

The Urbana Free Library Technology Plan

FY2010 – FY2012

Approved by the Board October 12, 2010

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A. Introduction

This Technology Plan covers FY 2010 through FY2012, the period from July 2009 through June 2012.

B. Library Mission Statement

The mission of The Urbana Free Library is:

- to select, acquire, organize, and promote the use of a wide range of books and other communications media in order to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the citizens within its taxing jurisdiction.
- to provide the physical space necessary for citizens to consult library materials in comfort and to meet with one another as part of the Urbana community.
- to provide unusually friendly and personal service to all library users.

(Urbana Free Library Long-Range Plan, 2006-2011)

C. Technology Vision Statement

In keeping with this mission, The Urbana Free Library is committed to the use of technology to improve the quality, scope, and efficiency of library services. The library continually reviews and adopts new technology to enhance the library experience of its users, to help library users achieve their goals, to improve access to information, and to improve employees' ability to perform their duties.

D. History

The Urbana Free Library was an early adopter of community connectivity, offering in 1984 the first off-campus public access terminal to the University of Illinois LCS online catalog, in 1994 the first public access terminal to Champaign County's CCNet, and in 1994 public Internet access through Prairienet.

The library has been a participant in the Lincoln Trail Libraries System automation system and online public access catalog from its inception in 1981 with CLSI. The system migrated to Dynix in 1993, installed a major Dynix upgrade in 1998, and migrated to the company's Horizon product in 2004.

The library has experienced the explosion in public use of computers, the Internet, and online resources, from the early days with just a few public Internet computers and a few electronic resources available on CD-ROM to its present day with nearly seventy public computers providing service in all departments and over fifty databases available in-house and remotely.

The library's Local History Online database went online in 2004, greatly expanding the library's provision of its unique resources to any individual with internet access. As of October 2008, the overall size of Local History Online was 613,221 documents and 3,563,230 indexing attributes. Champaign County Historical Archives staff and volunteers continue to add to the index, averaging more than 2,000 new items and 10,000 new index entries each month.

Following the building expansion of 2002 – 2005, the library improved its building technology, including a sophisticated programmable HVAC system, a more efficient PRI phone system, and security cameras and doors.

In 2006 – 2008 the library began to focus on telecommunications and infrastructure upgrades, including bandwidth adequacy, network structure and equipment, wireless hotspot service, and efficient and consistent configuration of public computers through ghosting and volume licensing.

E. Timeline of Routine Responsibilities

Board tech committee:

- Review and revise Tech Plan. Forward tech budget needs to finance committee. (January)
- Review tech needs of LINC automation system and create list of desired features. (July)

Staff tech committee: (each July, November, and March unless specified):

- Review unmet technology needs of staff and library users.
- Review software / hardware configurations of all public computers, including review needs of students and needs for applications to employment or government programs.
- Review equipment requests for public checkout, in-house public use, and programming.
- Review tech needs in light of developments at partnering agencies.
- Review Tech Plan progress and emerging technologies.
- Review computer / Internet handouts for the public.
- Create list of desired features for LINC automation system. (July)
- Review the Public Computer and Internet Access Policy. (July)

IT manager:

- Inventory of network equipment. (January)
- Inventory of end-user equipment. (January, July)
- Bandwidth report. (July, November, January, March)
- Implement changes to public computers. (July, November, March)

F. Identifying Community and Staff Needs

Goal: The library will routinely solicit feedback in order to meet the technology needs of its community and staff.

Objectives:

- O1 The library will complete a community-wide survey of its users every five years and will integrate public feedback into the Technology Plan. FY2013.
- O2 The library will create a public technology feedback form and a technology wish list on the web and in print. FY2011.
- O3 The library will request technology feedback when it conducts non-user focus groups. FY2012.
- O4 Staff will forward unmet technology needs of both staff and library users to the staff technology committee, which will meet to review requests in July, November, and March. Ongoing.
- O5 The library will conduct an annual survey of staff technology needs. The first such survey will be created by spring 2010.
- O6 Staff will identify the technology interests of teen library users. FY2011.
- O7 The staff technology committee will annually review the library's technology planning in light of developments at partnering agencies such as Lincoln Trail Libraries System, Champaign Public Library, and the Illinois State Library (July); Parkland College and various units at the University of Illinois including the Library, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, CITES, Illinois Harvest, etc. (November); and the City of Urbana and Urbana School District (March). Ongoing.
- O8 The library will develop an inter-departmental working group to suggest and evaluate priorities for website development and to facilitate the adoption of emerging web tools. FY2011.

G. Infrastructure (backend)

Goal: The library will maintain a robust, reliable network infrastructure with sufficient throughput to stay ahead of demand for library services.

