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Revisiting interlibrary loan best practices: still viable?

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper evaluates the impact of the Group Interlibrary Loan Best Practices instituted by the Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA) Libraries in 2002 and examines if these best practices are still viable today. The authors provide an updated discussion on current best practices in both GWLA and other highly effective library consortia.

Design/methodology/approach – The authors use a case study approach to identify areas where interlibrary loan best practices have improved service amongst the GWLA Libraries. In addition, the practices of other high performing consortia are included to further the discussion.

Findings – The GWLA Libraries found that the best practices implemented in 2002 improved service by decreasing turnaround time and increasing patron access to alternate format types. Other library consortia are also using similar group best practices that improve resource sharing.

Research Limitations – This article focuses mostly on the beneficial outcomes of the best practices and limits discussion of the problems and pitfalls encountered.

Originality/value – Readers will gain an understanding of how instituting group best practices can improve interlibrary loan service and recognize the benefit of library groups.

Keywords GWLA, Greater Western Library Alliance, Interlending, Resource Sharing, Interlibrary Loan, Best Practices, Library Consortia

Paper type Case Study

Introduction

In 1998 the Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA) [1] Deans and Directors charged the Interlibrary Loan Librarians with investigating a set of best practices that the Association of Research Libraries was developing. The GWLA Interlibrary Loan Best Practices Task Force researched this issue in the context of the consortium. They determined the most effective practice would be to apply best practices not only at the individual library level but also at the consortium level. This led to the creation of the Group Interlibrary Loan Best Practices framework, which consists of:

> ***Conceptual Best Practices*** *are at the highest level and constitute the philosophical framework within which interlibrary loan operates, these include goals and standards.*
> ***Structural Best Practices*** *are at the middle level and provide an infrastructure that allows for the implementation of conceptual and procedural best practices. Structural best practices include resources as well as the consortium and institutional framework and expectations. Resources include staff, equipment, technology, and organizational structure.*
> ***Procedural Best Practices*** *are at the base level, comprised of daily routines, procedures, tasks, and ways of processing the workload.* (Leon *et al.* 2003)

It was felt that this framework would help respond to the demands of patrons for faster delivery in an increasingly global information age.

The GWLA Group Interlibrary Loan Best Practices framework was accepted in 2001. The authors wanted to determine if this framework has made a difference, whether it is relevant in today's environment, and what new elements should be added.

Impact on GWLA

To understand the impact of the Group Best Practices framework on GWLA, the authors reviewed actions from the past ten years that have had either potential or real impact on the primary goal: to provide fast and efficient service to our shared collections. The largest impact, by far, was the establishment of turnaround time benchmarks and a tool to monitor each library's performance. In addition, GWLA members worked to increase the types of materials shared and established a common, longer loan period.

Turnaround time benchmarks

The most critical resource sharing action taken by GWLA in the past eight years was the establishment of benchmarks for turnaround time and a semi-annual process to assess how well member libraries met them. These benchmarks were used to help reduce the turnaround time for both copies and loans across the consortium. Identification of higher performing libraries helped identify those that might share their best practices for other libraries to consider implementing.

Noticeable improvements in turnaround time can be seen in the following charts. Although GWLA has not completed a consortium-wide patron needs assessment, a few member libraries have completed such an assessment which, along with anecdotal comments, indicated that faster turnaround time for copies was a priority for patrons. A 76% improvement in copies being filled within 24 hours has made an expanded range of content more affordable for member libraries. Since articles arrive so quickly, university researchers are willing to rely on interlibrary loan instead of requesting additional journal subscriptions. While turnaround time for loans has improved less dramatically, a 16% improvement within 4 days still indicates progress in physical sharing of items.

