

**A Study of Libraries Linking Idaho Databases
(LiLI-D)**

**Sponsored by the
Idaho Commission for Libraries**

FINAL REPORT

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Executive Summary

For the past 12 years, the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) has provided all Idaho residents with a variety of online library databases. These databases provide access to full text, abstracts, and citations to the content of magazines, journals, and newspapers, as well as thousands of full-length articles. This service, called LiLI Databases or LiLI-D, is part of the ICfL's Libraries Linking Idaho (LiLI) Program, a group of projects and services that bring networked library services to the residents of Idaho. In 2010, ICfL engaged Nancy Bolt and Dr. Karen Strege of Nancy Bolt & Associates to identify the impacts of the LiLI-D service on libraries and library users and to seek ideas for improving LiLI-D. ICfL identified the following outcomes for the study's focus:

- Impact of LiLI-D on libraries
- Impact of LiLI-D on library users
- Success factors
- Implications for the future of the program
- Recommendations for program sustainability
- Recommended next steps for ICfL

After discussion with ICfL staff members regarding the study's purposes and activities, evaluation of training endeavors and promotion of LiLI-D was added to this study's outcomes.

This Executive Summary presents a brief overview of the purpose of the LiLI-D study, its methodology, and the findings in each of the areas studied. It also includes a summary of all of the recommendations presented as part of each section.

Methodology

We used four methods to collect information about LiLI-D: an online survey, focus groups, review of ICfL documents, and individual interviews with representatives of eight state libraries.

Survey. We distributed an online survey to the Idaho library community in August 2010. Dr. Rachel Applegate, Associate Professor at the Indiana University School of Information and Library Science, Indianapolis, compiled and statistically analyzed the survey's results. A total of 222 respondents returned surveys.

Focus groups. After extensive discussion with ICfL, we made the following process decisions about focus groups: hold nine focus groups in five areas of the state; invite school, public, academic, and special (law, medical, business) librarians to attend in mixed groups; and invite specific librarians to attend who had experience with LiLI-D. A total of 76 people participated in the focus groups.

Document review. We reviewed all pertinent documents for the past ten years of LiLI-D operations. In this report, we focused on the most germane documents including:

- LiLI Advisory Board meeting records (2000-2006)
- LiLI Steering Committee meeting record (2006 -2010)
- LiLI-D Annual Reports
- Library Services and Technology Act. Idaho State Plan. FY2008 - 2012

Interviews with state libraries. We contacted eight other state libraries to find how they promote their statewide databases, collect data to use in decision making and to determine impact, and train librarians to use the databases. These states, selected because their similarities to Idaho include: Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

Success factors and challenges

Study participants indicated a high degree of satisfaction with LiLI-D, including currency of the databases, their broad and vetted content, the ability of full-text, 24-7 access, and that access to LiLI-D is paid for by the state. They also indicated that LiLI-D has a positive impact on library services and “levels the playing field” between rural and urban libraries.

In summary, LiLI-D is a success because it provides needed resources to Idaho residents at no cost to local libraries and in a way that allows local libraries to improve their service and image. LiLI-D, however, is not without its challenges as well. Study participants identified these challenges and provided suggestions for improvement, but did not display any hesitation about LiLI-D’s current and future value. The suggestions were directed to making LiLI-D even more successful than it already is.

The key overall suggestions for improvement included long-range planning for LiLI-D; a longer contract with a vendor; better and more advanced communication with Idaho libraries about changes in LiLI-D and promotion efforts; and changes in the interface to make it easier to use.

Promotion

The ICfL has used many methods to raise awareness of LiLI-D among Idaho residents. . This study’s survey showed that awareness of past media promotion campaigns varied strongly by region. In general, survey respondents and focus group members were skeptical of the value of promotions, and on average, did not agree that past promotions led to more user awareness or use.

Survey respondents and focus group members had many suggestions for ICfL regarding promotion of LiLI-D. These suggestions included enhanced promotion materials; using social networking venues; promoting libraries in general, with an emphasis on LiLI-D; and branding LiLI-D with a more active logo.

Training

The ICfL has offered a wide program of training for those working in Idaho’s libraries. A majority, 61% of survey respondents, said they participated in LiLI-D training. Among all

non-participants, lack of time was cited as the primary reason. The next most frequent reason was that in-person training was held too far away from their homes, and the last reason, most frequently cited by those from academic libraries, was that they did not need the training. Frequent LiLI-D users also often said that they did not need LiLI-D training.

Study participants offered us their likes and dislikes about synchronous online training, face-to-face (F2F) training, asynchronous learning, and tutorials. The survey results showed that most respondents preferred F2F training; that frequent LiLI-D users were more comfortable with synchronous online training; and that infrequent users particularly disliked synchronous online training.

The topics for training which received the most interest in the survey are, in order of preference: how to train library users to use LiLI-D, searching, and which databases are best for specific age groups.

Impact of LiLI-D on libraries

A major focus of this study is the impact that LiLI-D has on libraries and their users. This information was gathered through the focus groups and the online survey. The 2009 pop-up survey conducted by ICfL did not address impact.

Current, ongoing impact data is reflected primarily in the quarterly and annual statistics gathered on sessions, searches, and full-text downloads. Usage has tended to increase each year and the presumption is that this means the databases are useful to libraries and to library users. Offering statistics as a proxy for user satisfaction can be frustrating, because different vendors count usage differently, and there is a lack of certainty that increased use actually does reflect user satisfaction.

Several common themes emerged in the discussion of impact on the library.

The most common benefit, often mentioned with some passion, is summed up by the statement, *"We would have nothing without LiLI-D."* Overall, school and public libraries considered LiLI-D a more essential part of their services than did academic libraries, primarily because academic libraries had databases other than LiLI-D. Similar to this sentiment were the statements we heard in the focus groups, that LiLI-D created an "equal playing field" among libraries and that regardless of geography or budget, all libraries had access to the same resources.

Another common theme about impact was that LiLI-D saved the library money. Focus group members reported that they could cancel their library's subscriptions to databases and reference books because these resources were available through LiLI-D. Some mentioned they saved space by discarding past issues of periodicals and reference books. Others mentioned that the full text options in LiLI-D allowed them to reduce the number of interlibrary loans they requested from or loaned to other libraries. Other focus group members said they could now spend this money for more popular books, or for databases not included in LiLI-D, enhancing the resources available in the library.

Another theme about impact was advanced by the school librarians in the focus groups. They thought that LiLI-D helped improve the cooperation between school libraries and public and academic libraries, and that learning how to use LiLI-D prepares students for college.

One question pursued in both the focus groups and the online survey was whether LiLI-D increased library use. The general response was no, at least not in numerical terms. However, many focus group members thought that LiLI-D brought in different types of users. They specifically mentioned students, particularly distance learners, people searching for genealogical information, auto repair enthusiasts, families who homeschool their children, and others looking for specific information.

Another common theme about impact was that LiLI-D improved the library's image in the community. One focus group member said that users were surprised to find "*authoritative information from a Podunk library.*"

Another common theme had to do with advocacy efforts to communicate the value of libraries and that LiLI-D was one aspect of this value. While study participants thought that LiLI-D improved their image in the community, respondents thought that more could be done. They wanted more promotion of LiLI-D at the state level, with a focus on the value of libraries overall within which LiLI-D is emphasized as a part of information resources.

Measuring impact – statistics

Only a few focus group members raised the topic of statistics. Some group members did not know if they could collect data on LiLI-D use and, if so, how to do it. We received no suggestions from focus groups members or survey respondents on how ICfL might use statistics to demonstrate impact.

Furthermore, we found no particular guidance based on our conversations with other states. Other states' practices of statistic collection closely mirror ICfL's, which include quarterly reports, and an annual consolidation with a comparison to past years.

Impact on library users

A major challenge is determining the impact of LiLI-D on library users.

On the online survey, we asked several questions about user impact. When asked if more people use the library as a result of LiLI-D, the result was tepid, between 3 and 3.5 on a 5 point scale. When asked if library users used LiLI-D to find the information resources they need, only school librarians thought this was important enough to give it a score of 4; public and academic librarians' responses were barely at 3.5 points on a 5 point scale.

The focus group members provided primarily anecdotal data about user satisfaction. It was clear that the librarians thought that LiLI-D was essential to their provision of library service, but they had no user data to support this. School librarians came closest simply because in many school libraries, almost all of their students use LiLI-D to complete assignments.

Focus group members did report some instances of user frustration regarding the complexity of searching and asked for assistance in learning how to train users. They asked for simple training materials, including help sheets or videos that users could either use at the library or take home.

A vision for LiLI-D

Creating a vision for LiLI-D was not part of this study; however, we asked participants in eight focus groups what their vision for LiLI-D was.

Participants envisioned in the future LiLI-D will contain comprehensive information sources, with the priority resources for all types of libraries. They see that LiLI-D will include not only magazine and journal databases, but speeches, music, eBooks, videos, audio books, recorded books, movies, and more, including “audio instructions, holograms, and videos that have 3-D presentations.”

Focus group members recognized the importance of developing mobile access to LiLI-D. In the future, focus group members agreed that LiLI-D will offer federated searching, which is the ability to simultaneously search multiple data sources by entering one search string. Participants envisioned that the future LiLI-D offers users a “Google-style search” using natural language.

Comparison of states

As part of the study, ICfL asked us to interview other states with statewide databases, focusing on the areas of promotion, data collection, training, impact, and user satisfaction. States chosen were states in the west and Midwest with characteristics similar to Idaho. The states are: Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

The report organizes the information gathered from these eight states by the major topics of the interviews: promotion, training, and impact. After each of these sections we offer suggestions from these out-of-state interviews that may be useful in Idaho.

Implications for the future and sustainability

LiLI-D should have a bright future. As outside consultants studying LiLI-D, we came to three overarching conclusions.

- 1) LiLI-D is successful. Study participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction with LiLI-D, its content and delivery, and with ICfL for its management of LiLI-D.
- 2) There are also many ideas for making LiLI-D (and by extension libraries) even more successful. These are reflected in the recommendations in each section.
- 3) Key to continued success is making users and funding authorities more aware of the value of libraries to a community and of LiLI-D in particular. Continued success also requires recruitment and training of more librarians to recognize the value and to use LiLI-D.

