Technology Plan University of Missouri- Columbia Libraries

FY 2003

Prepared by

Library Technology Services

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FY '03 Technology Plan

University of Missouri-Columbia Libraries
Library Technology Services (LTS)

Introduction

A fundamental shift in computing strategies has occurred in the last few years. For the MU Libraries this shift is even more important in that access to information is a key component driving the deployment of new computer technology. As a result of this, a whole new approach to accessing information is being implemented at the University of Missouri–Columbia. LTS facilitates the new approach through its role of supporting the technology needs of the MU Libraries. The need to change our environment is more than just replacing dumb terminals with personal computers. We must change how our computers inter-connect, and this requires re-thinking how we use computers. In addition, all divisions of the Library have service goals they are trying to achieve and most, if not all, require the effective use of technology to be successful. In addition, library employees will need to adapt to the new technologies; training employees of the MU Libraries will be key elements in the delivery of these new services.

The intent of this plan is to outline the current computing needs of the MU Libraries, and plan for future endeavors. This plan addresses the mission of the library in terms of utilizing various technologies to acquire, organize and disseminate materials that help educate, enrich, and inform our patrons and staff. Goals and objectives for this plan were obtained from requests given to LTS and conversations with the Public Services Committee and other people throughout the Libraries. In addition, desktop computing plans of other institutions were reviewed, identifying useful strategies employed by Cornell University, Brown University, and the Kansas City Public Library. The intent of this document is not to put together a detailed "to-do" list for the LTS department, but to review the overall IT environment and develop methods of improving the service provided by LTS, in a way that will include all Divisions in the library system, as well as cooperative projects with other departments around campus. Following from this, we wish to establish objectives that meet the Libraries' overarching mission:

The mission of the MU libraries is to support the instruction, research and service programs of the University by acquiring scholarly resources, developing innovative services, and applying new information technologies to address the needs of our users.

Background/Current state of Technology

LTS supports approximately 150 library employees, 8 servers, and 400 computers. There is a mixed operating system environment of Windows 98, Windows NT and Windows 2000, with a wide variety of applications. The network throughout Ellis Library is Ethernet with a Gigabit connection to the campus backbone. Students, faculty, staff and other patrons use the computers within the libraries to conduct such activities as the following:

- Search the online catalogs of the University of Missouri Libraries and many other academic libraries in the state
- Access hundreds of databases provided through the MU Libraries' gateway
- Access electronic resources (e.g., CD-ROMs and course reserve files) that reside on MU Libraries servers
- Read hundreds of full-text online journals
- Participate in hands-on classroom sessions provided by Librarians on the use of electronic resources
- Access web sites relevant to course work and research
- View and create email

These computers are generally available in the Libraries on a walk-up first come first served basis. Ellis Library has 4 computers dedicated to student email access on the second floor, though they may access their email from any of the more 160 public computers in the library. There are currently 2 laser printers in the public area (Reference and Merlin) that allow students to print materials using the PrintSmart system that was implemented by the campus during FY02. The Libraries currently have 2 hands-on classrooms, and 2 presentation classrooms in which Librarians conduct instruction sessions on important electronic resources and also teach for-credit classes.

MU Libraries' employees use computers for such daily functions as updating catalog records, circulating materials, adding materials to our collection, research, creating informational handouts, creating and publishing web pages, administrative functions, and correspondence with departments across the campus, and patrons throughout the state and country.

FY '02 Accomplishments

This was a banner year for the Library Technology Services department. Our goal was to improve communications between all library staff and the Library Technology Services department, with a major emphasis on customer service. In what could have been a highly stressful environment, the Library Technology Services staff remained composed and professional. We expect to continue building on our past accomplishments and look forward to achieving even greater successes in the future. A brief list of our accomplishments is listed below.

