

Minutes
L-net Board Meeting
2/15/07
West Linn Public Library
10:30-3:00

In attendance: Linda Malone, Liisa Sjoblom, Carrie Ottow, MaryKay Dahlgreen, Steve Roskoski, Rebecca Gabert, Edith Fuller, Cindy Gibbon, Emily Papagni, Caleb Tucker-Raymond

Caleb began the meetings with introductions and a brief history of L-net, which currently serves 40-70 people per day. Caleb then distributed green (good) and fuchsia (bad) colored cards on which participants wrote comments regarding their feelings about L-net.

Caleb talked about the goals for 06-07, which included increasing use by 10% to 53 patrons/day; an 80% satisfaction rate; and an increase in coverage provided by Oregon libraries to 70 hours/week. Future goals include an increase in 07-08 to 61 patrons/day and an increase in 08-09 to 68 patrons/day. Currently 50%-70% of traffic on any given day is from K-12 students.

Caleb also reviewed the various committees associated with L-net (Training, Marketing, Summit, Quality) and their members.

Caleb introduced the subject of alternate formats for virtual reference, such as enterprise instant messaging – he is currently leading a group which will research development of a pilot project in this area.

MaryKay talked about the 5-year LSTA plan for 2003-2008, under which L-net is currently funded and said the new LSTA plan for 08-12 is due to IMLS by June 30. She also discussed the funding cycles for LSTA grants. The Oregon State Library Board will meet in June to consider this grant cycle.

The L-net Board discussed the frequency of in-person meetings and agreed that there will be one in June, at the Summit in Bend, and again in September (date to be announced).

Caleb then began reading the cards that were returned and used them as starting points for discussion.

Green cards - things we like about L-net

Extended hours - 24/7 - for after school, evening + weekend use by students

Availability of Caleb/Emily to present @ OEMA spring and fall conferences

Use is growing

Having the support/backup of librarians across the country is great - it allows us to concentrate on one patron at a time

Like the QP software - find it very easy to use -

Like that we are offering service 24/7 now

I like that L-net helps provide Ref. service to areas where people don't have as much access to libraries.

I like that L-net helps Oregon librarians collaborate and refer questions on to other libraries w/different resources or expertise.

L-net offers opportunities for patrons without adequate reference service to get vetted, appropriate information in a timely, professional manner.

I love that L-net is a collaborative service - it's the sharing of wisdom, resources, and special collections that makes the service so powerful.

I love all of our patrons, including the kids who sometimes try our patience.

I love all of our brave, forward-thinking partner libraries who recognize the need to provide reference services in new, innovative ways.

Statewide participation

Staffed 24/7 for all users

Variety of academic/public

Fuchsia cards - things we would like to see changed about L-net

L-net may need better marketing - publicity - in order to improve its image among doubters and nay-sayers who feel it is over-funded and under-used.

Marketing - Questia vs. L-net and library databases

I wish the chat software was easier to use.

I find the nationwide service less rewarding than working just w/ OR partners

Interface seems clunky at times

Not as easy as other services for customers to use

Recruitment/retention of partner libraries is challenging.

I think we could work with schools/teachers more so that middle and high school students have a better understanding of how L-net works - how long it takes to answer questions that students should treat the L-net staff with the same respect they show to other adults, etc.

Wiki difficult to use - often documents have been on the site disappear (updated?) and move o the Wiki - unable to locate

Working with impatient students; i.e., "bell ringing, gotta go!" - human nature - not sure how to address

We need more partner libraries. Why isn't every library in Oregon a partner, at least at the basic e-mail level?

Themes - things we like

24/7 service

L-net serves patrons in areas with little library access

Collaboration and resource sharing

Themes - things we would like to change

More/better marketing

Chat software is clunky

Expectations of L-net service in K-12 students, schools and teachers

We need to recruit more partner libraries

Conflicts - things that appeared on both colors of cards.

Chat software

Collaborating on a national level

Notes

Liisa asked if were supposed to distinguish 'L-net' from the software. No, since the software is part of L-net and is one of the things we can change if we need to.

~~~~~

Caleb estimated the 08-09 budget for L-net, including \$118,000 for salaries, \$63,000 for benefits , \$66,000 for OCLC, \$5,000 for travel, and \$15,000 for marketing. Multnomah County fees add \$7,667 for a total of \$267,667.

Caleb stated that another question is whether this is the best way to offer reference service to as many Oregonians as possible. He stated that the “self-service” web makes VR more challenging in trying to tap into those who expect self-service.

Carrie asked about the costs of the IM pilot, which include administration, software, hardware, training, etc. Caleb said most costs are unknown as of now.

Cindy stated that IM software needs to be CIPA compliant to use LSTA and suggested Caleb check with Ann Reed of OSL.

Caleb discussed his goals:

- finding ways to serve more people
- finding ways to show libraries' value
- keeping costs efficient.

It was discussed that the Oregon Department of Education might be approached as a potential L-net partner, since so many users are K-12 students.

Another source of funding could be library contributions. It might not cover the entire project, especially at first, but it would help cover the rising costs of salaries + benefits. L-net should spend some time working on a model for library contributions, feel out library directors' responses and prepare a proposal for future funding.

The board discussed the difficulties of librarians' working in isolation and expressed a need to encourage librarians to actually work collaboratively.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.