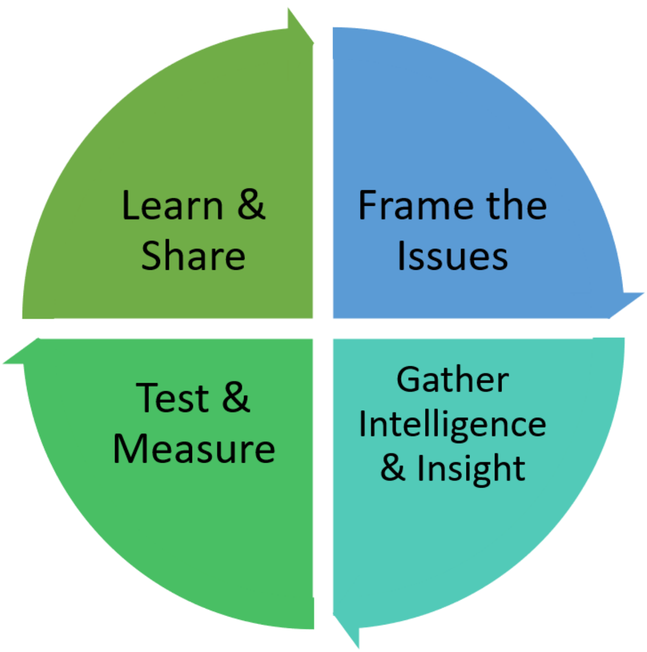

SWAN SHARED DIAGNOSIS

Clarity Task Force Report

ABSTRACT

Gaining insight and developing collective ownership of problems

Clarity Task Force

November 2019

SWAN Shared Diagnosis: Clarity Task Force Report

Contents

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Introduction: Developing a Shared Diagnosis

The SWAN library services software platform[1] is at the center of the chosen mission for the SWAN organization. The 2018 membership survey and interviews conducted as part of the assessment and analysis for SWAN's strategic plan revealed member dissatisfaction exists at a meaningful level. The first objective of the 5-year strategic plan for SWAN was to determine dissatisfaction with the staff interface (WorkFlows) and the patron interface (Enterprise).

As identified in the strategic plan, satisfactory solutions depend on proper diagnosis: "What are the contributors to member dissatisfaction?"

The strategic plan posits there are three possible contributors to the dissatisfaction:

1. **SWAN staff** (i.e. should provide more training, adequate documentation, etc.)
2. **SWAN member libraries** (i.e. have different opinions on how software should work, should embrace common practices, need a role in developing solutions, etc.)
3. **Vendors** (i.e. need to invest more resources in product software development, development cycles are prone to delays, etc.)

SWAN is missing a ***shared*** diagnosis. The below actions will lead to a clearer understanding of where SWAN's member dissatisfaction stems from and will allow us to develop adequate solutions to counter it.

Markers

The strategic plan outlines the following milestones.

- A prioritized list of SWAN software platform related problems has been developed with input from member libraries and patrons.
- SWAN Executive Director and the board systematically work through the list and develop initial diagnostic hypotheses that considers the role of all three potential contributors (staff, member libraries, vendors).
- Where there is disagreement or uncertainty, SWAN Executive Director proposes short term "triangulation" experiments to obtain more accurate data. Each experiment should intentionally modify one of the three potential contributors to discern what moves the meter on which problems.
- The experiments are agreed to by the board. Results are tracked and reported.
- At the end of this process, the Board and Executive Director agree on properly nuanced diagnoses of the major problems of the ILS and connected platforms.

[1] SWAN library services platform includes SirsiDynix suite including the Symphony integrated library system, the BLUEcloud suite, SirsiDynix Enterprise, EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS), OpenAthens, and OCLC WorldCat/WorldShare.

- These findings are shared with the broader membership.

Guiding Principles

At this stage, the primary goals are gaining insight and developing a culture of collective ownership of problems. Research and performance enhancements SWAN completed within Objective 1 should not lose sight of finding ways to improve the patron experience as part of Objective 4, Increase Presence of the Patron Perspective.

