

**FINAL REPORT TO THE  
COUNCIL ON LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES**

**MANAGING ELECTRONIC RESOURCES  
IN THE TRI-COLLEGE CONSORTIUM**

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**PROCESS REDESIGN WORKING GROUP REPRESENTATIVES:**

**Megan Adams**, *Social Sciences Librarian, Swarthmore College*  
**Berry Chamness**, *Information Acquisition & Delivery Coordinator, Bryn Mawr College*  
**Marilyn Creamer**, *Serials Specialist, Haverford College*  
**Terri Freedman**, *Science Librarian, Bryn Mawr College*  
**Jackie Magagnosc**, *Serials Specialist, Swarthmore College*  
**Norm Medeiros**, *Coordinator for Bibliographic and Digital Services, Haverford College*  
**Greg Posey**, *Web Developer, Tri-College Library Consortium*  
**Amy Rojek**, *Catalog Librarian, Bryn Mawr College*  
**Scott Silverman**, *Tri-College Licensing Librarian, Bryn Mawr College*  
**Carol Vassallo**, *Serials Specialist, Bryn Mawr College*  
**Barbara Weir**, *Asst. Director for Acquisitions, Systems & Data Mngt., Swarthmore College*

## CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	3
I. Overview .....	4
A. Opportunity/Why electronic resource management?	
B. Principles of workflow redesign	
II. Strategy .....	6
A. Formation of working group	
B. Development of budget	
C. Workflow sessions	
D. Process rebuilding sessions	
E. Marketplace investigation	
F. Decisions	
1. VTLS Verify	
2. Harrassowitz HERMIS	
3. Tri-College license	
III. Outcomes .....	12
A. Detail of workflow changes	
B. Assessment of decisions	
1. Tri-College Symposium	
2. VTLS Verify	
3. Harrassowitz HERMIS	
4. Tri-College license	
IV. Future work .....	17
A. Continued development of Verify, HERMIS, and the Tri-College license	
B. Ongoing assessment of workflows	
V. Conclusion .....	19
A. Publicizing the project	
B. Closing remarks	
Appendices .....	21
A. Budget detail	
B. Tri-College Library Consortium License Agreement for Electronic Resources	

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Tri-College Library Consortium of Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore Colleges has a long history of collaboration that dates to the late 1980s when a shared integrated library system was purchased. The Tri-Colleges' history of collaboration with electronic resources is slightly newer, beginning in the year 2000. Since then, the Libraries have developed means of managing certain aspects of electronic resources (e-resources), while other aspects have gone under-managed. After attending the workflow redesign seminar sponsored by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) in July 2003, the Libraries decided to pursue a project that would allow them to recast e-resource management in a more comprehensive fashion.

### Overview

The Libraries sought to examine and redesign the e-resource workflows that comprise the evaluation through renewal/cancellation decisions. The project term was 1 January 2004 through 31 December 2005, with a grant award of \$100,000 to support the Libraries' efforts. The project group consisted of eleven staff members deeply involved in e-resource management within the Libraries. After six months of weekly meetings, the group developed new theoretical workflows for improving e-resource management in the Tri-Colleges. The group then investigated various products to help effect the redesign, with 2005 being the first year of implementation for the newly revised workflows.

### Decisions

The most significant decision was purchase of a commercial electronic resource management system (ERMS). The Libraries entered into development partnership with VTLS for its Verify ERMS. Verify is the communications medium on which the Libraries' new workflows depend. Services purchased through the Libraries' serials agent, Harrassowitz, as well as development of an institutional license for electronic resources, constitute the major initiatives emanating from the project.

### Outcomes

Given the lengthy development cycle for Verify, the Libraries haven't yet implemented the new workflows developed in the first half of 2004, but the granular statuses through which e-resources progress have been identified, and will provide the triggering mechanism to notify staff members of impending tasks. Ultimately, it is the staffs' ability to communicate virtually that will largely determine the success or failure of this work. Proof-of-concept experiments with Harrassowitz indicate outsourcing of certain e-resource activities is a viable alternative to performing these tasks in-house. Publisher reaction to the Tri-College's institutional license has been better than expected, indicating it may be feasible for e-resource negotiation to start with terms identified by a locally-developed contract.

### Conclusions

Work still exists for refinement of Verify, HERMIS, and the Tri-College license in order for the Libraries to know how well their workflows fit into this new environment. It is expected that assessment of the overall project will more fully occur at the close of 2006.

## I. OVERVIEW

### A. Opportunity/Why electronic resource management?

The Tri-College Library Consortium of Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore Colleges has a long history of collaboration that dates to the late 1980s when a shared integrated library system was purchased. For many years now, this shared catalog and twice-daily delivery service among the Colleges have enabled patrons to view and access the Libraries' resources as though they were one large collection, similar in scope and size to a research library. The Tri-Colleges' history of collaboration with electronic resources (e-resources) is slightly newer, beginning in the year 2000. At that time, the Libraries began collective purchasing of e-resources in an effort to deliver consistent content to patrons, as well as to capitalize on more attractive pricing than the Libraries could garner individually. A Tri-College committee was established to review potential purchases, and this group continues to perform its charge well. When the Libraries began acquiring databases and large sets of e-journals, item-level records for them were entered into the Tri-Colleges' online catalog. The Libraries were also doing a decent job of highlighting new e-resources on their individual web sites. An area that emerged as especially troublesome during this time, however, was the recording of license terms. Of particular importance was the need to make available to staff the interlibrary loan restrictions on e-journals, since these directly affected business practices. For a while licensing information was stored in bibliographic records, but soon a need to store additional elements made it clear that the catalog could no longer serve this purpose.

