

State Library of Ohio  
Resource Sharing NCIP Development Meeting  
June 16, 2008

Attendees:

Jo Budler	State Library of Ohio
David Namiotka	State Library of Ohio
Dianna Clark	SEO Library Center
Tim Kambitsch	Dayton Metro Library
Karl Colon	Greene County District Library
Bob Carterette	Cleveland Public Library
Ann Palomo	Cleveland Public Library
Hilary Prysbilla	Cleveland Public Library
Terri Fredericka	INFOhio
Juanita Markham	INFOhio
Jean Banks	INFOhio
Gail Wanner	SirsiDynix
Ann Arthur	SirsiDynix
Tony O'Brien	OCLC
Ron Corcuera	OCLC
Katie Birch	OCLC (via phone)
Ralph Horton	OCLC (via phone)
John Bodfish	OCLC (via phone)

State Librarian of Ohio Jo Budler opened the meeting by welcoming all participants. David Namiotka, Information Systems and Technology Director at the State Library explained this meeting was called because the State Library and the Statewide Resource Sharing Steering Team would like to facilitate communication between Ohio Libraries Share: MORE participants, OCLC (the vendor of VDX, the OHIO LIBRARIES SHARE: MORE software) and SirsiDynix in the common pursuit of a successful implementation of NCIP. Talk centered on where this project stands today and what is needed to move forward together. The State Library is very committed to supporting the development of NCIP and OHIO LIBRARIES SHARE: MORE. Since introducing NCIP to OHIO LIBRARIES SHARE: MORE libraries in early 2007, many people have worked to make NCIP work but it is still not quite working as it should be.

OCLC presentation:

John Bodfish described how NCIP interacts with circulation systems. As an example, once NCIP is installed, the supplying library work will be done automatically by NCIP and very quickly will automatically give info back to the requesting library so if a potential supplier doesn't have it, the request can go to the next library in a process that is unattended by staff. At the requesting library, the NCIP message "accept item" is automatically

generated and the system will automatically send a notification email or phone message to the patron who ordered the item. NCIP can also create a temporary bibliographic record with data from the request. NCIP doesn't just save staff time, but creates a seamless workflow between different ILS while allowing them to remain dissimilar. This is now in a development and testing phase.

#### Challenges facing NCIP development in VDX:

Several people working on the NCIP standard have been involved since the beginning. NCIP Version 1.0 was the first attempt to have a ratified standard that would provide a collaborative language between ILS vendors. This was a success but some complexities could have been implemented in simpler fashion. NCIP v1.0 contains many services and data elements but it is not always completely clear what the services of those data elements should be and a few data elements were left out of v1.0 altogether. The standard needs to be adjusted and will be with NCIP v2.0 which is in development. V2.0 will also allow extensions to be added to correct problems, v1.0 did not allow extensions. NCIP v2.0 will have fairly general functions such as placing a hold or checking out an item to help avoid individual libraries' different rules and workflows.

#### OCLC commitment to NCIP development:

OCLC is committed to fully supporting both NCIP v1 and v2 integration with VDX. OCLC has a bigger team working on NCIP integration with VDX than at any time in the past. At this time OCLC is working closely with SirsiDynix and both are committed to making NCIP work with VDX and SirsiDynix products.

A hurdle to overcome is that not all vendors are as willing to support NCIP integration. Several factors contribute to this. For instance, in the beginning, not a lot of people understood NCIP and what it could do, now there is understanding but NCIP is priced too high for some libraries and many of the libraries believe that their SIP protocol works well enough so they don't have interest in switching to NCIP. Vendors are reluctant to put time and energy toward supporting NCIP if it is not something the majority of libraries want. Sometime in the future there will be a tipping point when enough libraries will have NCIP so that more libraries will be compelled to use NCIP and more vendors will support it. It will help to be vocal about which vendors support NCIP and which vendors don't. Publicize who is collaborating and who isn't.