Summary of recommendations

Success Factors and Challenges

1. ICfL should consider developing federated searching as part of the LiLI-D search methodology.
2. ICfL should continue and refine usability studies, as the LiLI-D portal is revised, involving librarians and adult and student users.
3. ICfL should continue the exemplary practice of asking members of the library community to comment upon planned changes to LiLI-D.

Promotion

4. ICfL should develop a long-term marketing plan for Idaho's libraries that includes an emphasis on LiLI-D.
5. ICfL should work with database vendors to customize their promotion materials.
6. ICfL should make maximum use of social networking to promote LiLI-D.
7. ICfL should offer and promote a LiLI-D mobile application.
8. ICfL should take every opportunity to inform library staff about these promotions and about the value of LiLI-D.

Training

9. ICfL should continue to use an array of different training delivery modes, and develop librarian's skills and confidence to benefit from online training.
10. ICfL should view its primary roles as training coordinator, promoter, and evaluator, and view providing the training directly as a secondary role, one that it shares with partners.
11. ICfL should emphasize teacher training.

Impact

12. ICfL should work closely with the Idaho State Department of Education to bring LiLI-D to the attention of teachers and school administrators.
13. ICfL should develop a method to gather stories from local libraries on the value of LiLI-D and to quantify, to the extent possible, the fiscal impact at both the state and local level of having LiLI-D.
14. ICfL should refine statistic gathering, reporting, and use of the reports.
15. ICfL should design a method to gain direct input from library users on their opinion of LiLI-D, including negotiating in the next database contract that the vendor supply a pop-up survey that ICfL can use to determine user satisfaction.

Introduction

For the past 12 years, the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) has provided all Idaho residents with a variety of online library databases. These databases provide access to full text, abstracts, and citations to the content of magazines, journals, and newspapers, as well as thousands of full-length articles. This service, called LiLI Databases or LiLI-D, is part of the ICfL's Libraries Linking Idaho (LiLI) Program, a group of projects and services that bring networked library services to the residents of Idaho. In 2010, ICfL engaged Nancy Bolt and Dr. Karen Strege of Nancy Bolt & Associates to identify the impacts of the LiLI-D service on libraries and library users and to seek ideas for improving LiLI-D. ICfL identified the following outcomes for the study's focus:

- Impact of LiLI-D on libraries
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- Success factors
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- Recommended next steps for ICfL

After discussion with ICfL staff members regarding the study's purposes and activities, evaluation of training endeavors and promotion of LiLI-D was added to the outcomes.

The LiLI-D suite of databases has changed over the years and ICfL's current contract with the ProQuest Company expires on June 30, 2011. An evaluation of particular products and vendors was specifically outside the scope of this study. This report is vendor-neutral and when product information is given, it is for illustrative purposes only. The study did not specifically solicit from participants their opinions about specific database products or recommendations for products; however, focus group members offered comments unsolicited.

LiLI-D is funded through appropriations from the state general fund. ICfL also uses federal funds received through the Library Services and Technology Act to support LiLI-D training and its promotional costs. In calendar Year 2009, the total license costs for LiLI-D was \$561,185. In 2009, LiLI-D received over 1 million logins and over 1.5 million items, including full text articles, were downloaded, printed or emailed.

A recent report¹ by the Institute of Museum and Library Services says that state libraries database licensing results in savings in the aggregate. This bargaining power of the state leads to lower prices for access to these databases than would have been paid by individual libraries. This report also notes that nationwide spending on database licensing has more than doubled during the past ten years, from \$31.8 million in 1999 to \$65.9 million in 2008.

¹ Henderson, E., C. Manjarrez. 2010. State Library Agencies Survey: Fiscal Year 2008. Research Brief series, no. 2 (IMLS-2010-RB-02). Washington, DC: Institute of Museum and Library Services. Available at http://www.ims.gov/pdf/Brief2010_02.pdf.

This report discusses the findings of this study of LiLI-D and makes recommendations for ICfL to consider for the future improvement and recognition of LiLI-D. We would like to thank the staff of ICfL for their cooperation and support as we conducted the study. We would also like to thank the Idaho librarians who answered the online survey and participated in focus groups and the librarians from other state libraries whom we interviewed.

Study Methodology

We used four methods to collect information about LiLI-D. These methods are described below.

- Online Survey
- Focus groups
- Review of ICfL documents
- Individual interviews with representatives from eight state libraries

Survey. We distributed an online survey to the Idaho library community in August 2010. Dr. Rachel Applegate, Associate Professor at the Indiana University School of Information and Library Science, Indianapolis, compiled and statistically analyzed the survey's results.

ICfL sent an invitation to complete the survey to the state's listserv for library workers and trustees. They also sent three reminders to the same list during the three-week survey period. Survey participants were not selected randomly and the results may not be representative of the universe of librarians and public library trustees.

A total of 222 respondents returned surveys, but because respondents skipped some questions, we use a smaller numbers of respondents to analyze some questions on certain analyses. We provide a detailed survey analysis in this report's Appendices.

- The respondent types correspond roughly to the proportion of types of library workers in Idaho, except that school librarians seem to be slightly over-represented in terms of their percentage of Idaho librarians.
- The greatest numbers of respondents are from the Southwest region², and from public libraries.
- 60% of respondents have worked in libraries for 11 or more years.
- School library respondents characterize themselves as follows: roughly half work in children's / young adult services; a quarter, circulation; and a quarter, administration (including "do all").

² In the survey, seven respondents identified themselves as from the South. Those were re-coded based on the respondents' addresses or library types, four to Southeast and three to East.

- Almost one-third of the responders are administrators; this group also tends to fall into the longer-work-life groups (11 or more years). We believe that administrators consist of two groups. The first group includes the directors of small public libraries or branch librarians where they may “do it all.”³ The second group includes administrators who supervise large libraries with multiple staff members.

We used the following statistical procedures to analyze survey response data.

First, simple frequencies—numbers and percentages of cases giving each possible response—were counted for each question.

Second, responses to each question were cross-tabulated with selected potential predictors of the answer to the question, such as library type and region. Pearson’s chi-square was calculated for each of these cross-tabulation tables to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the response from one group and another. The standard for significance was $p < .05$, meaning that there is only a 1-in-20 chance that the relationship between groups and responses is the same as would have been seen in purely chance variation.

For clarity, only consistent and statistically significant findings are reported.

Focus groups. After extensive discussion with ICfL, we made the following process decisions about focus groups:

- Hold nine focus groups in five areas of the state
- Invite school, public, academic, and special librarians to attend in mixed groups
- Invite specific librarians to attend who had experience with LiLI-D

Because the goals of the focus group meetings were to solicit ideas on how to improve LiLI-D and to identify LiLI-D’s impacts on library services, we invited only those experienced with LiLI-D. ICfL identified such librarians in each location and sent personalized invitations to each. ICfL also sent letters to the building principals of invited school librarians. The purpose of these letters was two-fold; to secure the principal’s permission for the librarian to attend and to raise the awareness of the importance of the school librarian in the school. During the focus groups, however, we discovered that some of the participants had not actually used LiLI-D in several years.

We facilitated nine focus groups in Idaho from October 18 to October 22, 2010. We hoped that each group would have members who represented all types of libraries to facilitate discussions about their various needs and uses of LiLI-D. However, Idaho has few special librarians and only three participated in the groups. In addition, some school librarians could not leave school for a morning meeting, and some afternoon groups had a majority of school librarians.

³ The majority of respondents who selected “Other” were one-person librarians: branch managers, “I do it all,” etc. The 24 who selected “Other” were re-coded as Administrators.

The following chart summarizes the number of participants for each type of library in each group. The percentage of members from library types varied by locations, but overall, 42% of the total members were from public libraries; 34% from school libraries; 20% from academic libraries; and 4% from special libraries. The participant's type of library corresponded roughly to the proportion of types of library workers in Idaho, except that school and academic librarians were slightly over-represented.

Location	School	Public	Academic	Special	Total
1 LiLI-D Steering Committee, Boise	2	3	4	1	10
2 Boise area	4	6	2	0	12
3 Chubbuck, AM	0	6	3	0	9
4 Chubbuck, PM	4	0	1	0	5
5 Twin Falls, AM	0	7	1	0	8
6 Twin Falls, PM	5	1	1	0	7
7 Hayden	6	5	0	1	12
8 Lewiston, AM	0	2	1	1	4
9 Lewiston, PM	5	2	2	0	9
Total Participants	26	32	15	3	76

We asked the same questions in all of the focus groups. In general the questions covered what participants liked about LiLI-D; what they would change; their vision for the future of LiLI-D; their opinion of LiLI-D promotion; preferred training methodology; and the impact of LiLI-D on Idaho library service.

Document review. We reviewed all pertinent documents for the past ten years of LiLI-D operations. In this report, we focused on the most germane documents including:

- LiLI Advisory Board meeting records (2000-2006)
- LiLI Steering Committee meeting record (2006 -2010)
- LiLI-D Annual Reports
- Library Services and Technology Act. Idaho State Plan. FY2008 - 2012

Interviews with State Libraries. We studied eight other state libraries to find how they promote their statewide databases, collect data to use in decision making and to determine impact, and train librarians to use the service. These states, selected because their similarity to Idaho, include: Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

Success Factors and Challenges

Background. We determined the best way to identify success factors of LiLI-D was to ask focus group participants what they liked about LiLI-D. This was tied to a question of what they would change. This analysis summarizes the answers to these questions. Separate sections in the report cover promotion, training, vision, and impact in more detail.

Findings regarding success factors. The identified success factors come primarily from the focus group question “What do you like about LiLI-D?” We feel these best describe what makes LiLI-D a success for local libraries and librarians as well as their users.

Members in over half of the focus groups identified similar reasons to “like” LiLI-D.

In all nine groups, members mentioned the currency, wide variety, and broad content of the databases. Many specific databases were mentioned with the auto repair, ancestry, and e-library databases in school libraries receiving the most comments. Group members appreciated the breadth of content that addressed the needs of public, academic, and school library users. In a similar vein, in seven groups, members appreciated full-text availability, and eight groups commented on the growth in complexity of the databases from simple to advanced. They thought these features served the needs of new users as well as those more experienced, and, particularly, helped children with learning disabilities and learning challenges. In six groups, school librarian members liked that the databases taught information literacy skills and a thought process that is more complex than crafting a Google search. School librarians also liked that the consistency of the databases in all Idaho libraries allowed a grade school student, who had learned how to use a database, to use these same skills in secondary and higher education settings. Finally, members in five groups liked that vendors select the content of databases to provide the best resources. School librarians said that access to LiLI-D resources is not subject to overly restrictive filtering software.

