

VIVA Interlibrary Loan Forum
University of Virginia
January 11, 2000

Report and Recommendations

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Introduction

The sharing of resources between member libraries has always been an important part of VIVA's success. In support of the interlibrary lending efforts, VIVA, through its Interlibrary Loan Enhancement Committee (now the VIVA Resource Sharing Committee) has promulgated policies and documents such as the VIVA **Interlibrary Loan Guidelines**, Ariel Protocols and Tier Groupings. In addition, VIVA allocated funds for equipment and Ariel software. There were also several statewide meetings of interlibrary loan practitioners. While the use of available technologies such as Ariel software and the OCLC interlibrary loan subsystem have assisted in the success of VIVA interlibrary lending, the primary reason for this success has been the interlibrary loan personnel at VIVA member libraries, who are committed to providing excellent service.

In recent months there has been a growing dissatisfaction within the VIVA interlibrary loan community about the state of interlibrary lending. This dissatisfaction was expressed on the VIVA ILL listserv over the **Interlibrary Loan Guidelines**, the inappropriate use of Ariel and OCLC, a perceived lack of support of the interlibrary lending effort by VIVA and a breakdown in communications in general. As a result, the VIVA Resource Sharing Committee sponsored a forum for interlibrary loan practitioners from VIVA member institutions, both public and private, on Tuesday, January 11, 2000. Since I was a former VIVA Steering Committee member and past chair of the Interlibrary Loan Enhancement Committee, I was asked to serve as a consultant and facilitator for the Forum. Over 100 individuals representing a wide variety of libraries attended.

Process

Some weeks prior to the meeting Don Samdahl and Kathy Perry provided me with background information - listserv comments, minutes of the VIVA Resource Sharing Committee, ILL statistical data, etc. It was agreed that it would be worthwhile for me to solicit comments and concerns from the ILL community via the listserv. Further, I agreed to categorize and compile a list of these and the earlier concerns posted on the listserv. This compilation was sent to the ILL community several days prior to the scheduled Forum with the anticipation that the attendees would read them prior to their coming to the Forum. Thus there would be more time available for analyzing the issues and seeking solutions. The issues and concerns fell into five broad categories - (1) OCLC record updating, union list and related issues; (2) VIVA **Interlibrary Loan Guidelines**; (3) Tier borrowing; (4) Ariel use issues and (5) Communications with VIVA ILL practitioners.

Attendees were divided into five groups. Each group had representation from all varieties of libraries both public and private, large and small. Group facilitators were Don Samdahl (Chair of the VIVA Resource Sharing Committee), Kathy Perry (VIVA Director), LeRoy Strohl (VIVA Steering Committee), Ralph Alberico (VIVA Steering Committee) and Doug Hurd (Resource Sharing Committee member). The role of the facilitator was to encourage group interaction as well as to keep the group focused on the tasks. Using the compilation of issues document, each group was asked to identify obstacles and make recommendations for solving communications problems. In addition, each group was assigned specific tasks relating to the other issues e.g. Groups 1-3 were asked to identify the obstacles and make recommendations for solving OCLC/Union List records and Ariel problems; Groups 4-5 were assigned VIVA **Interlibrary Loan Guidelines** and Tier borrowing. During the lunch break each group was given

time to report their findings. All the participants came together at the last session to hear the recommendations of the groups. A list of the obstacles and recommendations is attached.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are the result of those identified by the participants. I have taken the liberty to categorize them and to offer suggestions for action. It is important to understand that this Forum was not the result of the collapse of a broken system! Interlibrary lending among VIVA libraries is at an all time high. The participants were far from morose or depressed. They were very active in their participation and obviously enjoyed meeting colleagues - some for the first time. Their solutions were carefully thought out and for the most part are quite reasonable.

Annual Meeting - the most popular recommendation made was that the VIVA Resource Sharing Committee and the Steering Committee sponsor an annual meeting. I concur and would further recommend that such a meeting:

1. be the responsibility of a task force or subcommittee of the Resource Sharing Committee made up of interlibrary loan practitioners with broad representation of VIVA member libraries;
2. be held in a central location convenient to as many practitioners as possible;
3. be funded, if possible, for both public and private colleges in order to assure wide participation and representation;
4. be designed in a way that allows time for sharing common concerns, training (see below), and be result oriented e.g., identify issues, obstacles and offer recommendations
5. have as an agenda item the review of VIVA guidelines and policies;
6. begin in the summer, 2000.

