

The Urbana Free Library Technology Plan

FY2013 – FY2015

Approved by the Board August 14, 2012

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A. Introduction

This Technology Plan covers FY 2013 through FY2015, the period from July 2012 through June 2015.

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. In 2011, Lincoln Trail Libraries System merged with three other systems to become Illinois Heartland Library System, with the eventual plan to merge their automation systems. In December 2011, The Urbana Free Library and the Champaign Public Library left the LTLS automation system and migrated to a joint online CU Catalog utilizing the automation software of Polaris Library Systems.

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 over seventy-five public computers providing service in all departments, over fifty databases available in-house and remotely, and the circulation of downloadable materials.

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. At the end of December 2011, the overall size of Local History Online was 623,593 documents and 3,515,132 indexing attributes. In March 2012, Local History Online migrated to a new platform, the Fusion digital collection software by Polaris Library Systems.

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. The library moved from T1 to fiber access in September 2009.

E. Timeline of Routine Responsibilities

Library Board:

- Review / revise the Technology Plan. Consider technology needs to be included in budget planning. (January)

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. (July)
- Create list of enhancements to submit to Polaris Users Group. (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 survey for each department and a technology wish list on the web and in print. FY2013.
- O3 The library will request technology feedback when it conducts non-user focus groups. FY2013.
- 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 Staff will identify the technology interests of teen library users. FY2013.
- O6 The staff technology committee will evaluate the library's technology planning in light of developments at partnering agencies such as Champaign Public Library, Illinois Heartland Library System, and the Illinois State Library; Parkland College and various units at the University of Illinois including the Library, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, CITES, Illinois Harvest, etc.; and the City of Urbana and Urbana School District. Ongoing.
- O7 The library will maintain an inter-departmental working group to suggest and evaluate priorities for website development and to facilitate the adoption of emerging web tools. Ongoing.
- O8 The library will investigate a ticketing system for reporting and tracking IT issues. FY2013.

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 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 staff 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 each January. Ongoing.
- O5 The staff and Board will monitor the adequacy of network equipment and replace or update as needed. Ongoing.
- O6 The staff will monitor the need for an uninterrupted power supply in the server room. FY2013.
- O7 The staff and Board will review the library's data management practices and conduct a cost/benefit analysis of server hosting options. Ongoing.
- O8 The staff and Board will evaluate alternative configurations for its public computer infrastructure to improve hardware and software updates and their frequency. FY2013.
- O9 The library will strengthen the wireless coverage throughout the building and install additional nodes where needed. FY2013.
- O10 The library will review its data back-up procedures, including frequency, media, location, and usability of stored back-ups. FY2013.

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. FY2013.
- O2 The IT manager will alter the timing of virus and update scans to minimize impact on staff and public. FY2013.
- O3 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. Ongoing.
- O4 The library will provide software to facilitate access to online applications for employment and government programs. Ongoing.
- O5 All public computers of a given category will have identical software configuration. The staff technology committee will monitor the software configuration for possible changes within each department. Ongoing.
- O6 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 each January and to the administrative staff for State reports each July. Ongoing.
- O7 The staff and Board will monitor and review the current 4/5-year replacement cycle for staff and public computers. Ongoing.
- O8 The staff technology committee will review equipment requests for public checkout, for in-house public use, or for programming. Ongoing.
- O9 The Archives will monitor the need for additional reader-printers available to the public. FY2014.
- O10 The library will investigate options for the public to create Urbana Public Television programming onsite. FY2013.
- O11 The library will review the efficacy of the current staff email service. FY2013.
- O12 The library will investigate options available to provide printing capabilities for wireless users. FY2013.

- O13 Staff will explore options for providing e-readers for library users. FY2013.
- O14 The library will investigate the use of personal electronic devices to be loaned to patrons for in-house use. FY2013.
- O15 The library will investigate a ceiling-mounted digital projector available in the auditorium for public use. FY2013.
- O16 The library will explore the addition of listening stations for public use. FY2013.
- O17 The library will begin research and planning for a transition to RFID. FY2013.
- O18 The library will investigate an alternative to Steady State for security on public computers. FY2013.
- O19 The staff technology committee will monitor and recommend transitions to the next Windows platform and the next MS Office Suite upgrade. Ongoing.