Remote access from home/24-7 access with simple zip code authentication was mentioned by members of eight focus groups. They liked that people did not have to come to the library to use LiLI-D, extending its reach. This benefit was related to statewide access, bringing rural and urban communities the same content and making Idaho a more level playing field for learning and access to information resources.

A series of positive comments revolved around the impact of LiLI-D on the library. These are explored in more detail in the section on impact and are briefly mentioned here. Members of seven groups indicated that LiLI-D is free to the library and Idaho residents. Members of six groups said that LiLI-D was essential to library service and that they could not provide anywhere near the breadth of resources without it. Members of six groups also said that they appreciated that the participation in the state contract allowed them to use funds they might have used for databases to purchase additional resources such as databases that the state does not subscribe to; and that LiLI-D allows them to save space by discarding back-issues of print periodicals now available online.

Suggested changes in LiLI-D. These suggestions come from focus group members in response to the question, “What would you change about LiLI-D?”

Focus group members suggested many ideas about how LiLI-D should be improved and often expanded on these ideas when asked about their vision for LiLI-D. This analysis combines both of those discussions.

One major theme involved more LiLI-D planning. Members of all focus groups mentioned planning in some way. These comments included looking at Idaho’s needs to better select databases; making the contract longer; and developing a long-term strategic plan. A major issue in this theme was the desire to have as much advance notice as possible when databases change and more information about the process used to select databases. This idea was tied to the request for longer contracts so that products changed less frequently. Group members said that the librarians and the users had just learned how to use LiLI-D when the databases would change and they would have to learn a different searching method. Members of four focus groups perceived a lack of effective communication from ICfL, and this lack was implied in other groups.

Another theme revolved around changes in LiLI-D’s content and organization. Study participants mentioned this theme in the survey and in all the focus groups. Since the introduction of the LiLI-D portal in 2004, the ICfL has made continued efforts to improve the portal’s user interface. The initial development of the portal was spurred after a team found that librarians would appreciate simpler access to increase usage and that ICfL could use the portal to brand LiLI-D. In 2009, ICfL continued its efforts to improve the portal with the objectives to:

- Simplify access to the LiLI Databases
- Improve user access to the LiLI Unlimited
- Update the design to comply with state standards

In preparation for the latest revision, ICfL evaluated the needs of librarians and teachers through a survey and solicited feedback from the library community. According to ICfL staff, they received very few comments from library staff regarding the announcement about the portal redesign or the invitation to preview the new design. ICfL also worked with the Information Technology staff from Idaho’s Department of Administration to conduct user testing. Based on the results of these processes, ICfL revised the portal in early 2010.

This study found that many focus group members had useful comments on the portal’s design and functionality and we offer these with our recommendations as a guide for the evolution of the LiLI-D portal.

We found that focus group members were very pleased with the new portal simplified log-in, which requires that the user enter only a city name and a zip code. However, even though the focus group members were selected because they were experienced users of LiLI-D, some reported that they did not know about the change. In fact, many participants apparently had not yet used the new portal as some expressed a need for the ability, now

available, to browse the LiLI-D databases by subject or find a brief description of each database.

One participant said that ICfL needs to promote portal changes. Another member said that these promotions get lost in the volume of messages from ICfL. To remedy that another person suggested that ICfL signify the importance of messages by using a subject line “REALLY IMPORTANT.” Another person noted that it was up to individuals to read and respond to ICfL messages and requests.

Another enhancement to LiLI-D mentioned by many focus group members and survey responders was the implementation of a federated search feature, which allows the simultaneous search of multiple databases. Some focus groups members mentioned that this method of searching can lead to a more complex results set. We note that most study participants called for a simpler, Google-like, search method and a simpler result set.

This call for simplicity and complexity is one of two contradictions we found among focus group input regarding the LiLI-D portal. Another contradiction was that focus group members sometimes called for changes that ICfL had already made.

Recommendations

- 1. ICfL should consider developing federated searching as part of the LiLI-D search methodology.** We believe that federated searching would be useful for a set of librarians and users who are interested in executing more complex searching. As now configured, most federated search products pose problems in usability for the average library user. We urge ICfL to investigate federated searching with an eye to which product is easiest to learn and produces the most user-friendly set of results. We also urge ICfL to look at the vendor’s abilities to train Idaho’s librarians.
- 2. ICfL should continue to refine usability studies, as the LiLI-D portal is revised, involving librarians and adult and student users.** In response to our finding that many librarians did not respond to LiLI-D invitations to comment upon changes in portal design and, in some cases, did not know about these changes, we recommend that ICfL take two actions: 1) expand and refine usability studies among the broad library community on new designs and 2) hold formal usability studies with representative users. These should include librarians from different types and size of libraries and users from the public, including high-school and college students. In general, these tests should ask the users to perform representative tasks using the portal and ICfL should observe user successes and barriers with the interface. A number of helpful aids are available to develop “Do-It-Yourself” user testing. For example, the work of Steve Krug⁴ offers help to organizations on how to think about and implement low-cost usability testing.
- 3. ICfL should continue its exemplary practice of asking members of the library community to comment upon planned changes to LiLI-D.** We observe that ICfL might want to consider how to best target messages to ensure their receipt by and response from the intended audience. We also urge ICfL to send repeated messages using multiple

⁴ Examples of Mr. Krug’s works are available at <http://www.sensible.com/index.html>

avenues, as research shows that communication is most effective when a person receives the same messages many times and through multiple venues.

In addition, we found that that some study participants wondered how ICfL selected databases and its timing for decisions and implementation. As mentioned above, ICfL should use multiple methods for delivering this information. ICfL might consider a multi-purpose Web site such as the NebraskAccess Tool Box (see State Comparison narrative) with frequent reminders of the helpful information that is in the Tool Box.

Promotion

Background. The ICfL has used many methods to raise awareness among Idaho residents of LiLI-D. In addition to a 2004 marketing campaign, ICfL has produced a variety of bookmarks and other LiLI-D promotional materials for use in Idaho libraries. This study reviewed the perceptions of Idaho's library workers about these methods' effectiveness and asked survey respondents and focus group members to suggest improvements to LiLI-D promotions. We believe that there are four target audiences for LiLI-D promotions: library staff, teachers, the public, and Idaho legislators.

In January 2005, the ICfL commissioned an evaluation report⁵ about the 2004 LiLI-D promotion campaign from the Northwest Research Group. This study used a pop-up survey of 332 LiLI-D users. We found the following findings pertinent to the current study.

Continue the advertising campaign but focus on television as the primary medium.

Nearly one-fifth (19%) of respondents using LiLI.org heard of the Web site through the advertising campaign. Although some respondents were aware of the different ads – radio, television, and posters – television represented the greatest medium of LiLI.org awareness compared to the radio and poster ads.

Continue efforts to gain support from Idaho's librarians for LiLI.org. Over three-fifths (68%) of LiLI.org users hear of the Web site from librarians.

Findings

Awareness of past campaigns. This study's survey showed that awareness of past media promotion campaigns varied strongly by region. Fewer than half of those in the north, but over 60% of respondents in other regions were aware of LiLI-D promotions. The media in Northern Idaho is provided by companies in eastern Washington and this may account for this diversity in awareness. The media campaign is over five years old; however, many of the focus group members, who were selected because they had many years of experience with LiLI-D, did not recall the media campaign.

⁵ Idaho State Library. LiLI.org Awareness / Usage. Submitted by Northwest Research Group, Inc. January 2005

Value of promotion. In general, survey respondents and focus group members were skeptical of the value of promotions, and on average, did not agree that past promotions led to more user awareness or use.

Survey responders identified promotional items that could be distributed as the most useful. All other forms were seldom seen as useful, particularly radio ads. Focus group members confirmed survey results; most said that bookmarks or printed materials with brief LiLI-D information were helpful. Except for bookmarks with LiLI-D information, focus groups members believed that items such as pencils were not effective for LiLI-D promotion. These are typical comments from focus group members.

When patrons need help finding certain types of information the staff has been able to direct them to LiLI-D and help them. Then the patron is given a flyer for future use.

I use LiLI-D promotional materials at outreach events to help raise awareness of LiLI-D. I also give out the flyers at the end of a reference interview after I have instructed a patron on a database so that they have an easy way to locate the information from home.

We see here two uses of printed material: for promotion, and for reinforcement. As mentioned in the training section of this report, library staff value and use these printed resources to both train and promote LiLI-D.

Suggestions for changes in LiLI-D promotion. Survey respondents and focus group members had many suggestions for ICfL. These suggestions ranged from identifying specific promotion materials to making sweeping changes in LiLI-D promotion.

Promotion Materials. As mentioned before, study participants identified printed materials as the most helpful promotion to use with library users. Focus group members gave “Dazzle” pamphlets mixed reviews. Some thought these pamphlets were just right while others thought they were too large and contained too much text. Some participants agree with this comment, “*It would be even better if we could customize the promotional pieces. We like them to be already printed up with a space for us to put our library Web site.*” Library staff members see a dual purpose for these materials – promotion and training.

Promotion Venues. At each focus group, participants urged ICfL to promote LiLI-D using Facebook, Twitter, and other social-networking sites. They also advised ICfL to develop a mobile application for LiLI-D, or a site to run it on a mobile Web browser.

Overall Promotion. Comments from the surveys and focus group urged the ICfL to move from promoting LiLI-D to promoting Idaho libraries in general. The following statements are typical of those received.

Instead of promoting LiLI-D specifically, I'd like to see a campaign that promotes Idaho libraries and their resources, one of which is LiLI-D.

Promote find it at the library.

Don't just promote LiLI-D but promote AT YOUR LIBRARY.

Branding. We did not specifically ask questions about LiLI-D branding; however, focus group members identified LiLI-D branding as an issue in their responses to the question, “What would you change about LiLI-D promotion?” Participants made the most comments about the static nature of the lily motif, saying that they prefer a dynamic image, one that is capable of movement.

Put something on the page that is exciting.