Of vendors who are open to implementing NCIP compatibility, SirsiDynix URSA and a few home delivery products are using NCIP successfully. There are other vendors that are trying to implement NCIP but are having trouble fulfilling OCLC's NCIP needs in regard to VDX, a common problem is the difficulty to handle holds the way that VDX needs to handle holds. URSA can handle the holds the way VDX wants to and the Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library is one library that is using NCIP as OHIO LIBRARIES SHARE: MORE wants to.

### SirsiDynix:

Ann Arthur and Gail Wanner provided updates about NCIP developments at SirsiDynix. At the moment they are testing two NCIP responders, and are working on four or five interfaces. One NCIP responder with a setting file is in support of the interfaces. One of the NCIP responders is testing v1.7.4.1. All changes are backward compatible. All libraries must use Java servlet v1.4 or higher. NCIP responder for Horizon is in test with SEO. SirsiDynix will also make this work with Symphony. Many ILS vendors are competing for time with SirsiDynix, each month several ILS vendors ask to work with SirsiDynix to create an NCIP interface.

There are some problems with NCIP implementation. Examples of problems with messages involve the lack of a field for a pickup library when placing holds, cryptic error messages that are open to interpretation, and lack of error messages for 'accept item message'. Complicated setups in the ILS cause problems as do no users behind the application to select a title and there are time lags in development and testing for everyone involved.

Progress is being made in addressing these problems. SirsiDynix is looking for ways to generate better error messages. Originally the lack of the error messages was a result of the standard not having any options of error messages for SirsiDynix to choose. SirsiDynix asked the standards committee allow them to add more messages - this is part of version 2 of the standard that is currently going through the certification process. Once the standard passes through the certification process, SirsiDynix should be able to add more descriptive error messages. INFOhio is testing NCIP with the Sirsi Unicorn product that schools use. The holds are not working quite right yet but are improving - the decentralized holds seem to be working but the centralized holds do not. INFOhio has only tested the software as a requesting library, not yet as a responding library so more problems may arise when they test as a responding library.

At this point OCLC and SirsiDynix are working together to make NCIP work. SirsiDynix does have an NCIP responder for Horizon v7.4.1 and for Unicorn/Symphony customers. They currently are two different pieces of software with some of the same underlying code. The two codes will be combined into one responder for both platforms at some time in 2009 after implementation of v2 of the NCIP standard. SirsiDynix will continue to work on NCIP though there may be work stoppages at times. SirsiDynix will continue development of Symphony until all interfaces are supported.

Discussion ensued that it would be good to determine at this meeting what the next steps are so that all present can agree. In addition to defining next steps, those in attendance should most importantly set a deadline for a general release date and

determine how we can expect it to impact staffing and finances in the libraries. State Librarian Budler commented that LSTA grants may be available to help libraries upgrade with NCIP implementation as it is a very high priority for the State Library to get NCIP working with all Ohio libraries, especially with the SEO consortium.

### NCIP Standard - version 2

David Namiotka reported the latest info about NCIP v2. This information is from Candy Zemon who is leading the effort to get the next NCIP standard to a vote. The issue didn't get a response from enough members of the NISO topic committee participating members so the issue's deadline has been extended to get response for it to go to a vote. Attendee Tony O'Brien is a member of the topic committee.

Questions arose about whether or not NCIP v2 is backward compatible with v1 and what sort of difficulties each library will encounter when switching to v2. There are worries that if NCIP v2 is not backward compatible, then all the work that's been done will be a waste. OCLC reports saying v2 is not backward compatible is not completely accurate. Do people want to know if OCLC will continue to support v1 once v2 is viable? Yes, OCLC will continue to support v1. Staff using v1 should be able to go seamlessly to v2; they will only see better error messages. SirsiDynix also sees themselves supporting v1 and v2 for a long time, they typically give a two year warning when they will no longer support something. V2 might become a different protocol as SIP and SIP2 have. OCLC would like all of the SirsiDynix products to switch from NCIP v1 to v2 at the same time but SirsiDynix does not know if that will be possible with all the interfaces that would need to be upgraded.

