MOBIUS

Linking Missouri's Academic Libraries

COMMON LIBRARY PLATFORM

The Common Library Platform - CLP - is a shared computerized library system for Missouri's colleges and universities and a key strategy for improving library efficiency and patron service. Missouri academic libraries have a major opportunity to improve the cost-effectiveness of their automated services, and to share resources of all the state's academic libraries by participating in a proposed new program.

The CLP will share an automation system among all participating academic libraries, whether public, private, two-year or four-year. The Missouri Public Academic Library Administrators (MPALA) and the Council on Public Higher Education (COPHE) have developed the CLP strategy.

Similar plans in other states have shown substantial benefits to faculty and students. Missouri institutions have formed a consortium - MOBIUS - to administer and govern the CLP. The Common Library Platform will provide a number of benefits to Missouri's academic libraries and their patrons.

CLP SERVICES FOR LIBRARIES & PATRONS

The CLP provides all the primary modules libraries employ in managing and accessing their materials:

- Public access module for searching the catalogs via the World Wide Web
- Cataloging module
- Purchasing module that will support library acquisitions in an electronic mode
- Inventory control module that will permit circulations to be linked to the catalog and to individual patrons

There are other library support services available, including a module for managing periodical publications, support for standardized indexes as authority-controlled access terms, and connections to other resources and electronic databases (Z39.50-compliant to meet international library computing and networking standards).

SERVICE DELIVERY BENEFITS

The CLP will permit students and faculty of every academic library in Missouri to connect directly to a single statewide database and will provide direct services including search retrieval.

- Sharply improved access to the 14 million items in Missouri's academic libraries
- Enhanced patron services through direct borrowing, with lower transaction costs
- Overnight delivery of requested materials between member libraries
- Support for other services: electronic indexes, database and electronic document delivery
- Resource-sharing of primary library materials

ADMINISTRATIVE BENEFITS

The CLP employs MOREnet - the Missouri Research and Education Network-to link from a central site to every participating academic library in Missouri.

- Cost-effective computer and networking investment
- Enhanced value of taxpayer-funded investment through higher utilization of materials
- Improved research and faculty services
- Improved retention of faculty and students
- Cost savings for libraries planning to upgrade their systems; an alternative to full purchase

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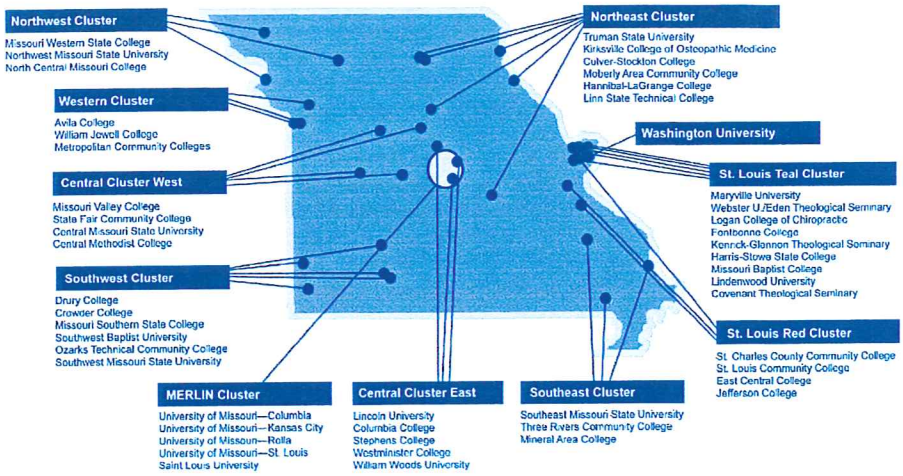
What is a Cluster?



The implementation plan calls for 11 automated library systems linked together through a separate union catalog system. A system is defined as a single server running library software from Innovative Interfaces, Inc. Each of the 11 library systems will be shared by multiple institutions. The institutions that share a system are called a cluster with proximty as the primary factor for determining how the clusters are formed.

Most Frequently Asked Questions

The CLP: When will we see it?

The Missouri General Assembly and the Governor approved the initial funding for the CLP project in July 1998 and approved the second round of funding in July 1999. The Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) will present the request for the third and final installment to the Governor in January 2000. Implementation of CLP began immediately following the approval of the initial funding. The first six institutions became operational in January 1999 and the implementation process continues with completetion scheduled for July 2002.

How much will the CLP cost and who pays?

The total anticipated CLP cost over five years is about $15.2 million. Start-up funding for the project is $10.2 million over three years. Ongoing funding of the operational costs of the CLP, estimated at between $2.0 and $3.0 million per year, will be shared equally between the participating institutions and the state of Missouri. The planned costs for individual institutions will include a small fixed annual cost along with a sliding scale of costs, with larger libraries paying more and smaller ones paying less.

Who operates and manages the CLP?

The CLP system, made up of several server computers and the software and databases needed to make the CLP function, is housed centrally in the University of Missouri - Columbia Data Center. Using a single computer site offers the best combination of access, network speed and lower personnel cost. A small operations staff maintains the computers and software, and troubleshoots equipment.

What happens next?

The initial two clusters supporting six institutions began using the CLP in January 1999. The next cluster supporting five institutions will be operational in January 2000. A contract for overnight delivery service of loaned library materials provides daily pickup at all member institutions. New clusters will continue to go on-line approximately every six months with a scheduled completion date of July 2002.

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