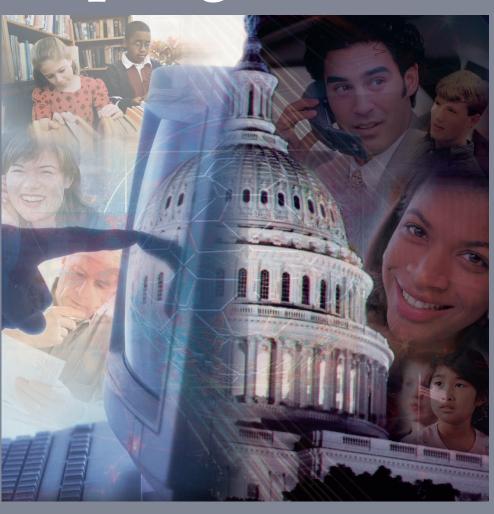# Recommendations of the Depository Library Council to the Public Printer
Spring 2011

Depository Library Council Recommendations

Spring Meeting, April 4-6, 2011 • San Antonio, TX

Recommendation 1: More Integration between FDLP Community and the FDLP Desktop

In order to improve and enhance community access to Government Printing Office (GPO) websites and online tools, GPO should explore the integration of Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) Desktop and FDLP Community web sites, which would include more overt linkages between these web sites, integrated login using openID (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenID), alerts/subscriptions for new activity on both websites, and moving "AskGPO" to the community platform in order to create a publicly accessible knowledge base for the community.

Justification

Many in the FDLP community have expressed frustration with the requirement of logging in to multiple sites in order to fully access FDLP business functions. More integration between the various FDLP sites would encourage increased usage of and communication with and between community members.

GPO's Response to Recommendation 1

GPO is currently working on a redesign of the FDLP Desktop and targeting upgrades to the FDLP Community site in the future as well. The redesign of the FDLP Desktop will further streamline processes and introduce new tools to assist the FDL community. For example, planned upgrades include the integration of the FDLP-L e-mail distribution service into the FDLP Desktop, enhancements to WEBTech Notes, and more. Once the FDLP Desktop redesign is mostly complete (in addition to the Ben's Guide redesign), the FDLP Community site will be re-assessed.

Since the community operates in two modes (both as individuals and on behalf of a Federal depository library), the FDLP Desktop and FDLP Community sites will continue as separate sites. There will be some cross-functionality due to this distinction, and GPO will be working to create more overt linkages between the two sites, integrate other depository Web services into the FDLP Desktop, and move to a dynamic password that is maintained by depositories, not GPO. In addition, GPO is working on a robust login system that would permit depositories to access a variety of GPO/FDLP Web services based on either their FDL username and password or their personal FDLP Community site username and password. For example, FDLP Community site members would be able to log into the Digitization Projects Registry site with their FDLP Community username and password and have instant access to add to the digitization registry. OpenID is one of the systems that is being considered for the password replacement.

Currently, the askGPO service is leveraged by all GPO business units as an enterprise tool, and it serves not only the FDLP Community, but the general public as well. Inquiries about the FDLP, FDsys, and GPO's Print Procurement are all handled through askGPO, as well as order inquiries from GPO's U.S. Government Online Bookstore. The option of moving towards a future FDLP dedicated ticketing system on the FDLP Community site is potentially feasible but would largely depend on the adaption of the service by the community and may create a new risk of having more than one system to communicate with GPO's separate business units. GPO is exploring options to enable searching of the askGPO knowledgebase and the FDLP Desktop from a single location.

Furthermore, GPO is expanding the potential user base of the FDLP Community site to include anyone interested in the FDLP and Federal information so that a more involved, interactive community can evolve. GPO will continue to activate users based on their registration request in order to keep out spammers, scammers, and scrapers so that FDLP Community members have a safe site free from advertisements, solicitations, and off-topic content.

During the October 2011 Depository Library Council Meeting and Federal Depository Library Conference, GPO is actively seeking feedback from the community regarding enhancements and prioritization of enhancements to its Web services. At any time, FDLP Community members can share their ideas and talk with GPO Web staff in the FDLP Web Services forum thread.

Recommendation 2: Creation of a Registry of Depository Library Inventory and Retrospective Conversion Projects

Council recommends that GPO encourage depository libraries to engage in local projects to catalog portions of their collections retrospectively.

Council further recommends that GPO establish a Registry of Depository Library Retrospective Conversion Projects, as outlined in Council Recommendation 4 (should this be #5?). This Retrospective Conversion Registry would enable depository libraries to (1) register their conversion projects in a publicly accessible database, (2) see which depositories are engaged in converting specific ranges of SuDoc classed publications, (3) see which depositories have completed conversion of specific SuDoc classed publications, and (4) know which depository libraries have done a complete inventory of certain portions of their collections.

