

MINITEX

Reference NOTES

A Program of the Minnesota Office of Higher Education and the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities

February 2009

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Trials Available for Proposed Statewide Resources!

Mary Parker

Attention libraries and schools in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota! The electronic resources listed at <http://www.minitex.umn.edu/exclude/rfp/> were submitted in response to the Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by the University of Minnesota on behalf of Minitex for licensing statewide access to electronic resources for Minnesota (i.e., ELM), North Dakota, and South Dakota. Although trial access to these resources will be available through at least April 3, 2009, the Minitex Electronic Information Resources (MEIR) Task Force needs your feedback no later than March 29.

Information about trial access, names of products, and links to vendor/product information are available. A link to our feedback form can be found at the bottom of each vendor section.

School media centers and libraries in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota may open this trial access to users.

As per the guidelines of the RFP, Minitex staff and/or MEIR Task Force members cannot answer questions or discuss products/vendors under consideration. While vendors may have submitted resource "packages" for consideration, please be aware that contracts may be awarded for individual products or for complete packages as offered.

Your feedback is important, so please complete an evaluation form for each of the resources you examine during the trial period. The MEIR Task Force will consider your feedback during the evaluation process on March 30- April 1.

Your participation will impact the selection of statewide resources.

Thank you for contribution to this important process!

The Secret(s) to Successful Library Programming

Matt Lee

Your library programming does a lot of leg work. It provides direct service to your patrons or students; it encourages the use of your library's resources; and, if done creatively, it broadens the reach of your library by drawing in new users. So, what are some strategies to optimize your library's programs, and how can you work creatively to help more people use your library? These were the questions taken up during the February "Soaring to Excellence" teleconference hosted by Minitex

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The MINITEX Library Information Network is a publicly supported network of academic, public, state agency, and special libraries working cooperatively to provide and improve library service to patrons in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

Reference. This teleconference series, conducted by DuPage University, provides access to speakers on key library topics, either online from your own computer or here on the U of MN campus or other host sites throughout the Minitex region. This month, experts Penny Mandziara and Kelly Watson spoke about creating dynamic library programming to youth, adults, and seniors in their session "Targeting the Ages: Programming that Hits the Mark."

You can view their full Program Workbook on the DuPage site (from dupagepress.com, click Soaring to Excellence 2009), which contains descriptions of many innovative and creative (not to mention reproducible) programs for library users of all ages. The session discussed many of these programs and included insights from the librarians who created and implemented them. Their experiences were varied, not surprisingly – but several key best practices seemed to thread throughout the conversations.

- Focus on interest areas (of your community and of your library staff)
- Create a program plan (to help visualize the process and allow your ideas to develop)
- Build in evaluation of some kind and don't be afraid to revise as you go
- Build programs around the ways in which your library is different from other libraries
- Build programs off of existing ones (i.e., "ala.org/everychild") and customize to your audience
- Build programs that shed new light on your library's space or resources or reputation or staff
- Forge partnerships – with internal staff, other libraries, and/or outside organizations
- Successful programs encourage participants to socialize with each other and/or help them feel comfortable in your library's space

So how can this help you "target the ages?" Use the above best practices in combination with the following key demographic trends to start a brainstorming session at your library to highlight programming ideas that speak to specific audiences.

For youth services – Balance creativity and activity with parental expectations. Use library programming to bring kids and family members together in unexpected ways.

For adult services – Because the adult category is so broad, it is important to provide programming to very specific niches (like moms or writers or crafters).

For senior programming – The most important trend in providing programs to this "somewhat elusive" and "often overlooked" group is to focus on bringing the program to the user.

The successful library programs highlighted during this teleconference were conducted by numerous types of libraries – from school to special to public – and focused on numerous types of library users – from kids to teens to adults. Each program planner experienced some unique challenges and capitalized on some unique opportunities along the way, but there was one thing that drew all of these varied programs together: fun. Successful library programs must be fun. So please, for the sake of your successful program, don't forget to have a good time. And read about how one MN library system is gaining national attention for their library programming in the **Spotlight on Libraries LARI's Library Links Program** below.

You can learn more about the next entry in the "Soaring to Excellence" series at <http://minitex.umn.edu/events/teleconferences/>.

