increasing prices
- Group purchasing

Politics
- Efficiency
- Integration of K-20, public libraries, etc.
- Private/Public collaboration
General Characteristics of Successful Consortia

- Organization
  - sustainable
  - agile and creative
- Valuable programs and services
- Committed membership
- Clear sponsorship and ownership
- Strong leadership / governance
- Continuous communication
- Adequate funding
  - Usually not just volunteers
Organizing Themes

Geography: local, state, region, national, international
Type: school, public, 2-year, 4-year, research, special, private, public
Statewide Academic Consortia in America

- 1984: FCLA (Florida)
- 1990: LOUIS (Louisiana)
- 1992: OhioLINK (Ohio)
- 1994: TexShare (Texas) & VIVA (Virginia)
- 1995: GALILEO (Georgia)
- 1997:
  - California Digital Library
  - Kentucky Commonwealth Virtual Library
  - NCLIVE (North Carolina)
  - PALCI (Pennsylvania)
• 1933 -- Triangle Research Libraries Network (TRLN)
• 1970 -- Boston Library Consortium (BLC)
• 1973 -- Southeastern Library Network Network (SOLINET)
• 1989 -- College Center for Library Automation (CCLA)
• 1990 -- Washington Regional Library Consortia (WRLC)
• 1996 -- Adventist Libraries Information Cooperative (ALICE)
• 1996 -- New England Research Libraries (NERL)
EXAMPLES FROM THE WORLD

• Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC): UK Higher Education

• China Academic Library and Information System (CALIS)

• The Gauteng and Environs Library Consortium (GAELIC)

• Canadian National Site Licensing Project (CNSLP)

• The National Electronic Library (of Finland) (FinELib)
International Coalition of Library Consortia

http://www.library.yale.edu/consortia/

• 151 consortia –
  – 90 consortia from the US
  – 61 consortia from other countries
Variations

- Missions
- Members
- Historical Context
- Organization, Governance and Staffing
- Funding / Payment Models
Governance & Legal standing

- Government agency (e.g., state system of higher education)
- Organization established in state law
- Independently incorporated (501c3)
- Members bound by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Members bound by an Interagency Agreement or Intergovernmental Agreement
- No legal standing (but decisions are recorded)
- Verbal agreements

Benevolent dictator → Representative democracy
Useful Source

• http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/~b-sloan/consort.htm

• Bylaws
• Memoranda of Understanding
• Resource Sharing Agreements
• Strategic Plans
Funding

- No central funding
- Central funding except for e-resources
- Central funding and cost-sharing for e-resources (e.g., CDL)
- Central funding for most costs

Most consortia select what to acquire and then identify funds -- they don’t collect money and then decide how to spend it
Cost Allocation Methods

• Equal % across all types and sizes
• % based on FTE
• % based on materials budget
• % based on use
• % based on how vendor allocates
• Some mix of flat and pro-rated amounts

Changes are often made based on the resource and what seems to be work at that moment for that constituency
### Staffing

- "Volunteers"
- Staff contributed by member or host institution
- Consortium employees

#### Distributed staff
- Better connection with member libraries & patrons
- Expertise
- "No cost"
- Too great an association with one institution?
- Accountable to consortium?
- Lack of true cost accounting

#### Central staff
- Accountability
- Expertise
- Working for all members
- Clarity of roles
- Need for consortial personnel structure
- Not in touch with member libraries & patrons?
- Self perpetuating?
Some Consortia in More Detail

• VIVA
• ORBIS/CASCADE
• LOUIS
• NERL
• JISC
• FCLA
VIVA’s Mission is to provide, in an equitable, cooperative and cost-effective manner, enhanced access to library and information resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia’s non-profit academic libraries serving the higher education community.

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Financial Benefits --
Cost Avoidance -- VIVA

Through group purchases
7/1/94 to date:
Approximately

$103,500,000

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The Remarkable Value of VIVA

Cost avoidance through group purchases
July 1, 1994 to June 30, 2003:
$103,000,000

That’s a 1-to-5 payoff for Virginia!
TO BE REMEMBERED!!!