By establishing this Registry, GPO would help the community move forward and make progress toward a complete inventory of FDLP depository collections.

Background to Recommendation

There is need for a coordinated effort to conduct inventories and retrospective conversions of depository library collections. GPO has previously developed partnership guidelines for cooperative cataloging projects: http://www.fdlp.gov/outreach/partnerships/757-catalogingpartnershipguide.

These guidelines and partnership opportunities are oriented toward the creation of bibliographic records or other metadata, records that could be shared with all members of the depository community and/or added to the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP) for use by other depository libraries. In addition to the CGP, OCLC's WorldCat is a rich source of cataloging copy for depository libraries wishing to catalog federal government publications.

Most of the time when a depository library catalogs federal government publications, it also wants to "set holdings" for those publications in a nationally available bibliographic database or union catalog. Setting holdings facilitates interlibrary borrowing and enables regional or national analysis of depository library collections. In other words, setting holdings in a bibliographic database or union catalog enables the community to discover (1) which depositories have specific titles and (2) how many copies of those titles are held in a region or in the nation as a whole. In order to accomplish the setting of holdings in a nationally accessible union catalog, inventories or retrospective conversions of depository library collections must occur. During these inventories or conversions, individual titles in collections are (1) matched to local depository shelf lists or other local inventory databases, then (2) searched in a bibliographic database to find suitable cataloging copy (or are originally cataloged). After cataloging, holdings for those titles are set in both local catalogs and one or more national bibliographic databases, and item records are attached to those holdings records.

While a massive effort to coordinate a complete national inventory of the collections of all 1,250 depository libraries is not feasible in this economic climate, some depository libraries are currently conducting partial inventories and conversions of portions of their depository collections. These efforts should be tracked and the community should be able to easily determine which depository libraries are engaged in these efforts and what portions of their collections they are inventorying and cataloging.

GPO's Response to Recommendation 2

GPO staff members have been reviewing options for building a national inventory, and we thank council for the recommendation that GPO encourage depository libraries to catalog their retrospective collections. We are working to develop a comprehensive plan to be made available online (a complete national bibliographic inventory for the two programs GPO administers: the FDLP and the Cataloging and Indexing Program). The first phase that we are focusing on is the identification of material for inclusion in the Catalog of Government Publications (GCP). This includes historical material that is not part of the paper Shelflist but was distributed to depository libraries via the FDLP. The bigger and broader group is the material that is located in the libraries, not distributed from GPO, but within scope for the FDLP. We intend to utilize the CGP to provide access to the bibliographic records.

The second phase of the project is to review and investigate processes for a physical inventory of Federal publications. Approaches discussed, but not yet investigated, include working with a small group of libraries with large Federal depository collections to do a piece level inventory. As the Council recommendation noted, this will be a "massive effort to coordinate a complete inventory" of depository collections. By working on this project in a systematic way, we hope to make the most of everyone's limited resources. At issue is the need to develop a workflow process that provides for easy submission of material to GPO and that does not build up a backlog of material for review and inclusion in the CGP.

The Digitization Projects Registry at <http://registry.fdlp.gov> is useful for libraries considering digitization projects. This is not a tool that can be used to substitute for bibliographic records such as a catalog. It was designed to accommodate users wishing to share information about digitization projects or future projects. The Registry includes information related to the project such as subject, agency, dates, digital standards, contact information and project status. You may also browse or search on all fields in the Registry, including an advanced search function. The project owner chooses whether to make piece level or project level entries for the different publications. The intent of the Registry is to supplement and share information with the community about Federal digitization projects, not replicate either the CGP or World Cat.

Forward progress on the national bibliographic inventory project is limited in part by funds and also lack of staff. GPO will share the final project plan for this initial phase with Depository Library Council in the near future.

GPO encourages any library wishing to share information about their inventory effort to contact LSCM's Director of Library Technical Information Services, Laurie Beyer Hall, at lhall@gpo.gov or LSCM's Program Analyst, Ginny Wiese, at vwiese@gpo.gov.

Recommendation 3: GPO's Budget

In order to improve the FDLP community's understanding of GPO's operating budget, Council recommends that GPO provide educational updates on the agency's annual appropriations requests throughout the budget cycle. In addition, Council recommends that GPO provide updates on pending Congressional legislation that impact GPO's activities and services to the FDLP.

