CONSULTANTS'
FINAL REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS

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Submitted by:

Melissa Stockton, Quipu Group

Lori Bowen Ayre, The Galecia Group

INTRODUCTION

Melissa Stockton and Lori Bowen Ayre have completed the work scheduled for Phases 1 & 2 of the project to procure a new virtual catalog and interlibrary lending solution for Massachusetts libraries (a.k.a. MassVC). Phase 1 of the project provided methodologies for gathering information from the vendor and library consortium communities to give MassVC a strong understanding of the technologies available for interlibrary lending and how those technologies are working in other locations. Phase 2 of the project utilized the information gathered in the first phase to create and implement an evaluation process for selecting the most appropriate interlibrary lending (ILL) solution for MassVC.

Phase 1 of the project was designed to be an information gathering phase. Focus groups with selected staff involved with the MassVC ILL system provided high-level information on what features are important to front line and administrative staff. A survey of the experiences of other consortia across the country was also undertaken, making sure that as many live ILL systems as possible were included in the interview pool.

The outcome from Phase 1 was the identification of all the potential vendors and ILL solutions available in the library market. Interviews were conducted with vendors offering proprietary solutions as well as service providers for open source alternatives. The functionality of each potential system was analyzed. The final report for Phase 1 included a chart of the options found and the high-level functionality of each system in the areas of circulation interoperability, and other areas of importance such as de-duping, scoping and load balancing. During Phase 1, the consultants reviewed ILL systems as well as discovery layer capabilities with each potential provider.

The Final Report for Phase 1 introduced three models for the future MassVC ILL System to select for moving forward with a procurement process, including ILL Only, ILL Plus and ILL with Discovery. The ILL Only model concentrated on simply re-creating the current MassVC system, without focusing on circulation interoperability. The ILL with Discovery Model put the focus on both circulation interoperability and the availability of a discovery layer for searching which could be used by all participating libraries. ILL Plus was the option selected by the MassVC Governance Group as the model they would pursue. This model concentrates on procuring a new ILL system which has the ability to provide circulation interoperability for the greatest number of MassVC participants.

Activities were planned for Phase 2 to reflect the information and potential solutions detailed in the Phase 1 report. The second phase began in September, 2011 and encompassed a full RFP process to identify the best ILL Plus solution for MassVC. A MassVC Task Force was also created at the end of Phase 1 to work through the RFP process.

This report details the process followed and the work completed during Phase 2.

RFP CREATION, DISTRIBUTION & REVIEW

Phase 2 encompassed the creation of an RFP, evaluation of vendor responses and vendor demonstrations and a final recommendation by the MassVC Task Force.

RFP CREATED

The consultants compiled lists of functional requirements for review and discussion. These lists were used during focus group meetings in October, 2011. The functional requirements were split into three sections—Staff Interface, Public Interface and Integration/Systems. The focus group meetings were well attended and provided a

methodology for all types and sizes of libraries to aid in determining the most important features for a new ILL System. The groups discussed the functionality they do not want to lose that is available now in their URSA ILL System as well as the functionality they would like to see added to the MassVC system.

Following the focus group meetings, the consultants assembled the appropriate functional requirements into an RFP format. Again, the functional requirements were grouped into broad functional categories. Each section was reviewed in detail with the MassVC Task Force. The Task Force reviewed the categories assigned to each requirement, the wording of each functional requirement, and also assigned a weight (High, Medium, Low) for each entry. In addition, each category of the RFP was assigned a weight (See Table 1).

The RFP was released at the end of January, 2012.

Table 1: Weighting of Categories

Section/Sub-section	Weighting
Functional Requirements	**675**
Public Interface	125
Staff Interface	100
System Administration	125
Interoperability & Systems	175
System-wide	125
Reports	25
Implementation	**225**
Initial Implementation	75
Development	75
Membership Changes	25
System Architecture	50
Bidder's Qualifications	**100**
Narrative	50
Bidder Qualifications	50
RFP Total	**1000**

STRUCTURE OF THE RFP

1. Introduction/Background

    This section provides the vendors with information regarding MassVC's history, governance and membership structure. It also includes a brief discussion of the desire for a high level of circulation interoperability with local ILS systems and that MassVC is only looking for general information regarding discovery layer interfaces at this time.

2. Bidder Qualifications

    This section requires a response from the vendor and includes questions about the organizations staffing structure, financial stability, experience, references and insurance.