Objectives:

- O1 The IT manager will monitor the average and peak bandwidth use for fiber and will submit a summary report at staff technology committee meetings each July, November, and March and at the Board technology committee meeting each January. Ongoing.
- O2 The library will solicit reports from its wireless provider on the average number of daily users and percent of users who reach the library's contracted hotspot ceiling. The library will maintain a wireless capacity that meets the needs of 90% of its users. Ongoing.
- O3 The Board technology committee will annually review the potential need and cost for additional bandwidth or for bandwidth shaping software. Ongoing.
- O4 The IT manager will provide an inventory of network equipment for annual review by the Board technology committee each January. Ongoing.
- O5 The staff and Board will create a replacement cycle for network equipment. FY2011.
- O6 The library will investigate and recommend a new Local History Online platform. FY2011.
- O7 The IT manager will extend the capabilities of the current Local History Online platform to accommodate audio and video content. FY2010.
- O8 The staff and Board will review the need for an uninterrupted power supply in the server room. FY2011.
- O9 The staff and Board will review the library's data management practices and conduct a cost/benefit analysis of server hosting options. FY2011.
- O10 The staff and Board will evaluate the use of thin clients for its public computer facilities. FY2010.

H. Equipment and Software (end user)

Goal: The library will provide easy-to-use hardware and software to meet the needs of library users and staff.

Objectives:

- O1 The library will increase the number of parent and child Internet computers. FY2010.
- O2 For ease of public use, the library will provide uniform public scanners wherever possible. FY2011.
- O3 The library will provide Archives staff with a dedicated film scanner for photographic negatives. FY2011.
- O4 The library will review/alter the timing of virus and update scans to minimize impact on staff and public. FY2011.
- O5 The library will provide software to support adult learners and students at Urbana Adult Education and Parkland College, and distance education participants of Illinois colleges. The staff technology committee will review such needs each July, November, and March. Ongoing.
- O6 The library will provide software to facilitate access to online applications for employment and government programs. The staff technology committee will review such needs each July, November, and March. Ongoing.
- O7 All public computers of a given category will have identical software configuration. The staff technology committee will review the software configuration for possible changes within each department each July, November, and March. Ongoing.
- O8 The IT manager will maintain a library-wide inventory of end-user computers, including equipment age, warranty, model, processor, RAM, HD, and location within the library for all public and staff computers. The IT manager will submit this inventory to the Board technology committee for planning each January and to the administrative staff for State reports each July. Ongoing.
- O9 The staff and Board will monitor and review the current 4/5-year replacement cycle for staff and public computers. Ongoing.
- O10 The staff technology committee will review equipment requests for public checkout, for in-house public use, or for programming each July, November, and March. Ongoing.

- O11 The library will purchase a multi-disc cleaning/repair system for CDs and DVDs. FY2011.
- O12 The library will replace the Windows 98 Screen-Scan microfilm reader-printer in the Archives. FY2011.
- O13 The Archives will increase the number of reader-printers available to the public. FY2011.
- O14 The library will investigate options for the public to create Urbana Public Television programming onsite. FY2011.
- O15 The library will review the efficacy of the current staff email service. FY2011.
- O16 The library will investigate and implement software to facilitate scheduling of meetings. FY2011.
- O17 The library will install printing capabilities for wireless users. FY2011.
- O18 Staff will explore the possibility of e-readers for library users. FY2011.

I. LTLS Shared Automation System

Goal: The library will participate in a shared automation system and will advocate for enhanced features to improve staff efficiency and service to library users.

Objectives:

- O1 The library director will remain informed about LTLS automation developments, will attend LINC Policy Council meetings, and will seek Urbana staff appointment to critical committees. Ongoing.
- O2 In order to maintain a presence on the LTLS Board, the library will nominate one of its own Board members whenever an LTLS vacancy is available and Urbana is not represented. Ongoing.
- O3 The library will develop a plan for accumulating future migration costs. FY2011.
- O4 The staff and Board will review the technology needs of the shared automation system each July, focusing on features that affect patron service or staff efficiency. The staff and Board will create a list of desired features and will communicate that list as an addendum to the LTLS Annual Profile Summary submitted each October. Ongoing.
- O5 The staff and Board will keep abreast of impending statewide and regional library system changes and will assess their potential effect on the library's automation options. FY2011.

J. Public Services

Goal: The library staff will help library users take advantage of technology to meet their informational, educational, cultural, and recreational goals.