As a result, in early 2001 a meeting of serialists, catalogers, and technical services administrators was convened in order to discuss options for more effective management of licensing and affiliated administrative metadata. The Libraries decided to build a central database where information about e-resources could reside. At that time, only a few such systems were in use, and these only at much larger institutions. Nonetheless, the Tri-Colleges forged ahead, and by early 2002 they implemented ERTS, the Electronic Resource Tracking System. This database stored and provided access to administrative metadata, but didn't address a vast array of other e-resource management tasks, particularly workflow efficiency and communication.

After attending the two-day workflow redesign seminar sponsored by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) in July 2003, the Libraries decided tackling the remaining deficiencies with respect to e-resource management would be the best use of this unique opportunity. The subsequent grant request proposed recasting e-resource management holistically; that is, examining all the activities that occur from the moment a decision is made to evaluate an e-resource through the renewal or cancellation decision for that resource. Some of these tasks had been performed well, thanks to ERTS and to the dedication of the Tri-College staffs, but holes remained, and even in the tasks that were being performing well, efficiencies could be realized.

### B. Principles of workflow redesign

The principles of workflow redesign as instructed by the Stillwater Institute involve surrendering presuppositions; allowing all affected staff to have a voice; utilizing an impartial facilitator; and learning from mistakes. Mindful of these principles, the

Libraries began the two-year project in January 2004 by assembling Tri-College staff deeply involved in e-resource management. This working group met three hours per week over the course of six months to detail e-resource management practices, and to envision how management of e-resources could be improved. The group utilized an impartial facilitator, a member of Bryn Mawr College's Communications Department, to mediate conversation and keep the agenda on target. This six-month period of discussion presented a generous allotment of time and funds to strategically plan a series of workflow improvements. While engaged in this work, members of the working group interviewed librarians who indicated they had merely reacted to changes forced upon them by the proliferation of e-resources. They had deployed staff to areas of need without a great deal of forethought. Prior to this grant opportunity, the Tri-College Libraries had reacted in much the same way. Although the Libraries had spent a few months planning ERTS, the workflows that developed around it, and the pre-existing workflows for how e-resources were managed, simply evolved. The working group sought to utilize this project as a means of improving the workflows that had been created ad hoc.

## II. STRATEGY

### A. Formation of working group

Management of electronic resources in the Tri-Colleges, as in many academic libraries, is a distributed process. Yet most of the tasks are performed by technical services staff. As a result, the Libraries' three technical services administrators formed the steering committee for this project, with Haverford's Coordinator for Bibliographic and Digital Services leading the initiative. The most appropriate working group draftees were the Tri-Colleges' serials specialists, who perform with the bulk of e-resource tasks. The Tri-Colleges have had for some years now a Licensing Librarian who brokers many e-resource purchases on behalf of the Libraries. His presence on the group was also critical. Given the prospect of engagement in sufficiently technical work, the Tri-Colleges' Web Editor was asked to join the group. Cataloging of e-resources is a coordinated activity in the Tri-Colleges, and one where significant time investment exists. Consequently, the steering committee asked the E-Resource Cataloging Coordinator to join the group. Lastly, recognizing that the ultimate purpose in streamlining management of e-resources is to benefit library users, two public services librarians were invited to fill out the working group.

### B. Development of budget

Although the goals identified in the grant proposal match the Libraries' ultimate outcomes, the fiscal route taken by the working group differed from the presumed plan. In preparing the budget section of the grant application, the Libraries imagined a hefty portion of the overall \$100,000 request would be allocated for the purchase of an electronic resource management system (ERMS). Given that the Tri-Colleges are an Innovative Interfaces Inc. (III) customer, it was assumed that the Libraries would purchase Innovative's ERMS at a cost of \$40,000-\$60,000. The ERMS we chose to purchase, however, cost considerably less than the III product. Although the Libraries correctly predicted they would partner with a serials agent to provide enhanced services geared towards delivery and maintenance of electronic journals, the annual estimate noted in the grant request was slightly less than the actual annual cost. The budget allocations for metadata and affiliated tools, system design, staff development, and data entry weren't needed, due primarily to the developmental nature of the Libraries' ERMS work. The line item for a facilitator was also left untouched, since the working group utilized an existing Tri-College employee to serve in this capacity. Lastly, Elliot Shore, Bryn Mawr College's Chief Information Officer, suggested that the Libraries sponsor a symposium where invited experts in the field of e-resource management could visit the Tri-Colleges to help the working group assess its progress. The budget allocation for the symposium covered the expenses associated with this particularly useful event. The remaining funds (\$14,594.40) will be expended in 2006 on serials agency services.

<b>Managing Electronic Resources in the Tri-College Consortium</b>		
<b>Statement of Budget and Expenditures, December 15, 2005</b>		
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Expense</u>
Innovative Interfaces products	35,000	
VTLS services		34,916
Partnering with serials agent	20,000	
Harrassowitz services		39,982
Metadata & affiliated tools	5,000	-
Systems design	15,000	-
Staff development	5,000	-
Data entry	10,000	-
Facilitator	2,500	-
Tri-Co Consortium Conference	7,500	5,041
Other meeting expenses	-	5,467
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>85,406</b>

Overall, the grant funds empowered the Libraries to accomplish more than originally anticipated – a rare outcome indeed. The budget detail appears as Appendix A.

**C. Workflow sessions**

The work begun in January 2004 sought to document the ways the Tri-Colleges manage e-resources, consortially as well as individual institutions, since the redesigned workflows would need to accommodate both acquisition paths. The agenda that was developed for detailing the Libraries’ current workflows was divided into ten weekly meetings, each lasting approximately three hours. The agenda was based on a combination of the following:

- A discussion paper that documents how consortially-purchased e-resources are managed by staff on the three campuses.
- Institution-specific documents that describe how each library purchases e-resources.

These four documents provided the basis for discussions during the first ten meetings. These sessions were critically important, since they illuminated the facets of e-resource management to all members of the working group, and thus provided a common understanding of the processes that needed reshaping.