3. Functional Requirements

    The functional requirements were split into seven groups: Public Interface, Staff Interface, System Administration, Interoperability, System-wide Settings, Reports and Discovery. Each section contained a number of items related to specific functionality. The vendors were required to respond to each functional requirement item, however, they were informed that the Discovery section would not be scored or included in the evaluation of the ILL System.

4. Implementation

    The implementation section covers a number of topics related to the implementation and support of the proposed solution. Detailed implementation plans relating to specific MassVC member installations and timelines were requested. Vendors were also asked about their training and support services for initial implementation and for on-going needs. Vendors were asked about the development services offered, and specifically those related to circulation interoperability and the communications with local ILS systems. This section also asked vendors to provide information on the system architecture they would recommend for MassVC.

5. Instructions for Vendors

    The specific items which required a response from vendors were detailed in this section, including a separate cost proposal to be submitted on a form provided in the RFP. The goal was to gather the cost information in as similar a fashion as possible among the vendors, giving the Task Force the ability to compare "apples to apples."

6. Deadline for Responses and Calendar

    Information on all deadlines and the procurement calendar were included in this section.

7. Evaluation

    Vendors were told that the MassVC Task Force would be reviewing the proposals and that demonstrations were planned for the finalists.

RFP DISTRIBUTION

The RFP was advertised through listservs and announced on websites. In addition, it was sent directly to all of the solution providers identified during Phase 1. Respondents were given approximately 5 weeks to create and send their responses. A question period was provided, giving vendors a chance a ask questions about the RFP. The responses to these questions were reviewed by the Task Force and responses to all questions were sent to all potential vendors.

Responses were due March 6, 2012. Four vendors sent in proposals in response to the RFP, these vendors included Auto-Graphics, Equinox, Innovative Interfaces and Lyrasis/Relais.

RFP RESPONSES REVIEW

The RFP responses were sent out to all Task Force members, without the cost section. The Task Force began their review by assessing the vendor responses for the items in the RFP which had been ranked as "High." This allowed the Task Force to determine the basic ability for each vendor to handle the highest priority items for MassVC.

The Task Force determined that all four vendors offered a solution which might fit the needs of MassVC even though none of them offered true circulation interoperability which the Task Force had defined as the ability to initiate the ILL transaction from within the ILS.

Based on the RFP responses, it became clear that full circulation interoperability with local integrated library systems (ILS) is not yet available in the marketplace. Full interoperability requires that the ILL and the ILS systems involved must provide two-way NCIP communications. At the present time, the ILL systems are capable of sending and receiving these messages, however, there are not yet any ILS solutions which can send an NCIP message back to the ILL system. The only time this full interoperability is a possibility is for libraries which utilize an ILS from the ILL vendor, e.g. Innovative Interface's Millennium system can seamlessly integrate with the INNREACH product and Auto-Graphics Agent Verso integrates completely with the Agent Resource Sharing product. Since the MassVC libraries utilize different ILS solutions, this means the goal of utilizing only one interface (within the ILS) for the full ILL process is not yet possible. No matter which vendor is selected, MassVC will be implementing an ILL system with partial circulation interoperability and will then need to work with the ILL vendor and their local system providers to develop these two connections when support is developed within the ILS.

After carefully review of all four proposals, all four vendors were moved ahead by the Task Force at this point and all four asked to provide an on-site demonstration of their solution.

DEMONSTRATIONS

Demonstrations were held over a 2-day period in May, 2012 at Minuteman headquarters. Two vendors were scheduled to present each day. Participation by MassVC and other interested libraries was encouraged. Attendees were asked to attend all four demonstrations, whenever possible.

An evaluation form was distributed for each demonstration, asking the participants to rate each vendor in several general areas such as workflow for filling requests and patron experiences with entering a request. At the end of the two days of demonstrations, attendees who had seen all four demonstrations were asked to rank the four vendors.

SCORING RFP & DEMOS

Spreadsheets were created by the consultants and distributed to the Task Force which automatically tallied a final score for each vendor based on the weighting system that had been established by the Task Force. The Task Force scores were compiled and the summary of the scores were distributed to Task Force members, along with summary evaluation information from the demonstration participants (See Appendix A).

With the final scoring information, the Task Force met to discuss their reactions to the proposals and the demonstrations. The cost proposals were also brought into the mix during this meeting. The RFP scoring heavily favored one vendor, Auto-Graphics. The Auto-Graphics system came out with the top score for all 10 task force members that submitted scores. The demonstration scores (provided to Task Force members as well as everyone who participated in the demos) indicated strong support for both Auto-Graphics and Relais/Lyrasis.

