State Library of Ohio  
Statewide Resource Sharing  
State of the States: Environmental Scan  
December 2007

Background  
In 1997 the State Library of Ohio, OPLIN, and the Ohio Library Council led an effort for interactive sharing of resources among all Ohio’s school and public libraries. The broad vision of this initiative was “Anyone, Anywhere, at Anytime can borrow Anything from Any other Ohio library.” In November 2000 the State Library contracted Fretwell-Downing, Inc. (FDI) to provide software licenses, consulting services, installation, technical implementation and training for the technology portion of a Statewide Resource Sharing System. The system, originally called Moving Ohio Resources Everywhere (MORE) and later renamed Ohio Libraries Share: MORE is a service of the State Library of Ohio.

As of July 31, 2007, there were 130 participants in Ohio Libraries Share: MORE (OLS: MORE) including 49 schools and 81 public libraries. Combined, these libraries contain 19 million volumes serving more than 3.3 million Ohio students and library patrons. Today OLS: MORE connects and interoperates with ten brands of automated library systems (electronic card catalogs) in Ohio libraries, and tests of links with all of the remaining brands are planned.

Despite OLS: MORE’s successes, the solution provided by the underlying computer system has not functioned as well as hoped. In an effort to further improve resource sharing in Ohio, a survey of the other 49 states was done to determine how other states are addressing this issue and potential solutions.

Introduction  
While all states offer some sort of interlibrary loan services, no state is doing statewide resource sharing in such a way that all types of libraries in the state public, academic and school; can share materials from one library to another via one shared catalog or in way that is not labor intensive to library staff. This environmental scan establishes three current models for statewide resource sharing most commonly used – OCLC borrowing, shared consortia borrowing and statewide union catalogs.

Model 1 OCLC borrowing  
Several states including Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Idaho, Illinois, and Kentucky pay for OCLC access for the public libraries in their state so that the states can easily borrow materials from other libraries for their patrons. Other states that depend on OCLC borrowing have voluntary consortia that libraries can choose to join. These states include Nebraska and Tennessee.

Model 2 Shared consortia borrowing  
Many states have various consortia in different regions that provide access for their members. The numbers and sizes of consortia varies but some of the states that use consortia as a primary way to share resources are Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New York, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, and West Virginia.
Model 3 Statewide Union Catalogs
Many states depend on a statewide union catalog that allows users to see holdings throughout the state and initiate borrowing or even traditional methods such as faxing. Some of these states are Louisiana, Maryland (for public libraries only), Mississippi, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Several states are involved in other initiatives that appear to be unique to them.

- Wyoming shares resources among all types of libraries. This is closer to a complete statewide resource sharing environment than most other states but part of the reason this has been achieved is that only two different automation systems are being used. Not all libraries in the state participate.
- Utah’s state library web site provides a multi-catalog search for public and academic libraries.
- Colorado provides a free Inter library loan system to all Colorado libraries via Fretwell-Downing’s VDX Web-based software.
- The State Library of Louisiana provides OCLC borrowing for public libraries in the state.
- Georgia and Iowa have adopted open source software to connect libraries in their states with one system.

Libraries in all states are making efforts to provide resource sharing for their patrons. No state so far has a seamless way for public, academic and school libraries to share resources. Although there are examples of multi-type libraries sharing, it is mainly accomplished within consortia settings which have voluntary membership, so all libraries in a state are not members. As yet there is no simple, straightforward way to implement statewide resource sharing without all libraries subscribing to the same automation system.

Ohio will lead the way if the Next Generation of Statewide Resource Sharing achieves it’s vision.

http://www.library.ohio.gov/swrs/swrs-otherstates.html