Pick an image, a mascot (not a plant) that can be used in apps, PSAs, other moving venues.

Focus group participants also suggested changing the name of LiLI-D, saying that library users do not understand what it is or means.

Name not good, not helpful, “What is LiLI-D and why should I care?”

What does LiLI-D mean? Users don’t know.

Recommendations

4. ICfL should develop a long-term marketing plan for Idaho’s libraries that includes an emphasis on LiLI-D. This suggestion reiterates the following priority strategic direction in ICfL’s vision for the future,⁶ “Establish an Idaho libraries brand or identity. Seek professional assistance to establish a dynamic brand identity for Idaho libraries as a whole.” Given the many disparate ICfL activities and the variety of Idaho’s libraries, it may be difficult to find an overall campaign theme. However, the most recent use of the slogan “online @ your library” to promote the BTOP grant activities might be an umbrella for most of the Commission’s marketing endeavors, including LiLI-D.

To further develop this recommendation, the Commission should follow through with its plans to hire a consulting firm to look at the agency needs and to suggest a campaign which would incorporate different Commission programs, including LiLI-D. Because the previous evaluation report showed that nearly 20 percent of LiLI-D users heard about the resource from TV ads, we recommend that ICfL consider using TV ads in the marketing campaign.

We suggest that this promotion plan identify four market segments: library staff, Idaho residents, K-12 teachers, and Idaho legislators. Due to ICfL’s promotions and training, it may seem that library staff should already know about LiLI-D. However, we found that some survey responders did not know about or understand the value of LiLI-D. Furthermore, because we heard repeatedly throughout this study that librarians were the primary promoter of LiLI-D and that the 2004 study showed that 68% of LiLI-D users heard about this resource from librarians, we urge ICfL to consider librarians a target for promotional activities.

We heard clearly from the school librarians in the focus groups that teachers need to be aware of LiLI-D. School librarians are very aware of their role in this endeavor and already strive to build teacher awareness of the value of LiLI-D. They asked for ICfL’s help in their efforts.

⁶ Idaho’s Library Future. 2006-2020. Available at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/files/2020vision-document.pdf>.

Idaho residents, of course, are a more diverse and diffuse than library staff and teachers. We suggest that the planning focus on a few distinctive groups within this segment. One of these groups can be digital users who are growing up with computers and the Internet and are currently low users of library services. This suggestion reiterates a strategy in Idaho's long-rang plan, that of developing ways to reach digital users.

Another key segment is legislators and the goal is to make sure they understand the benefits of LiLI-D to their constituents and to the libraries in their communities. Emphasis should include the educational benefit of libraries overall and the link between LiLI-D and improved student performance. Anecdotes about car repair, genealogy, distance learning, and homeschooling should be gathered and used liberally in the campaign.

One component of the statewide campaign should be a tool-kit for local librarians to customize for their own community, emphasizing some of the same benefits in the state campaign. The tool kit could include a common message about Idaho libraries and LiLI-D that can be shared statewide; talking points to use with key constituent groups including local authorities and stakeholders; sample press releases or articles that use anecdotes to demonstrate the value of libraries and LiLI-D; and graphics that can be customized by a local library.

ICfL might emulate recent award-winning state-wide programs, such as the Wyoming State Library's "Bringing the World to Wyoming" and the New Jersey State Library's "Library Champions" campaigns. Another award-winning campaign, albeit for a smaller geographic area, is King County Library System in Washington State's "Look to Your Library...Especially Now" campaign. The latter campaign is an extensive outreach program that guides residents to the free resources available from the library. According to King County Library officials, this campaign led to an increased use of database resources.

5. ICfL should work with database vendors to customize their promotion materials. All of the big three database vendors-EBSCO, ProQuest, and Gale-have suites of promotion materials valuable to libraries and some vendors have offered marketing dollars to state libraries, such as Montana. When developing an RFP or negotiating a contract with a vendor, ICfL should require that the vendor make all such promotion materials customizable with the ICfL brand and local library brand. After ICfL develops a statewide general library campaign, then ICfL could change these materials to fit the new campaign.

Because only larger Idaho libraries may have the staff to further customize vendor-provided material, ICfL should highlight the best vendor offerings and show libraries with fewer resources how these materials can be used locally. Also, ICfL should work with the vendors to produce and print bookmark style user tips, as study responders viewed this type of material as the most helpful in reaching library users.

Examples of vendor marketing materials that may be valuable to Idaho's libraries include the following: "Try It Now!" advertisements from EBSCO can be displayed on a library's Web site, placed in an online newsletter or blog, or pasted into an email. These ads are hyperlink-enabled and the ad can automatically connect to a specific EBSCO database. ProQuest offers Library Marketing Toolkits, which includes guides, flyers, and press release

templates, and are developed for different types of libraries. Gale offers access to many promotion materials tied to the theme of “Power to the user.”

6. **ICfL should make maximum use of social networking to promote LiLI-D.** Focus group members suggested that ICfL take advantage of free social networking sites, such as Twitter and Facebook, to promote LiLI-D. Even though these platforms are free for use, ICfL staff members must allocate time to monitoring and refreshing these applications. Staff members should set objectives for these applications and monitor their effectiveness and use. We believe that this promotion venue is particularly important to reach digital users. A study⁷ commissioned in July 2010 by the commerce software developer ATG, found that for all respondents aged 18-34:

- About 29% of said they have discovered a product or service through a social network. That figure is lower for older adults.
- 50% are using Facebook to “like” merchants, interact with other consumers and friends about products, post images and reviews, seek customer service, look for coupons, and post messages to a merchant’s fan page.
- 46% are using their mobile devices to receive text notifications from merchants, search for coupons, browse through merchants’ collections, and seek ratings and reviews.

7. **ICfL should offer and promote a LiLI-D mobile application.** All three database vendors mentioned above offer a mobile application for their product. However, to promote the LiLI-D brand (or its successor) the vendor must allow ICfL to customize this application. Furthermore, ICfL should explore the possibility of offering mobile applications for discrete databases, such as the auto repair and genealogy databases, to allow specific audiences the convenience of a one-stop application.

8. **ICfL should take every opportunity to inform library staff about these promotions and about the value of LiLI-D.** This may seem obvious and a repeat of a part of recommendation number one, but the 2005 evaluation of LiLI-D promotions showed that 68% of LiLI-D users heard about this resource from librarians. Focus group participants also mentioned that word-of-mouth, face-to-face promotion with users was very effective, if not the most effective, method of promoting LiLI-D. The ICfL should take every opportunity to promote LiLI-D to its own constituency and advertise every additional LiLI-D promotion venue or activity. Library staff members are the most effective way of getting the word out to Idaho residents.

⁷ ATG. Consumer Shopping Experiences, Preferences, and Behaviors, July 2010. Available at <http://www.atg.com/resource-library/white-papers/atg-online-shopping-study.pdf>.

Training

Background. The ICfL has offered a wide program of training for those working in Idaho's libraries. From 2005, to July 2010, ICfL statistics show 66 total trainings offered with a total attendance of 876. Seven of the 66 events were synchronous online training; the rest were face-to-face.

The ICfL has made a particular effort to train school librarians and teachers. From 2001, when notes from Network Advisory Board meetings show that the ICfL was aware of the problem of reaching teachers and school librarians, ICfL developed and delivered a training program, including videos, to reach this audience. At the same time, ICfL trainers offered LiLI-D face-to-face training across Idaho and began to use computer labs to offer hands-on experiences and to hold training sessions in high schools. Venues included the annual summer Institute and regional library meetings. Face-to-face LiLI-D training ceased in mid-2009 with the departure of the staff member assigned to LiLI-D training.

Findings

Who participates in training? A majority, 61% of survey respondents, said they participated in LiLI-D training. Respondents from Southwest Idaho were less likely to have participated in training. Those most likely to have participated live in East and South-Central Idaho. Respondents from academic libraries were much less likely to have participated in training, at half the rate of respondents compared to other library types.

Why librarians do not participate in LiLI-D training. The survey asked the 39% of those who did not participate in training to identify reasons why they did not. Among all non-participants, lack of time was cited as the primary reason. The next most frequent reason was that in-person training was held too far away from their homes, and the last reason, most frequently cited by those from academic libraries, was that they did not need the training. Frequent LiLI-D users also often said that they did not need LiLI-D training. Although we did not ask this question in the focus groups, in all but two of the groups, members mentioned that they did not have time for training and/or they were aware of others who did not have the time.

Preferred delivery of training. The following are the definitions of training methods used in this study.

Synchronous online training is real-time training. This training resembles face-to-face classroom training in that all learners go through the course at the same time. Through the Web, an instructor and students are logged into the same place at the same time and interact more or less simultaneously. Webinars are one type of synchronous online training and are similar to a seminar in a conference room; however, participants participate remotely via a computer. A webinar is mainly one-way, from the presenter to the audience with limited audience interaction. A webinar can be collaborative by including polling and question and answer sessions to allow full participation between the audience and the presenter. Webinars can be recorded for individual review at a later time.

Face-to-face training (F2F) is instruction in a classroom environment with at least one instructor.

Asynchronous learning is online instruction in which interaction between instructors and students occurs intermittently with a time delay. Examples included self-paced courses taken via the Internet and online discussion groups.

Online tutorials assist users in learning how to use or do something. Tutorials are generally a combination of audio and visual screens or videos, and are an example of on-demand instruction.

The potential to provide training using online methods has increased significantly within the last few years. Once state libraries could only use F2F methods to reach their constituents; now, they can also choose from many ways of organizing and presenting online training opportunities. The survey results showed that most respondents preferred F2F training; that frequent LiLI-D users were more comfortable with synchronous online training; and that infrequent users particularly disliked synchronous online training.

We asked focus group members to provide more details about their preferences for LiLI-D training. Participants were eager to share these views and for the most part, their responses mirrored the variety of responses received through the survey. Because we focused on delivery methods, our findings are arranged by those categories.

We found tepid support of webinars among study participants. In particular, those who staff one-person libraries said they find it difficult to schedule attendance at live online events or to find a time to view archived versions. We also found that some participants do not know how to use webinar software or were hesitant to ask questions during the broadcast. Participants acknowledged that webinars were an attractive option to deliver training for those in the remote locations or for the staff member of a one-person library to avoid travelling to F2F sessions. However, as mentioned before, convenience does not automatically mean that librarians will participate in training.