As a respite before commencing the weekly meetings to rebuild the workflows, the Libraries invited publisher and serials agency representatives to talk about e-resource licensing and services, respectively. These meetings were instructional, helping the group understand the pressures and work habits of vendors with whom libraries do business.

#### **D. Process rebuilding sessions**

Following the two weeks of guest lecturers, the working group began a seven-week session where the processes for consortially-purchased e-resources were redesigned, with concentration being placed in the following areas:

- Discovery & Trial
- Order/Licensing/Payment
- Access
- Administration
- Control
- Renewal

These areas grew naturally from working group discussions of e-resource management, as well as through review of R2 Consulting's *Agents in Place: Intermediaries in E-Journal Management*, a white paper that expertly details the variety of tasks inherent to e-resource management.<sup>1</sup> The role of the meeting facilitator was especially important during this phase of the project, since it was crucial for all group members' voices to be heard, and for no idea to be dismissed out of hand.

At the close of the weekly sessions, the working group documented the redesigned workflows for a consortially-purchased e-resource, beginning with the evaluation decision and concluding with the renewal/cancellation decision. The group also agreed on functional requirements and desirables for a new electronic resources management system, such a system being deemed the engine to power the revised workflows. The group used a secure folder in the Tri-College Consortium's Blackboard system to store this document and the plethora of other documents pertinent to the project. This central repository provided a simple means of keeping safe and making available the files needed.

#### **E. Marketplace investigation**

Summer 2004 was used to investigate products and services that could help achieve the new e-resource management workflows. The steering committee created subcommittees, and charged them with gathering the necessary information to make a recommendation to the entire group.

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1. Rick Lugg and Ruth Fischer (2003). Available:  
[http://www.harrassowitz.de/top\\_resources/docs/AgentsInPlace20031024.pdf](http://www.harrassowitz.de/top_resources/docs/AgentsInPlace20031024.pdf). Accessed: 9 December 2005.

The key item to investigate was an e-resource management system. As the working group had hoped, the ERMS marketplace had matured, and several library vendors either had commercially available products or products in the works. Some of the functional requirements identified as being part of the desired ERMS had been present in the Tri-Colleges' locally created ERTS system, but many more features had not. Consequently, the working group deemed such new functionality as critical to effective and comprehensive management of electronic resources. Some of these functions included the ability to port to end-users server down notices; the ability to generate an assortment of reports; and most importantly, the ability to monitor resources through the spectrum of workflow processes. Given our participation on the reactor panel of the Digital Library Federation's Electronic Resources Management Initiative (ERMI), the working group knew that the commercial system chosen should conform to the functional specifications disseminated by ERMI in August 2004.

The group also investigated e-resource services provided by serials agents, having spoken to representatives of the three leading serials agencies: EBSCO, Harrassowitz, and Swets. The group sought to learn the services these agencies provided vis-à-vis electronic resources, since the group felt strongly that outsourcing certain e-resource activities might enable sustainable management of a growing and complex e-resource collection.

A third marketplace investigation involved MARC records. Although services for the provision of catalog-ready bibliographic records are not new, the Tri-College Consortium has performed e-resource cataloging work in-house throughout its history. The group recognized that the labor necessary to continue performing such cataloging in-house would continue to increase over time, and thus decided to review commercial MARC record providers to see if their offerings matched the Libraries' exacting standards.

The final area of investigation was not commercial in nature, but well researched nonetheless. It involved development of a Tri-College license for electronic resources that would govern the terms of use for e-resources purchased by the Libraries, rather than use being governed by the terms of a publisher's license.

## **F. Decisions**

After careful consideration, the working group made four informed decisions based on exhaustive review of available products and services. These decisions resulted in the implementation of three new tools, listed below, and the deferment of implementation of one tool, a MARC records provider.

### **VTLS Verify**

The most significant decision, that of a commercial ERMS, was not an easy one to make. Mindful of the functional requirements and desirables identified months earlier, the working group invited vendors of three systems (Ex Libris, Innovative, VTLS) to campus to provide live, or in the case of Ex Libris simulated demonstrations of their products. Each of the three systems, as expected, had pros and cons. Innovative's product, *ERM*, was commercially available; the Libraries could have had it installed

within 45 days of committing to it. ERM had been used by a number of beta testers such that many of the bugs had been resolved. Being a current Innovative customer, ERM would have synced with our integrated library system in a way that would allow display of license data to catalog users. On the down side, the Libraries were not attracted to Innovative's Millennium interface; ERM did not adhere strictly to the DLF specifications; and there was little support for consortia-related tasks. Moreover, the much-touted benefit of porting license data to catalog users wasn't considered a strong incentive by the working group, since the catalog is often circumvented when users access e-resources via the Tri-Colleges' SFX link resolver. Our second demonstration, Ex Libris' *Verde* ERMS, was still in a mostly conceptual stage when shown to the working group, but the system seemed to possess great potential. The main architects of the system were Ivy Anderson (Harvard) and Ellen Duranceau (MIT), two of the most experienced e-resources experts in the field. Given Anderson's membership on the DLF ERMI group, the working group knew *Verde* would conform to the DLF specification, and would no doubt interface with SFX, creating a powerful synergetic resource. The working group was intrigued with the prospect of implementing *Verde*, but only if Ex Libris would agree to incorporate the Tri-Colleges into *Verde*'s beta testing pool. When the group inquired about this possibility, Ex Libris responded that they had sufficient library partners at the moment. Although disappointed with this response, it was *Verde*'s relatively distant release date that was the group's strongest reason for dismissing it as the Tri-Colleges' ERMS. Our third and final visitor, VTLS, showcased its ERMS, *Verify*. Members of the working group were impressed with the system, both aesthetically and functionally. Perhaps the greatest challenge for ERMS vendors is in providing support for consortia, yet *Verify* out of the box was an extensible system. Considering the number of libraries that band together to purchase e-resources, it's not farfetched to think an ERMS might be shared by a group of libraries less incestuous than the Tri-Colleges. The demonstration of *Verify* showed clearly the means by which the system could accommodate entities from multiple libraries. The hierarchical display of the entity structure seemed logical, and easy to decipher. The group considered *Verify* the best of the three ERMS at meeting our needs, and the one for which we could have the most impact on system development. After further discussions with VTLS, the Tri-Colleges were invited to become the development partners for *Verify*. A three-year contract was executed in early 2005.

