MCAG Software Survey – Report to Executive Committee

In Fall 2006, MCAG conducted an online survey investigating III and non-III software products in use at MOBIUS libraries. We intended to use the survey data for several purposes. First, we planned to create a table listing software in use at MOBIUS libraries, so that libraries considering purchasing or using new software products will have a list of colleagues who can be consulted. Next, we thought our questions about what software MOBIUS libraries would like to use or to collaborate on purchasing might help provide direction for future MCAG projects and might be of interest to MCO or the Executive Committee. In addition, we anticipated that questions asking why libraries are not using products might reveal barriers to adoption that MCO or MCAG might be able to help eliminate. Finally, since MCAG has been extensively discussing ways to promote IUG membership and to coordinate voting on IUG enhancements, we included a question about whether libraries are IUG members and are aware of the benefits of IUG membership.

The survey was distributed to the site coordinator at each MOBIUS library. Forty-two responses were received.

Results – III Software

Nearly all of the MOBIUS libraries use the base Millennium modules—100% of the responding libraries use Millennium Cataloging and Circulation; approximately 83% use Millennium Acquisitions, and approximately 95% use Millennium Serials. Most of those that do not use Acquisitions and Serials indicated that they have a small number of orders or periodicals, or that they do not have enough staff or time to implement the modules. A couple of libraries are required to use other accounting systems or procedures for acquisitions, and two are simply happy with their current workflow. A reason that one library does not use Millennium Acquisitions is that its users would want the books to arrive even more quickly if order records appeared in the catalog. (This appears to be a training issue, since order records can be suppressed in the catalog.)

We also polled libraries on whether they use some of the other III packages and features already purchased by MOBIUS. Thirty-eight respondents answered this question; results, from most-used to least-used packages, were:

- Millennium Serials: Holdings statements (LIB HAS statements) (34 libraries)
- Millennium Circulation: Reserves feature (32 libraries)
- Web Management Reports (27 libraries)
- MyMillennium (Reading History, Preferred Searches, etc.) (18 libraries)
- Millennium Acquisitions: Online ordering (17 libraries)
- Millennium Circulation: Receipt printers (15 libraries)
- Millennium Serials: E-Claiming (13 libraries)
- Millennium Materials Booking (12 libraries)
- Millennium Cataloging: Spine label printing (8 libraries)
- Electronic Reserves (7 libraries)

- Millennium Circulation: Offline circulation (6 libraries)
- Millennium Inventory (6 libraries)
- Millennium Media Management (3 libraries)
- Millennium ILL (1 library)
- Other (1 library) (Product used is ERM)

When asked to comment on the advantages or disadvantages of these packages and features, respondents commented that they find many of them useful, including serials holdings statements, web reports, and materials booking. Problems were mentioned with some of the products, including: inventory (problems if libraries intershelve multiple location codes); offline circulation (cumbersome to use), MyMillennim (defaults to cluster catalog after logout; Reading History does not include INNReach transactions), and spine labels. One library purchased E-Reserves and ILL products from other vendors, because the III products did not have they features they needed. Another respondent did not realize how many products his/her library was not using, and felt more training might help.

Responses about use of telnet indicated that libraries are using Millennium for most features when possible, but still use telnet when features are not available, or when tasks are easier to do in telnet.

Next we asked about III add-on packages that involve additional costs. Of the eighteen libraries that responded, eleven use a handheld scanner for count-use or inventory, three use WebBridge, and one or two each are using Bursar In/Out, ERM (Electronic Resource Management), Self-check, WAM (Web Access Management), and Patron API. None reported using AirPac or MetaFind.

Comments on the III add-on packages included: using the handheld scanner for inventory is quick, but books have to be in order first, the reports are not very helpful, there are too many steps to the whole process, the wand is not as good as a regular barcode reader, and the Percon handheld required a lot of care; the self-check does not work with 3M security strips and requires a lot of care; Bursar In/Out is the only way to export fines; WebBridge setup is complicated. One respondent commented that in general the add-on features are too expensive.

Results—Other Library Software

We also asked what vendors libraries are using for some non-III library-related software. Results for this question are attached.

Libraries were asked if they are using any of the products discussed in the survey in non-traditional ways. One library uses Create Lists for daily check-in of serials; this makes it easier to find the library's serial records when there are several similar records. Another library adds special subject headings and notes to make retrieval of A/V materials easier. One library puts its new books shelf into course reserves, and another tracks ILL books using a pool of dummy records. One library circulates shop tools and media equipment.

We also asked if there are products the library would like to use but does not, and what the library would need in order to use them. Four respondents mentioned federated searching, and two mentioned content management, WebBridge, ILLIAD, or OpenURL. Other products receiving one mention each were: URL checker, spine label printing, the acquisitions module, Encore, RapidILL, ERM, RFID, API, CLIO, the E-Reserves module, and inventory. Not surprisingly, the greatest barrier to implementation was financial, followed by time and staffing constraints.

When asked about interest in collaborative purchasing of software, respondents mentioned the following types of products: federated searching (5 libraries), OpenURL (3 libraries), and content management (2 libraries). Other products that got one mention each were: cover art, media images, summaries, author notes, ERM, information literacy tutorials, media management, bibliographic citation software such as RefWorks or EndNote, WAM, SpellCheck, and upgrades to (unspecified) existing products.

Other software libraries might be interested in purchasing or using included: Captivate, Dreamweaver, collaboration software like SharePoint, printing management software like Anzio, virtual reference, agency, and kiosk software for public PCs.

Results—IUG Membership

Of the 31 respondents who answered the question about IUG membership, 24 libraries are members, and 7 are not. One of the respondents whose library is not a member was not aware of some of the benefits of IUG membership.

Future Directions

MCAG has compiled tables indicating which libraries are using:

1. III products already purchased by MOBIUS (except the four base Millennium modules).
2. Add-on (extra cost) III products not purchased by MOBIUS.
3. Other library software products.

We will ask MCO to post these lists to the MOBIUS web site as resources for the membership.

MCAG may continue to discuss whether this survey has pointed out any areas it should consider for its future work. We are also considering redoing the software-in-use portion of the survey (the three items mentioned above) annually, and updating the lists on the MOBIUS web site. We may also include the questions about joint purchasing in the annual survey, results to be submitted to MCO and the Executive Committee.

Report submitted by MCAG, 5/2007