

Metronet
Strategic Plan 2007-2010
(Revised May 2009; Changes in italics)

In creating the strategic plan for Metronet, the Executive Director reviewed the outcomes of Metronet's programs from 2004 to 2006 (attendance, feedback from program attendees, reactions from Board members, website utilization, and comments from other professional organizations such as MEMO). Metronet also compared its initiatives with those of the other multitype systems, with MELSA programs, and with the continuing education opportunities provided by MINITEX. Although it would not be accurate to state that a formal assessment of the needs of libraries in the metropolitan area was conducted, the evaluative efforts described above provide a sound foundation for this edition of Metronet's strategic plan. *Revisions to the 2009 update for the plan reflect the work that Metronet has been doing that focuses on information literacy, connecting library media specialists and teachers to a wide range of resources, conducting online continuing education, and providing networking opportunities for all library staff through online and face-to-face opportunities.*

Vision: Metronet will be the major agency for connecting libraries of all types in the metropolitan area by emphasizing their commonalities, synchronicity of values, service quality, innovation, and best practices.

Mission: Metronet serves libraries of all types in the metropolitan area by leveraging existing library strengths and resources to build capacity so as to achieve more collectively than could be attained independently.

Values:

Metronet

- places high priority on the effective use of the full range of information, computing, and telecommunication technologies;
- respects the goals, aspirations and service cultures of the libraries it serves;
- believes that collaboration among libraries is essential to the stewardship of public funds and to the delivery of quality customer service;
- believes that barriers to library service and information access should be eliminated to the extent possible.

Goals 2007-2010

Metronet's goals must generally align with the legislation that created Minnesota's multicounty multitype library systems. This legislation states that Metronet's purpose should lead to programs in most of the following areas:

1. Resource sharing.

In view of the several pre-existing arrangements developed by libraries in the metropolitan area for the interlibrary loan of library materials (delivery systems operated by MINITEX, MELSA and CLIC), there is no need for Metronet to participate in the direct delivery of library materials. *Metronet has interpreted resource sharing to include the sharing of knowledge and information that improves one's ability to perform their duties. In view of that definition, Metronet has developed an extensive training curriculum that focuses on helping teachers and media specialists collaborate in teaching information literacy and research skills in the classroom and media center. The Metronet Board has made a commitment to*

promote and encourage participation as widely as possible, given the resources, so that teaching information literacy skills are included in as many classrooms as possible.

2. Planning for Cooperative Programs

Metronet will build upon its experience in partnering with the St. Paul Public Schools (SPPS), Metropolitan State University Library, and the St. Paul Public Library System in planning the year-long information literacy project. Metronet will again provide assistance to the Chaska and Minneapolis school districts and invite and support other school districts in the metro area that wish to launch information literacy projects. Metronet will seek other opportunities to engage in collaborative planning with libraries such as the CLIC consortium. Metronet will sponsor a major annual conference on information literacy. Metronet will work closely with MELSA in planning programs that are relevant to public libraries. These include programs that promote increased cooperation between school, public, and academic libraries and/or display library resources to new audiences.

Metronet will work with the other multitype systems in developing professional development programs which would be offered at multiple locations in the state or online such as *23 Things On a Stick* and *More Things On a Stick*.

Metronet's strength is its staff. It has developed a strong, efficient staff that is able to produce vibrant and successful programming with the limited resources available. Metronet relies on developing viable partnerships in order to provide its services to as broad an audience as possible. The Director will continue to develop these partnerships with school districts, state agencies, libraries, and others to leverage Metronet's ability to accomplish its goals and objectives.

3. Delivery Services and Programs

As was indicated above, there does not appear to be a need among metro area libraries for delivery services. However, Metronet has successfully distributed copies of the semi-annual publication "Raising Readers" to interested libraries in the metro area and beyond. Metronet has also distributed the biography of Norman Borlaug to libraries across Minnesota. Metronet will continue to provide delivery services to its library members as particular situations warrant.

4. Database Development or Purchase

Metronet has developed a very useful database of Minnesota Authors and Illustrators and a database of web addresses of Minnesota organizations, including corporations, non-profits, schools, and libraries. Metronet will continue to maintain, update, and add to these databases.

Metronet will continue to promote the use of other state-funded databases such as the Electronic Library for Minnesota and the Minnesota Digital Library.

Metronet and MELSA are in discussions about the creation of a database of individual library staff in order to improve communications with end users of the programming and continuing education opportunities offered by the systems.

5. Improved Communication Among Libraries

Most of Metronet's programs are designed to improve communications among libraries. Despite a fairly standardized graduate education for librarians, the cultural "walls" surrounding the various types of libraries are far less permeable than one would expect. Professional organizations such as MEMO,

SLA, MLA, PLA, etc. reinforce the distinctiveness of each type of library, thereby creating significant challenges for multitype networks in their efforts to promote collaboration and greater communication across the types of libraries and across governmental boundaries. Metronet will continue promoting better communication among the types of libraries through its professional development programs, newsletter, website, and any other means possible. With regard to using technologies for this purpose, Metronet will experiment with podcasts, RSS, Wikis and similar technologies as means of extending Metronet services.

Metronet has identified a need to help integrate younger librarians into the greater activities of the Minnesota library scene. To this end, networking and continuing education opportunities will be targeted at this group. Based on the success of this strategy, other interest groups may be formed.

6. Other

- Continue to raise Metronet's profile among area libraries by demonstrating Metronet's value and relevance.
- Continue to advocate for libraries with Minnesota legislators and other policy makers.
- As a catalyst for change, promote the adoption of best practices, implement economies of scale where possible, and advocate for innovation in library services and organization.

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