V-Cat ILS Evaluation and Review Committee

Meeting Notes for Thursday, April 14th, 2022

This meeting was held at the WVLS Office. Remote attendees are marked with an * below.

Meeting Facilitator: Alexander Johnson, MCPL.

1. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 9:31 am.

2. Roll Call
Committee Members Present: D. Frandrup* (Antigo), E. Brewster* (Demmer/Three Lakes), K. Heiting* (Granton) (left at 10:42), M. Handel* (Simek/Medford), R. Metzler* A. Polinski (Rhinelander), (WVLS), K. Zimmermann (WVLS), H. O'Hare (Tomahawk)(arrived at 9:50)

Committee Members Absent: C. Luebbe (MCPL)

3. Approval of Agenda
No one requested changes to the meeting agenda.

4. Overview of the V-Cat ILS Review Process and Tentative Schedule(s)
Committee reviewed the Gantt chart prepared by E. Brewster. It was noted that ample time is needed between the start of implementation and the end of the current contract. The annual contract with Innovative for Sierra ends at the end of August each year. It does not seem possible to meet an implementation deadline at the end of August 2023, so the committee is looking at implementation in 2024. There were no concerns expressed with this timeline, other than the main challenge being to stay on target with deadlines to meet the August 2024 deadline.

5. Review of Staff Survey Results, Functionality Requirements, and Draft RFI
Some sections of the RFI have been compared with the survey results to ensure that the concerns expressed in the survey are also included in the RFI. K. Zimmermann noted that there are some sections remaining and will coordinate with others to complete the comparison. K. Heiting agreed to assist with cross checking the reports and statistics section. It was noted that searching for records was included in the survey but is not in the RFI at this time.

In general, it was noted that inventory, searching for materials, minimum network specifications could be added to the RFI. It was noted that some MCPL Branches are experiencing inability to access Sierra Desktop because of network issues, and we will want to know minimum specifications of software. Information about the current self-hosted setup will be added after consulting with J. Klingbeil at WVLS.

The committee reviewed the document section by section, noting areas that were complete or needed more attention. The committee's goal is to have polished document finalized at our next meeting and then share with V-Cat members for review.

The committee discussed whether to include both 2019 and 2021 statistics in Appendix A. It was noted that circulation numbers for the second half of 2021 looked closer to normal, and libraries are starting to rebound. It was recommended that both be shared, and an average could also be considered.

Additional information about WVLS services and staff, history of V-Cat automation will be added.

Specific vendors were taken out of the list of existing functionality, as they are listed later in the RFI. Inventory was added to the list.

K. Zimmermann will add links within the document and clean up formatting.

Dates for responses from vendors will be finalized when a target send date is identified. The committee agreed that select vendors would be contacted for demonstrations, and demonstrations should be completed by Dec 2022.

The committee reviewed the document section by section, noting areas that were complete or needed more attention. The committee's goal is to have polished document finalized at our next meeting and then share with V-Cat members for review.

I. A General information
- K. Zimmermann will check with J. Klingbeil about network connectivity requirements.

II. ILS Functionality Assessment
- MCPL Staff reviewed Acquisitions and compared with the staff survey.
- Serials was reviewed by R. Metzler
- E-Resource Management was reviewed by K. Zimmermann
- MCPL staff reviewed the Cataloging and Records Management sections and compared with the staff survey
- R. Metzler reviewed Cataloging and Authority Control Sections.
- K. Zimmermann reviewed E management
- V-Cat Cooperative Circulation Committee reviewed the Circulation and Records Management section and compared it to the staff survey
- Systems Administration and Authentication reviewed by K. Zimmermann

Areas yet to be reviewed/compared to the staff survey:
- Circulation
- Item record management (under Records Management)
- Reports and statistics (K. Heiting volunteered to assist)

Areas that need more feedback:
- Self Checkout – Committee members with libraries that have self checkout stations were asked to take a look at the Self Checkout and SIP 2 sections and provide feedback.
- Inventory – K. Zimmermann will check with MCPL staff. (K. Heiting also volunteered to assist.)
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III. Public Catalog
This section is intended to gather information about the out of the box public catalog to gauge how good the base product is on its own.