We found some enthusiasm for F2F among some study participants. This type of training allows for hands-on or experiential learning, which many study participants cited as their preferred way to learn. Study participants also mentioned the interpersonal benefits of F2F training, such as the opportunity to build networks among colleagues and to learn from others. F2F training also gives librarians the ability to escape the competing responsibilities at their home library and enables them to focus on learning.

Survey results showed that respondents from the North and the Southwest regions actually preferred online asynchronous training (described as *“Online training that I can view on my own schedule”*). Focus groups were favorable to the suggestion that ICfL deploy online asynchronous training. Focus group members suggested that ICfL offer 20-40 minute tutorials on different aspects of LiLI-D, including specific titles. These tutorials would include self-assessment or self-check functions, so that learners could determine if they know the tutorial’s materials. Focus group participants identified this method as self-study, and did not mention an instructor-led delivery method.

Focus group members were positive about tutorials, which they further defined as on-demand, content-sensitive training videos. Group members said that videos would be particularly beneficial if they focused on demonstrating skills and were interesting and dynamic. They urged that these videos be less than three minutes in length and answer the question “How do I ...?” Participants compared these videos to what is available on YouTube or eHow, an online how-to guide with articles and videos offering step-by-step instructions. Some members noted that the most teachable moment occurs when the learner’s need is greatest, which in this example is when the user or librarian is at the computer querying LiLI-D. Participants noted that both library staff and users would find these videos helpful.

Preferred training topics. The topics for training which received the most interest in the survey are, in order of preference: how to train library users to use LiLI-D, searching, and which databases are best for specific age groups. Focus group members also offered topic suggestions, but most of their discussions focused on training delivery. In general, their comments can be summed that library staff want an introduction to the product when the product is initially released.

Train the trainer. The idea of a train the trainer program did not emerge in the survey; however, several focus groups members mentioned this method of delivering training. We define this method as one or more local persons trained to train others in that geographic area. Participants said that ICfL should provide an instructional template and materials for trainers, and should also offer training on training library users. This suggestion reflects the first choice of topic area by survey respondents, which was teaching librarians how to teach users. At two focus groups, members were so enthusiastic about this idea that they asked academic librarian attendees if they would serve as the trainer in this model. The academic librarians said they would be happy to train other librarians in the area if ICfL provided curriculum materials and handouts.

Printed training materials. Study participants identified a need for printed materials to be used in two different ways. The first way is to use as a reference to consult after training. One focus group member said, *“The manual provided at in-person training was very good; this should also be provided on the Web site.”* Study participants also wanted printed materials to reinforce one-on-one training with library users. Academic and public librarians identified one-on-one instruction as their preferred and most common way of training library users how to use LiLI-D. They used and valued the printed materials provided by ICfL to reinforce this instruction and asked that these materials be simplified.

Recommendations

9. **ICfL should continue to use an array of different training delivery modes and develop librarians’ skills and confidence to benefit from online training.** The adage “one size doesn’t fit all” applies to training in Idaho. ICfL should consider three factors when determining which training delivery method to use: the content of the training; the experience of the learner with LiLI-D; and the experience of the learner with e-learning technologies.

Idaho librarians may soon be introduced to new database products, because Idaho's contract with its current database provider ends in July, 2011. When the purpose of the training is the introduction of a new product, F2F, with a hands-on training, is the method most preferred by learners, including those with library education and experience with working with databases.

After initial training, we recommend that the ICfL coordinate training for two groups: beginners and advanced. This recommendation was offered by several study participants and summarized by the survey responder who said, *"Separate the beginners from the more advanced users. I sometimes get bored because I know more than some others, but we have to go at their pace. I'd like to get some more in-depth knowledge and tips."* The survey results suggested that the "advanced" group might be more receptive to webinar training than would infrequent LiLI-D users.

We recommend that ICfL develop the skills and the confidence for librarians to use online training methods, which we believe can be an efficient and beneficial way of delivering quality training on particular topics. ICfL can create and offer an introductory session about online training. We suggest that this training be F2F or in a leader-led group setting in which the group views a webinar. Having a F2F setting may seem counter intuitive to this training topic, but we believe that showing learners how to use webinar software in a supported "live" context, which allows for demonstrations, questions, and immediate answering, will develop learner skills and confidence. Perhaps ICfL could broadcast the webinar with the regional field consultants providing the hands-on training and support in different locations.

To reinforce the learners' new skills and confidence, we suggest that ICfL follow up this introduction with a regular series of webinars on high-interest topics. To encourage reluctant attendees, the ICfL might sponsor a drawing for a nominal prize for those who complete the webinar and answer a few questions about its content, or could hold viewing parties in regional libraries.

10. ICfL should view its primary roles as training coordinator, promoter, and evaluator, and view providing the training directly as a secondary role, one that it shares with partners. ICfL has many skilled staff members capable of providing quality training. However, ICfL also has many partners who can fulfill a development and delivery role. We believe the ICfL staff's skills can most efficiently be used to develop an annual training plan, to identify partners to provide the training, and to work with these partners to promote the training. ICfL should evaluate each training to provide feedback to trainers and, as importantly, to inform the next year's training plan.

For example, study participants are enthusiastic about self-paced courses and short videos for busy librarians. LiLI-D's current vendor has these materials available, but note that no study participant mentioned that they were aware of them. ICfL could leverage these available training materials to increase its training portfolio.

In addition to the offerings of LiLI-D's current vendor, all of the largest database providers offer many short tutorials with an average length of 3-4 minutes. We did not review these

offerings, so cannot offer opinions about their quality or their value to librarians and library users. Our point is that such resources exist. ICfL should work with its vendors to ensure that these resources are customized with branding, are appropriate to Idaho librarians, and are helpful to library users.

Each of these companies also offers many webinars on different topics for various audiences. Again, we did not preview these offerings to evaluate their usefulness in Idaho. ICfL should take full advantage of its leverage as a major customer and require that the vendor ensure that these offerings are useful in Idaho.

Idaho's partnership with WebJunction also offers a place to host a LiLI-D user support site with user-generated questions and answers. ICfL can also use this site to make general announcements and promote training. Because WebJunction has many state library partners, Idaho's membership creates an opportunity for ICfL to join with other states to meld resources, creating training opportunities that could work across state lines. NebraskaAccess Toolbox is an excellent model of possible content for a WebJunction LiLI-D Web site.

ICfL might also create and promote a cadre of local LiLI-D trainers to deploy to fulfill needs for F2F training. For little investment in training material, local trainers could offer instruction at regional workshops or even at individual libraries.

Interviews with other states showed that the most robust training and promotion programs occurred when the state library had one or more full-time staff devoted to training efforts. ICfL should consider this when making staffing decisions.

11. ICfL should emphasize teacher training. In all focus groups, attendees stated that the schools were the place in which Idaho residents were first introduced to and learned to use LiLI-D. Participants called this skill and knowledge "information literacy." They recognized the importance of both school librarians and teachers in developing information literacy. School librarian attendees stated that, to do an effective job, school librarians needed the support of teachers and believe that ICfL should help them develop teachers' understanding of LiLI-D.

As early as 2001, ICfL recognized this opportunity and has attempted to reach teachers by offering training sessions in teachers' in-service days and in high schools across Idaho.

We did not see an evaluation of these past efforts, but from focus group participants, we believe that these efforts should continue. Of course, reaching teachers is a complicated activity due to many factors that are not germane to this study. Suffice it to say that teachers are overwhelmed by their multiple responsibilities and have limited time for training opportunities. In addition, statistically, about 1 in 11 teachers⁸ leave Idaho schools each year; a turnover rate that, looked at optimistically, ensures that LiLI-D training will always have a new audience, or, from a pessimistic view, that almost 10% of teachers know nothing about LiLI-D.

⁸ http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/finance_tech/staffing.htm in the Annual Statistical Report 2009-2010

However difficult it may be to capture the limited time of teachers and despite the challenge of turnover rates, our view is that ICfL should evaluate its past efforts and work with the State Department of Education and the newly hired School Library Consultant to identify the most beneficial plan to train teachers. Other recommendations in our study involve K-12 teachers and their certification and, if enacted, would have significant impact of teacher training efforts.

Impact of LiLI-D on Libraries

Background. A major focus of this study is the impact that LiLI-D has on libraries and their users. This information was gathered through the focus groups and the online survey. The 2009 pop-up survey conducted by ICfL did not address impact.

Current, ongoing impact data is reflected primarily in the quarterly and annual statistics gathered on sessions, searches, and full-text downloads. Usage has tended to increase each year and the presumption is that this means the databases are useful to libraries and to library users. Offering statistics as a proxy for user satisfaction can be frustrating, because different vendors count usage differently, and there is a lack of certainty that increased use actually does reflect user satisfaction.

Findings.

Several common themes arose from both the survey and the focus groups. Not all focus groups mentioned all of the benefits listed below, but none contradicted the common themes.

The most common benefit, often mentioned with some passion, is summed up by the statement, *"We would have nothing without LiLI-D."* One focus group member called LiLI-D *"a godsend."* Several said they did not have funds to purchase databases. One focus group member said, *"LiLI-D is the resource that matters,"* and another stated, *"No one can match what we get from LiLI-D."*

The on-line survey included a question that asked respondents to rate, on a scale of 1 (very low) to 5 (very high), if LiLI-D was an essential part of the library's services. School and public libraries rated LiLI-D between 4 and 4.5, with academic librarians' ratings slightly lower. The academic librarians in the focus groups indicated this was because they have other databases besides LiLI-D. Another survey question asked responders if their library could offer equivalent services without LiLI-D. Public and school librarian respondents indicated it would be very difficult to offer equivalent services. More academic librarian respondents felt they could offer equivalent services. Similar to this sentiment were the statements we heard in the focus groups, that LiLI-D created an "equal playing field" among libraries and that regardless of geography or budget, all libraries had access to the same resources. Rural libraries were particularly pleased because they thought that having these information resources reduced their feeling of isolation and inability to provide the same resources as more urban or wealthier libraries.