Common Theme: COST AVOIDANCE

These “savings” are not real dollars that were re-purposed for other uses. Neither the consortia or the libraries ever had or hoped to have that money to begin with.
More than a Buying Club

- Electronic Collections
- Priority Service for ILL
- Staff Professional Development
- Technical Expertise
- Training for Bibliographic Instruction
- Virginia Heritage Project (Special Collections)

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Virginia’s Context

- Large, strong public institutions
- History of autonomy among public colleges and universities
- Inconsistent infrastructure
- Downsizing central government
- Highly decentralized: 1 staff member and many committees
Orbis Cascade Alliance
Major Services

• Summit
  • Union Cataloging
  • Inter-institutional Borrowing
• Courier Service
• Electronic Resources
• Conferences & Workshops
• Shared Storage Repository
Central Oregon Comm. College
Central Washington University
Eastern Oregon University
Eastern Washington University
George Fox University
Lewis & Clark College
Linfield College
Oregon State University
Oregon Health & Science Univ.
Oregon Institute of Technology
Oregon State University
Pacific University
Portland Community College
Portland State University
Reed College
Seattle Pacific University
Southern Oregon University
The Evergreen State College
University of Oregon
University of Portland
University of Puget Sound
University of Washington
Washington State University
Western Oregon University
Western Washington University
Whitman College
Willamette University
Organizational Summary

- Washington & Oregon
- Private & Public academic
  Every public college and university in both states.
- Two-year & Four-year
- Large & Small
- Serving 95% of four-year students
- No central funding
- Four staff members (looking for 5th)
- Membership involvement and buy-in
- Service to non-member libraries

220+ libraries participate in some aspect of the Alliance.
Electronic Resources

Group purchasing of commercial databases, electronic books & ejournals

• Shared subject expertise
• Shared licensing expertise
• Group buying power
• Wash. & Oregon statewide projects
• Serving non-member libraries

➢ 60+ resources, 200+ libraries
➢ Increased access
➢ Cost avoidance
Regional Library Services Center

- High density storage
- Campus libraries put to best use
- Home for collaborative projects

Preservation and Access Service Center for Colorado Academic Libraries (PASCAL)

www.orbiscascade.org/rlsc/
LOUIS

• Automates Louisiana Academic Libraries

LOUIS Members

- 27 Public Academic Libraries
- 9 Private Academic Libraries
- Louisiana Technical College (43 campuses)
- 66 Public Library Systems (331 Buildings)
- The State Library of Louisiana
- K-12 School Libraries
LOUIS Services

- Schedule Trials
- Negotiate Prices
- License Products
- Implement Access
- Provide Training
- Maintain Contact with Vendors
- Collaborate with Other Consortia

With a staff of 12+
The LOUIS Impact

$0 $5,000,000 $10,000,000 $15,000,000 $20,000,000 $25,000,000


Automation Databases Savings (aka Cost Avoidance)

$43,000,000

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NERL
Mission and Brief History

• Primary Mission: Acquiring Access to e-Resources at Advantageous Prices and Terms of Use for New England Research Libraries

• To be agile, flexible, non-bureaucratic, low-overhead

• To enhance collegiality and information sharing

• Summer 1996: 12 librarians planned formation of NERL

• Fall 1996: 16 libraries become core members
  – Operate on a 3-year renewable “sunset clause”
  – May 1999: hired part-time librarian

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Okerson
NERL Members Today

- Today: 26 “core” (active) members, including Stanford, Georgetown, George Washington
- Members govern NERL’s present and future activities and boundaries
  - Each pays annual dues
  - Each names a representative and alternate
  - Members make decisions (mostly via e-mail) about content, license, pricing
  - Approx. 50 publishers, many dozens of resources
**NERL “Affiliate” Members**

- About 40 “affiliate” (passive) members which:
  - Accept NERL’s negotiated terms
  - Use many or most NERL contracts
  - Have no voice in decision-making
  - Pay $100 per year per database accessed
  - Are as far north as Maine, as far south as the Carolinas
The JISC is...