### **Harrassowitz HERMIS**

Although not officially considered "in development," Harrassowitz's suite of e-resource services named "HERMIS" offered the Tri-Colleges an opportunity to outsource a number of activities previously performed in house, including resource identification and evaluation; license management; ordering, payment, renewals, and cancellations; activation of electronic resources; technical access management; and usage tracking. Of this exhaustive list, the services deemed most valuable given the Tri-Colleges' needs were resource identification and evaluation, a service where the Libraries receive customized and detailed reports of available electronic content; license management, whereby Harrassowitz acts as licensing agent during the early stage of negotiation for purchases not consortial in nature; activation of e-journals, which are e-resource registration procedures and notifications; and technical access management, whereby Harrassowitz's help desk handles troubleshooting for resources the Libraries purchase through them. In preparation for the Tri-Colleges' grant request, the steering committee

estimated that 35 hours per week were being spent troubleshooting e-resource access issues. It is anticipated that utilizing Harrassowitz's help desk will cut that number in half with no loss in response time. Clearly, in order to continue to fund HERMIS, the Libraries will need evidence that outsourcing these tasks is more affordable than performing them internally.

### **Tri-College license**

Licensing is another area where the working group felt efficiencies could be realized. Licensing electronic resources in the Tri-College Consortium is an arduous and often frustrating activity. The Tri-College Licensing Librarian brokers deals, with the Bryn Mawr College attorney acting as counsel. Since vendor licenses vary from publisher to publisher, negotiating and parsing these contracts on a case-by-case basis takes a substantial commitment of time. While discussing improvements to e-resource processes, the working group read about MIT's experiment to provide publishers with the institution's license for the electronic resource they sought to purchase.<sup>2</sup> The working group was inspired to create a Tri-College license for electronic resources, drawing heavily from the NorthEast Research Libraries consortium (NERL) license. After several months of work, the Tri-College license was finalized in January 2005. It is included as Appendix B.

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2. Ellen Finnie Duranceau (2003). "Using a Standard License for Individual Electronic Journal Purchases: Results of a Pilot Study in the MIT Libraries." *Serials Review*, 29(4): 302-304.

### III. OUTCOMES

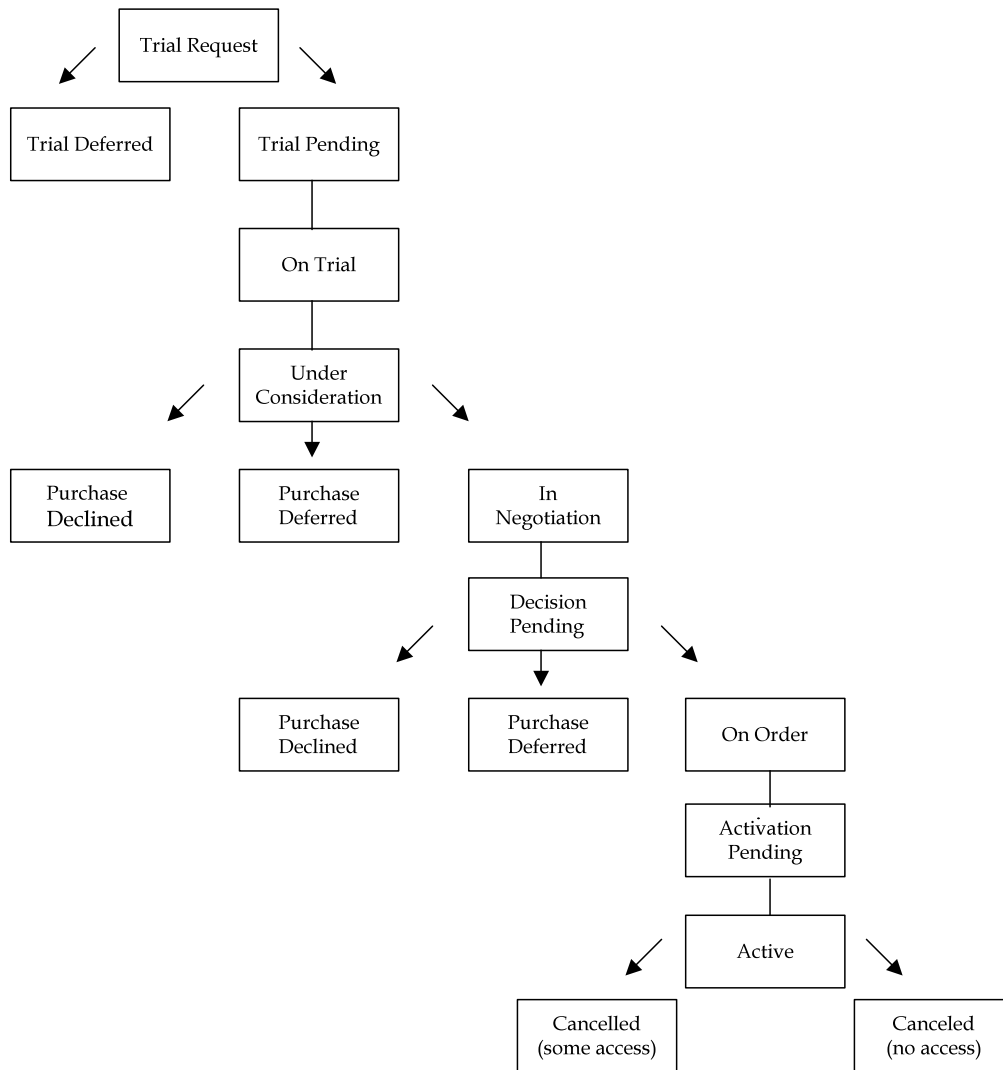
#### A. Detail of workflow changes

Not to be overlooked by the glamour of the new tools and services purchased are the workflow changes that resulted from the sessions held during the second quarter of 2004. Although these tools and services hold great promise, the process improvements the working group created influenced these purchases. Without a thoughtful assessment of how best to manage e-resources, the rest of the group's activities would have been useless.