I. Shared Automation Platform

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

Objectives:

- O1 The library will develop a plan for accumulating future migration costs. FY2014.
- O2 The staff will review the technology needs of the shared automation platform each July, focusing on features that affect patron service or staff efficiency. The staff will create a list of desired features and will communicate that list to the Polaris Users Group. Ongoing.
- O3 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. FY2013.
- O4 The staff will investigate methods to streamline interlibrary loan processing in Polaris. FY2013.
- O5 CU Catalog should be accessible by mobile devices. FY2013.
- O6 In structuring the PACs (public access catalogs) staff will ensure ease of movement between the CU Catalog and the Archives Catalog. FY2013.
- O7 Staff will evaluate and mitigate patron impact of the separation from the LINC catalog. FY2013.
- O8 Staff will evaluate Champaign and Urbana policy differences that may affect patron services. FY2013.
- O9 The library will implement the Polaris 4.1 upgrade. FY2013.
- O10 The library will implement online payment of charges in Polaris. FY2013.

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 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. Ongoing.
- O3 The library will provide access to select databases on the in-house PACs. The staff technology committee will review and make recommendations. Ongoing.
- O4 Departmental staff will analyze use statistics and review their database purchases annually. Ongoing
- O5 The library will consider separate and distinct launch pages for distinct public computer groups to highlight items of interest, online resources, and popular sites. FY2013.
- O6 The library will implement credit card payment online. FY2013.
- O7 The library will implement the room reservation module on the public event calendar. FY2013.
- O8 The library will investigate the feasibility of remote check-out and remote card registration for outreach events. FY2013.
- 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. FY2013.
- 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. Ongoing.
- O11 Staff will develop public technology courses on computer literacy, information literacy, and related topics of interest. Ongoing.
- O12 Staff will maintain a technology volunteer program in the lab. Ongoing. .

- O13 Staff will investigate the possibility of a circulating video game collection. FY2013.
- O14 Staff will experiment with alternate public computer lab rearrangements. FY2013.
- O15 Staff will continue to monitor the available options for e-book access in the library marketplace. Ongoing.
- O16 Staff will consider replacing the existing AV selection books with an electronic AV selection tool that integrates with the catalog. FY2013.
- O17 Staff will explore the problems and solutions to using the after-hours book pick-up. FY2013.

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 goals, guidelines, and assessment strategies for social media and digital services initiatives. Ongoing.
- O2 The library will create and distribute an electronic newsletter as an alternative or complement to its monthly print newsletter. FY2013.
- 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. FY2013.
- O4 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. FY2013.
- O5 The staff will have access to webpage hits to evaluate web communication. FY2013.
- O6 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.
- O7 Staff will create short video clips for promotional use on the library website and social media sites and public television. FY2013.
- O8 The library will publish and promote bibliographies and finding aids in digital form on the web, as well as providing such content in PDF and print formats. FY2013.
- O9 The library's website development will insure that digital content will be optimized for search engine retrieval. FY2013.
- O10 The library's website development will support equal access for people with disabilities. Staff will test the library's site for ADA-compliance. FY2013.

L. Training and Competency

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

Objectives:

- O1 Departments will review the list of departmental technology competencies each fall. Technology committee representatives will bring relevant objectives to the November technology meeting. Ongoing.
- O2 Each staff member will assess (with a supervisor) his/her own proficiencies in relation to the departmental tech competencies. FY2013.
- O3 In annual employee evaluations, supervisors will create individualized technology training goals for staff with more marked deficiencies. FY2013.
- O4 Administrative staff will review library-wide technology training needs and will set priorities for meeting those needs. 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. Ongoing.
- O6 The library's Learning Culture Committee will keep provide short lunch-hour presentations on tech topics on interest. Ongoing.
- O7 The library will identify and train staff who could serve as back-up for some basic IT functions. FY2013.

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. FY2013.
- O2 The library will reassess the FTE and competencies, and resulting wages, needed for web maintenance staff after the website redevelopment. FY2013.
- O3 The library will ensure budget support for staff training to meet technology competencies, including time for staff attendance and time for in-house staff to develop staff training curriculum. FY2013.
- O4 The staff and Board will create an equipment replacement fund for long-term, large expenses that cannot be met by the annual budget allocation. FY2014.
- O5 Staff will review e-rate cost-benefit in time to apply during the December/January window if desired. FY2013.
- O6 The library will monitor the need for IT support during evenings and weekends, as well as develop plans to enhance IT support long-term. Ongoing.
- O7 The library will ensure budget support to provide adequate bandwidth for staff and public services. Ongoing.
- O8 Staff will determine the short-and long-term costs of a transition to RFID. FY2013.
- O9 Staff will determine the costs for rearranging public computing facilities. FY2013.
- O10 Staff will investigate the costs of incorporating laptops and personal electronic devices for in-house use. FY2013.

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. Both staff and Board will contribute notes to the Technology 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 will formulate technology recommendations and will incorporate those recommendations in budget planning for the coming year. Ongoing.

Adopted: August 14, 2012