Training and Mentoring - many of the issues identified appear to be the result of a lack of understanding on the part of some practitioners of interlibrary lending processes, lack of technical expertise, etc. It is recommended that the Resource Sharing Committee assign the development of training and mentoring to a representative group of interlibrary loan practitioners. The cost of training opportunities, whenever possible, should be covered by VIVA in full or in part. Their responsibility should be, at a minimum,

1. to monitor the VIVAILL listserv and conduct an annual survey to identify training needs;
2. to develop training opportunities as a part of the annual meeting; however, other training opportunities such as regional meetings or the use of individualized instructional methods e.g., WEB, should not be overlooked;
3. to develop a database of experts within VIVA who would be willing to serve as trainers and/or mentors;
4. to identify those VIVA Library interlibrary loan practitioners who demonstrate "best practices" in their operations; they should be encouraged and given opportunities to share their expertise with the interlibrary loan community.

VIVA Interlibrary Loan Guidelines - the last revision of the **Guidelines** was May 12, 1997. Since then there have been new individuals assigned to interlibrary lending in their libraries who have little or no knowledge or understanding the **Guidelines**. The same can be said of policies relating to Ariel Protocols and Tier Groupings (adopted by the Steering Committee in 1995). It is important to note that Forum participants did renew their commitment to the **Guidelines** in general and to the 48 hour standard in

particular. It is recommended that the Resource Sharing Committee establish a task force or subcommittee for the purpose of:

1. reviewing the **VIVA Interlibrary Loan Guidelines** for possible changes or alterations e.g., standard by which "rush" requests are to be filled, incorporating the Ariel Protocols and Tier, etc.; present results at the annual meeting
2. develop a method of tracking turnaround times for requests in order to evaluate how well the 48 hour standard is being met and to determine what steps need to be taken to improve service.

Interlibrary Loans and the VIVA Organization - an unintended consequence of the recent reorganization was to give the perception that the role of interlibrary lending had been diminished. This is understandable since this community originally had a "seat" on the VIVA Steering Committee. It has been replaced with the Resource Sharing Committee which has broader responsibilities. I believe there can be some changes which will offset the negative impact of this reorganization and would offer the following for consideration:

1. Of the nine members of the Resource Sharing Committee, it appears that only one has immediate interlibrary loan experience. While the mission of the Committee is theoretically broader than just interlibrary lending, it is the Committee's major oversight responsibility. This should be better reflected in the Committee's membership. Of the nine members, it would seem that at least four should have close ties with the interlibrary lending community either as practitioners or immediate supervisors of an interlibrary loan department. This representation should come from large, medium and small libraries.
2. It is important that the Committee take on the role of advocate for interlibrary lending. There are issues which need to be addressed with the VIVA Steering Committee that are sensitive and political (see below). Being an advocate will send the message to the interlibrary loan community that they are being heard and represented.
3. Make certain that as many as possible of the recommendations coming from the Forum are implemented. Among these an annual meeting (one should be held this coming summer) and training opportunities are particularly important and immediate.
4. The Steering Committee will be considering a Memorandum of Understanding which, if I understand it correctly, will be a renewal of commitment to the original principles upon which VIVA was founded. Should such a Memorandum be undertaken, serious consideration should be given to adopting the **VIVA Interlibrary Loan Guidelines** as a part of it..
5. It is a fairly common practice at local libraries for the interlibrary loan department to make the acquisitions or collection development staff aware of frequently requested titles so that they may be considered for the permanent collections. It would seem that this would also be true for VIVA. The VIVA Resource Sharing Committee and Resources for Users Committee may find it valuable to find a way to share information about titles frequently borrowed among the VIVA Libraries. Such titles might be available in a digital format and could be readily available to all VIVA libraries.

Looking to the Future - there are a number of new and/or improved systems now on the market which may serve to better meet the needs of the interlibrary loan mission. The Resource Sharing Committee should put the following on its agenda for study and possible recommendation:

1. State wide delivery system - an early attempt at this resulted in VIVA utilizing FEDEX. It is my understanding that this contract is now void. The original intent of a statewide contract is still valid - taking advantage of volume pricing and assuring a speedier delivery of books and other media;

2. Patron initiated software - some advances and improvements are rumored to have been made.
3. Uncover type document delivery as a backup to Ariel.

VIVAILL listserv and WEB site - the consensus among the Forum participants was that there are opportunities for an expanded use of the listserv and WEB site devoted to VIVA Interlibrary lending. Some of the recommendations for consideration are:

1. have the Resource Sharing Committee appoint an advisory committee to work with Andrew Morton to explore ways in which the listserv/web can be better used as a communication device e.g., develop an FAQ and tips category, report on personnel changes in interlibrary loan departments, report Ariel IP address changes, report interlibrary loan highlights of Resource Committee meetings, etc.