During the course of the discussions it became clear that the full details of e-resource management were not well known by any one member of the committee. Each library had created its own e-resource workflow, and participants were often unclear as to how the process was handled. An early discovery for how e-resource management could be improved involved electronic resource trials. Prior to this workflow redesign project, trial establishment was handled by the Tri-College Licensing Librarian, who is charged with negotiating electronic resources on behalf of the Libraries. Given the Libraries purchase only about 20% of the resources they trial, the Licensing Librarian was spending much time on resources that would never be utilized by patrons. Additionally, it was difficult for him to keep up with requests for trials, and thus a haphazard approach to handling them was the norm. In response to this bottleneck, the working group carved out a "Trials Coordinator" role, currently being served by a Swarthmore College librarian. In this capacity, the Trials Coordinator makes contact with vendor representatives to establish trials and to receive preliminary pricing. She enters this preliminary information into Verify, upon which many additional data will ultimately be connected. The Trials Coordinator is also responsible for collaborating with the Tri-College committee responsible for determining which resources to evaluate. Establishment of this role has helped the Libraries regularize the trials process, while freeing the Licensing Librarian to concentrate on purchases. Given the number of trials established each year, and the communication challenges of working with staff and faculty on three campuses, the Trials Coordinator has been a meaningful and successful change.

Enhanced communication is the other significant change that informs the development of Verify and will ultimately determine the success or failure of the Libraries' new e-resource processes. In any distributed work environment, communication is a tremendous challenge. Given the array of tasks and associated staff necessary to manage e-resources, effective communication is critical to stewardship of these virtual materials. The real promise of the DLF ERMI specifications is not in the hundreds of elements into which data can reside. Indeed, numerous libraries store such administrative metadata in spreadsheets and find this solution just as functional, if not more so, as a database system. For the Tri-Colleges, the hope of exploiting the Processing Workflow Entity within the framework of a sophisticated communications medium, Verify, is the grand vision for minimizing the inefficiencies caused by communication breakdowns.

The working group developed a communications channel within Verify that's predicated on granular e-resource status values. Almost without exception, when an e-resource transfers from one management activity to the next, the status of that e-resource changes. For instance, when the trial period for an e-resource ends, the status of that e-resource transitions from "on trial" to "under consideration." Such status changes require certain staff to be notified in order to perform their work. The makeshift means by which the Tri-Colleges have been performing such communication to date have relied on email correspondence riddled with inefficiencies and prone to error. The new means of communication within Verify's staff interface will generate personalized screens of pending activities for classes of users. Verify will become a tool that will run silently in the background for most staff until a notification arrives, at which point the window will maximize with the notice. As mentioned above, the granular status levels will drive these notifications. The e-resource lifecycle as demonstrated through our status values is as follows:



Typical ERMS predicate email “tickers” on date fields, but the Tri-Colleges’ design predicates notification on these granular status fields, since it’s the completion of a task, more so than arrival of a date, which typically requires an action to be taken. Developing a sophisticated alerting system within Verify that can deliver notification to staff members based on a matrix of e-resource status, user login, and user class was among the working group’s most significant achievements, and an area where our contribution to the library community may be most valuable.

#### **B. Assessment of decisions**

In many ways it’s too early to evaluate the working group’s efforts. 2006 is shaping up to be the year when the group’s decisions will be put to the test, after which significant assessment will be undertaken.

#### **Tri-College Symposium**

In July 2005, five e-resource management experts were invited to attend a one-day symposium in which the working group presented progress on its key initiatives.<sup>3</sup> When scheduling the symposium in summer 2004, the working group anticipated being farther along with its ERMS implementation, which would have allowed the symposium to be a more useful assessment tool. Although the resulting symposium presentations were limited by the project’s slower-than-expected progress, the day’s program succeeded in raising the awareness of the working group in three under-explored areas: a public interface to Verify; the malleability of the ERMI specification; and the strategic nature of the Tri-College license for e-resources. The working group was comforted by the attendees’ universal acclaim for the Libraries’ approach to holistic e-resource management.

#### **VTLS Verify**

The Tri-Colleges’ engaged in development partnership with VTLS because the working group was attracted to Verify’s initial design, believed in the approach VTLS was taking with Verify, and wanted an opportunity to craft an ERMS to meet local needs and the needs of other consortia. The Libraries had succeeded in building their own e-resource management system a few years back, albeit on a smaller scale than Verify, and thus believed they had sufficient expertise to assist VTLS staff in creating a comprehensive ERMS. Our experience with the minutia of e-resource activities, the workflows that encompass e-resource management, and the vision of the ERMI specification prepared the group well for its work with VTLS. Moreover, the project group recognized quickly the deficiencies of the ERMI specification vis-à-vis consortia, and helped Verify accommodate the needs of multi-library users. The initial testing of the first version of the Verify system in March 2005 illustrated several shortcomings which would have made it unusable for consortia. Because of this, VTLS decided to scrap their original hierarchical structure and to redesign the system using XML for greater flexibility. Much of 2005 was spent not in testing a complete system as we had imagined, but in helping VTLS work on system design and function. As of this writing, Verify is

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3. The symposium attendees were: Ivy Anderson (Harvard), Trisha Davis (Ohio State), Ellen Duranceau (MIT), Sharon Farb (UCLA), and Diane Grover (University of Washington).

shaping up to be the kind of tool imagined a year ago when the group was considering ERMS options. The true test of Verify's success will be in its ability to be the communications medium envisioned. Without complete development of the robust task-based notification system the working group prescribed, Verify will be nothing more than a glorified spreadsheet.