SWAN Board Activity

Developing a Shared Diagnosis
The SWAN Board discussed forming a group comprised of library staff from various services areas within a library to help with determining the shared diagnosis as prescribed in the first objective of the strategic plan. This group became the Clarity Task Force. It was agreed the SWAN Executive Director will bring a report and recommendations from the Task Force to the SWAN Board and membership using input from staff as library users. The written charge for the group was reviewed by the SWAN Board, along with the initial names of individuals and libraries. Executive Director Aaron Skog contacted each library director in advance prior to extending the invitation to the selected library staff. Seven staff from seven libraries joined the Clarity Task Force. The group was chaired by Dawne Tortorella, SWAN Assistant Director.

Patron Mobile app
Based on feedback from the strategic planning town halls, the SWAN Board decided to initiate a discussion at the September and December 2018 Quarterly meetings on SWAN's mobile presence. The purpose of this was to not wait for Clarity's recommendation on the need for a mobile app but have the SWAN Board take steps quickly to address what was clearly expressed from library staff. The mobile app was launched to all 97 SWAN libraries in July 2019. While outside of the activity of Clarity, this goal was pursued alongside the purpose of Clarity.

Formation of Clarity Task Force

The Clarity Task Force is an operational task force of member library front-line staff, representing a wide range of expertise. This Task Force is collectively charged with assisting the SWAN Executive Director in evaluating core Library Services Platform software and services and how it is implemented in our consortium. Membership expertise and creativity are critical to the success of surfacing areas of improvement, increased efficiency, and future exploration/experimentation.

Task Force Group Composition
Recommendations for membership of the Clarity Task Force was submitted by the SWAN Executive Director for approval by the SWAN Board of Directors. Active members from our SWAN Advisory and User Groups were a key consideration, with approval sought from their respective Library Directors before invitations were sent to these library staff. Among the selection criteria for individuals was their solutions-driven contributions to the SWAN membership.

Objective

Clarity will assist SWAN in surfacing and documenting areas of dissatisfaction and frustration with our library services platform and membership services, as well as help provide direction in priorities for research and exploration. The Task Force work was guided by three key objectives:

1. Determine a shared diagnosis
2. Deliver on solutions
3. Strengthen our collective identity

The Clarity Task Force has met monthly since April 2019 and participated in shared discovery and research activities. The Task Force has collaborated through a SharePoint project site where documents, research findings, and discussion are open for all members of the Task Force.

Framework

The first meeting of Clarity in April 2019 agreed the following as the framework for the group.

- Learn & share
- Frame the issues
- Test & measure
- Gather intelligence/insight

This framework is represented on the cover of this report.

Task Force Research

To help understand library staff satisfaction with SWAN's library service platform, Clarity reviewed the SWAN membership survey conducted in 2018 as part of the strategic planning process. This included the results and written comments by library staff. Based on this survey results and its comments, Clarity chose to conduct its own research with library staff. The Task Force felt the timing of the 2018 survey directly after the addition of 19 new libraries, combined with strategic planning, required more complete answers.

The Task Force and SWAN staff worked to develop research activities that would surface more in-depth collection of data and staff impressions. Clarity and SWAN staff proposed an approach for research using established user experience methodologies. The approach was not to pre-determine any issues and allow for a variety of inputs to give Clarity the insight it desired for the common diagnosis. The research activities used four methods of input.

- Time Studies of WorkFlows (pp. 17-24)
- Journaling Study (pp. 24-34)
- WorkFlows User Interviews (pp. 35-40)
- Focus Groups (pp. 41-52)

The details of each of the activities is detailed in ***Part 2*** of this report. What follows in ***Part 1*** is the analysis and summary by Clarity representatives on the issues requiring focused attention. This focused attention is not solely directed at problem identification. In many cases, findings highlighted areas of opportunity where directed efforts could provide positive impact. Problems which were identified by only one or a small number of members were not discounted, but rather earmarked for attention through direct communication and resolution. SWAN staff is using information collected through these activities to resolve identified problems directly with member libraries and staff.