GPO's Response to Recommendation 3

The Superintendent of Documents provides updates on appropriations and legislation at national library conferences held throughout each year, GPO-sponsored conferences, and through periodic conference calls with the Depository Library Council. In August, LSCM launched FDLP Connection, an electronic newsletter that highlights the goals, achievements, activities, and stories from throughout the FDLP community. The Superintendent of Documents writes a monthly column that includes updates on appropriations requests and the status of those requests. Additionally, that column is intended to inform the community on other important issues affecting the FDLP, such as any pending Congressional legislation.

The Superintendent of Documents is also making a commitment to keep the Depository Library Council apprised of any updates on appropriations and legislation via regular conference calls and timely e-mail updates as events unfold.

Recommendation 4: GPO Investigate Exclusive Benefit to FDLs for New PACER Platform

Council recommends that GPO work with the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, as its new program of library access to PACER launches and is evaluated, to investigate additional PACER benefits and incentives exclusively for participating federal depository libraries.

Justification

Council appreciates the potential for increased public access to PACER by the Administrative Office of the Courts through its new library program. As the program proceeds beyond its initial launch and opens to other libraries, the evaluative data collected will provide GPO with an opportunity to investigate additional PACER benefits and incentives exclusively for participating federal depository libraries. These benefits would further increase public access to PACER while providing additional benefits to libraries in the FDLP.

GPO's Response to Recommendation 4

PACER is provided by the Federal Judiciary in keeping with its commitment to providing public access to court and case information. A primary goal of the PACER: Access and Education Program (the Program) for libraries is to increase public access to PACER through awareness and education of the general public in the use of PACER.

An evaluation process is built into the Program. An evaluation form was developed to be used with all Program educational sessions and participating libraries are obligated to maintain statistics and report quarterly the number of education sessions conducted, the number of participants in the sessions, and the results from the evaluations.

The data collected will be examined to determine if the Program is achieving its goals and meeting the success factors, which have been identified:

- Increase in the number of education sessions;
- Increase in the number of persons participating in sessions; and
- Positive results from session evaluations.

This process was established in collaboration with the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts and the American Association of Law Libraries. GPO looks forward to working with the AOUSC to analyze the data and to determine if there are additional PACER benefits that can be provided exclusively to Federal depository libraries. Beginning on 10/18/2011, participation in the Program will expand by 50 libraries. Preference will be given to depository libraries that were part of the PACER pilot of 2007/2008. It is projected that the Program will be opened up to any Federal depository library, public law library, or public library in January 2012. This is an excellent opportunity for depositories to expand their offerings to the public and increase civic engagement in Government.

In addition to the PACER: Access and Education Program, GPO is partnering with the AOUSC to provide no-fee public access to Federal appellate, district, and bankruptcy court opinions available through FDsys. This is currently in the public beta phase.

Recommendation 5: Consolidation of GPO Tools and Infrastructure

Currently, many GPO applications and databases operate independently of each other. This leads to users having to search multiple places to find information and to perform multiple functions in order to transact business with GPO. Council recommends that GPO identify databases and systems that share common aspects; develop interfaces between those databases and systems; and achieve greater database and systems interoperability.

Justification

- At present, GPO tends to create solutions to problems and needs by developing solutions that address individual problems and needs.

- This leads to a multiplicity of places to search and functions to perform.

- An example is the Needs and Offers List and the CGP--currently, these two databases are separate entities and operate independently of each other.

- Another example is the Item Lister and the List of Classes. With the item lister, a depository can pull up a list of item numbers that depository selects and does not select; however, that depository must then do a separate search in the List of Classes to determine what title, series, or category is represented by that item number. If a linkage existed between the two, that depository could immediately see which titles, series, or categories are represented by item numbers and could also generate a list of selected titles, series, or categories that are specific to that depository.

- Council recommendation 2 (2011) calls for the establishment of a retrospective conversion registry. Instead of making this registry separate from the digitization registry, GPO should combine them and any other registries they generate in the future.

GPO's Response to Recommendation 5

Data interoperability is crucial to GPO's Web development, and GPO shares Council's goal to have better integration of Web services. Ensuring that applications running on different platforms are able to exchange information and operate cooperatively will allow GPO to create Web applications that not only better assist Federal depository libraries, but also the general public. As services within GPO are re-examined and streamlined to take advantage of today's technological capabilities, GPO must leverage industry and Federal best practices while meeting the demanding needs of its users. Expectations must also be leveraged against GPO's budget and staffing constraints. GPO's first goal is to migrate from legacy, at-risk systems to a stable, structured platform and dataset. This is targeted for completion by the beginning of the second quarter of 2012. Once the systems are migrated and stabilized, future enhancements and integration will be examined based on staffing and funding abilities.