Spotlight on Our Libraries: Legislative Reference Library Video Essay, Melanie Huggins's Opinion Piece, and LARI's Library Links Program

Beth Staats

There is a great video essay by David Gillette that appeared on Twin Cities Public Television Almanac at the Capital. He states that the library gives the legislators the "bionic" research assistance they need. So true! It was a great plug for the LRL and very entertaining. If you haven't seen it, be sure to check it out at <http://snipurl.com/c7122>.

If you haven't seen it yet, be sure to check out the opinion piece by Melanie Huggins of St. Paul Public Library, published in the February 15, 2009, issue of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*. Along with statistics on St. Paul Public Library usage she gives four answers to a question that merits serious discussion, "What can the library continue to do for our city when it needs us the most?" The article can be viewed at http://www.twincities.com/opinion/ci_11705016.

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Kudos to Kathy Fredette and all the Lake Aggasiz Regional Library staff and volunteers who have worked to make the Library Link Sites program a huge success! Look for the January/February issue of *Public Libraries* where there is a six page article about LARL's Library Links program entitled, "The Library Link Sites Success Story: Alive and thriving more than four years later." LARL has thirteen branches and serves approximately 135,000 people. Many of those folks live in "far-flung" rural areas of the seven-county region and were not reaping the benefits of public library access. The Library Links program set out to improve remote access for its underserved population that includes the elderly and young families. With the help of a Volunteer Coordinator in 2004 they were able to begin the process of "research, exploration, promotion, recruitment, and training" to make these library-community partnerships possible. It was decided that the communities would supply the "space, furnishings, volunteers, and publicity" and LARL would supply materials, computer access, delivery services, training, staff support, and a part-time site coordinator. Included in this article is a list of "Fourteen Steps to Successful Library Links Sites Program." The first step is to "develop the vision and promote it thoroughly" and the fourteenth step is to "build in flexibility for change" since each community is different. The twelve steps in between take you through the process that the hard-working LARL staff went through in creating Library Link Sites, which they received PLA's Highsmith Library Innovation Award for in 2008. In 2004 LARL began with three pilot sites and today have a total of ten.

Dogs Who Like a Good Story

Jennifer Hootman

As I was sitting down to page through my fresh, new copy of *Better Homes and Garden* with my two buddies (a loyal, playful Boston Terrier and a spry, loving Yorkie) lying on either side of me, I happened upon a terrific article that confirmed my long held belief that dogs love to hear a good story!

The article, *See Spot Read*, in the March 2009 issue of *Better Homes and Garden* highlights the story of a mother whose son with learning disabilities was experiencing difficulty in learning to read.

Unfortunately, her efforts to use phonics books with him were going nowhere, and he grew frustrated by not remembering what he had learned the day



before. She didn't want her son to associate reading with a bad experience. Struggling with her child's literacy, the mother and her children went to the library and saw something that changed their lives for the better – a child lying next to a dog reading a book aloud while petting the animal. Their library was running a program called *Read to Rover*.

The intent of these *Read to Rover* programs is to provide trained therapy dogs to be a one-on-one, noncritical listener as the child reads aloud a book. These therapy dogs are trained to lie or sit quietly and to accept anyone's touch. The mother in this story knew her son loved dogs and thought this program could encourage him to get back to the phonics books. Indeed, the program worked! The boy and his mother selected various books and phonics materials practicing throughout the week. After he practiced, he then read them to the dog at the library. He was so excited to read to the dog, that he is now not only motivated to practice reading but also enjoying it.

According to the *See Spot Read* article, there are a number of public libraries throughout the U.S. that provide this kind of program calling it *Read to Rover*, *Dog Day Afternoons*, or *Paws to Read*. These programs apparently were inspired by *Reading Education Assistance Dogs* (R.E.A.D) program which was launched in 1999 by the Intermountain Therapy Animals of Salt Lake City. For more information on the R.E.A.D program, see: <http://www.therapyanimals.org/read/>. Are you providing a program like this in your library? If so, we'd love to hear about it!