The Task Force decided to phone references for Auto-Graphics but not to remove any vendors from the pool until those calls were completed. After the references have been contacted, a final meeting will be held to allow the Task Force an opportunity to discuss what they learned, to review this recommendation from the Consultants and to make a final decision. Once finalized, the Task Force will make their recommendation to the Governance Group.

REFERENCES

A subgroup of the Task Force was created to contact the references for Auto-Graphics. The entities provided as references included:

- State Library of Kansas
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- New Jersey State Library
- Tennessee State Library and Archives
- Connecticut State Library/Connecticut Digital Library

The members of the subgroup were assigned specific references to contact. A list of questions was prepared for use with each reference contacted. Many of the questions pertained to the vendor's ability to fulfill promises or commitments made to their clients. Each subgroup member was given the task of interviewing the person identified as the primary contact for each reference, and to interview one or more front-line staff from the organization (if possible).

Although the Task Force has not discussed the results of these interviews, all references appear to be generally very positive. The groups contacted were pleased with the functionality of the Auto-Graphics system as well as the responsiveness of the company. The references contacted ranged in how long they have been using an ILL solution from Auto-Graphics as well as the configuration of the system. The variety of configurations among the group of references illustrated the flexibility of the Auto-Graphics solution and the ability of the company to provide a solution that will meet the specific needs of each client.

The few negative comments received related to a new enhancement request process being implemented. The new approach does not offer the same interaction as the previous approach used which afforded the libraries a fair amount of say in Auto-Graphics' development priorities. In general, however, the libraries' past experience with Auto-Graphics led them to believe that they would continue to be responsive to their customers' needs when deciding how to focus their development efforts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The consultants have been working with MassVC for over a year: working closely with the MassVC Task Force, listening to front-line and administrative staff regarding their needs and desires in a new system and also gaining insight on the current capabilities of ILL systems available. With this knowledge of the Massachusetts libraries, the ILL market, and the vendor offerings, both consultants recommend moving ahead with Agent Resource Sharing from Auto-Graphics.

The MassVC Task Force overwhelmingly identified AGent Resource Sharing - more than any other product available today - as the product that best addresses MassVC's needs. This assessment is supported by both consultants who independently scored Auto-Graphics as number one based on RFP responses as well as demonstrations. AGent Resource Sharing was identified as the number one choice based solely on functionality. The cost proposal served to reinforce the decision to pursue the Auto-Graphics solution.

Auto-Graphics has been creating solutions in the resource sharing area for many years. Their product, Agent Resource Sharing, has been deployed in a number of large, multi-type library consortia and those clients have helped to shape the current product. Auto-Graphics is very strongly invested in interlibrary lending and resource sharing. And while other vendors have ILL solutions which are a part of their overall product line, resource sharing solutions are among Auto-Graphics' core product offerings.

The consultants believe it is important for MassVC to select a vendor that is trusted to move forward and incorporate new standards and technologies as they become available. The company has stated a commitment to continue improving resource sharing tools and has a long history of including new standards and new functionality in their own product line. Based on this history, the consultants believe that Auto-Graphics is a company which will make good on their promises and will help MassVC move forward as more interconnectivity and other capabilities are possible.

In terms of next steps, we recommend that MassVC begin negotiations with Auto-Graphics. The other vendors should be informed that they were not selected as the first choice and that they will be contacted if negotiations fail with Auto-Graphics. The consultants believe that negotiations, although detailed, will not be too difficult with Auto-Graphics since the system currently fulfills a majority of the highly desired features.

It will be important to include development requirements in the contract. Although Auto-Graphics provides support for NCIP in their own product, they have not implemented this functionality with all possible ILS solutions. They have indicated that they are in final testing with the Polaris, Horizon and Symphony systems but that all other NCIP connections would need to be tested for other MassVC libraries. The finalization of this testing as well as the implementation of any new NCIP functionality should be addressed in the final contract.

Another issue to address in the contract is the implementation of Auto-Graphics' new public interface based on HTML5. This new interface has not yet been released and was not demonstrated. The Consultants recommend that MassVC review the specifications and test the functionality of this new interface before making a commitment to it.

And of course, final pricing will need to be negotiated but the pricing model appears fair and reasonable for a system the size and complexity of MassVC.