If the working group was unprepared in a single area, it was in expectations. The group anticipated a speedier development cycle. Having no development experience among the Libraries' staff members, the project group presumed a timeline which at its slowest would mirror that of locally-developed systems. Such was not the case. It took months for the working group to grow comfortable with Verify's seemingly slow maturation.

Two activities resulting from the Libraries' ERMS implementation that deserve mention were the *mapping process* and *value list development*. In preparation for loading pre-existing administrative metadata from the Libraries' home-grown system into Verify, a subcommittee of the working group mapped local elements to ERMI elements. This process resulted in an approximate 50% success rate; that is, 50% of the local elements in use in the Tri-Colleges had a corresponding ERMI element. For the remaining 50%, the subcommittee identified the ERMI entity into which the data should be ported. This mapping exercise illustrated the deficiency with the ERMI specification for accommodating consortial needs, since most instances of non-correspondence was attributed to the Tri-Colleges' consortial status. Perhaps a more significant activity for libraries elsewhere preparing for ERMS implementation was the Tri-Colleges' value list development. In many areas, the ERMI data structure does not provide prescription for the values of elements when possible values are numerous. A subcommittee of the working group identified these elements, and provided VTLs with the values for incorporation into Verify. At some point in the future, the Tri-Colleges intend to share these lists with the e-resources community, since they may save considerable work for libraries that are in the early stages of ERMS implementation.

### **Harrassowitz HERMIS**

The working group justified outsourcing certain e-resource management activities to Harrassowitz based on the Libraries' inability to perform well all of the tasks inherent to controlling these coveted and proliferating resources. The size of the Libraries' technical services staffs simply cannot handle the number of tasks associated with e-resources. Harrassowitz, much like the Tri-Colleges, was trying to redesign the way it handles e-resources, and was prepared to offer innovative services for its customers. The timing of the two initiatives coincided, and resulted in a pseudo-development partnership where both Harrassowitz and the Tri-Colleges learned a great deal. As year one of our HERMIS contract comes to a close, the Libraries know that the mix of services offered by Harrassowitz are important to libraries, but some may be better suited for in-house performance, while others seem prime for sustained outsourcing.

Members of the working group lack consensus about the value of Harrassowitz mediating license terms on behalf of the Tri-Colleges. Some members of the working group thought this service added unnecessary time to the negotiation process; others found it worthwhile and time-saving. It seems more experimentation is necessary to determine the value of outsourcing this service. On the other hand, the project group

unanimously endorses the registration and troubleshooting services Harrassowitz has performed on behalf of the Libraries. These services are recognized as time savers that don't impede access to the resources. The troubleshooting service is especially coveted. During 2005, the working group tracked the amount of time it took Harrassowitz to resolve access problems for e-resources brokered through them versus the amount of staff time it took to restore access to e-resources the Libraries purchased directly from publishers. No deterioration in service resulted from outsourcing troubleshooting, but that significant staff time was saved as a result. Unlike our Verify work, it's not too early to assess HERMIS. After a year of contracting for these services, it's clear that some combination of e-resource activities can be outsourced successfully. Further, in many academic libraries, outsourcing will be the only means of sustainable administration of a diverse and proliferating e-resources collection.

### **Tri-College license**

Over the past year, the Tri-College Library Consortium License Agreement for Electronic Resources has been provided to a handful of publishers as part of the negotiation process. Though no publisher has accepted it outright, a few have agreed to incorporate parts of it into the binding contract. In some cases, publishers have approached the Licensing Librarian to ask whether the Tri-Colleges have a model license. The working group had anticipated opposition from publishers, but in nearly all cases the licensors have been courteous and responsive. This initiative, which members of the working group believed to be in some ways outrageous and in others arrogant, was more successful than anyone predicted. Given the enthusiasm of Bryn Mawr's counsel, who helped craft the document, and the Tri-College Licensing Librarian, this new approach to licensing will persist into the future.

Aside from the moments of joy when a publisher agrees to incorporate a clause into the executed license, or when a publisher asks for our model license, the benefits of an institutional license haven't yet been realized in the Tri-Colleges. The main reason for this assertion is that Verify has yet to provide a means of automated encoding of values based on the Tri-College license. When Verify can default values from the license into the Terms Defined Entity, staff time parsing licenses may be significantly reduced. The project group looks forward to a day when the license of execution is predicated on the Tri-College contract, not a publisher-supply agreement. Nonetheless, the group's original definition of success vis-à-vis licensing -- that the Tri-Colleges' efforts serve to inform publishers of terms libraries find acceptable -- has been achieved.

## IV. FUTURE WORK

### A. Continued development of Verify, HERMIS, and the Tri-College license

Refinement of each of our three major initiatives (Verify, HERMIS, Tri-College license) began in the last quarter of 2005.

Swarthmore's Assistant Director for Acquisitions, Systems & Data Management, Haverford's Serials Specialist, and the Tri-Colleges' Web Developer visited VTLS headquarters in Blacksburg, Virginia to work through various aspects of Verify's functionality and design. It was valuable to meet face-to-face with Verify's product manager and lead developer. The working group members returned from their excursion feeling confident about VTLS' ability to deliver Verify's finishing touches.