Outreach vs. Reaching Out: Hi, I'm Carla, and I'll be your personal librarian today

Carla Pfabl

Recently, I read an article from an ACRLog, *Getting Students To Ask For Help Is A Higher Education Challenge*, <http://tinyurl.com/bgree2>, about how students don't typically ask for help. Don't let the title throw you off. This article applies to more than just higher education – it is for any librarian working with or wanting to connect with any user because in a web-based world, even the in-person patron can be an online patron/learner. The article suggests, based on an earlier article published in *RUSA's Reference & User Services Quarterly*, "Subject Searching Success: Transaction Logs, Patron Perceptions, and Implications for Library Instruction," Fall 2008, and commentary from a blog post by Ricklibrarian in December 2008, that students don't think of the library as a place to ask for help. Why is that? The ACRLog article goes on to say that many online learners drop out before finishing a single course and without ever asking for help, not just research help, not just from the library, but for any aspect of school life.

We can all speculate as to why this occurs, and I suspect that it is not uncommon in the public library arena as well. People have a tendency to be hesitant to ask for help. Librarians try to make the environment open to asking questions and assisting patrons whenever possible, but we have always taken a "sit back and wait for the patron to come to us" stance. We do this because it's hard to anticipate need, we don't want to discourage use, we don't want to scare away patrons.

There are ways we can be subtle about seeking out patrons at point of need. We have been looking at ways to achieve this for some time now and technology is finally catching up with our ideas. One example is to embed links to your "Ask a Librarian" service or services page on no-result pages of online catalog searches and within proprietary databases (if allowed). We can also make our presence known through social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter, and so on. We can make our presence known through social networking, but are we still just waiting for the patron to come to us? As the ACRLog article suggests, we need to build a personal relationship with the patron, "gain credibility as a member of a student's network." We can begin by using these steps above, but it will also be helpful to use some tried and true outreach methods

such as going into the classroom, going to town hall or chamber of commerce meetings, hosting classes and business meetings in your library, adding your contact information, including IM and social network sites to syllabi, WebCT sites, handouts, and whatever else patrons will take away. Making those connections allows you to create the relationship and join in the networks surrounding those people.

To build on this idea, I recently asked a few librarians to share their stories of how they connect with their users. What types of access points do they use for connecting with their patrons through the library domain and outside of the library domain? Most librarians responded saying that they aren't currently doing anything but have thought about or are planning on doing something along this line. What most librarians are currently doing is advertising an individual staff page with a host of various contact points listed. Most librarians confessed that they get very little contacts from patrons via their IM's listed on the page. Some have thought about adding a MeeboMe-type chat window on their web pages but none have implemented this yet. Others rely on a unit or departmental chat window for contact via online source, and others are looking at more active types of embedding their name and contact information with groups such as adding IM or chat window to a unit blog, course web page such as a WebCT page, and/or an external web page.

Not one librarian mentioned using a social networking site or non-library domain for the purpose of library contact. Are we being web-shy or just don't see how to fit this in? Perhaps we are just as hesitant to put ourselves out there to patrons as patrons are to ask for help. How can we reach out of our library domain to connect with patrons at a library-wide or library-service level or even at the librarian level? Are we making the connections and contacts with patrons through blogs and social networking sites? According to the librarians I spoke with, no. But that doesn't mean we should stop using these avenues. If you want some ideas on connecting with patrons through Facebook, I suggest reading David Lee King's blog post on experimenting with your Facebook page: <http://tinyurl.com/52q9n4>. Also, as Jessamyn West points out (<http://tinyurl.com/bjgofv>), King's Digital Branch Style Guide is a must read:

<http://tinyurl.com/az9aqb>, for policies and structure regarding a library/librarian blog. It's important that patrons identify the help and research librarians provide as part of the library but that doesn't necessarily mean the help must come via the library website.