- Centralized virus protection software and standardized updates and scans of staff and public machines.
- Completed laptop checkout program, purchased three additional laptops to expand the program.
- Installed Ezproxy on a server to allow remote access to TDNet.
- Upgraded public workstations. Now all have web access and are a minimum 450Mhz CPU speed.
- Installed PrintSmart client on all public workstations to allow pay for printing solution to all patrons, university affiliated and non.
- Provided newer workstations to HSL, Journalism, & Engineering.
- Purchased 97 new Dell 1.5 Ghz computers for staff. This was to serve as the initial purchase that began our 3-year computer replacement cycle.
- Installed Ariel 3.0 to provide desktop document delivery to patrons to cut down on Ill printing expenses and provide 24/7 document access to patrons.
- Improved call tracking and inventory databases. Created web interface for LTS staff to use from any location on campus.
- Created LTS web page that provides a FAQ, status page, Feedback form, trouble call submission form, and procedures to follow during network or server outage.
- Created an AskLts email account to allow faculty and staff to submit problems via email.
- Created a listserv to provide staff a means of getting announcements from the LTS or Admin offices.
- Ordered machines for Recorded Sound remodeling project.
- Digitized over 400 images for the Digital Scriptorium project.
- Worked with Web Committee to update Library's Web gateway.
- Responded to approximately 670 trouble call tickets.
- Upgraded computers in Electronic Classroom 1.
- Upgraded Email Computers on 2nd floor, and Merlin machines outside of the elevators on 2nd and 3rd floors.
- Upgraded Web machines in Special Collections.

Implementation of the Computer Replacement Plan

One of the Libraries' priorities is to assure that each library employee whose work requires daily access to a workstation has at least the minimum level machine. We can accomplish this by developing and implementing a revolving annual plan, which identifies workstations to be assessed, maintained, upgraded, re-deployed or replaced as the need arises. LTS evaluated options for scheduling the replacement cycle and determined that the CPU speed should be the organizing principle on which the schedule of replacements should be based. LTS believes that using CPU speed as the replacement criterion will allow for an on-going system-wide review of the Library's computing needs based on the viability of equipment, rather than on individual/department/unit requests. The desktop computers in staff areas will be replaced on a three-year cycle using CPU speed as the replacement criteria.

Approximately 1/3 of the Libraries' desktop computers (50 units per year) will be replaced each year at a cost of approximately $1,200 per unit. The cost for computer replacement is projected to be $60,000 per year. The replacement of library servers will be based on a 4-year replacement cycle. The expected cost for replacement servers is $8,000 per server.

LTS also recommends that a $15,000 contingency be provided each year to support the acquisition of additional desktop computers for new employees, special projects, personal printers, scanners, and other peripherals. Therefore, the LTS staff recommends that the

Libraries provide funding of approximately $85,000 per year to support a desktop replacement program for staff computers, servers, and contingent hardware.

Technology Mission, Goals and Action Steps

The mission of the Library Technology Services Department is to develop, maintain, and continuously improve the technological environment, which supports the MU Libraries' program of services to students, faculty, staff, and patrons.

Goal 1: *Evaluate and enhance the technological infrastructure for library employees*

➢ Upgrade all staff computers to 1.0 gigahertz or better by the end of the fiscal 2003 year
➢ Upgrade all computers to Windows 2000 by end of FY 2003
➢ Initiate a 3-year staff computer replacement cycle
➢ Initiate a 4-year server replacement cycle.
➢ Review and Consider Active Directory migration options

Goal 2: *Evaluate and enhance the technological infrastructure in support of public services*

➢ Evaluate and address current instruction facilities for patrons, and discuss possibilities of improvement with appropriate members of public services divisions
➢ Address current networking issues on 4th floor of Ellis Library, suggest solutions
➢ Work toward establishment of a regular funding and replacement cycle for public workstations

Goal 3: *Extend a full range of electronic services to persons with disabilities, working with the Librarians who are responsible for providing such services to patrons*