Table 1 Turnaround time for filled requests within GWLA
(measured from date/time request is received by lender until borrower receives material)

Copies	Filled within 24 hours	Filled within 48 hours	Filled within 72 hours
Spring 2005	6%	41%	73%
Fall 2012	83%	96%	99%
Change	77%	55%	26%

Loans	Filled within 3 days	Filled within 4 days	Filled within 5 days
Spring 2005	41%	70%	87%
Fall 2012	61%	86%	95%
Change	20%	16%	8%

Sharing the semi-annual report that listed all member libraries' turnaround times helped in a variety of ways. Member libraries were able to see how well their lending services performed in relation to the minimum expectation and to each other. Libraries with faster turnaround times shared their best practices for others to consider. These included workflow changes, introduction of new technologies, participation in new services like RapidILL [2] for fast article sharing, and more.

The data was only a tool that helped illuminate changes needed at the different best practices framework levels. Procedural Best Practices were identified and implemented locally. Structural Best Practices such as staffing levels, technology used (e.g., better scanning equipment), and participation in RapidILL were implemented. One important reason for the improvement in copy turnaround time was that participation in RapidILL increased from 18% of GWLA member libraries in 2002 to 75% today. Changes were even made at some libraries in support of some of the Conceptual Best Practices level, such as providing more support for interlibrary loan lending services to balance

resources being used for interlibrary loan borrowing. This helped some libraries better meet their commitment to treat other member libraries' patrons the same as their own. The establishment of agreed upon benchmarks as standards, regularly monitoring and openly sharing each library's performance data, and the commitment to make changes fostered the dramatic improvement in speed of service.

Improving services through media lending
GWLA libraries vary by size and geography, and some have a variety of other consortial commitments. This creates challenges for member libraries as they strive to support all elements of the Group Best Practices. The original Task Force had hoped the Conceptual Best Practices would provide a universally accepted philosophical framework, create a common foundation that would lead to easy adoption of policies and practices, and lead to improved service overall. All participating GWLA libraries' leadership and interlibrary loan librarians agreed on the framework, but the realities of our different environments have meant challenges.

One Conceptual Best Practice is to "Serve local patrons and patrons of every other library in the consortium equally." (Leon *et al*. 2003) It was felt this best practice would support the concept of all member libraries sharing with others in the consortium. Less than 25% of GWLA libraries loaned their media to other libraries in 2002. It has taken individual efforts across the consortium but now over 75% of libraries are sharing their media collections.

Another Conceptual Best Practice is the commitment to a continuous learning ILL operation that is also committed to efficiencies. (Leon *et al*. 2003) Ten years ago the GWLA ILL librarians determined our collective workflows would be more efficient and would provide better service to patrons if the consortium agreed upon a common, longer loan period, and so they agreed to work at their local libraries to establish an 8-week loan period for ILL loans. It took effort but libraries were able to demonstrate the value of this extension to meet commitments to other consortial libraries along with the positive impact on their own patrons.

Current viability of Conceptual Best Practices

Conceptual best practices serve as the philosophical platform by which effective library consortia demonstrate the importance of resource sharing both to the consortium and to the member libraries. Consortia that can agree to and live by these key philosophical values are most effective. Therefore, the authors chose to assess the original Conceptual Best Practices by looking for consortia that exemplify success in each and providing examples of their excellence. These success stories illustrate the importance of support at this philosophical level by administrators, operational leaders, and others. In fact, these successful groups visibly demonstrate support for these concepts through their actions.

Priorities
These are the overarching principles that lead to effective group performance. The Conceptual Best Practice that best captures what is needed for group success in the 2002 Best Practices is *"*Serve local patrons and patrons of every other library in the consortium equally" (Leon *et al*. 2003).

Having a group of libraries committed to the key philosophical belief that it is important to treat all member libraries' patrons the same is fundamental to providing excellent service. One of the leading consortia that exemplifies this commitment is the Orbis Cascade Alliance [3]; members of this group have implemented *"A service model predicated on user priorities, fewer and more consolidated library locations, and delivery of information services and resources 'anytime and any place'*." (Wilson, 2012) This core belief, which has been evident within the consortium for years, has enabled their success. The libraries are implementing a shared ILS system which is helping them re-think how some traditional library functions are accomplished. At the very least, they have not had to spend time debating whether it is a good idea to treat patrons from other libraries the same as local patrons. They are able to focus on innovation instead.