Marketing to the Irrational People Who Don't Use Your Library

Matt Lee

It doesn't make any sense to avoid using a library. You know that, and I know that. Every library offers resources that are already paid for that can make a person's life better, their decisions wiser, and their free time more enjoyably spent. So, why then aren't libraries used by every rational person? Seth Godin, a marketing consultant and author, thinks it's because customers are irrational:

http://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog/2009/02/the-rational-marketer-and-the-irrational-customer.html. You can tell them all about how your library will save them money and time and you can go into great detail about the benefits you offer – but customers on the whole don't care about that. What they care about is what their friends and family think, or the hassle of going out of their way to get a library card, or the embarrassment of not knowing how to find a book or article. Relatively little things. Relatively irrational things when compared to all the tangible benefits libraries offer, but things that deter new library users nonetheless – which means that we might need to be more irrational when reaching out to new patrons or students or clients. We might need to change the focus from what our library offers, to what our potential customers want.

So what's the best way to tell potential customers that your library has an easy way to find books or articles, or a hassle-free library card application process, or that their friends and family are already using the library? Well, when you're pondering that question, it might be helpful to hear actual stories about different marketing tools from businesses that have used them. The feedback contained in Marketing Sherpa's 2009 Marketing Wisdom (<http://www.marketingsherpa.com/Wisdom2009.pdf>) report can help you identify outreach pitfalls to avoid and opportunities to engage. What are proven ways to reach customers by email? What 2.0 tools have garnered marketing success for businesses? How can search engine marketing, mobile marketing, and web design increase customer involvement? You'll find insight into these topics and more with the Marketing Sherpa report.

Humans are not logic-machines. We're often motivated by insecurity, or whimsy, or our peers rather than the cold, hard facts. Marketers use this to their advantage, and so, too, can libraries.

Registration is now OPEN!

The **Library Technology Conference 2009** will be held March 18-19, 2009, on the campus of Macalester College, St. Paul, MN. To register, go to <https://www.minitex.umn.edu/events/conferences/libTech2009.aspx>.

The Library Technology Conference is in its second year and grew out of the very successful Midwest Library Technology conference held in May 2008. That event attracted participants from academic, public, special and K-12 school libraries from five upper midwest states. This year's conference is again intended to provide an opportunity for librarians from around the region and the country to discuss the technologies that are affecting library services; to see examples of what libraries are doing with these technologies; and to provide a venue where participants can learn specific skills or knowledge that they can take back and adapt for use within their own libraries.

In addition to more than 40 sessions and hands-on workshops on a wide variety of technology-related topics impacting libraries, we are very pleased that **Eric Lease Morgan** and **Stacey Greenwell** will be joining us as keynote speakers. Eric, a frequent contributor to ALA/LITA technology trends and Head of Digital Access and Information Architecture at University of Notre Dame, is well known as a leader on library technology issues. Stacey helped to plan and is now head of "The Hub" - the University of Kentucky's Information Commons - and will speak on how all types of libraries can incorporate 'information commons' concepts into their library and will share her experiences around planning technology/learning 'spaces' in libraries.

For more information, visit the conference web site at <http://www.macalester.edu/library/libtechconference/>

MINITEX is pleased to make available the following teleconference via live streaming!

Sunshine Week 2009 -
Event Information



Friday, March 20, 2009,
12 - 1:30 PM (CST)

A panel of experts from around the country will kick off a lively discussion from Washington, DC about open government and secrecy - the problems, the impact on communities, and what the public can do.

This year's event, "Opening Doors: Finding the Keys to Government Information" will feature two panels: one consisting of Congressional and Administration policy-makers who will discuss how the government and the public can make the federal government more open and one consisting of individuals with expertise in making government information available in a useful format online.

Fee: No charge; **Registration:** Not required (though there will be a short form to fill out prior to downloading the streaming video)
Stream the teleconference on your desktop! The link will be available at least 24 hours prior to the event at the 2009 Sunshine Week Event Page: <http://www.openthegovernment.org/article/articleview/353/>

During the teleconference, feel free to e-mail or call in any questions you may have for the panel. Use the above link to make sure your computer has all the necessary software at least one day before the event.