AUTO-GRAPHICS

- **Scored #1 by all 10 TF members**
- **Ranked #2 by demo participants**

AUTO-GRAPHICS RFP Scores	Median Score	Mean Score	Sum of Scores
Public Interface	102.07	102.16	1021.59
Staff Interface	76.47	74.47	744.71
SysAdmin	98.38	95.26	952.65
Interop	110.83	107.92	1079.17
System-wide	97.35	98.70	987.00
Reports	16.66	16.95	169.55
Implementation	173.00	171.00	1710.00
Bidder Quals	91.00	92.00	920.00
TOTAL	**758.10**	**758.47**	**7584.66**

AUTO-GRAPHICS Demo Scores	
Patron-Searching	3.6
Patron-Requesting	3.7
Borrowing Library-Managing Requests	4
Lending Library-Filling/Denying Request	4
Borrowing Library-Receiving	3.8
Lending Library-Receiving Returns	3.9
Other Features	
System-wide	4.2
Reports	3.6
Overall Ease of Use	3.5
Overall Functionality	3.8

- **Scored #2 by 5 of the 10 TF Members**
- **Scored #3 by 3 of the 10 TF Members**
- **Scored #4 by 2 of the 10 TF Members**
- **Ranked #3 by demo participants**

EQUINOX RFP Scores	Median Score	Mean Score	Sum of Scores
Public Interface	85.09	78.41	784.09
Staff Interface	76.27	69.37	693.73
SysAdmin	93.24	84.85	848.53
Interop	110.83	99.75	997.50
System-wide	81.00	73.00	730.00
Reports	17.50	16.32	163.18
Implementation	150.00	138.00	1380.00
Bidder Quals	57.50	55.00	550.00
TOTAL	**673.42**	**614.70**	**6147.03**

EQUINOX Demo Scores	
Patron-Searching	3
Patron-Requesting	3.1
Borrowing Library-Managing Requests	2.9
Lending Library-Filling/Denying Request	3.1
Borrowing Library-Receiving	2.9
Lending Library-Receiving Returns	2.9
Other Features	
System-wide	3
Reports	2.5
Overall Ease of Use	2.7
Overall Functionality	2.8

- **Scored #2 by 1 of the 10 TF Members**
- **Scored #3 by 3 of the 10 TF Members**
- **Scored #4 by 6 of the 10 TF Members**
- **Ranked #4 by Demo Participants**

INNOVATIVE RFP Scores	Median Score	Mean Score	Sum of Scores
Public Interface	93.32	91.02	910.23
Staff Interface	61.37	62.75	627.45
SysAdmin	73.22	72.32	723.24
Interop	78.75	83.42	834.17
System-wide	85.10	84.20	842.00
Reports	15.43	15.41	154.09
Implementation	107.00	109.00	1090.00
Bidder Quals	79.00	78.00	780.00
TOTAL	**592.99**	**596.12**	**5961.17**

INNOVATIVE Demo Scores	
Patron-Searching	3.3
Patron-Requesting	2.7
Borrowing Library-Managing Requests	3
Lending Library-Filling/Denying Request	3.2
Borrowing Library-Receiving	3.1
Lending Library-Receiving Returns	
Other Features	2.6
System-wide	2.8
Reports	3.1
Overall Ease of Use	2.9
Overall Functionality	0

- **Scored #2 by 4 of the 10 TF Members**
- **Scored #3 by 4 of the 10 TF Members**
- **Scored #4 by 2 of the 10 TF Members**
- **Ranked #1 by Demo Participants**

LYRASIS/RELAIS RFP Scores	Median Score	Mean Score	Sum of Scores
Public Interface	75.85	75.57	755.68
Staff Interface	65.73	62.82	628.24
SysAdmin	71.47	67.94	679.41
Interop	96.25	92.75	927.50
System-wide	103.00	98.60	986.00
Reports	12.73	12.64	126.36
Implementation	141.50	143.00	1430.00
Bidder Quals	76.50	73.00	730.00
TOTAL	**631.96**	**626.32**	**6263.19**

LYRASIS/RELAIS Demo Scores	
Patron-Searching	4
Patron-Requesting	4.1
Borrowing Library-Managing Requests	4.1
Lending Library-Filling/Denying Request	4.2
Borrowing Library-Receiving	4.1
Lending Library-Receiving Returns	4.1
Other Features	
System-wide	4.2
Reports	3.5
Overall Ease of Use	4.1
Overall Functionality	4.1