Leadership by library administrators
Library administrators must advocate for and support resource sharing as a vital component in meeting the needs of the consortium patrons. In recent years, many libraries have suffered major budget cuts, and there are other initiatives (digital librarianship, institutional repositories, etc.) that may cause administrators to redirect funds away from resource sharing functions. Resource sharing units must continue to provide the needed services in as efficient a manner possible but will still need to have adequate resources (staff, equipment, technology) in order to do so.

This is especially true as consortia enter into more shared collection development activities which in turn increase the need for efficient and effective ILL among members.

The Information Delivery Services (IDS) Project in New York exemplifies how library administrators can best support and engage in conversation with ILL librarians on effective resource sharing. [4] This belief was continually promoted throughout the tenure of former SUNY Geneseo Director Edwin Rivenburgh, who exhorted library directors and staff to "identify the problems with resource sharing and work together to solve them" (Oberlander and Rivenburgh, 2012). It was this group solution to a common problem that led the IDS Project to adopt the philosophy that they should be "*a unified community of trust and support built around a critical and clearly understood purpose: effective resource sharing*." (Oberlander and Rivenburgh, 2012). By adopting a common value in shared resources, members of this consortium have developed both technological and staff solutions and a community that effectively meets the information needs of library patrons.

The key to any consortium's success is that all libraries embrace and act upon the tenets outlined above. Deans and Directors sign off on cooperative agreements, but don't always follow through on providing resources necessary for excellent service. The consortium and individual libraries should regularly evaluate current trends, technologies, and procedures that can maximize resource sharing and provide greater efficiencies in service.

Evaluation

A crucial section at the conceptual level is to continually evaluate the consortium's resource sharing activities to ensure that its goals are meeting the needs of its patrons. This is even more important due to the increased interest by stakeholders, e.g., tax payers, in getting what they want in the most cost effective manner. In fact, libraries should be working towards understanding the value their patrons place on resource sharing services, as clearly called for by a growing number of leaders in the field. "Community college, college, and university librarians no longer can rely on their stakeholders' belief in their importance. Rather, they must demonstrate their value." (Oakleaf, 2010) Oakleaf includes a variety of specific examples in her study, *Value of Academic Libraries: A Comprehensive Research Review and Report,* that illustrate the need and what can be done.

Communication

The IDS Project joint annual meeting embodies the ***effective*** sharing of information and ideas to provide guidance and ensure the success of cooperation. Staff members, from ILL librarians to IT support to administrators, use this annual event to discuss issues and identify better ways of providing patron services. GWLA resource sharing practitioners have found opportunities to collaborate on joint projects, learn about effective interlibrary loan practices, and develop a synergistic relationship with counterparts at other institutions through the GWLA annual meetings. Due to a need for closer collaboration between the Collection Development Committee and the Resource Sharing and Document Delivery Committee, both groups have decided to identify methods for making optimal use of their shared collections and resources.

Access to Material

A critical Conceptual Best Practice that continues to be highly relevant today is:

> *High performing operations with a consortium wide view maximize access to their Own and each other's material. Specifically, they lend anything a GWLA patron Can charge out and remove from his/her local library*. (Leon *et al*. 2003)

When library consortium members develop agreements, it is important to consider the needs of the "home library" patron. If "home library" patrons would like to borrow a particular type of material (audiovisual, bound journals, etc.), then consortium members should also lend these whenever possible. In addition to print materials, patrons need access to e-resources, so member libraries should ensure that licenses for e-books and e-journals contain ILL rights.

