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Building a Cross-Institutional Infrastructure for Technical Services: The OhioLINK CollaboraTeS Project

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Reinventing OhioLINK 2006-2009

- After 20 years OhioLINK reassessed its model in light of economic, technological and global issues
- Priority service areas identified:
 - Improve our electronic information delivery systems to connect users to needed information effectively
 - Optimize content availability statewide with sustainable economic models



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CollaboraTeS grew out of a four year process of “Reinventing OhioLINK” beginning in 2006 through 2009. In 2009 the initiative became OhioLINK 2.0 – following the cultural model of remaking contemporary American life.

CollaboraTeS emerged from a long process of committee work and assessment and is one among many of the new initiatives being undertaken by OhioLINK libraries. OhioLINK is changing, slowly, but surely.

[read slide points about service areas]




More Priority Service Areas

- Look as broadly as possible across all operations to be more effective and more efficient. Use group action if it ensures a highly effective and efficient outcome
- Maximize our resources, efficiency and effectiveness to the state through efforts to obtain grants and leverage our resources and grant possibilities through partnerships with Ohio public and school libraries, public agencies and business



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How did CollaboraTeS Emerge?

OhioLINK vision assessment in 2007

Increase the cost-effectiveness of the USO college and university libraries by collaboratively and collectively managing the growing physical & electronic collections

- Minimizing the long-term capital and operating costs of storing, preserving and providing improved access to current and future library materials
- Implementing centrally new software tools for information management and access that can be shared and utilized at all campuses
- Coordinating library operations across Ohio to expand cost efficiencies and savings
- Collaborating with other Ohio information dependent groups (e.g. public libraries, K-12, and business incubators) to enhance the quality of education, research, and economic development beyond OhioLINK's core constituencies



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In 2007 Tom Sanville, OhioLINK's former director, outlined a new vision

- OhioLINK can enable the USO to be a global leader in research that generates robust economic development
- OhioLINK can enable the USO to maximize accessibility to higher education
- OhioLINK can increase the cost-effectiveness of the USO college and university libraries by collaboratively and collectively managing the growing physical and electronic collections

It is the third point that lead to exploration of opportunities in the area of technical services. Many of the issues focused on cost reduction and reduction of duplication among campuses.

[read highlighted points]


Upon hearing these lofty objectives, many of us were uncertain what that meant on the ground among the



DMSC Taskforces

(Database Management & Standards Committee)

- Metadata strategies for the contemporary consortia environment
- Group Technical Services Activities
- Central Catalog Changes
- Transforming access to Library Services
- EAD archival documents repository
- Coordinated Depositories
- Statewide Electronic Requesting and Delivery of ILL Paper Article Requests



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Twenty taskforces were formed and given charges to explore every aspect of OhioLINK library services. In the technical services area, DMSC, or the Database Management and Standards Committee, participated in seven taskforces.




At About the Same Time...

- DMSC was discussing reports from the field (e.g. Calhoun's *The Changing Nature of the Catalog...*)
- Trying to discern the meaning and impact of "reinventing OhioLINK"
- Defining concepts we believed should be addressed in "reinventing OhioLINK"
- Overall, it was a time of uncertainty




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On a parallel track, DMSC was trying to make sure that the technical services voices were heard during the changes.




Reinventing DMSC

- From various taskforce reports, DMSC identified important technical services activities -- DMSC Action Plan (June 2008)
- Among the initiatives (that we could do something about):
 - Create an Ohio NACO Funnel
 - Identify cataloging resources in OhioLINK




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DMSC entered a formal process of reinventing itself. Magda el-Sherbini recommended that DMSC set up a small group to work on strategic initiatives for DMSC. The group appointed Barbara Strauss, Magda el-Sherbini and Margaret Maurer to do this work. They agreed to go through the individual task force reports and tease out doable things for DMSC.



Group Technical Services

- Definition: Aggregating or centralizing technical services activities
- Based on the charge for Group Technical Services, demonstration projects were needed
- “Coalition of the Willing” or “Group TS2” A self-selected group of OhioLINK libraries examining how a cooperative technical services operation can be put in place as soon as practical.



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Meantime, back at OhioLINK the Group Technical Services activities were formed.