A second common theme about impact was that LiLI-D saved the library money. Focus group members reported that they could cancel their library's subscriptions to databases and reference books because these resources were available through LiLI-D. Some mentioned they saved space by discarding past issues of periodicals and reference books. Others mentioned that the full text options in LiLI-D allowed them to reduce the number of interlibrary loans they requested from or loaned to other libraries. In addition, some focus group members mentioned that more esoteric periodical articles cost more to borrow and these costs were averted by having the full text available on LiLI-D. Other focus group members said they could now spend this money for more popular books or for databases not included in LiLI-D, enhancing the resources available in the library. Yet another librarian commented that saved funds could be used for staff training.

One confusing aspect about cost savings emerged from the survey. When asked if LiLI-D saved the library money, survey respondents indicated an agreement of between 3.5 and 4 on a 5-point scale. When asked more about this in the focus groups, some members commented that they did not have funds to buy databases before LiLI-D and would not have the funds to purchase these databases if LiLI-D went away.

A third common theme about impact was advanced by the school librarians in the focus groups. They thought that LiLI-D helped improve the cooperation between school libraries and public and academic libraries, and that learning how to use LiLI-D prepares students for college. One member said, "*Productive students become productive adults.*" Another commented that LiLI-D empowers the school librarian to work with teachers throughout the school to find resources. They would like integration of LiLI-D with the state's new Information Literacy and Technology Standards.

In this same vein, school librarians also commented on the functions of LiLI-D (such as vetted resources, cite-me, and email me) that helped students focus on learning rather than on mechanics. LiLI-D reduced the time students spent searching a filtered Internet with many non-relevant and distracting resources. LiLI-D allowed the school librarian to focus on information literacy and database searching skills that will benefit the students when they go on to college or enter the workforce. School librarians thought that these skills definitely improved student learning. One focus group member wondered if the availability of LiLI-D improved test scores, but no data was identified to verify this.

One question pursued in both the focus groups and the online survey was whether LiLI-D increased library use. The general response was no, at least not in numerical terms. However, many focus group members thought that LiLI-D brought in different types of users. They specifically mentioned students, particularly distance learners, people searching for genealogical information, auto repair enthusiasts, families who homeschool their children, and others looking for specific information. One school librarian thought that the availability of LiLI-D, particularly the ability to access resources from home, allowed students to teach their parents about these resources.

A fourth common theme about impact was that LiLI-D improved the library's image in the community. One focus group member said that users were surprised to find "*authoritative information from a Podunk library.*" They thought that LiLI-D impresses users and that the

statewide branding helps the status of the library. They also thought it enhanced the image of the librarian as a trained information resource. LiLI-D shows users that the library “*has more than books and believes in quality customer service.*”

A fifth common theme had to do with advocacy efforts to communicate the value of libraries and that LiLI-D was one aspect of this value. While they thought that LiLI-D improved the library’s image in the community (see above), respondents thought that more could be done. They wanted more promotion of LiLI-D at the state level, with a focus on the value of libraries overall within which LiLI-D is emphasized as a part of information resources. They wanted tools they could use to enhance local political benefit. They suggested a campaign to inform state legislators of the value and benefit of LiLI-D to their constituents, with some acknowledging the work of Idaho Library Association in this endeavor, and some mentioning reaching out to legislators in their communities. The section on Promotion in this report includes a recommendation that addresses this issue.

A sixth common theme of impact was that librarians believed their job performance improved because of LiLI-D. This was a minor theme in the focus groups; with only a few members indicating they thought LiLI-D gave them more confidence to do their work. In the online survey, however, public and academic librarians said that LiLI-D helped them do their job more efficiently (between 3.5 and 4 on a 5 point scale) and school librarians rated this even higher, above 4.

The final theme of user satisfaction was expressed in anecdotes. Students return to the school library to show a high grade on an assignment. People doing auto repair remark on the convenience of printing pages they need to take to the garage with them. One woman finished a degree from her home using the LiLI-D resources saying, “*I’m glad I found what I need.*” These were all informal stories, but poignant in the telling. Librarians are clearly proud of the service they offer and remember stories about impact.

Recommendations

12. ICfL should work closely with the Idaho State Department of Education to bring LiLI-D to the attention of teachers and school administrators.

This can be done in several ways.

The State Department of Education has issued Information and Communication Technology Standards that include information literacy skills (however, not so named) for which LiLI-D is a prime tool. While the standards are still in the draft stage, it is likely that something similar to what has been proposed will be adopted. Efforts should be made to publicize LiLI-D in conjunction with these standards to all school districts, with specific examples of how LiLI-D can help schools address this standard.

ICfL should ask to make a presentation in teacher and administrator educational programs to show the value of LiLI-D (as well as the value of school librarians).

ICfL might also develop lesson plans that local school librarians can use to teach LiLI-D in conjunction with school assignments. Again, an example can be found in the

13. ICfL should develop a method to gather stories from local libraries on the value of LiLI-D and quantify, to the extent possible, the fiscal impact at both the state and local level of having LiLI-D.

It is hard to overstate the importance of impact data on the decision of stakeholders and funders for the continued support of LiLI-D, and in fact, any Commission service. The federal agency most responsible for library funding, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, asks for impact data for all of its funded projects. This trend to ask for cost benefit and return data on investments is also prevalent at the state and local levels. Impact has been measured primarily by statistical data as mentioned above. Collection of stories on the value of LiLI-D as well as the design of surveys to gather actual users' opinions should be a top priority for ICfL. A major theme in the focus groups was that the existence of a state-funded LiLI-D allowed the local library to reallocate resources and better serve their users. Qualitative and quantitative methods to capture these savings should be undertaken.

Measuring Impact – Statistics. Only a few focus group members raised the topic of statistics. Some group members did not know if they could collect data on LiLI-D use and, if so, how to do it. We received no suggestions from focus groups members or survey respondents on how ICfL might use statistics to demonstrate impact.

Furthermore, we found no particular guidance based on our conversations with other states. Other states' practices of statistic collection closely mirror ICfL's, which include quarterly reports, and an annual consolidation with a comparison to past years. A LiLI-D steering committee member said, *"We have evolved in our use and our perceptions on the databases, instead of a new service they are integrated into our structure."* The relatively low interest or use of statistics seems to us to demonstrate this statement. At the beginning of the state-wide database projects, librarians were eager to show that the residents used the databases. After a decade of access to LiLI-D, use seems to be a given, resulting in a reduced desire to quantify use through statistics.

The ICfL currently collects use statistics in particular metrics, compiles these annually, and compares the data to past years' data. ICfL staff analyzes these reports to spot trends and identify any problem areas with particular databases. We see two problems with these reports. The first is that the reports do not show the number of off-site users who use LiLI-D; the second is that one measure only counts how many times full-text articles are downloaded, printed or emailed.

Recommendations

14. ICfL should refine statistics gathering, reporting, and use of the reports. An opportune time to do so is during the upcoming product selection process and negotiations for a new LiLI-D contract.

First, we recommend that LiLI-D count and report results that users download, print, or email, including citations. These activities show that all results have worth for the user. For example, the Montana State Library representative said that, *“Counting downloads; print, emailed, or other ways of sharing content is a proof that the user found the databases of value.”*

Second, we urge that ICfL find a way to count remote use of LiLI-D. Over the years, the library field has evolved new tools and standards to ensure that librarians can count uniformly all access by in-library and remote users of digital materials. ICfL should require that the vendors of all LiLI-D products not only adopt the Code of Practice promulgated by the organization COUNTER (Counting Online Usage of Networked Electronic Resources), but demonstrate, to ICfL’s satisfaction, that the vendor’s users, particularly other state librarians or large consortia, are able to use the vendor’s statistics functions to meet their data collection needs.

In addition to making sure that vendors use COUNTER, ICfL should require vendors to offer report functions using the SUSHI application. SUSHI is a client-server application that allows a program running on the library’s computer to connect to a program running on the content provider’s computer and request a report. The advantage of SUSHI is that ICfL can run the application automatically, which then can load the data into whatever consolidation tool ICfL uses. SUSHI also offers a “Consortia Reports” function, which can provide detailed usage for consortium members in a single report.

ICfL also should require that the vendor not only specify these standards in the response to the RFP, but also provide names of clients who use these tools to track use. ICfL should ask the vendor for proof how these information collection methods assemble data on remote use, i.e., at non-library locations. ICfL touts the ability of residents to use LiLI-D remotely, but is unable to say with any precision how much LiLI-D use is by remote users.

Another concern in this area concerns the ability of ICfL to employ more granular use data to plan for and evaluate its training and promotion efforts. One of the goals of both efforts is for Idaho residents and librarians to increase their use of LiLI-D. We understand that the portal provides many smaller libraries with a well-designed central location to access LiLI-D in the absence of staff who can integrate LiLI-D into the local Web site. However, as ICfL well knows, the portal presents a problem with collecting statistics for individual libraries and remote users. This problem in turn creates problems with tracking the success of ICfL promotional activities and training efforts.

For example, if ICfL implements a training program designed to upgrade the skills of public library staff in Idaho’s smallest libraries, then, as one measure of the impact of this program, ICfL could track the number of LiLI-D uses in this target audience. Although some of these statistics would be available, some would not, leading to an insufficient evaluation.

Enhancing existing data collection, including more library-specific data and information about remote users, would give ICfL important information about the effectiveness of both training and promotional endeavors in specific areas or with particular types of libraries.

We urge ICfL to require vendors to help fill this information gap and to seek the help of other partners in the state, such as the Department of Administration.

IMPACT OF LiLI-D ON LIBRARY USERS

Background. A major challenge is determining the impact of LiLI-D on library users. ICfL attempted to do so through a survey on the LiLI-D portal in 2009. However, 81.5% of the respondents were librarians. As part of this current study, we attempted to design another pop-up survey, but this became impossible for four reasons: 1) academic and school librarians indicated that surveying their students required approval of either the school officials or the institutions' Research Review Board, a lengthy and complicated process; 2) library vendors could not provide a quick and easy pop-up survey when users accessed their databases; 3) while it was possible to place a pop-up survey on the LiLI-D portal, the survey would only be seen by users who access LiLI-D through the state portal and not by the users who access LiLI-D through other means; and 4) the amount of effort required by ICfL staff to work with all of the individual libraries to mount a survey on individual Web sites was prohibitive.

Thus the data on the impact on library users is second-hand and anecdotal.