The hope is that the NISO committee will approve NCIP v2 to go to a vote. Given that v2 is an improvement, the NISO committee will likely put it to a vote. The fact that vendors are in on the decision making and want it to go forward will also likely influence the NISO committee's voting. The new NCIP version will be seamless, its functionality will be no different, it will just have better error messages and be leaner where it needs to be leaner.

### Questions

Questions centered on testing and implementation timelines and next steps. The schools are currently testing and primarily have trouble with the issue of centralized vs. decentralized for the 'pickup library' choice and also building a rota. After the issues are resolved, the schools should be ready to implement NCIP.

Other issues include:

- VDX filtering out bibliographic records in a library's catalog by format, for example an audiobook copy versus a print book copy. A concern is that if a record contains both a hard copy and an audio book as material type, Z39.50 won't recognize the difference. As long as Z39.50 recognizes the format, it will be fine.

- When duplicate materials are not all able to be put on hold, only some of the duplicate copies can be placed on hold.
- When a staff member is placing a request, can staff not use the PIN number? (OCLC will check on this.) SirsiDynix can turn this feature on or off.
- Testing as a responder hasn't been done since 2007.
- Clevnet is concerned that holds were being placed on Clevnet libraries that are not OHIO LIBRARIES SHARE: MORE members. (VDX requests the item at the title level, if VDX doesn't consult the hold map, it may request items from libraries that don't participate.) A solution may be to place a hold at the item level and at the item type at the same time but VDX isn't able to assess the item type at this time.
- Could NCIP capabilities allow VDX to respond directly to patrons' requests that come through a library's catalog? So that the patron won't have to redo the search in the VDX system.
- Sirsi's upgrade to from Unicorn GL3.1 to GL3.2 will be renamed Sirsi Symphony. NCIP currently being used in Unicorn GL3.1 will be the NCIP used in Sirsi Symphony. Testing with Symphony and INFOhio will begin sometime in Summer2008.

It is very valuable to see the complaints out in the open. Now that all are aware of the issues, Ralph Horton will make a checklist of the outstanding items and post it to the NCIP-Customer mailing list. This checklist will be updated as to current status to keep all informed of progress these next few weeks until completion.

Discussion ensued about remedying other current roadblocks and what we can do outside of working on NCIP to assist our OHIO LIBRARIES SHARE: MORE libraries get ready for implementing NCIP. New workflow issues will need to be mapped out. Promotion and training on those new workflows will be provided after testing is performed successfully to ensure that the NCIP feature in VDX works as promised with SirsiDynix.

Once SirsiDynix implements NCIP and it works with the VDX software, how will this effect implementation of NCIP on other ILS platforms? How soon can we work with other libraries that want to implement NCIP? Per OCLC, this may be based on adapting VDX. First OCLC will need to define a set of services and a lot will depend on the nature of the different ILS. Sometimes there is a danger that while working with a vendor, that vendor may make changes to accommodate NCIP that will cause other problems and then that ILS vendor will charge the libraries to fix the problem that they caused. In this instance, customer libraries should band together and complain to the vendor en masse. The State Library will evaluate the number of OHIO LIBRARIES SHARE: MORE transactions by ILS and will recommend that OCLC work with ILS vendors accordingly.

The next steps in the process will be communicated on the NCIP list. The hope is that the NCIP implementation issues will be worked out with SirsiDynix before school starts. Once NCIP works in the schools, we will roll it out to the other Ohio libraries that use SirsiDynix ILS. The State Library will publicize when it works and let everyone know

we're supporting NCIP's implementation in VDX. After that we anticipate working to add more public libraries and schools to the OHIO LIBRARIES SHARE: MORE system and working with INFOhio to facilitate schools saving staff time and working with public libraries to defray delivery costs.