New Conceptual Best Practice

One Conceptual Best Practice relevant to today that is missing from the 2002 framework is the need to acknowledge the importance of patron needs unequivocally at this philosophical level. Patrons are able to access information from many other sources (e.g. purchase articles direct from publisher, Amazon, Alibris, etc.). If libraries are unable to meet patron expectations, patrons may elect to purchase needed materials on their own and feel that libraries are of little importance and value. This new best practice is probably the most vital in developing and providing service. In

the 2002 framework, the focus was mostly on support for internal policies and procedures. The forward-thinking *Rethinking Resource Sharing Manifesto* challenged the ILL community by stating, "And more importantly, resource sharing practices and policies continued to be library-centric while the rest of the world had already moved on to being consumer-centric." (Rethinking Resource Sharing Initiative, 2007). [5] First and foremost, libraries need to think of patrons as the focus of what we do, how we do things, and why we do things. Our group policies and procedures need to reflect best practices in patron service.

Current viability of Structural Best Practices

Some Structural Best Practices are still valid even as resource sharing units need to think about outside factors that contribute to the success of the consortium. By doing so, new Structural Best Practices can be seen that include developing patron centric procedures, mentoring, and continual evaluation of services and patron needs.

Technology and equipment

Technology continues to be a crucial component in effective interlibrary loan units. Highly effective units should "maximize technology whenever possible" (Jackson, 1998). Major technological changes are occurring rapidly, and library staff members need to proactively evaluate and select the proper tools that will reduce staff time and create greater efficiencies in the workflow. A primary time saver for ILL staff in large-volume operations continues to be use of an ILL request management system. ILL staff should take the time to learn time saving methods and make the most of features available in the system. When providing copies, it is increasingly easier to provide copies electronically, yet some libraries continue to send via mail. Even libraries with a modest volume of requests should consider utilizing free digital tools. In addition, there are products available that make providing cleaned up images easier, which better meets patron needs.

Each interlibrary loan unit should have adequate numbers of computers, scanners, and printers so that requests may be processed quickly and efficiently.

While technology and equipment are important to the success of an effective organization, it is just one component. More importantly, high performing ILL units need to have effective staff, the flexibility to adapt to new situations, and adequate resources to provide quick service and focus on patron needs.

Staff

To operate effectively, ILL units need adequate numbers of committed staff who are highly trained and self-motivated. ILL staff must be adept in learning new systems and procedures, since ILL units increasingly operate in a dynamic work environment. In addition to ILL staff, it's important to have technical support staff who can maintain our ILL request systems. Some successful library organizations have found that they are able to expand services by having staff who work during the evening hours and weekends to process borrowing requests, pull books, and scan articles. The University of Arizona reduced turnaround time by "collaborating with another library team…to process all types of incoming borrowing requests. This team is responsible for staffing overnight and weekend hours." (Voyles *et al*., 2009) Oregon State University has had success using their 24/5 staff to help with processing lending requests so they are ready for paging in the morning. They are also training a new staff member who works evenings and weekends to process the ILL borrowing copyright process queue. In both cases, it is helping them better manage Monday mornings. (Goergen-Doll, 2013) The University of Missouri also has a night-time staff member focusing on lending requests so they are ready for day-time staff to complete the process. (Green, 2013) Other successful ILL units have found that it's best to centralize all ILL operations in one department and have staff that are fully cross-trained. Each library has individual challenges and opportunities, so it's important that each library determine what organizational structure will provide the greatest outcome for their unit.

Unmediated Requesting Systems

A critical reason for the dramatic improvement of turnaround for copies within GWLA is that 75% of member libraries participate in RapidILL. This system's success is due to a combination of its technological advancements and the commitments from participating libraries to fill requests within 24 hours. The fact that many requests may be ordered through ILLiad [6] without staff mediation, and requestors at libraries using ILLiad's "trusted sender" function may access articles posted directly to the web without ILL staff mediation, results in not only fast service between libraries but ultimately fast service from the original patron request date. Libraries with a medium or high

volume of requests for journal articles or book chapters are strongly encouraged to seek out fast, high quality ILL technology and libraries committed to delivering expedited reciprocal service. One major success factor for most GWLA libraries is their use of RapidILL. Another unmediated option worth considering is OCLC Direct Request, especially for libraries able to work with suppliers who are committed to the same level of service.