Haverford's Coordinator for Bibliographic and Digital Services attended a strategic planning retreat at Harrassowitz headquarters in Wiesbaden, Germany. He and a colleague from Stanford University were invited to help shape Harrassowitz's 2006 goals. In preparation for this retreat, Harrassowitz dispatched a representative of a consulting firm to spend a half-day discussing with Tri-College staff the benefits and shortcomings of HERMIS. The consultant's report of that meeting informed discussions during the retreat in Wiesbaden. As the largest implementer of HERMIS services, the Tri-Colleges had significant say during the week of meetings. The vision for improving and extending HERMIS services was largely driven by the Tri-College's representation at the retreat. A powerful example of the Tri-College's influence in shaping the direction of HERMIS occurred just prior to this writing. The Tri-Colleges and Harrassowitz agreed to become among the first vendor/library partners to adopt the Standardized Usage Statistics Harvesting Initiative (SUSHI), a developmental protocol supported by NISO and the ERMI group. SUSHI seeks to automate harvesting and aggregation of COUNTER-compliant usage statistics. A similar data exchange experiment will also be tested in early 2006. If successful, this exchange will allow data to move from Harrassowitz's OttoSerials system into Verify, and thus save enormous data entry time for the Libraries.

The final near-term initiative-related activity is the revision of the Tri-College license. As noted earlier, the document has been received more favorably than the working group anticipated, but could benefit from a review, which is planned for January 2006. The revision process will be led by the Tri-College Licensing Librarian, who will review the document with an eye towards language that has consistently proven problematic to publishers. It's likely the revised license will look quite similar to the original, though perhaps slightly shorter. The Tri-Colleges intend to mount the revised license on each Library's web site, thus making it accessible to other libraries that may be interested in developing their own institutional license.

**B. Ongoing assessment of workflows**

In substance and in spirit, this project is about workflows. The tools the group has chosen to implement, though means to an end, ultimately will not determine the Libraries' success in managing e-resources. The lifeblood of this project is granular tasks that form an intricate matrix of processes, which rely on timely, appropriate information exchange among distributed staff. Not until the Libraries have sufficient experience incorporating the new workflows into their overall management scheme will the working group be prepared to step back and assess the project. It is anticipated that such an assessment will begin at the close of 2006.

## CONCLUSION

### A. Publicizing the project

The working group has taken seriously its commitment to advertise the project to the larger library community. A number of national conference appearances have allowed members of the working group to discuss the work CLIR has supported. These appearances included the following:

#### 2005 ALA Annual Conference (Chicago, IL)

Haverford's Coordinator for Bibliographic and Digital Services was an invited speaker at the ALCTS program "Innovations in E-Journal Management." His presentation showcased the Tri-Colleges' workflow redesign project in light of the changes necessitated by the proliferation of e-journals in academic libraries.

#### 2005 ASIST Conference (Charlotte, NC)

Swarthmore's Assistant Director for Acquisitions, Systems & Data Management was an invited speaker at a panel entitled, "Recent Developments in Electronic Resource Management." Her presentation discussed the challenges of implementing a commercial e-resource management system within the context of the Tri-Colleges' overall workflow redesign project.

Two additional publicity avenues will open next year. In early 2006, an ALA monograph entitled, "Managing Electronic Resources: Contemporary Problems and Emerging Issues" will be published, and will include a chapter written by Haverford's Coordinator for Bibliographic and Digital Services. His contribution discusses the history of e-resource management in academic libraries, and the work the Tri-Colleges are involved in to help streamline workflows. At the 2006 ALA Annual Conference, Swarthmore's Assistant Director for Acquisitions, Systems & Data Management will present a paper on ERMS implementation. Her invited talk will be one of six featured during this half-day preconference moderated by Haverford's Coordinator for Bibliographic and Digital Services.

Less formal means of communicating the Libraries' work have occurred on numerous occasions. Many colleagues have been intrigued with the Tri-Colleges' approach; some even impressed. There are three areas where most interest rests among colleagues. The first is the Libraries' holistic approach to redesigned workflows. Many colleagues have addressed certain aspects of e-resource management, but not the overall corpus of activities. Secondly, development of the Tri-College institutional license strikes some colleagues as overtly aggressive and unlikely to result in success. Yet those with whom working group members speak seem impressed with the idea, and recognize that there may be enormous benefit in working from a known, fair license. Lastly, the Tri-Colleges' service agreement with Harrassowitz for outsourcing some e-resource tasks also raises eyebrows, since few people know such services exist, and those who do lack faith in vesting such complex tasks with an agent.

**B. Closing remarks**

This initiative has made a remarkable impact on the way the Tri-College Libraries think about and approach management of electronic resources. Prior to commencement of this project, the steering committee felt confident in the Libraries overall ability to tackle this work. The Tri-Colleges had been one of the first academic libraries to develop a local ERMS, and among the only small institutions thinking about e-resource management in such an advanced way. Yet having been through a rigorous two-year journey in theory and practice, and to places as diverse as Blacksburg, Virginia, and Wiesbaden, Germany, the group understands the complexities presented by the digital medium in a far more sophisticated way. This experience has been humbling, yet also empowering. The Tri-Colleges are far more potent and knowledgeable than before this project began. They've learned from others farther along, contributed their knowledge to similar and not so similar libraries, and have undergone a process that can manifest in nearly every group of processes that occurs in library departments. The Tri-College Libraries will benefit from this experience, and the generosity of CLIR, for many years to come.