IV. Discovery Catalog

This section is intended to gather information about a company's proprietary add-on discovery layer. It was noted that most vendors will want to highlight their discovery product. Aspen works with Sierra, Evergreen, Koha, Carl, Horizon, Polaris, and Symphony and it is unlikely there will be a need to change the discovery layer even if a vendor has one of their own. As we move through the process WVLS staff can consult with Aspen to make sure any ILS under consideration would be compatible.

V. Integration with Other Companies
If committee members know their library is starting to work with vendor make sure to let K. Zimmerman know so it can be added.
It was suggested that vendors may be willing to work with a company without an additional cost, and a column was added.

VI. Implementation Timeline and Known Constraints
No changes were suggested for this section.

VII. Costs
It was noted that currently there are not any add on products or expenses for individual libraries within V-Cat at this time.

Appendix A
No changes were suggested for this section, aside from those previously discussed in the meeting.

Discussion occurred regarding how to share the final RFI document with V-Cat members, and whether it would be necessary to present it at a meeting. The committee determined that it would be acceptable to send out an email, making sure that there is enough time for libraries to review and respond. It was noted that this information is preliminary, and libraries who are truly interested will make the time to review the document.

6. Information about MCFLS and NWLS ILS Evaluation and Review Processes
MCFLS ILS Evaluation and Review process continues. Their committee is working on site visits first two weeks of April for SirsiDynix Symphony and Sierra one in person visit and an extended conversation.

NWLS has received RFI responses back from Bywater Solutions, (koha) Karl X and Sierra. K. Zimmermann shared some of the RFI information with the committee. Zimmermann also shared that NWLS is interested in pursuing a shared ILS with V-Cat. It was noted that merging Integrated Library Systems is a complex process outside the scope of this committee. A brief discussion followed, and the committee concluded that it is too early to get into details about what shared systems might look like, other than to consider the possibility and gather information. It was noted that joint quotes would be good information to have to better understand economy of scale.

D. Frandrup moved to append the RFI long as it's not additional work for this committee and NWLS agrees with our RFI details. A. Johnson seconded. Motion carried.

7. Overview of Available ILS/LSP Vendors and Products
The committee reviewed a spreadsheet with potential vendors shared with the committee. Products were dropped from the initial long list. Included are products used in Wisconsin, products being considered by MCFLS and NWLS that are in active development, are tailored to public libraries, have experience migrating libraries from Sierra, and have worked with library consortia.

It was noted that Apollo is not in use in Wisconsin. Library Technology Guides notes that 6% of public libraires are using this product. It was difficult to find consortia using this product.

It was noted that SCLS lists in their system as Bibliovation, and there was some confusion about whether it is the same or different from Koha. K. Zimmermann agreed to gather more information on the difference between Bibliovation and Koha.

8. Consideration of Vendors for RFI

K. Zimmermann noted that considering information from 9 RFIs may be overwhelming, and a discussion followed about multiple products to narrow the list. Committee members who had experience with the products suggested including Evergreen and dropping Verso.

It was noted that open-source products could be dramatically less expensive, and it may be beneficial to consider multiple open source products to mitigate allowing price to be considered too heavily.

Minimum requirements were discussed. It was noted that the product must work with consortia. Additional features that could be considered minimum requirements include functionality for multi-site libraries with branches within a consortia and compatibility with Aspen.

The committee settled on a tentative list of products to be re-visited at the next meeting: Symphony, Polaris, Sierra, Koha, Evergreen, Carl.X

It was noted that not all vendors may choose to reply to the RFI.

9. Request for Future Agenda Items

The following topics were suggested for the next meeting:

- Review and finalize vendors to consider
- Review and finalize the RFI document
- Additional questions for function areas
- Scoring matrix
- Minimum requirements or deal breaker functions that an ILS must have

10. Set Next Meeting Date

May 12, 2022 is the next meeting date. Committee members discussed that this is during the WAPL conference, but chose to keep the meeting as scheduled.

11. Adjournment
E. Brewster moved to adjourn the meeting. H. O'Hare seconded. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 11:25 am.

Notes compiled from collective notes from K. Heiting, R. Metzler and K. Zimmermann. Submitted by K. Zimmermann.