• The Joint Information Systems Committee
• Centrally funded by the higher education funding bodies for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales
• Not a single committee, but a nested committee structure responsible for stimulating the innovative use of IT in learning, teaching, and research
JISC Services

Variety of Advice and Support Services:
- Images
- Interoperability
- Time-based media

Data Centre NESLI Cache Service

IMS Centre

ATHENS Data centre
Software Neg. Team
UKOLN

Network Mgmt Service

AHDS BUFVC RDN

TechLearn

Data Archive

Digitisation Service
JISCmail
NETSKILLS Training

14 Regional Support Centres

Disability Support Service

Mirror Service

Variety of Advice and Support Services:
Digital Preservation Coalition

• Aim of Coalition is to develop the UK digital preservation agenda within an international context
• Core of 19 member organisations
• Plus associate members and allies
Why national consortial activities?

• Some of the standard reasons for consortia...
  – Value for money
    • Less duplication of effort
    • Greater purchasing power
  – Raise strategic profile of activities/problems

• Plus...
  – Fits well with political trends (e.g. lifelong learning, social inclusion, improving UK economic prospects)
  – More easy to administer than multi-national consortia
  – Less opportunity for divide and conquer tactics (theoretically!)

• But...
  – Hard to establish and maintain without strong central decision-making of some kind and visionary leadership from the community
FCLA

• Established in 1984 by the Legislature
• Attached to the University of Florida
• Type 1 Center (not a “consortium”)
• Administered by UF for personnel, payroll, purchasing, etc...
• Advisory Board of Library Directors
• Multiple committees and subcommittees advise FCLA and the Directors
• Most funding from legislative appropriation

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First objective for FCLA -- shared ILS

- Single installation of NOTIS for State University System of Florida
  - 10 Library Catalogs
  - Union Catalog Searching
  - 12.5 million bib records
  - 10 million searches per year
  - 3.3 million checkouts/renewals per year
- Currently converting to Ex Libris/Aleph and implementing SFX/MetaLib
FCLA local load of databases began in 1991

- ERIC
- IAC EAI & FT
- IAC Business & FT
- IAC LegalTrac
- Wilson ASTI, BAI, ILP, ART, 6-pack
- Compendex

- Medline
- PsycInfo + backfile
- BIP, BOOP and WPD
- ABI/Inform
- Dissertation Abstracts
- Current Contents
- Elsevier FT (700 titles)
FCLA -- Databases Today

• Almost no Local Loading Anymore
• Over 200 Databases Licensed for all 10 Universities
• 11 Aggregators/Vendors
• 50 Publishers
• *Plus, e-journal package licenses administered by volunteers in libraries*
FCLA's Digital Library Services

- Ant Bibliography (FORMIS)
- Eric Eustace Williams
- Everglades Information Network
- Florida Environments Online
- Florida Heritage Collection
- Florida Historical Legal Documents
- Linking Florida’s Natural Heritage
- Literature for Children
- Psychological Study of the Arts
- Reclaiming the Everglades
- Ringling Collection
- Sea Turtle Bibliography
- Southwest Florida Environmental Documents
- Textual Collections
- Type Specimens in the UF Herbarium
- UF Herbarium Collections Catalog
- Visual Collections
- World Map Collections

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The Florida Heritage Collection is an ongoing cooperative project of the State University System (SUS) of Florida to digitize and provide online access to materials broadly representing Florida's history, culture, arts, literature, sciences and social sciences. Thematic areas in this growing collection include Native American and minority populations, exploration and development, tourism, the natural environment, and regional interests.