Circ-to-Circ Systems provide a shared catalog that a consortium library patron can use to search and request materials. Patrons have the assurance that items located in the shared system will generally arrive quickly, and will be available for their use for a known period of time that has been agreed upon by their consortium. Patrons like the advantage of locating relevant research materials that they know they can get. In the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) [7], 90.3% of requests are filled by the first library in the lending string (Larsen, 2013). This success is based upon a system collaboratively developed between Relais International, Atlas Systems, and the CIC. In addition, the commitment of participating library staff to accurately profile the Z39.50 connections has led to this effective system which skips items that are not available as well as non-circulating. The average cost per request of these systems, compared to traditional interlibrary loan borrowing, could be noticeably less expensive. The average cost for libraries to borrow using a circ-to-circ system in the Leon Kress Cost Study was $3.85 while the average cost for interlibrary loan borrowing was $12.11. The circ-to-circ system resulted in a study-wide average savings of $8.26 *per request* as compared with traditional interlibrary loan borrowing costs (Leon and Kress, 2012). Faster service at a lower cost is possible through the use of technology and staff commitment.

Patrons

Because providing excellent service to patrons is the primary goal for libraries and interlibrary loan units, ILL practitioners are encouraged to analyze their service from the patrons' point of view. Many patrons are not even aware that it is possible to obtain materials not owned at their individual library, without purchasing articles and books themselves; thus, highly effective ILL units will develop marketing strategies to promote their service. Texas Tech University, for example, developed a successful marketing program using print flyers, YouTube videos, and social media to promote interlibrary loan (Litsey and Daniel, 2012).

Promoting awareness of interlibrary loan is the first step in providing effective service. The next step is to look at any obstacles that patrons may encounter when trying to use the service. Organizations should note that the most "inspired marketing plan will fall short if the patron or customer arrives to use your service but the process is so complicated that he or she is too frustrated to bother." (Litsey and Daniel, 2012) Factors that libraries might consider: 1) Is it easy for patrons to identify resources of interest? 2) How easy is it to order materials once these items are identified? For example, libraries should make use of an open link resolver to automatically transfer citation information into the ILL request system, thus avoiding the need for rekeying the information and reducing the possibility of patron errors, or provide web pages that patrons can use to request materials and easily access their ILL system accounts.

Evaluation

Evaluation is important in high performing units. Resource sharing units need to continually evaluate internal processes and procedures, how well they are meeting group standards and benchmarks, and how well they are meeting the needs of the patron.

High performing consortia should establish benchmarks for service and evaluate how well member libraries are doing at least on an annual basis. Individual library units may not realize that service expectations are not being met if there is no feedback. The IDS Project states "trust but verify" (Oberlander and Rivenburgh, 2012), and so it has developed a real-time, automated method of monitoring each library's performance, known as the Transaction Performance Analysis Module, that is shared with all member libraries.

The second aspect resource sharing librarians need to consider is how well does the service we provide meet the individual patron's needs. There are many ways to evaluate patron satisfaction (but that can be a whole other article), such as LibQual+® surveys [8], focus groups, or short surveys, and yet many do not. Once librarians receive feedback from patrons, it's important to develop a plan for improving service if needed. Surveying patrons is one area that many libraries neglect, but it's important to identify patron needs in order to develop effective resource sharing strategies.

Communication & mentoring

New libraries joining a consortium should be mentored as they join so that they are aware of performance expectations and group best practices. Ideally this should be an ongoing sharing of expertise, as illustrated by the

IDS Project's highly commendable mentoring program [9], which helps new members get off to a successful start by providing them with both ILL and technical assistance.

