Who Are We?

- OWLSnet is a library consortium consisting of 29 libraries from the Outagamie Waupaca Library System and the Nicolet Federated Library system
- 1 full-time cataloger and 1 part-time cataloging assistant work for OWLS on system-wide cataloging
- 2 full-time catalogers work for Appleton Public Library (OWLS contracts with them to do some system work)
- Before SkyRiver, 9 libraries plus OWLS had access to OCLC Connexion
- We moved to SkyRiver in July 2014
Why Did We Move?

SkyRiver costs less than half what we were paying for OCLC Connexion and more libraries could access it

There were also some developments promised...
All member libraries can access SkyRiver through Sierra using a Z39.50 connection
  ○ Library staff can only bring in records, they cannot overlay
  ○ Library staff cannot edit bibs in Sierra
  ○ Limited editing in the Z39.50 version of SkyRiver

OWLS and APL staff use a SkyRiver client
  ○ 2 versions of the client: editing capability and non-editing capability
  ○ Allows for original record creation
  ○ Ports directly into Sierra
Pros-Libraries

- All libraries (29 libraries, 49 locations) have access to the bib utility tool
  - Materials can get out to the shelf faster
  - Fuller records are in the database right away

- Libraries may understand the importance of cataloging more
  - OWLS provides training on what records are “good” records to bring in
  - They see the records they bring in right away
  - Records usually have titles, authors, series, subject headings, and summary fields so patrons can find items in the OPAC immediately

- Libraries appreciate the independence to bring in these records on their own

- Libraries brought in 12,734 bib records without OWLS’ help in 2018
Pros-System Staff/Catalogers (Client)

- Easy to bring in and overlay records
- Ports directly into Sierra
- Can save local bibliographic records created in SkyRiver
- More can be done with the client than the Z39.50, so permissions can be controlled
- When SkyRiver goes down it is usually up and running again within an hour
Cons-Libraries (Z39.50)

- The interface looks just like Sierra so libraries get confused sometimes
- It's difficult (or confusing) for libraries to view more than the first result
- Libraries frequently pick the first result even if another one would be better
- Frequent incomplete records, so libraries will still ask us to update a record
Cons-System Staff/Catalogers

- Lack of quality control
  - Innovative says the cooperative nature is the control
- Multiple records for the same item that vary in quality
  - Many local fields, additional ISBNs and improper encoding
- More staff intervention is required
  - Authority work is now a manual process in Sierra
  - No efficient way to identify and overlay updated bibs
- Sometimes “Update Master Record” doesn’t “stick”
  - Each participating institution picks its own encoding level, so if they choose full level then no one else’s changes apply
Other Concerns—Dreams Unrealized

- Never quite lived up to expectations
  - We were under the impression that Innovative was developing features for SkyRiver that would automate processes (similar to OCLC’s processes)
  - “Better Records” emails were sent on a weekly basis of records that had been “updated” but ours were frequently better than the updated versions
  - SkySearch feature has been underwhelming to say the least
  - Original SkyRiver staff have left Innovative and no one there now seems to understand it
Since its inception there have been questions about how long SkyRiver would last and how much Innovative is committed to the product.

- One person seems to be assigned to SkyRiver and that is not her only assignment
- At IUG 2019 it was announced that SkyRiver is a “legacy” product, but was later recanted
- Several features that were promised have been abandoned or III staff weren’t aware of them
Contact Me

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