Findings

On the online survey, we asked several questions about user impact. When asked if more people use the library as a result of LiLI-D, the result was tepid, between 3 and 3.5 on a 5 point scale. When asked if library users used LiLI-D to find the information resources they need, only school librarians thought this was important enough to give it a score of 4; public and academic librarian's responses were barely at 3.5 points on a 5 point scale.

The focus group members provided primarily anecdotal data about user satisfaction. It was clear that the librarians thought that LiLI-D was essential to their provision of library service, but had no user data to support this. School librarians came closest simply because in many school libraries, almost all of their students use LiLI-D to complete assignments.

Focus group members did report some frustration from users on searching the databases and asked for a simplified searching methodology; assistance in learning how to train users on databases; promotional materials to use with users; and help sheets or videos that customers could either use on site or take home.

At least three universities in Idaho-Idaho State University, the University of Idaho, and Boise State University-use a survey called LibQUAL to measure customer satisfaction. A summary look at the data from two of the surveys and a conversation with a staff member from a third university confirmed that students and faculty seem relatively pleased with library service overall but request that the library purchase additional databases and, at one university at least, provide an easier search methodology.

No other state that we interviewed is successfully surveying users to find their satisfaction with state-provided databases. Like Idaho, they are measuring impact on the users by collecting and analyzing overall usage statistics. One librarian said, *“If they keep going back to the database, they must like it.”*

Recommendations

15. ICfL should design a method to gain direct input from library users on their opinion of LiLI-D, including negotiating in the next database contract that the vendor supply a pop-up survey that ICfL can use to determine user satisfaction. A survey that simply asks, “Did you find what you want and, if not, why not?” with a short drop-down menu of answers, can help identify problems. Periodically, perhaps once a year, a longer survey that gathers user demographics might be useful. In designing a longer survey, we suggest that ICfL identify a way to separate librarian responses from those of other users.

Vision for LiLI-D

Background. Developing a LiLI-D vision is outside this study’s scope; however, we asked focus group members to share their thoughts regarding LiLI-D’s future and to identify important patterns for ICfL planning. For the purposes of this discussion, we define a vision as an agreed upon, articulated, long-term description of a future state of a service. The focus groups were not designed as a vision process which would involve more hours and attention to stretch the participant’s thoughts into the future. We spent only 10 to 15 minutes in most focus groups on the topic of vision and asked this simple question, “What is your vision for LiLI-D?” We asked this question in eight of the nine focus groups; lack of time prevented us from asking the question in the ninth group. The results from this vision discussion can be divided into four broad areas: LiLI-D content; how users can access it; how users can search LiLI-D; and information literacy. We look at each of these aspects below.

Findings.

LiLI-D content. Participants envisioned that the future LiLI-D will contain comprehensive information sources, with the priority resources for all types of libraries. They see that LiLI-D will include not only magazine and journal databases, but speeches, music, eBooks, videos, audio books, recorded books, movies, and more, including “audio instructions, holograms, and videos that have 3-D presentations.” Of particular significance were the comments that envisioned LiLI-D as offering Idaho information, with digital Idaho history, art, music, books, and current events all available through LiLI-D.

Others mentioned what we call a vision of LiLI-D as the “Good Web.” These members thought that LiLI-D would be a place for, *“Separation of entertainment, recreation, ads from research information,”* with *“Referral to good sites on Web on topics/subject guides,”* and *“Hot links to authoritative sources.”* Members who expressed these thoughts did not explicitly rule out LiLI-D as a comprehensive resource for entertainment and recreation.

Instead, we see these comments as an attempt to differentiate LiLI-D from the vast Web, where it is hard to find specific, accurate, and the “right” information.

Access to LiLI-D. Focus group members recognized the importance of developing mobile access to LiLI-D. One participant said, “*Users don’t want to drag a computer around to access LiLI-D.*” Other members specifically mentioned mobile phone applications, while others wanted LiLI-D to be available through any available personal device.

Searching LiLI-D. In the future, focus group members agreed that LiLI-D will offer federated searching, which is the ability to simultaneously search multiple data sources by entering one search string. Participants envisioned that the future LiLI-D offers users a “Google-style search” using natural language. Participants also saw that the future LiLI-D offers users other methods for complex searching to meet their particular needs. One participant believed that the user would interact with LiLI through conversation: “*I talk to LiLI and she answers.*”

Information literacy. We define this concept as a set of abilities allowing individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information. We found two strands of thought regarding LiLI-D and information literacy. The first strand is that a future role of LiLI-D is as an information literacy instructor for users. In this version of the future, LiLI-D is a proxy for the reference librarian who teaches “*research and evaluation skills through an online reference interview to get users what they want.*” In addition, LiLI-D will guide users “*how to think about what’s on the Web,*” and “*encourage people to develop their own skills.*”

In contrast to the concept of LiLI-D as a teaching reference librarian, some group members envisioned LiLI-D as an automated tool that “*recognizes when information is needed, has the ability to locate and evaluate it.*” This vision sees LiLI-D not as an instructor, but as doing the information literacy work for the user. A participant summed up this concept by saying, “*I want LiLI-D to know what I want to find.*” In this view, LiLI-D does not teach; instead, LiLI-D assumes the duties of an information researcher. All that is left for the patron is to use the needed information.

Comparison of States

Background. State Library Agencies (SLAs) in all 50 states purchase database licenses for libraries. According to a recent study⁹ by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, all SLAs purchase database licenses for public libraries; 42 purchase licenses for school libraries; and 35 purchase statewide licenses for library cooperatives.

Henderson, E., C. Manjarrez. 2010. State Library Agencies Survey: Fiscal Year 2008. Research Brief series, no. 2 (IMLS-2010-RB-02). Washington, DC: Institute of Museum and Library Services. Available at http://www.ims.gov/pdf/Brief2010_02.pdf.

As part of the study, ICfL asked us to interview other states with statewide databases, focusing on the areas of promotion, data collection, training, impact, and user satisfaction. States chosen were states in the west and Midwest with characteristics similar to Idaho. The states are: Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

Findings

The report below organizes the information gathered from these eight states by the major topics of the interviews: promotion, training, and impact. The report focuses on the aspects of the interviews that we thought were unique or might be of interest to planners in Idaho.

Promotion and marketing.

The State Library of **Iowa** (SLI) use only vendor produced promotional materials, including material from EBSCO's marketing webpage that contains bookmarks and posters that can be customized. SLI introduces each new library director to the statewide databases.

The State Library of **Kansas** (SLK) promotes their statewide databases through regular meetings with their regional library systems. They have posters and flyers on their website at <http://www.kslib.info/ce/ksmktg.html>. A box on the SLK home page prompts, "I'm looking for..." with a drop-down menu that links to some of the more popular databases. They provide the Gale mobile application for Apple products and the Android phone.

The **Montana** State Library's (MSL) contract with Gale includes \$5000 for promoting databases. In the past year, MSL focused on school libraries with these funds and has purchased posters, locker stickers, bookmarks, and book covers. This year they are designing locker mirrors. In spring 2010, MSL ran "Treasure Hunt for the Treasure State" which featured random questions that students could answer only by using the databases. Gale funds purchased contest prizes including an IPOD.

Even though Montana's EBSCO contract does not include a requirement for EBSCO to help with marketing, EBSCO has funded radio ads in agricultural and rural areas featuring the Small Engine Repair online database. These ads were very successful. "Treasure Hunt for the Treasure State" and the radio ads caused a spike in usage following these promotions. MSL feels that campaigns focused on a specific audience or on a specific product are more successful than those aimed at a general audience.

In 2004, **Nebraska** Library Commission (NLC) established NebraskAccess to help increase access to the database resources.

NebraskAccess also alleviated the burden on many smaller libraries and schools to create their own website and supporting materials to help their user's access to the resources. NebraskAccess was designed to be user-friendly with little library jargon and includes several tutorials to guide new users. A link to the NebraskAccess site and all of its resources is now permanently featured on NE.gov <http://www.ne.gov>. Database usage is tracked by monitoring statistics.

They describe their promotional activities as:

Statewide outreach services are then based on which types of outreach or promotional efforts are considered most effective. In 2008 Network Services staff exhibited at two statewide teacher/librarian conferences in Nebraska in an effort to promote the program and reach potential new users. Network Services staff also create and make available via the NebraskaAccess web site a variety of promotional materials for libraries to use in marketing the database resources to their own patrons, students and communities.

Promotion and training go hand-in-hand in Nebraska and many promotion activities include a training component. A dedicated database trainer conducts training and promotes the databases at all venues. The trainer has worked with Omaha's Catholic schools and parents who home school their children; attended monthly library director meetings; and at the University of Omaha, talked directly with students. The trainer has also attended genealogical conferences, e-government conferences, and World Day at the mall in an attempt to reach government employees and the public. When NLC changed the Web site for databases, they sent out press releases and gave radio interviews.

The **North Dakota** State Library (NDSL) purchased a state-wide license to a suite of databases and also joins Minnesota in purchasing regional subscriptions. They publicize the databases primarily through attending educational and library conferences and try to attend the small business conference held in North Dakota each year. NDSL also tries to attend one specialized industry meeting to publicize the databases. They find that attending professional meetings is the most successful approach to promoting the databases.

The **Oklahoma** Department of Libraries (ODL) branded its database program ten years ago as the *Oklahoma Digital Prairie @ your electronic library*. ODL believes that after 10 years, people seem to know that the logo means databases.

ODL staff members reach teachers through an annual Encyclomedia, an event for K-12 faculty and staff where they have a regular presence. ODL considers it their most successful outreach. ODL is very interested in getting schools to use their databases and always sees an increase in log-ins after this event.

The **South Dakota** State Library (SDSL) features an "electronic resource of the month" in the Cornerstone newsletter. Local libraries are encouraged to submit these articles to their local newspapers to reach a broader public. One example is an article on the Ancestry database sent to listservs and newspapers in conjunction with the television program "Who Do You Think You Are?" Ten local librarians submitted it to their local newspapers.

To reach the education audience, SDSL sends news releases to the SD Department of Education, particularly when they add new resources or updates occur. They also developed "Libraries Guides," which are two-page handouts, one for each of the resources that librarians and educators can use with library users or students. Librarians use these guides both for promotion and user training.

The **Wyoming** State Library has created bookmarks and radio spots in the last five years. They have also created book jackets which promote the databases to middle school students. County libraries distribute the posters to the schools.