Local Support and A Better VIVA - several of the obstacles and their solutions reported at the Forum might arguably be traced directly back to how well the administrations of VIVA Libraries support their interlibrary lending effort. It is important that the Resource Sharing Committee work with the Steering Committee to encourage individual VIVA member libraries to do their fair share in making VIVA interlibrary lending a success. This obviously needs to be done with diplomacy and a willingness to understand that not all libraries or their institutions enjoy the same level of support. Nevertheless, if an attitude can be changed, some resources reallocated and some improvements made no matter how incremental, the overall effect will be an improved VIVA interlibrary lending program. Recommendations concerning this area are:

1. Union list holdings for all VIVA libraries should be available and kept current. This is very important if interlibrary lending is to be both effective and efficient. In most cases this responsibility is in a department other than interlibrary loans.
2. Load leveling - it is clear from the statistics that some libraries perform at a higher level than others. Granted that even though the collections at some libraries are far richer than others, there have to be other reasons for such widespread percentage increases/decreases as reported in a statistical comparison from 1995/96-1998/99. This and other data need to be analyzed and an action plan developed to address these issues.
3. Standardization of software and equipment - several participants identified the lack of consistency among libraries particularly related to Ariel software and hardware. It was reported that not all libraries were utilizing Ariel 2.2 even though VIVA purchased copies for all VIVA members. Also, it appears that all libraries do not use scanners appropriate to the task. Further, not all libraries keep Ariel available, causing lending libraries to resort to surface deliveries. The Resource Sharing Committee needs to determine how widespread this problem is, identify those libraries which are failing to use Ariel appropriately and encourage them to do so.

In summation, I do want to reiterate that interlibrary lending continues to be a success for VIVA. The Resource Sharing Committee and the Steering Committee are to be commended for moving very quickly in putting together a forum to air some of the issues of concern to the interlibrary lending community. I believe the recommendations suggested by those who participated are not unreasonable. On a personal note, I was very pleased and flattered to be asked to serve as a consultant/facilitator for this Forum. Meeting former colleagues and working with a group of people I came to admire and respect was a wonderful way to start the new century! Best to everyone!

Dennis E. Robison

January 20, 2000

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Transcriptions from Flip Charts

Obstacles to Communication

1. Some libraries have separate lending and borrowing units (internal communication problem).
2. Institutions are unaware of other institution's procedures and policies.
3. Large requests - how to communicate the possibilities and capabilities of handling them.
4. Load leveling - misunderstanding about definitions and expectations.
5. Some libraries don't understand high volume demands.
6. Ill community does not take full advantage of computer capabilities e.g., WEB
7. Contact person listed in OCLC NAD is not always the appropriate person.
8. Libraries need to share information and expertise in methods for tracking turnaround time.
9. Staffing issues, extenuating circumstances - how do we communicate?
10. No central clearing house or alert service for everyone to share information.
11. Directors unaware of ILL issues, benefits.
12. Some libraries have a higher commitment to other consortiums than to VIVA.

Guidelines/Tiered Structure Obstacles

1. Rush requests treated differently by each library; no common understanding of what it means; how does a library indicate a rush request?
2. Lack of statewide knowledge about guidelines, procedural details.
3. Lack of street addresses
4. Guidelines related to turnaround time subject to many external factors beyond our control (relates to rush items.)
5. Libraries that cannot meet guidelines provide a better service by saying "no" more quickly - relates to high volume.
6. Lack of consistent union listing prevents tier system from functioning effectively.
7. If each library doesn't fill requests with same alacrity, tier system breaks down.
8. Directors don't always provide resources to achieve guidelines.
9. Guidelines cannot substitute for judgement calls.

OCLC/Ariel Obstacles

1. Not updating union list due to lack of knowledge, lack of resources and commitment on part of director.
 - Needs to reflect cancellations
 - Put DHU not just DH (display holdings)
 - Need to publicize how to do it e.g. update union list.
 - Updating depends on local system hardware.
 - Need info on which VIVA electronic resources can be ILL'd
2. Shipping delays
 - Ariel mechanical problems.
 - Multiple copies
 - Not updating records soon enough when shipped
 - Not updating when received
 - Not updating when returned
 - Need to clarify what OCLC time period is for phases
 - Each institution work from record
 - VIVA libraries need to follow standard procedures for updating records.
3. OCLC microprocessor issues

- Records are missed.
 - New 2.0 release problems.
 - Need to check and communicate
4. Shipping - lack of verifying addresses especially community colleges and multiple campuses.