Definition: Aggregating or centralizing technical services activities

Benefits Expected:

Cost savings through staffing efficiencies and discounts

Greater standardization among member activities

Reduce duplication

Improved expertise for libraries who have few staff resources for technical services now

Action/Analysis Required to Make a Decision:

Investigate group acquisitions ordering.

Investigate centralized cataloging and/or processing.

Investigate new models for authority control.


Investigate group serials check-in.

Investigate ways to catalog unique local collections of interest to consortial community.

Evaluate whether group and centralized activities would be cost-effective versus current costs of the group, taking into account libraries' current cost recovery through OCLC via Enhance, BIBCO, and NACO activities.


Reassess our relationship with OCLC and with other vendors in light of proposed changes.

Compile cost sharing proposals, specifications, and sample workflow routines.



Projects

- Music scores cataloging (Cleveland State, YSU)
- Original cataloging (Denison/Kenyon, BGSU) (WSU, Univ. of Dayton)
- CJK and Arabic cataloging (Univ. of Cincinnati and Cleveland State, OSU)
- Special collections cataloging (Univ. of Dayton, OSU)
- GOBI / PromptCat / Millennium workflow consultation (Belmont, Univ. of Akron)
- Electronic record loading and authority control assistance (Belmont, YSU)



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The demonstration projects that came out of this effort included:




Recommendations: Expertise

- Technical Services personnel have expert knowledge of how metadata describing local and OhioLINK collections are encoded in the online catalog. This knowledge is essential when assessing options for improving public access for local constituent groups. It also is critical when there is a need to extract reports from the catalog to support local and cooperative collection development and management activities.



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At the end of a long and complicated process, a lengthy report was issued. I would like to share with you the portion that is at the core of the presentation today – that is, identifying expertise.

At the beginning of the recommendations on expertise we find this significant statement:



Recommendations

- Use technology to enable new models of collaboration that coordinate expertise *virtually for greater efficiency without requiring physical relocation of expertise* away from local sites. For example, virtual statewide or regional hubs could be formed to handle certain functions, formats, languages, or subject areas (a hub being defined as a concentration of expertise and capacity). There could be hybrid models for some types of work as well, with certain physical sites coordinating virtually with experts around the state.



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There are five recommendations...





Recommendations

- The composition of the hubs must be flexible to accommodate changes that affect the availability of expertise and capacity at OhioLINK sites.
- To realize the greatest benefit from such new collaborative arrangements, an individual or group (e.g., DMSC) should be given responsibility for facilitating their establishment and for coordinating and supporting them on an ongoing basis.




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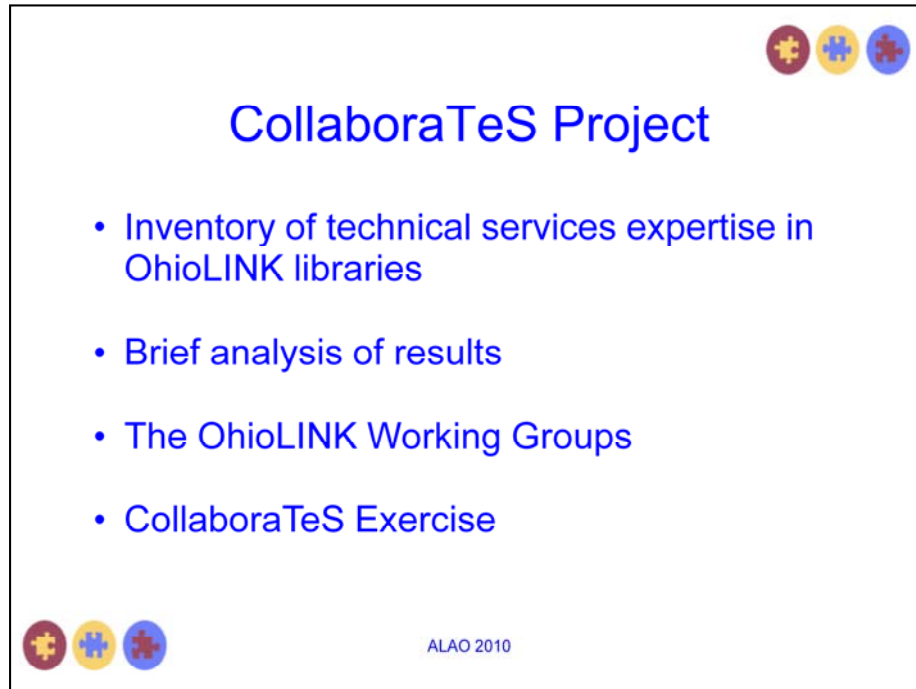
Recommendations