Concurrent with the research activities, SWAN staff worked with a group of engaged library staff interested in providing research and development feedback to SirsiDynix related to the BLUEcloud suite of applications. This BLUEcloud R&D work is included in both immediate action and strategic direction related to the clusters of concern.

Part 1: Issues Identified, Responsibility, Corrective Action, and Strategic Direction

Combining information from research activities initiated by the Clarity Task Force, BLUEcloud R&D work within the SWAN community, and input from our advisory and user groups, extensive data collection, and member engagement surfaced five primary issues. While the research, development, and engagement activities surfaced identifiable problems for immediate resolution, the Task Force remained focused on clusters of interest and how these can be addressed through shared responsibility and courage to consider big ideas.

The primary clusters helped focus on issues that impact a large population of the membership and provide opportunities for immediate corrective action and strategic direction.

The highlighted clusters of concern and interest include:

1. Holds (patron and staff experience, demand management, policy)
2. Discovery and access to resources (searching, assisting patrons)
3. Acquisitions processing
4. Reports and statistical analysis
5. Support: communications, documentation, and training

As these issues were reviewed, most refreshing was the attitude of the Clarity Task Force who echoed:

> **We have the power to solve some of the problems. It requires agreement on a path forward!**

Introduction: Purpose of SWAN

Central to developing a shared diagnosis is agreement on how we define and view SWAN. Is SWAN a shared hosting service for a library's integrated library system? Or is it the infrastructure and community of libraries that facilitates resource sharing?

Focus group participants and Clarity Task Force members were asked to define SWAN. Responses overwhelmingly described SWAN as an organization whose primary mission is to facilitate resource sharing amongst participating libraries. It expands the collective resources available to library patrons and is viewed as the community of libraries and SWAN staff as the support structure that allows the resource sharing to take place.

While this answer seemed apparent in discussion, the implications of SWAN as solely hosting the individual library's ILS versus being a resource sharing network as the defining characteristic of SWAN presents challenges. The difference between those focal points creates a dichotomy surrounding shared purpose and practice. These challenges manifest in tension between local control (SWAN is solely an ILS host for the individual library) and consortium-wide policy (SWAN is a resource sharing service for all member libraries).

It is critical to acknowledge that local identity does not preclude strengthening SWAN's collective identity – as well as the inverse. Rather the unique and local identity of each member library fuels our SWAN resource sharing consortium. A shared mission of serving patrons and supporting communities, individually and collectively drives our work.

Just as the SWAN Board leads as a representative democracy, library and SWAN staff strive to be good citizens in providing service and supporting the cooperative. Disparities in resources available locally highlights the positive impact of good citizenry, across our wide geographic reach.

Balancing good stewardship with consistent and expansive access to resources can be difficult. Regardless of challenges and difficult discussions, the research conducted by Clarity shows that the SWAN membership understands resource sharing as the principle value and has a strong desire to work together.

The importance of trust within our SWAN community cannot be taken for granted on our quest for continuous improvement in service and resources. As we present this shared diagnosis of issues, we do not affix blame. Instead, we will assign responsibility on solving problems and following a positive path forward with incremental steps. Incremental successes in this journey will build trust amongst SWAN staff, SWAN members, and our strategic partners.

Issue #1: Holds

The placement, prioritization, and fulfillment of holds through direct patron and staff requests is the nexus of resource sharing throughout SWAN. Holds management related issues were the most surfaced concern. Library staff working at public service desks made clear that dissatisfaction exists around managing holds for library patrons (see the Part 2 "Issues Identified through Journaling Activity").

It is helpful to step back and look at the data to provide a holistic review of holds processing within SWAN, recognizing the volume of holds-related activity in the system.