Ariel obstacles

1. IP addresses (or lack of them) for all VIVA Ariel Libraries
2. Should indicate if library is having installation problems and contact for technical assistance from other schools.
3. Quality of Ariel dependent on photocopy.
4. Should use Ariel to communicate problems e.g., incomplete document.
5. Re: Incomplete document - receiver should check immediately and notify. If past 7 days, re-request.
6. Lack of Ariel standards - should be incorporated into guidelines.
7. Should not be marked "not received" if request within 7 days; need to include ILL #.
8. Some schools lacking equipment e.g., scanners or printer for Ariel
9. Shouldn't assume if someone has Ariel IP address they can do both. Some schools have two or more IP Addresses.
10. Staff resources - too dependent on students
11. Inadequate and timely updating
12. Mail room not under control and influence of ILL department.

Recommendations

1. Libraries with more human resources and expertise should share knowledge, information and expertise - training in general; mentoring, resource people.
2. Need for VIVA ILL people to get together statewide more frequently to share ideas and knowledge.
3. VIVA needs to be more proactive in terms of promoting ILL communications among members; consider ILL as an important agenda item.
4. Keep informal communication channels open; develop mentoring program.
5. Promote widespread use of custom holding through training, documentation & demos.
6. VIVA supported ILL training sessions, external.
7. Compile a list of experts within the state; offer regional and state-wide training
8. Survey members for training [needs] on annual basis.
9. FAQ on Listserv
10. Incorporate adherence to VIVA ILL Guidelines into Memorandum of Understanding
11. Annual meetings when school is not in session; begin this summer; prefer central location.
12. On annual basis VIVA Resource Committee sends to ILL Dept (not Dept Head) a VIVA ILL packet (Guidelines, FAQ, Mentor list, listserv info, meeting and training schedules, etc.)
13. Explore possibilities for statewide contract for express delivery services.
14. Develop standardized procedures for handling rush requests and incorporate it into guidelines.
15. Reaffirm 24/48 hour standard.
16. OCLC name address directory and local ILL procedures need to be kept up to date.
17. Use Listserv to report ILL personnel changes; Aerial IP address changes, tips, questions.
18. Gather data on high demand journals and explore electronic access.
19. Compile a list of ILL "Best Practices."
20. Lending policies for each school should be on OCLC.
21. Guest speakers OK for annual ILL meeting but emphasis should be on VIVA practitioners communicating with each other.
22. Highlights of ILL related items in Resource Sharing Committee meetings; post on listserv.
23. Questions/issues for the month on listserv.
24. Use listserv as forum for special needs.
25. Information about VIVA [member library] Resources that can be loaned [e.g., video, films, bound journals, etc.]
26. Training on WEB on ILL procedures vis a via VIVA guidelines e.g., when to update records, what a due date means, include definitions.
27. OCLC updating union list - need training and attitude change - not to upadte is not saving time or money.
28. Improve updating records; need VIVA minimum standard soon.
29. Respond completely to incoming requests about yes/no, shipping date, receiving date, return date on a timely manner for each request.
30. Need Resource Sharing Committee or taskforce to log in records to track and solve problems. Schools should keep a log to see trends on record keeping problems, ID if microenhancer, local library or function is the problem.
31. VIVA Libraries should not use "will supply"
32. Library should update constant data on name directory.
33. Deal with resend problems - if incomplete, then need to report missing page(s) within 7 days to supplying library.
34. IP addresses should be sent to jcooper@virginia.edu. Identify if some schools are not using
35. Consistent information on Ariel sheet - symbol, library, IP Address
36. VIVA needs to help schools implement Ariel
37. VIVA schools should keep Ariel up all day; if lender can't send via Ariel then it is a burden to send Fedex or 1st class.
38. Resource Sharing Committee should check with OCLC to see if "not received" date has been changed as this may be the source of many problems.
39. There is nothing wrong with saying "no."
40. If it is too long, send complete work.
41. VIVA hire individual holdings records update

42. Review, consider and acquire patron initiated software.
43. All institutions should be required to use Ariel 2.2.
44. Tiered contacts list - exchange one-on-one training, VIVA and on-site at new person's institution.
45. Annual meeting should have session(s) on tips e.g., macros and OCLC basic, intermediate, advanced.
46. Bring in nationally known speaker Annual meeting
47. Move meeting around state.
48. Review, consider and acquire uncover type service.
49. Put tier grouping on web site.
50. Develop standard Ariel resend form for resends that has loan number, citation, within 7 days. Resend needs to be sent within 48 hours.
51. More support for larger institutions
52. Use tier grouping whenever possible
53. Lending library needs to indicate any missing pages due to advertisements, etc. All libraries need to be trained in use of Union list and custom holdings.
54. Say "no" when you mean "no" and use "conditional" when you have a question or give specific information.
55. Standardize equipment in all schools - should have a scanner and same version of Ariel.