- Use the data from the recent DMSC survey of catalog expertise to identify needed hubs related to cataloging and potential participants.
- Create and share documentation of the various methods used by GTS2 pilot participants for one site to accomplish cataloging for another site (e.g., for setting OCLC holdings, transferring catalog source information and completed records, receiving compensation, etc.)



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With this somewhat lengthy description of the context for CollaboraTeS, I would like to turn this presentation to Margaret Maurer to explore the specifics of the project.



The slide features a title 'CollaboraTeS Project' in blue text at the top center. Below the title is a bulleted list of four items: 'Inventory of technical services expertise in OhioLINK libraries', 'Brief analysis of results', 'The OhioLINK Working Groups', and 'CollaboraTeS Exercise'. The slide is decorated with three puzzle piece icons in the top right and bottom left corners. The text 'ALAO 2010' is located in the bottom right corner of the slide area.

Thank you Barbara.

Hello and Welcome. I am Margaret Maurer....


This is an outline of the remainder of the presentation today.

Today I get to talk to you about an exciting new project that OhioLINK has initiated: the CollaboraTeS Project. While rooted in the planning process described by Barbara, this project is anticipated to be long term, and experimental.

The CollaboraTeS Project works to foster collaboration among OhioLINK technical services departments by providing a set of supportive tools, and by working state-wide to help OhioLINK libraries create collaborative technical services opportunities. I see it as the natural extension of the cooperative collection building that OhioLINK libraries have been participating in.


Libraries have always collaborated. But CollaboraTeS focuses on applying basic management techniques to inter-institutional projects—taking the contract cataloging model into a new non-profit environment.

OhioLINK libraries have experience working with each other to build collections and automation systems. We also have experience



Initial CollaboraTeS Inventory

- Inventory technical services expertise
- Institutional willingness to share / barter / contract that expertise
- Nature of work needed
- Does the nature of the institution matter?



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In October 2008 OhioLINK's Database Management and Standards Committee charged Barbara and I with creating a survey to be administered to OhioLINK institutions. In order to do this we invited Julie Gedeon, The Coordinator of Assessment at Kent State, to assist in survey design and analysis.

The first step, was to inventory expertise. We were also asked to gage institutional willingness to share / barter / contract that expertise with other OhioLINK libraries. DMSC also wanted to know the nature of expertise that was needed by specific institutions. It's not about what everyone has, it's about what they are willing to admit they have, and what they are willing to share, barter or sell on contract.

They recommended that rather than defining costs and detailing relationships at the point of survey, that we instead only ask about the nature of the reciprocation. Details of the remuneration could be determined later between the two institutions, perhaps using some of the other tools on the CollaboraTeS page.

They also charged us with creating an environment where every OhioLINK library can access the expertise, whether or not they can reciprocate.

Timeline



- Oct 2008. Charged to create inventory
- Nov 2008—April 2009. Worked to design survey instrument. Tested survey instrument
- May 2009. Released survey to OhioLINK libraries
- Aug 2009. Submitted preliminary results to DMSC
- Nov 2009. CollaboraTeS spreadsheet is up on OhioLINK Web page



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We've been at this since October 2008 when we were charged to create the inventory.

The page has been up since last November.

Now I'm going to hand the conversation over to Julie.



Surveyed for Expertise in

- Languages
- Resource formats (DVDs, e-books, etc.)
- Cataloging schema and metadata standards
- Technologies
- OCLC products and services
- Participation in PCC programs




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Thank you, Margaret.


This is a list of the categories for which we asked participants to indicate expertise, need, and willingness to share

We also asked for contact information



Who Responded to the Survey?