Materials are taken from archives, special collections, and libraries of the ten state universities which make up the SUS. These materials represent only a small part of the wealth of historical and archival treasures held by the SUS libraries. Users should note the source of materials they use on this site and should contact the holding libraries or archives directly for more information.
From FCLA scholarly journals accessible on the web

- Florida Entomologist
- Journal of Nematology
- Nematropica
- Proceedings of the Florida State Horticultural Society
Overlapping Consortia

E.g., University of Florida’s Memberships

• FCLA -- state universities
• NEFLIN -- NE Florida regional multi-type
• ASERL -- Southeastern research libraries
• SOLINET -- OCLC regional network
• ARL -- national research libraries
• RLG -- international research libraries
Consortia Bring Value to the Purchasing Process

VALUE TO MEMBERS
• Leverage collective purchasing power
• License negotiation
• Single contract authority
• Collect institutional information
• Central billing & accounting
• Research & statistical reports
• Reputation: “seal of approval”

VALUE TO PUBLISHERS
• Rapid market penetration
• Increase market share
• Increase core & marginal revenue
• One contract, bill & payment
• Timely payment
• Marketing services
• Lower overhead cost per sale
New Acquisitions

- Committee expresses interest in product
- Get price quote
- Conduct a trial
- Make decision to subscribe
- Negotiate license
- Issue Purchase Order
- Configure access
Renewals

- Committee indicates interest in renewing
- Get price quote
- Make decision to renew
- Negotiate renewal price
- Issue Purchase Order
- Access configuration changes as needed
Reality

• Lots of to’ing and fro’ing
• Quote process can be iterative
• Internal committee negotiation often needed (big vs. small; general vs. special, eg. Law, medical, etc…)
• Sometimes bids or RFPs are required
• Priorities change (even during the process)
Licenses

• Access to electronic version of print
• Authorized users can:
  – Search, view and browse
  – Print and download
  – Access remotely via secure procedures
  – Access onsite as walk-ins
• Articles in coursepacks and online course reserve
• ILL: prefer electronic but at least of printout of article or Ariel
Other License Issues

- Linking services - OpenURL compliant?
- Z39.50 or other MetaSearch protocol compliant?
- COUNTER Compliant Statistics?
- IP Authentication?
- Patron Privacy?
1. Get them
2. Determine what is represented
3. Present them to the Members
Assumptions in Determining Cancellations

• Prefer to retain content vs. convenience/functionality
• Vendor’s performance, service and statistics are essential
• “Near Redundancy” will not be supported
• Value full text over indexes and abstracts
The Changing Imperatives Affecting Consortia

• E-resource licensing is not new or sexy, but just another task
• Increased competition among consortia to provide offers
• Eroding library purchasing power
  – Many libraries are seeking to cancel current e-resources
• Market saturation: too many new e-resource products
  – Once we bought everything electronic we could find
• Reduced profit margins for aggregators means decreased discounts or lower net revenue for consortia
The Future: Content

• Expand available content (e-journals, e-books, e-reference)
• Encourage cooperative collection management
• Develop digital libraries and institutional repositories
• Provide physical storage repositories
The Future: Collaborative Technology

- Shared library information systems
- E-journal and linking management systems
- Virtual union catalog and patron-initiated circulation systems
- Collective portal management
- Shared authentication systems
- Collaborative virtual reference
But, the future is hard to predict

Some original assumptions made by consortia:

- Z39.50 would revolutionize OPACs
- Consortia would primarily load databases locally
- Naïve enthusiasm at the prospect of reduced costs -- we now talk about increased access
- The Internet would be key to information delivery but we never envisioned the WWW or its impact
"There have been other vendors that have said that they don't need the consortia, but they end up coming back because their products didn't get the sort of market penetration they wanted."

Catherine C. Wilt, Palinet

http://chronicle.com/weekly/v50/i07/07a03001.htm
"Publishers and vendors helped create consortia by their pricing practices -- in part, because of an inability for libraries to cope [with inflation of journal and database costs]... I can see as consortia mature, certainly in the group-purchasing area, you're going to end up hitting the wall again, only as a group... It's ultimately a stronger situation to be in. But it doesn't change the basic battle that you are fighting.”

Tom Sanville, Ohiolink

From “...Conundrum” by Scott Carlson
Recognition

• Ralph Boe, LOUIS
• John Helmer, Orbis/Cascade
• Arnold Hirshon, NELINET
• Tim Jewell, University of Washington
• Houeida Kammourie-Charara, Notre Dame
• Ann Okerson, NERL
• Kathy Perry, VIVA
• Alicia Wise, JISC
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The End

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