

Statewide Shared Downloadable E-Content Selection Committee
Recommendation to the Network Advisory Council regarding RFP for Statewide Shared
Downloadable E-Content Service.
February 22, 2008

Background of the RFP process:

The State issued an RFP for a shared, statewide downloadable E-content service in early January. Two vendors responded to the State's RFP for Statewide Shared Downloadable E-Content: Digital Library Reserve (DLR) (Overdrive product) and OCLC (NetLibrary product). The responses were screened by a subcommittee of the Downloadable E-Content Selection Committee. Digital Library Reserve's response did not meet all of the RFP Qualifying Criteria in that it did not include school libraries in their response and offer. Instead, DLR offers a separate school product. Under the requirements of this specific RFP, this disqualified DLR's response. OCLC's response met all of the RFP Qualifying Criteria and was forwarded to the full Selection Committee.

Selection Committee Recommendation to NAC:

The Selection Committee evaluated OCLC's response, viewed an OCLC demonstration and visited with an OCLC representative about the OCLC package. Based on discussion of all aspects of the OCLC package, the committee recommends that the State not pursue a purchase of a statewide downloadable E-Content package from OCLC. The reasons for this recommendation are:

1. The content available in the OCLC package is simply not adequate for a statewide service. OCLC currently offers around 6500 downloadable titles and only a portion of these were part of the proposal. All of the Children's and Young Adult content currently proposed comes from the publisher Recorded Books. All Recorded Books content will be discontinued after August, 2008, further reducing OCLC's currently available content. Additionally, OCLC's package only contains audiobooks. One of the original goals of the statewide project was to offer video and music format in addition to audiobooks.
2. The cost of the OCLC package is simply not affordable on an ongoing basis for libraries statewide. We would be able to purchase what is viewed as considerably limited content in the first year for \$85,000, and then pay that much again plus an estimated 5% increase in subsequent years. Adding additional libraries would cost even more. This is not an affordable ongoing price for Montana.

The primary reason is content: there is simply not enough of it to justify the cost, there is concern about the future quality of that content once the Recorded Books portion of the OCLC product is gone and there is expressed concern that, should the State pursue a purchase with OCLC, libraries currently interested in a statewide downloadable E-Content service would pull out of the project.

The Committee also recommends that the State re-investigate all options now available to continue toward a statewide service.