- Sent survey to 95 institutions
- Received 41 responses
- 43.16% response rate
- 31.58% participation rate in the online tool



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As you can see here we had a 43.16% response rate, but some of those institutions responding by opting-out of the directory. We therefore ended up with a 31.58% participation rate by OhioLINK institutions in the online tool. Not terrific, but a start.

We think the participation rate was lower than it eventually will be because people had a hard time envisioning what we were asking them to participate in. Another theory is that people might not want to admit they have excess capacity in tight times.

By far we had many more responses indicating that they had expertise, than that indicated they needed expertise. This was not what we expected.



OhioLINK Libraries that have Language Expertise



- 19 institutions indicated they had language expertise in 33 languages
- 75 language entries in total
 - 24% of these were one-offs (18)



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We struggled with how to ask people about languages, finally landing on a scheme to group languages by family and then to ask libraries to identify the language within that family. Consequently the specificity of the responses was all not consistent. For example, some responders specifically stated they had Chinese, but others just marked CJK. Also, people selected our examples more frequently than they thought up their own answers. We did end up with a base list of languages to use into the future.

18 institutions identified themselves as having a language that no other institution had – 24% of the responses to this question.




OhioLINK Libraries that Need Language Expertise

- 15 institutions indicated they needed language expertise in 24 languages
- 47 language entries in total
- 11% of those who reported needing specific language expertise areas only needed transliteration. 9% needed complete cataloging




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Bibliographic knowledge of languages represented a modestly large area of need, but clearly these numbers are lower than the haves were. This is the beginning of a trend you will see throughout these results—libraries consistently admitted having more expertise than they indicated they needed.



Which Languages are Needed?

| <u>Language</u> | <u>Needed By</u> |
|---|------------------|
| Arabic | 6 |
| Chinese & CJK | 5 |
| Indic languages | 4 |
| African and Slavic | 3 |
| Greek, Japanese and Nordic | 2 |
| 15 other languages needed by at least 1 library | |




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Languages listed here are often some of the hardest to supply when cataloging.

Some of the same problems with specificity were apparent here as well. At first glance Arabic seems to be the most needed language, but Chinese and CJK are both needed by 5 libraries, for a total of 10 libraries.


While some languages were needed more than others, clearly a lot of languages were needed by only one library.



OhioLINK Libraries with Format and Schema Expertise



- 34 institutions indicated they had format and schema expertise in 49 areas
- 454 format and schema entries in total
- Admitted expertise in the 29 areas we asked about plus an additional 20 areas



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This section gave responders much less opportunity to input their own ideas as we provided many more response options.

OhioLINK libraries also admitted to having wide array of expertise



Most Frequent Format / Schema


- Print Monographs – 31
- Print Continuing Resources – 24
- Videorecordings – 23
- Ebooks – 22
- Electronic Continuing Resources – 20
- LC Classification – 20
- LCSH subject analysis – 20



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23

These are the formats and schemas that responding libraries most frequently indicated they had expertise in.



Need Format and Schema Expertise


- 14 institutions indicated they needed format and schema expertise in 30 areas
- 59 format and schema entries in total
- 1 institution indicated it needed help with 23 different formats and schemas



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As you might expect, libraries tended to need more specialized formats such as maps and scores. Fewer libraries needed monographs and print continuing resources.

Assistance with educational metadata, EADs, ETD cataloging, MeSh, and rare book and sound recording cataloging all were needed by 3 libraries.



OhioLINK Libraries that had Subject Expertise

- 17 institutions indicated they had subject expertise in 27 subject areas
- 43 subject entries in total



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Ironically, the subject section of the survey allowed people the most freedom regarding what they entered. We struggled with how to ask people about subjects because the response options provided do influence people’s responses—at one point we toyed with the idea of finding a way to incorporate the entire LCSH into the survey. Eventually we provided them blanks to fill in. As with languages we hope to end up with a base list of subjects to use in future work. The 27 subject areas ranged from Archaeology to Turkey. Subject specificity ranged widely, in part due to the survey format. For example, one library would indicate they had “literature” subject expertise and another would indicate they had “literature—in English” subject expertise.



OhioLINK Libraries that have Technological Expertise



- 23 institutions indicated they had technological expertise in 10 areas
- 100 technological entries in total



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Libraries most frequently reported having expertise of the batch loading of records—not surprising for OhioLINK institutions due to cooperative collection efforts. But knowledge of batch modification of records and serials holdings records weren't far behind.