From July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019, the following metrics show:

- Holds created – 2,411,036
- Holds made available – 2,271,196
- Transits between SWAN libraries – 4,054,391
- Approximately 84% of holds are filled by another SWAN library
- Items missing in transit (approximately 1 year) – 1,802 or less than 0.04% of 4,054,391 transited items
- Average time of hold shelf before pick-up – 2.218 days
- Holds are placed by:
    - Patrons via Enterprise – 74%
    - Patrons via Mobile Apps - ~1%
    - Staff via WorkFlows – 25%

Detailed analysis July 24 – August 31, 2019 shows:

- Average daily holds filled – 4,747

- Average days to fill hold – 11.01 days
- Median days to fill hold – 6
- 93% of holds filled within one month

SWAN's library services platform is processing an amazingly large number of holds with near flawless efficiency.

Statement of Issue/Problem

Several factors add to the complexity of holds placement and management within SWAN. These factors include:

- Inconsistencies across the membership in restrictions on placing holds on new items is frustrating to patrons and staff.

  An example of these inconsistencies is readily apparent in the SWAN Hold Map. At the 2019 COSUGI Consortia Special Interest Users Group (for SirsiDynix Consortia customers), SWAN's hold map configuration was nearly 3 times larger than the next largest hold map (3,472 lines versus the 1,340 hold map lines within the CLEVNET consortium of 314 libraries). Within SWAN, member libraries range from 3 hold map entries to 153, illustrating the vast differences in how libraries implement restrictions on placement of holds.