➢ Investigate and acquire feasible software and hardware modifications, eye tracking systems, light sensors, and alternate keyboard devices to assist customers
➢ Add workstations for the visually impaired at various locations
➢ Create a section on the home page dedicated to disability issues
➢ Work with Campus ADA Coordinator to assure compliance with federal and state regulations

Goal 4: *Improve electronic access to document delivery and ILL services*

➢ Install ClioWeb in Ellis and HSL libraries by end of FY 2003
➢ Work with HSL systems and Ellis Library Access Services to maintain peak efficiencies of operations
➢ Investigate methods of delivering documents to wireless electronic devices
➢ Investigate methods of extracting billing information from PeopleSoft

Goal 5: *Expand the scope and functionality of the Library's web site*

- ➢ Evaluate options for providing streaming electronic media (audio & video)
- ➢ Research and install a web statistics gathering package
- ➢ Work with the Public Services committee to determine the best method of eliciting feedback from patrons (i.e. instant polls, online surveys, etc).
- ➢ Research and implement search engine technology for Library web sites.

Goal 6: *Assist in the implementation of a digitizing program for MU Libraries*

- ➢ Assist in developing a plan and implementing standards for digitizing the Libraries' Special Collections
- ➢ Create workspace for future digitizing projects, in coordination with the UM Libraries' activities in digitization
- ➢ Work with the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Initiative Committee to determine Libraries role in the electronic submission of thesis and dissertations.

Goal 7: *Develop, implement and evaluate a program to enhance the use of technology by staff in their daily work roles.*

- ➢ Work with the MU Library HR staff to plan and implement a program to enhance library staff technical skills.
- ➢ Initiate regular training classes for library employees on pertinent software applications
- ➢ Evaluate current instruction facilities for staff, and discuss possibilities of improvement
- ➢ Support regular technical training for LTS staff

Goal 8: *Improve both internal and external customer support*

- ➢ Continue to evaluate and improve the call tracking, timely response, and communication with internal customers.
- ➢ Continue to evaluate and improve the inventory process.
- ➢ Integrate the process of requesting hardware, software, training, and services with the Library's purchase and procurement process.
- ➢ Review and update current LTS disaster recovery plan and incorporate it into the Library's Recovery Plan.
- ➢ Evaluate and implement time clock software for student use.

Goal 9: *Integrate LTS plans and procedures with MU campus and U-M System technology services and processes.*

➢ Maintain awareness of the goals, objectives, and priorities for action of the MU Information Technology Strategic Planning Process and provide input as requested
➢ Maintain productive working relationships with IATS through one-on-one communication, participation in appropriate committees and discussion groups, and joint projects
➢ Continue to explore possibilities for cooperative digitization initiatives, including MU campus-wide efforts, U-M System projects such as the cooperative planning efforts of the 4 U-M campus libraries, and statewide projects such as Virtually Missouri
➢ Evaluate feasibility (costs, possible timelines, etc.) of migrating certain locally-supported server functions to a central IATS support model

Conclusion

The idea of changing the ways in which our work is done, and then implementing these changes is challenging. However, the ultimate goal for LTS is to provide the best service we can to our internal users and the Libraries' patrons. As the premier research library in the state, it is our responsibility to remain on the forefront of the technology movement, in an effort to provide as much information as possible to those seeking our help. The information technology "wish list" is long. Before the MU Libraries can undertake any of these initiatives with confidence, the library system must have a coherent vision and corollary planning process into which specific project and directions fit. In addition, the Libraries must have a reliable form of communication, in order to assure that the needs of the library patrons and employees are being met.

The ultimate aspiration is to firmly establish the MU Libraries as campus leaders in the use of computing technology. Our students, faculty and staff deserve nothing less. Our ambitious list of objectives for FY03 is designed to move us toward that goal. However, we know that the LTS cannot succeed by relying solely on our own efforts, however determined. We need everyone's collaborative support and continuing feedback to make these objectives a reality. Given these advantages, we believe FY03 will be another exceptional year for library technology.

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