Need Technological Expertise

- 8 institutions indicated that they needed expertise in 10 unique technological areas
- 19 technological expertise entries in total
- Knowledge of ERM management and the use of Perl Scripts were most needed



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There was more specific demand for help with technologies, although it's possible that was due to the format of the survey: it was very easy for us to develop a short and specific list of technologies.

3 libraries needed ERM management expertise and 3 libraries wanted help using Perl scripts to customize reports.




OhioLINK Libraries that Have Experience with OCLC® Products and Services

- 19 institutions indicated they had expertise with 8 OCLC products and services
- 35 OCLC products and services entries in total




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It's encouraging that 15 of the 19 OhioLINK institutions were willing to share or barter information about some OCLC product or service.



Need OCLC Products and Services Expertise

- 6 institutions indicated they needed expertise with 4 OCLC products and services
- 13 OCLC product and service entries in total



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Again, the list in this section was very specific and thus probably easier for libraries to clearly indicate where they had needs.

Needs were pretty evenly distributed between Batch Reclamation, CONTENTdm, PromptCat Profiling and Regular Enhance Experience.



Overall Willingness to Share

| Area | Willing to Barter / Share | Willing to do on Contract | Not Willing to Share |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Languages | 45% | 16% | 39% |
| Format / Schema | 16% | 10% | 74% |
| Subjects | 37% | 14% | 49% |
| Technologies | 18% | 5% | 77% |
| OCLC Products | 43% | 9% | 49% |



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Each row here represents a category for responses on the survey. So, for example, in the languages row, 45% of those that responded that they had expertise in languages were willing to share or barter that expertise for at least one language, 16 percent were willing to do the work on a contract basis—but 39% were not willing to share the expertise they identified.

We seem much less willing to share formats, schemas and technologies than we do languages.

It will be interesting to see how these percentages change through time as the collaborates project works to increase libraries' familiarity with doing work directly for each other, and as we grow the tools to support that growth—which is a nice segue into the next part of the presentation.



Some Things Easier to Share

- Reluctance to take on other people's work if you're under the threat of being downsized
- Comfort levels for in-house versus do work for others
- What role do local practices play?
- Technology
- Everyone outsources something



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Some things are easier to share than others. Perhaps there is a reluctance to take on other people's work if you're under the threat of being downsized


Libraries' comfort levels for in-house work may be different than when thinking about doing work for others

– For some categories people are comfortable enough with their own expertise level to do the work in-house, but maybe not share that level with others. False modesty might play a role here.

What role do local practices play? We all do things in a specific way to one degree or another—and are these a barrier to collaboration?


We're not yet really in a cooperative environment regarding the logistics of our work. The technology doesn't make it very easy to do this work for each other, what with sharing OCLC authorizations, logging onto each others' systems, etc.

It's also important to remember that everyone outsources something—that safety valve exists in our systems already.



Some findings

- That more libraries admitted to having expertise than admitted to needing it
- Libraries having expertise were more willing to share or barter than were willing to do work on contract
- That smaller libraries also offered expertise
- Hard to say if collectively OhioLINK libraries had expertise in all areas




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We found that more libraries admitted to having expertise than admitted to needing it—this was one of the strongest findings, and it was across the board.

There was also an unanticipated finding: Many more libraries who had expertise were willing to barter or share that expertise than were willing to do work for each other on contract. I wonder how future CollaboraTeS work will impact these findings?


Small libraries did offer expertise, depending on the area. They offered to share / barter / contract in the areas of languages and formats. This was less true for subjects and technologies. Libraries of all sizes were able to offer something.

Now Margaret will conclude the presentation and get us started on the exercise.



OhioLINK Libraries and CollaboraTeS

- Foster collaboration among OhioLINK technical services departments
- Provide a set of supportive tools
 - Inventory of technical services expertise
 - Project models
 - Cost models
 - Memorandums of understanding




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So now OhioLINK libraries know quite a bit more about who has what and is willing to share.


The second part of the collaboration process is trying to figure out how to manage those collaborations.