Lessons learned for Idaho: There is no obvious “killer app” for promoting databases. Idaho might review the Web sites of other states for ideas for promotion materials and to examine the organization of their websites. At least two states had success with exhibits and presentations to non-library audiences. The Montana State Library has negotiated funding for promotion from database vendors. This might be an option to pursue in negotiating a new contract with a vendor.

Training.

The State Library of **Iowa** (SLI) offers online training four times a year and believes the most successful classes are those after a library renews its database subscription. Each September, SLI holds regional meetings and sometimes trains and promotes the databases at these meetings.

The **Montana** State Library (MSL) has a statewide training coordinator who conducts training. They are reducing reliance on Gale or EBSCO trainers. Heritage Quest produced 90-minute webinars that were so popular they were repeated five times to accommodate the requests from Montana libraries.

The Montana library community has embraced online training, which saves MSL both time and expenses. MSL promotes webinars as a “lunch-time” learning program. Persistence in offering webinars has paid off in attendance and acceptance.

The **Nebraska** Library Commission (NLC) offers regular database training. NLC has created a NebraskAccess Toolbox (<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/nebraskaccess/toolbox/>) to assist local librarians with database training and use. It includes help with browser requirements; citation guides and lesson plans for teachers to integrate NebraskAccess resources in the K-12 curriculum; a mailing list for news about NebraskAccess; a list of all participating libraries; promotional materials such as bookmarks, business cards, or handouts; usage statistics for an individual library; title lists; and training materials such as handouts, practice Q&As and more. In addition to the groups mentioned above under promotion, NLC also works with library science students to help them be ready to use the NebraskAccess databases when they work in Nebraska libraries.

NLC offers regular in-person training and has been offering webinar training for one and a half years. Every summer for the last 12 years they have produced a Database Roadshow that is well attended. People come back year after year to learn new information and network with other librarians. The Roadshow focuses on new databases or new searching methods.

As in other states, NLC faces the challenge of training one-person library staff that have multiple duties, and cannot travel to training, do not use the training, or fail to promote the database. One technique they use is to tell these librarians to give the password to users so that the users can call the State Library for help.

The **North Dakota** State Library (NDSL) has a statewide training coordinator who currently conducts training. They find webinars to be successful. Gale is producing brief (15 minute) webinars on specific topics.

The **Oklahoma** Department of Libraries (ODL) has not had a dedicated trainer for several years but has recently employed an Electronic Resource Librarian (ERL). They have used vendor training in the last three years, but believe that not having a staff trainer was a real detriment as ODL monitored vendor training to prevent the sessions from becoming a sales event. Also, they find vendor training to be “deadly dull” because of the lack of personalization.

The new ERL will train both librarians and end users. ODL is developing a blog to post information on new developments, training schedules, and links to PR materials that she is developing or that are available from vendors. Right now the blog is not used much, but they expect it to grow. The new staff person is meeting with librarians, going to Encyclomedia, and meeting with the Advisory Council on Technology to get exposure and name recognition. ODL expects searches to increase. ODL has also purchased IPODS to use in training to show the value of databases.

The **South Dakota** State Library (SDSL) has two electronic resource coordinators who focus on promotion and training. Each coordinator covers an assigned part of the state. They visit school librarians and administrators to inform them about the electronic resources that are available. They also conduct in-service and professional development trainings that are scheduled as a result of the visits. Training is publicized through monthly emails to listservs. They conduct “Pushing Out the Walls: Expanding Resources for Your Library,” which are four to six hour, hands-on sessions.

SDSL has also created the “Electronic Resources Challenge,” a self-paced training modeled after “23 Things.” This is a 10-week course with participants making blog observations and responding to questions posed in a weekly exercise. The “Challenge” has been offered in the spring and summer of 2010.

SDSL is particularly happy with online trainings. They feel these are reaching librarians unable to travel. The asynchronous approach has been successful for librarians who cannot attend online at a specific time.

The **Wyoming** State Library (WSL) conducts frequent online training in which they offer advice on how to use a “database of the month.” Training is provided by WSL staff. Some training is done on a regional basis. They have used vendor training, but find it very generic and not as useful.

Wyoming librarians who responded to a recent survey from WSL selected face-to-face training as their preferred method of training (50% of 119 respondents). Webinars were selected by 38% of survey respondents.

Beginning in mid-November, WSL will offer an online series called “Discover it, Try it, Learn it,” to help library staff to explore the Wyoming Libraries Database (WYLD) databases. This series contains videos and exercises, and encourages library staff to apply

their new skills to help others. Each series includes multiple “bite-sized” segments, followed by exercises. WSL will offer the opportunity to enter a prize drawing to those who complete a segment.

WSL offers WYLD database users online help if they complete a form. If users need immediate assistance, they can call a toll-free number.

Lessons learned for Idaho: The states with the most robust programs have full-time staff devoted to promoting and training librarians about databases and other electronic resources. Most states are using multiple training options, including face-to-face, self-help tutorials, and extensive webinars. Look particularly at the Nebraska Toolbox as a model for making information readily available to local librarians.

All states reported an issue of promoting databases and conducting training with small and rural librarians. These librarians typically go back to their library and are overwhelmed with regular duties and do not use the training they received.

Measuring impact.

The State Library of **Iowa** (SLI) receives three types of statistical data: overall searches, overall transactions, and data by library. All local libraries can download their own statistics from EBSCO. This includes remote downloads in the library’s service area based on library card authentication.

SLI seeks impact data for the LSTA reports. SLI looks at how databases save libraries money. In July, 2009, when libraries signed up for some databases, SLI asked if the EBSCO database lets them provide information and resources that they could not provide otherwise. Ninety percent of the libraries said yes.

The State Library of **Kansas** has two methods of collecting statewide data. They use the system authentication of IP addresses to get statewide usage data. To receive data for a specific library, the library needs to have their own log-in. If a library that does not have their own log-on wants usage data, the state estimates a percentage based on that community’s percentage of the state’s population. They are hoping that vendors will determine a standard way of measuring use.

The primary information used to show impact is the number of searches of the databases. The total is in the millions for public libraries. They assume if there are numerous searches in a specific database, the users must like it. School library data is available but not compatible. They perform periodic surveys to determine satisfaction with databases and make changes as appropriate. They have used a pop-up user survey in the past, but did not include the libraries with independent log-ons. They would like to do another pop-up survey that includes all public libraries.

The **Montana** State Library (MSL) asks Gale to collect statistics and asks for a summary each quarter. “My Montana,” the MSL portal, is used by small public libraries in lieu of a Web page, so some use is not identified by individual library. MSL has tried to get accurate statistics about the use of the databases by persons outside of libraries and found that it is

complicated to do so. They find that stories are more compelling to legislators, but that data is needed for the fiscal office.

MSL is considering which metrics to collect and which not to ask for. They consider that counting downloads, print, emailed, or other ways of sharing content is a proof that the user found the databases of value.

The **Nebraska** Library Commission sent the following description of their data collection process:

In addition to the quantitative data collected and analyzed by Library Commission staff, qualitative information about how the databases are received by library staff and the public, what difference the information found in the databases made in people's lives, and what types of information the public and librarians still need access to, is also tracked.

Library Commission staff also evaluate outreach activities conducted on the local level to promote these databases to the general public and to specific target groups such as business or education. Further statewide outreach services are then based on which types of outreach or promotional efforts are considered most effective.

NLC periodically surveys librarians asking their opinion of the current databases; content areas covered; and other databases they would like to include in the state's subscription. If the budget is reduced, they will use the results from this survey to help decide what databases to keep.

NLC tracks newsletter articles using RSS feeds and regular Google key words to discover mention of the databases. For example, a genealogist might mention the value of the NebraskaAccess databases in an article for other genealogists. They also ask librarians to collect success stories. NLC has eight testimonials on their public Web site about the value of their databases. Here is an example.

The other evening we had a police officer (who is also a CSM patron) here to locate medical information regarding a pediatric case with which she was dealing. She found citations in EBSCO host "Health Source" & the actual article in Lexis-Nexis "Medical" which focused on the precise information that she needed. It's nice to know that we're able to help the Saint Mary students and the Omaha community as a whole.

Another way NLC demonstrates impact is to calculate the cost of all the databases if an individual library had to subscribe. They calculate the cost to all of Nebraska libraries for individual subscriptions would amount to \$500,000.

The **North Dakota** State Library (NDSL) uses stories to communicate the value of the databases to legislators. The stories convey their value in a compelling manner, making their use concrete. They use statistics when there are powerful numbers; for example, searches numbering 1,000,000 resonates because of North Dakota's small population.

The **Oklahoma** Department of Libraries conducted user surveys (with the librarians being defined as the users) in 2007 and in 2010. Most of the respondents came from school

libraries. In 2007, the respondents were asked if they would give up one database to get another; they said no, they like the package they had. There was a very high response from both school and public libraries.

ODL employs measures of use to gauge satisfaction and gather anecdotes of use by users, but they have not implemented any direct user satisfaction studies. They would be interested in doing a pop-up survey. They use this data in advocacy at ALA legislative day.

The **South Dakota** State Library collects usage data from vendors monthly on sessions, searches, and page views. They also judge the effectiveness of the databases by training evaluations and other input from librarians. Usage data determines cost-effectiveness of the database when renewing subscriptions. The SDSL selects statewide databases with an Electronic Resources Task Force made up of librarians from various library types: school, large and small public libraries, government agencies, and private and public colleges. The members of the task force are responsible for gathering feedback from librarians within their service populations. A survey was done in 2007 when reviewing resources for renewal. The librarian's responses were used to determine resource renewal and justification.

The **Wyoming** State Library collects data from local libraries, but information about remote use is impossible to track. WSL staff members would like to track remote use, but currently vendors do not offer the tools to track this access. For statistical reporting, remote use is counted as WSL use.

WSL offers many statistical reporting options on its Web site. Usage data for some products is only tracked in the aggregate. Usage data for other products is available by individual libraries. Almost all of these reports can be created for specific time periods, including for past years and by month.

Lessons learned for Idaho: No state is collecting data in addition to that supplied by the vendor, primarily searches, downloads, and/or page views. Some states use surveys primarily focused on which databases librarians like or would like to see changed. No state is collecting comprehensive data directly from library users. Most of the states that we interviewed would like to do a pop-up user survey.