## APPENDIX A: BUDGET DETAIL

<b>Managing Electronic Resources in the Tri-College Consortium</b>			
<b>Statement of Budget and Expenditures, December 15, 2005</b>			
	<b>Inv Code</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Expense</b>
Innovative Interfaces products		35,000	
VTLS services	G		34,916.00
Partnering with serials agent		20,000	
Harrassowitz services 2/05	C		19,303.57
Harrassowitz services 12/05	BB		20,678.31
Metadata & affiliated tools		5,000	-
Systems design		15,000	-
Staff development		5,000	-
Data entry		10,000	-
Facilitator		2,500	-
Tri-Co Consortium Conference		7,500	
Honoraria (5 @ \$250)	K,L,M,N,O		1,250.00
dinner meeting 7/05	P		938.84
transportation 7/05	Q		270.00
travel exp for speakers 7/05	S,T,U,V,W		2,581.95
Other meeting expenses (travel & food)		-	
catering at HC for 9/04	A		230.00
catering at SWAT for 9/04	B		86.95
catering at SWAT for 3/05	D		76.96
catering at SWAT for 3/05	E		18.07
catering at SWAT for 3/05	F		34.95
NM travel 4/05	H		110.00
RHK travel (6/05)	I		163.00
NM travel 6/05	J		272.22
ARL-DC travel 7/05 (NM)	R		50.00
travel & reg. to ASIST conf. (BW)	X,Y		449.03
travel to VA (VTLS conf)(MC)	Z		335.25
travel to VA (VTLS conf)(BW)	AA		140.50
AP due from SWAT for meetings			3,500.00
<b>Total:</b>		<b>100,000</b>	<b>85,405.60</b>

## APPENDIX B: TRI-COLLEGE LIBRARY CONSORTIUM LICENSE AGREEMENT FOR ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

### TRI-COLLEGE LIBRARY CONSORTIUM<sup>1</sup> License Agreement for Electronic Resources

This License Agreement (this "Agreement") is made effective as of *[date]* (the "Effective Date") between *[Publisher, Address of Publisher, City of Publisher, State of Publisher, Country of Publisher, Postal Code of Publisher]* ("Licensor") and Tri-College Library Consortium, Bryn Mawr College, 101 N. Merion Avenue, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania 19010-2899 ("Licensee").

In consideration of the mutual promises contained herein and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the parties agree as follows:

#### I. CONTENT OF LICENSED MATERIALS; GRANT OF LICENSE

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<sup>1</sup> Bryn Mawr, Haverford and Swarthmore Colleges

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Training. Licensor will provide appropriate training to Licensee staff relating to the use of the Licensed Materials and any Licensor software at any time upon Licensee request.

Quality of Service. Licensor shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that the Licensor's server or servers have sufficient capacity and rate of connectivity to provide the Licensee and its Authorized Users with a quality of service comparable to current standards in the scholarly information provision industry in the Licensee's locale.

Licensor shall use reasonable efforts to provide continuous service seven (7) days a week with an average of 98% up-time per month. The 2% down-time includes periodic unavailability due to maintenance of the server(s), the installation or testing of software, the loading of additional Licensed Materials as they become available, and downtime related to the failure of equipment or services outside the control of Licensor, including but not limited to public or private telecommunications services or internet nodes or facilities. Scheduled down-time should be performed at a time to minimize inconvenience to Licensee and its Authorized Users. Licensor shall notify Licensee in a timely manner of all instances of system unavailability that occur outside the Licensor's normal maintenance window and use reasonable effort to provide advance notice of hardware or software changes that may affect system performance.

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### **IX. RENEWAL**

This Agreement shall be renewable at the end of the current term for a successive term unless either party gives written notice of its intention not to renew at any time prior to expiration of the current term. The Licensor shall specify the fees for the successive term in writing in a renewal authorization that will supersede those contained in Appendix for the length of the successive term.

### **X. EARLY TERMINATION**

Either party shall be permitted to terminate this Agreement at any time and for any reason, provided that such party shall so notify the other party in writing thirty (30) days prior to termination.

In the event of early termination by either party permitted by this Agreement, Licensor shall reimburse Licensee for any fees or pro-rata portion thereof paid by Licensee for any remaining period of the Agreement from the date of termination.

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### **XII. WARRANTIES**

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### **XIV. FORCE MAJEURE**

Neither party shall be liable in damages or have the right to terminate this Agreement for any delay or default in performing hereunder if such delay or default is caused by conditions beyond its control including, but not limited to Acts of God, Government restrictions (including the denial or cancellation of any export or other necessary license), wars, insurrections and/or any other cause beyond the reasonable control of the party whose performance is affected. If Licensor cannot perform, Licensor shall refund any fees or pro-rata portion thereof paid by Licensee for that period of the Agreement.

### **XV. ENTIRE AGREEMENT**

This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement of the parties and supersedes all prior communications, understandings and agreements relating to the subject matter hereof, whether oral or written.

### **XVI. AMENDMENT**

No modification or claimed waiver of any provision of this Agreement shall be valid except by written amendment signed by authorized representatives of Licensor and Licensee.

### **XVII. SEVERABILITY**

If any provision or provisions of this Agreement shall be held to be invalid, illegal, unenforceable or in conflict with the law of any jurisdiction, the validity, legality and

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#### **XVIII. WAIVER**

Waiver of any provision herein shall not be deemed a waiver of any other provision herein, nor shall waiver of any breach of this Agreement be construed as a continuing waiver of other breaches of the same or other provisions of this Agreement.

#### **XIX. NOTICES**

All notices given pursuant to this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be deemed received within five (5) days after mailing if sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested. If any notice is sent by facsimile, confirmation copies must be sent by U.S. Mail to the specified address. Either party may from time to time change its Notice Address by written notice to the other party. Email shall meet the definition of written notice and mail.

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*[Licensor  
Address of Licensor  
City of Licensor  
State of Licensor  
Country of Licensor  
Postal Code of Licensor]*

#### **If to Licensee:**

Tri-College Library Consortium  
Bryn Mawr College  
101 N. Merion Avenue  
Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania 19010-2899

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Licensor's use of the name "Tri-College Library Consortium," or variants including but not limited to "TriCo" or "Tri-Colleges," or the names any of its subscribing members (alone or as part of another name) in advertising or promotional materials shall be permitted only upon the prior written approval of, and in accordance with restrictions agreed to by Tri-College Library Consortium.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the parties have executed this Agreement by their respective, duly authorized representatives as of the date first above written.

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BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Signatory of Licensor

Print Name:  
Title:  
Address:  
Telephone No.:  
Facsimile:  
E-mail:

**TRI-COLLEGE LIBRARY CONSORTIUM:**

BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone No.:  
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