If you cannot view the program live, there will be an archived version on the Sunshine Week website or you can borrow a DVD copy from Minitex at: <https://www.minitex.umn.edu/events/teleconferences/checkout.aspx>

WorldCat.org on Your Phone

Jennifer Hootman



OCLC launched a pilot program January 18th which will run through June 2009. The pilot brings WorldCat.org to handheld communication devices such as mobile phones and PDAs. The goal is to give users a "local" experience – to make accessible all open WorldCat records on the user's mobile device. WorldCat Mobile users will be able to find local library materials, a map to the loca-

tion, and the option to call that library which is all made possible by global positioning capabilities found in most smartphones and PDAs. Currently, known item searching – title and author – only is available through this pilot. Thus, this program is best suited for finding rather than searching. OCLC hopes to increase library visibility and direct users to their local libraries through WorldCat Mobile. This pilot program was created in collaboration with Boopsie, Inc., a software developer for mobile and cellular devices. For more information on the pilot including a list of compatible devices, see: <http://www.worldcat.org/mobile>. To download and try out WorldCat Mobile, see: <http://worldcat.org/m/>. If you give the pilot a try, OCLC would like to hear about your experience and any suggestions you may have by e-mailing: worldcatmobilepilot@oclc.org and cc Minitex Reference at mtxref@umn.edu.

On a related note and just published in OCLC Abstracts (March 2, 2009, v. 12, n. 8), the article, *Light PC Internet Users are 30 Percent More Likely than Heavy PC Internet Users to Access Mobile Internet Content*, highlights results of comScore, Inc.'s study of PC and mobile Internet users in the U.S. Their study found that 15.2% of "light" PC Internet users (viewing an average of 1,104 pages per month) accessed information on their mobile devices at a minimum of once a week while a lesser number of "heavy" (viewing an average of 6,701 pages per month) PC Internet users, 11.7%, accessed the Internet on their mobile devices. The number of mobile Internet users are on a significant rise. Is your library targeting mobile Internet users? If so, let us know. We'd love to hear about your outreach efforts to this segment of the population.



Minitex Reference Services ELM Webinars

Here is the list of upcoming Minitex Reference Services ELM Webinars. Register now because they fill up fast! For more information on these and other webinars, or to register, go to <http://www.minitex.umn.edu/events/training/webinars.asp>.

In memory of and a tribute to...

We are saddened by the loss of our colleague, Jane Engh, and her husband Helmer (Bud) last week. Our fondness of and respect for her and the impact she had on reference services in Minnesota are clear in the monikers we and those she touched use, "my Jane," "our Jane Engh," "Ms. Reference Minnesota."

While Regional Reference Librarian for Traverse des Sioux (TdS) Library System for many years, Jane referred reference referrals to Minitex Reference Services. Questions referred from Jane felt like the proverbial "needles in the haystack" for us. By the time they came to us, she had exhausted most, if not all, conceivable resources. Nevertheless, she was unflagging in her efforts to find the answers needed by her patrons and forwarded these challenging questions to us.

In exchange for office space and the use of its collection, Jane spent a quarter of her time working on the reference desk of Minnesota State University, Mankato. Without a doubt, she brought the same high standard of service and reference expertise to the needs of students, faculty, and staff as she did for her public library patrons.

Jane was instrumental in developing and writing materials for Minnesota Opportunities for Reference Excellence (M.O.R.E.). (This innovative program was a model for Minnesota Opportunities for Technical Services Excellence (M.O.T.S.E.)) Jane trained hundreds of front-line staff in the behaviors, skills, and tools needed to provide the highest level of reference service.

Although Jane retired in 2002, her influence on those of us privileged to know, work, or learn from her endures. We extend our condolences to her family and many friends and colleagues.

EBooks & NetLibrary

April 6: 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

April 28: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Academic Search Premier Advanced

March 23: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

April 10: 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

May 5: 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Web Page Creators Free of Cost and Code

March 12: 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

April 23: 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

WorldCat

March 13: 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

April 14: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

ProQuest Newsstand Complete

March 16: 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

April 13: 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Business Source Premier

March 24: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

April 20: 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Gale K12 and PowerSearch

March 25: 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

April 2: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.



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The Institute of Museum and Library Services, a Federal agency that fosters innovation, leadership, and a lifetime of learning, and State Library Services & School Technology, the Minnesota state library agency, supports MINITEX Reference Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).

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Permission to reprint with appropriate acknowledgement is granted.

 Printed on recycled and recyclable paper with 10 percent postconsumer material.

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A Program of the Minnesota Higher Education Services Office at the University of Minnesota