While some library consortia have a formal mentoring program, others do not. Even when a consortium doesn't have a formal mentoring program, ILL practitioners are not alone. An excellent source that can help an ILL unit develop forwarding thinking policies and procedures and streamline service is the Star Checklist on the Rethinking Resource Sharing Initiative website.

It is vital that consortium members have a forum to meet in person and strategize effective ways of meeting the needs of resource sharing patrons. "No cooperation can succeed without communication." (Collins, 2012) When librarians develop personal connections there is greater trust and a willingness to resolve issues, brainstorm for better service methods, and increase cooperation. Resource sharing is a community effort.

Continuous learning ILL operation

Interlibrary loan is a dynamic unit in the library. New systems are introduced at a rapid pace and staff must maintain skills through continual training in order to be successful. Keeping up with the latest trends in technology, processes and staff development is vital. One very effective way of doing this is through a consortium mentoring group like the IDS Project has. In addition, it is vital to keep up with others outside of the consortium. This can be done through webinars, attendance at resource sharing conferences like the Colorado ILL Conference, Northwest Interlibrary Loan and Resource Sharing Conference, IDS Project, and vendor specific meetings such as the International ILLiad Conference.

Current viability of Procedural Best Practices

Procedural Best Practices continue to be vital to providing optimal service. The specific implementation of certain practices depends on the local environment and will evolve over time. For example, some of the Procedural Best Practices identified in the original framework are no longer needed, e.g., innovations in technology have changed how often libraries receive requests, yet it is still important that libraries promptly perform routine tasks to get the job done.

A 2002 Procedural Best Practice was to "Create, share and use macros whenever possible." (Leon *et al*., 2003) Macros, using software like Macro Express, continue to be an important part of workflows in medium to high-volume ILL operations. However, the concept of what macros can do has expanded for libraries that use the ILLiad software. *Add-ons* that enhance the effectiveness of ILLiad are becoming increasingly important. These add-ons expedite work processes such as searching of library catalogs, accessing information from book and journal article vendors, automating Internet searches, and much more. This functionality, originally created by the IDS Project in conjunction with ILLiad developer Atlas Systems, is facilitating workflow changes barely dreamed of ten years ago.

In assessing the currency of Procedural Best Practices identified over ten years ago it is clear that the ILL community needs a solution to better share ideas in our rapidly changing environment. One excellent example is the IDS Toolkit that is focused on providing useful tips for interlibrary loan operations that use ILLiad. Libraries can acquire ideas, information, and technical assistance at this site. However, more is needed for non-ILLiad information. One possible vendor-neutral solution for the ILL community at large would be the ShareILL wiki [10]. This wiki is gaining support for maintenance provided by committees of the ALA RUSA Sharing and Transforming Access to Resources Section [11]. The authors will load an updated list of Procedural Best Practices to ShareILL so that others can contribute other suggestions as well.

Conclusion

Some have predicted the imminent demise of interlibrary loan. Rick Anderson (2012) has stated "We live in a radically different information world from the one that gave rise to ILL. Instead of resisting that reality, we should embrace it, rejoicing in the ways it allows us to serve our patrons better." However, as collections are de-accessioned, budgets continue to shrink, and libraries strengthen their commitment to serving the patrons' increasingly complex information needs, cost effective sharing of materials between libraries will continue to be needed, at least for the foreseeable future. How libraries accomplish their resource sharing goals will likely evolve as they continue to merge or re-align internal departments and staffing. Some ILL units are becoming more closely integrated with collection development, others with reference or research assistance. In some cases, ILL units are taking on additional work such as metadata cataloging that utilize skillsets of staff. Detail oriented ILL staff

members who understand the fields in bibliographic records can more easily learn metadata cataloging. No matter what, there will continue to be the need to share materials and help connect patrons to the information they need, including hard to find open access items. Dennis Massie noted, "I am convinced that having full-text indexing of HathiTrust in WorldCat, right next to that 'find it in a library' button, is going to drive users to seek print copies of works in the digitized corpus." (Massie, 2012)