Objectives:

- O1 Each July the staff technology committee will review the Public Computer and Internet Access Policy. Ongoing.
- O2 The staff and Board will review the public fees for printing and copying. FY2011.
- O3 Staff will compile information about technology classes available in the community in order to provide the public with information on available resources, to develop needed resources at The Urbana Free Library, and to partner with other agencies as appropriate. FY2011.
- O4 The library will provide access to select databases on the OPACs. The staff technology committee will review such needs each July, November, and March. Ongoing.
- O5 The library will create separate and distinct launch pages for distinct public computer groups to highlight items of interest, online resources, and popular sites. FY2011.
- O6 The library will implement credit card payment online. FY2011.
- O7 The library will implement the room reservation module on the public event calendar. FY2011.
- O8 The library will investigate the feasibility of remote check-out for outreach events. FY2011.
- O9 Staff will explore opportunities to provide mobile, off-site technology instruction in order to provide convenience to library users and to broaden the library's technology reach to the non-user community. FY2011.
- O10 Staff will review library handouts on basic computer/Internet activities to update, to add topics, or to create lists of additional resources. The staff technology committee will review such needs each July, November, and March. Ongoing.
- O11 Staff will develop public technology courses on computer literacy, information literacy, and related topics of interest. FY2011.
- O12 Staff will continue development of a technology volunteer program in the lab. FY2011.
- O13 Staff will investigate the possibility of a circulating video game collection. FY2011.

K. Public Communication

Goal: The library will provide its public with information about the library and its services through engaging and varied points of access including web, phone, and public access media.

Objectives:

- O1 Staff will develop a working plan that establishes goals, guidelines, and assessment strategies for social media initiatives. Ongoing.
- O2 The library will create and distribute an electronic newsletter as an alternative or complement to its monthly print newsletter. FY2011.
- O3 The library will actively solicit and use email addresses (with an opt-out provision) in order to notify patrons of library news and events. FY2011.
- O4 The library will identify an accomplished web development professional whose services can be secured as a consultant when needed for website redevelopment. FY2011.
- O5 The library will rebuild its website with a robust content management system to support the collaborative and simultaneous publication of content created by staff and departments. FY2011.
- O6 The staff will have access to webpage hits to evaluate web communication. FY2010.
- O7 Staff will review the adequacy of the library phone system. During open hours, the public should receive no pre-recorded menus and no busy signals. Ongoing.
- O8 Staff will investigate the feasibility of library programming for public access television. FY2011.
- O9 Staff will create short video clips for promotional use on the library website and social media sites. FY2011.
- O10 In addition to online PDF reproductions of its print bibliographies and finding aids, the library will publish and promote the print content in digital form on the web. FY2011.
- O11 Digital content will be optimized for search engine retrieval and support equal access for people with disabilities. Ongoing.

L. Training and Competency

Goal: The library will enable its staff to grow professionally and to acquire technology skill sets which help them better serve library users.

Objectives:

- O1 Staff in each department will maintain a list of departmental technology competencies. Ongoing.
- O2 Each staff member will assess (with a supervisor) his/her own proficiencies in relation to the departmental tech competencies. FY2011.
- O3 In annual employee evaluations, supervisors will create individualized technology training goals for staff with more marked deficiencies. FY2011 / Ongoing.
- O4 Administrative staff will review library-wide technology training needs and will set priorities for meeting those needs. FY2011 / Ongoing.
- O5 The library will identify particular technology knowledge and expertise available in-house. To optimize staff recognition and professional growth, the library will utilize staff to teach co-workers whenever possible. FY2011 / Ongoing.
- O6 The library will establish a plan for the routine provision of identified library-wide or department-wide technology training. FY2011.

M. Budget

Goal: The library will commit sufficient budget to acquire and maintain hardware, software, and professional development necessary for improved technology services to library users.

Objectives:

- O1 The Board will authorize additional funds to hire a consultant to add Drupal functionality to the library's website. FY2011.
- O2 The library will reassess the FTE and competencies, and resulting wages, needed for web maintenance staff after the website redevelopment. FY2011.
- O3 The library will augment the budget to increase staff time allocated to service on the staff technology committee. FY2012.
- O4 The library will augment the budget to support staff training to meet technology competencies, including time for staff attendance and time for in-house staff to develop staff training curriculum. FY2012.
- O5 The staff and Board will create an equipment replacement fund for long-term, large expenses which cannot be met by the annual budget allocation. FY2012.
- O6 Staff will review e-rate cost-benefit in time to apply during the December/January window if desired. FY2011.

N. Evaluation

Goal: The library will regularly evaluate its technology goals and objectives in order to monitor progress and to respond to new developments.

Objectives:

- O1 The library will maintain a staff technology committee with representatives from every department. Ongoing.
- O2 The staff technology committee will meet each July, November, and March to review the Technology Plan for progress and to evaluate emerging technologies. Ongoing.
- O3 Each November, the staff technology committee will review and revise the Technology Plan to forward to the Board technology committee. Both committees will add notes to the plan to document outcomes, including completed objectives and objectives that are no longer desired. The documented plan will be archived. A newly revised and renamed plan with updated objectives will be forwarded to the Board for approval. Ongoing.
- O4 Each January the Board technology committee will formulate technology planning recommendations for the budget and will forward those recommendations to the Board finance committee. Ongoing.

Adopted: October 12, 2010