This is the direction our work is moving in now. We are beginning to build the supportive materials that will foster increased collaboration between OhioLINK technical services departments. These management tools can include project or workflow models, cost models, sample memoranda of understanding and other example documents and best practices.



Using the CollaboraTeS Web Page to Identify...

- Libraries that have expertise that is lacked locally
- Libraries that need expertise that is available locally
- Contact information
- Other supportive tools
- Links to research on other collaborations

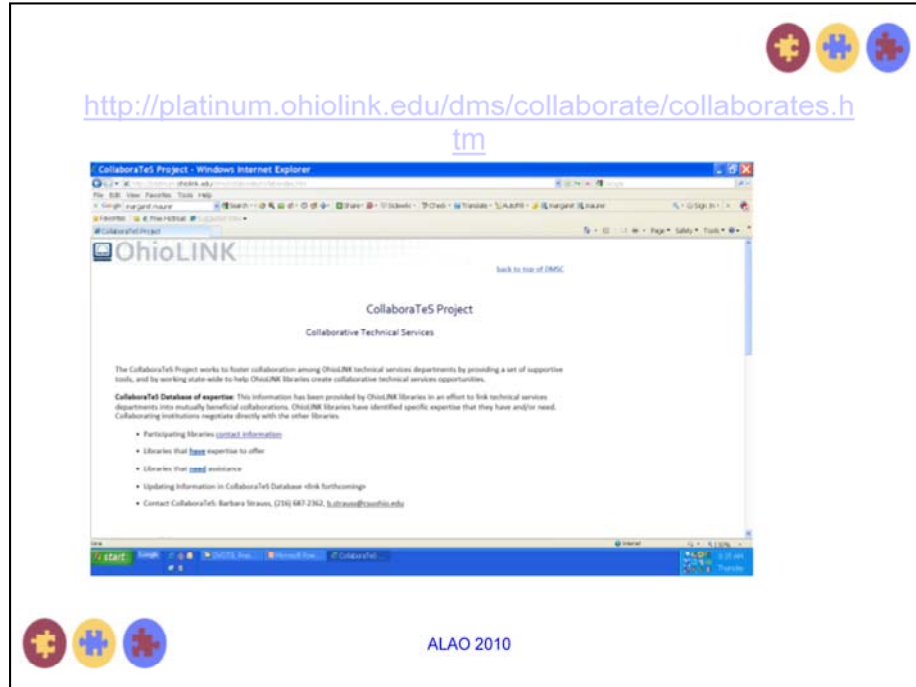


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Within the OhioLINK community the hope is that when faced with a difficult project or item to catalog, libraries will turn to the CollaboraTeS Web Page to identify a target library to collaborate with.

Alternatively, libraries that want to provide services to other libraries on a contract basis will turn to the CollaboraTeS Web Page to identify target libraries to market their services to.

They will also be able to link to example documents, other supportive tools and links to research on other collaborations



This is the link to the CollaboraTeS page on the OhioLINK site



CollaboraTeS Working Groups

- Collaborates Technical Working Group
- Collaborates Marketing Working Group



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There are currently two working groups defined for the CollaboraTeS Project. The first group here—the Technical Working Group is charged with moving the CollaboraTeS tool from a spreadsheet to a database. Barbara is heading up that group.

The Marketing Working Group has already begun to meet. We are charged with fostering collaboration among OhioLINK technical services departments and promoting the usage of materials on the CollaboraTeS Web page by OhioLINK libraries. We hope to create a Toolkit that helps libraries understand all aspects of collaboration.


One of the reasons we are here today is to advertise CollaboraTeS to OhioLINK libraries.



CollaboraTeS Group Exercise




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Questions?

<http://www.personal.kent.edu/~mbmaurer/BuildingCross-Institutional.html>

- Margaret Maurer mbmaurer@kent.edu
- Barbara Strauss b.strauss@csuohio.edu
- Julie Gedeon jgedeon@kent.edu



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Questions?

The link on this final slide is to the page on my personal Web page. A copy of this presentation is already up there for your use, and printing out. It will also be available on the CollaboraTeS Web page on the OhioLINK Web site. These links and the email addresses for the three presenters here appear on the handout as well.

Thank you.