Regardless of where ILL functions are performed, budget pressures are driving more libraries to finally develop cooperative collection development agreements. This is being seen in more cooperative ventures. The foundation for such agreements in GWLA was set in 2002 when member libraries set out to improve overall resource sharing services. In the few surveys completed by participating libraries, it is clear that most patrons want fast and accurate ILL service. GWLA used the turnaround time data points to clarify how well member libraries were meeting the desired service level. This led to changes at each level of the original framework: conceptual level changes are illustrated by member libraries' renewing commitments; structural level improvements include appropriate staffing levels, better training, and implementation of advanced equipment and technology such as Odyssey, Article Exchange, and BSCAN ILL; procedural level improvements include greatly reduced processing times, updating, and more.

GWLA is implementing a more cost effective model for sharing of loans by licensing Relais International's D2D system using a model similar to that of the CIC. This tool will help drive costs down but the service quality demanded by patrons will still require committed service by all member libraries. Continuing its commitment to agreed-upon Conceptual and Structural Best Practices across the consortium will help member libraries focus their precious resources on innovation. Standards will need to be maintained and monitored in our increasingly complex environments.

Throughout all of these changes, and with new internal partners such as collection development and/or research assistance, ILL staff must continue to be agile and look for opportunities to improve service to patrons. The Group Best Practices, with necessary updates, continue to be a viable framework for success.

Notes

1. Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA) is a consortium of 33 academic research libraries located in the central and western United States. About 75% of libraries are members of the Association of Research Libraries. Thirty-two of the member libraries participate in the resource sharing component of the consortium. See www.gwla.org.
2. RapidILL is a system that was developed and managed by Colorado State University. The system is successful because it builds and maintains a union catalog of member libraries' serial holdings and participating libraries commit to fulfilling lending requests within 24 hours. Member libraries are grouped into "pods" with peer institutions of similar size and agree to fill requests for free between group members. The Association of Research Libraries pod has 67 participating libraries. The Carnegie E classification academic pod has 97 participating libraries. There are a variety of other groups including several international. See http://rapidill.org/Default.aspx.
3. Orbis Cascade Alliance is a consortium of 37 private and public universities, colleges, and community colleges in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. See www.orbiscascade.org/.
4. The Information Delivery Services (IDS) Project comprises more than 72 public and private academic libraries, the New York Public Library, and the New York State Library. See www.idsproject.org/.
5. *Rethinking Resource Sharing Initiative* started in the United States in 2005 with a white paper written by a group of librarians, product vendors, and library technology specialists calling for innovative thinking on the future of resource sharing. See http://rethinkingresourcesharing.org/.
6. ILLiad is the interlibrary loan and document delivery request management system developed by Atlas Systems, www.atlas-sys.com/illiad/.
7. The Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) is a consortium of the Big Ten member universities plus the University of Chicago. See www.cic.net/about-cic.
8. LibQual+® is a group of assessment tools available to the library community from the Association of Research Libraries. See www.libqual.org/home.
9. The IDS Workflow Toolkit is an online source for best practices for libraries that use ILLiad. See http://toolkit.idsproject.org/.

10. ShareILL is an online wiki created in 2001 by Mary Hollerich, then at Northwestern University Pritzker Legal Research Center and now at Southern Methodist University Central University Libraries. It includes an array of useful information for resource sharing practitioners such as links to national libraries, union catalogs, ILL codes, ILL systems and software vendors, and copyright and licensing information. It has been updated over the years. See http://shareill.org/.
11. The Sharing and Transforming Access to Resources Section (STARS) is a section of the American Library Association's (ALA) Reference and User Services Association (RUSA). STARS committees work on all forms of resource sharing, such as interlibrary loan, remote circulation, and cooperative collection development. See http://www.ala.org/rusa/sections/stars.

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