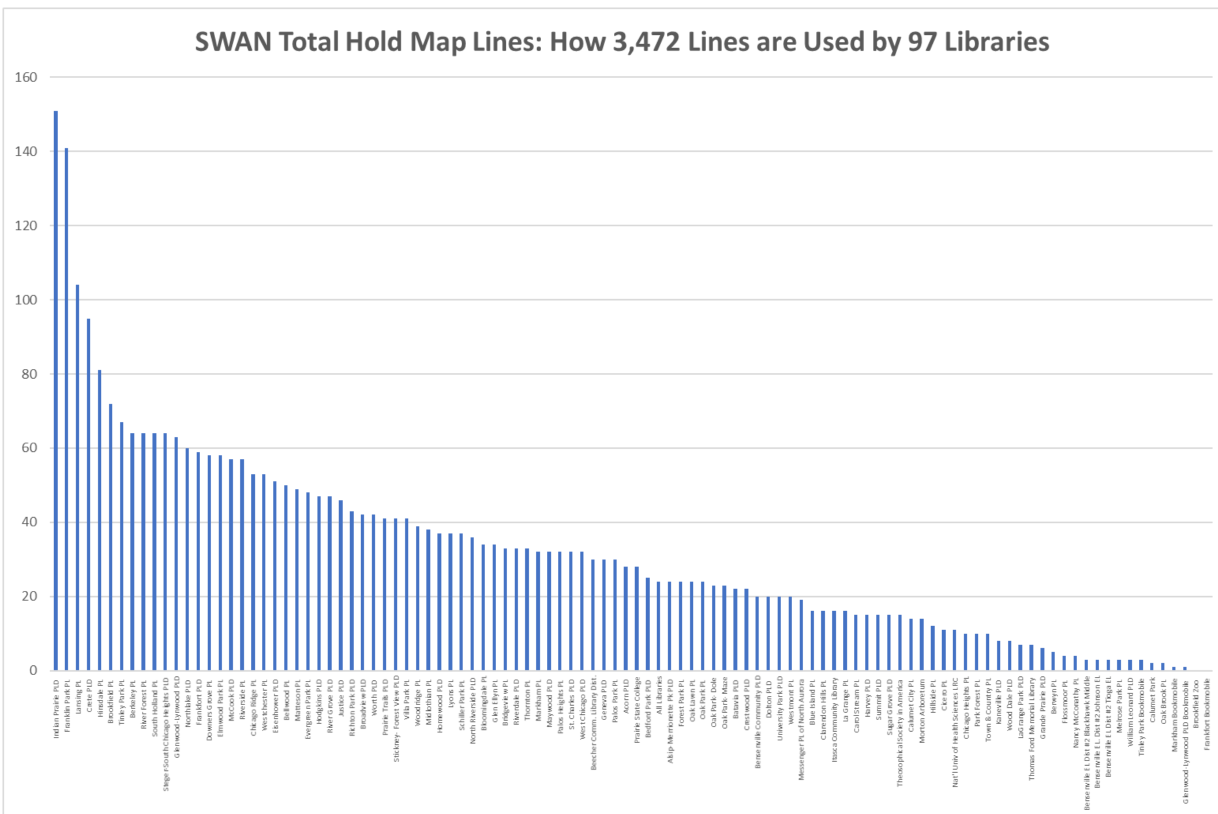


Figure 1: Each line represents a member library's total number of lines used within the SWAN hold map

- Searching and placing holds in WorkFlows is cumbersome, requiring staff to toggle between Enterprise and WorkFlows, and often a supplemental resource such as Google or Amazon is used.
- Due to cataloging of same titles/different format (e.g. Blu-ray, DVD, combo, large type) and duplicates created through pre-cats and vendor records, it is difficult to identify the best title for holds placement which will ensure the fastest fulfillment for patrons.
- Patrons may place a hold on the wrong copy, such as the copy not owned by their home library. Staff would like to be able to more effectively move these holds to a more appropriate record without losing queue order.
- Hold queue wait time is difficult to estimate and staff are not confident about communicating the holds process and configuration.
- Hold wait time is too long for popular titles.
- Item on shelf at home library could fill hold, but it is not selected for pull list.

Corrective Action (Immediate)

- Review Holds Global Configuration, developing ongoing data driven experiments and reporting. [Note: Change implemented 9/10/19 – System is configured to trap hold with first item received.]
- Report on de-duplication processes within SWAN and number of records merged.
- Communicate and enforce compliance of cataloging standards.
- Review record matching criteria used in acquisitions processing to create fewer duplicates.
- Develop recommended best practice for placing holds on on-order titles/items.
- De-mystify how holds are placed, prioritized, and processes in the system.
- Document and communicate impact of on-order records and holds processing.
- Develop training (collaboration between SWAN staff and member library staff) on searching and placing holds, emphasizing how to determine best title.
- Research and test use of BLUEcloud Circulation in public service job roles.

Strategic Direction/Big Ideas

- Implement consistent lending policy across the membership (e.g. allow holds to be placed on all items).
- Develop method where a hold can be placed on every title by any patron. Essentially implementing a model of patron-driven acquisition based on first-copy trigger in SWAN.
    - Provide alerts/reports when patrons have holds on titles that are not available for fulfillment and thus become purchase alerts for patron home library.
- Provide consortium-wide bestseller rental to manage demand. Implement as a roaming collection.
- Eliminate splitting of combo packs; circulate titles consistent with title purchased.
- Develop specialized public service tool which includes a secure and verifiable method of accessing patron accounts in Enterprise for holds placement/management.
- Develop a tool to estimate hold wait time.

Issue #2: Discovery & Access to Resources

The research Clarity conducted through the journaling and focus groups revealed a consistent use of Enterprise to initiate the search for an item and then in placing a hold for a patron in WorkFlows. The two interfaces present challenges within these steps, which can lead to library staff dissatisfaction with serving patrons

Statement of Issue/Problem

Specific difficulties in searching are outlined in the research findings. Many of the search issues surfaced intersect with holds management and how the "most appropriate" title is surfaced for patrons based on their home library.

- WorkFlows only allows sorting on the first 200 titles returned in search results.
- Differences due to editions and formats are not apparent and appear to be duplicate records.
- Search results ranking does not favor patron's library copies.
- Filters/facets are not responsive or persistent.
- Patrons want to search and sort by what is currently available.
- Series searching often requires use of other resources such as Novelist, Amazon, GoodReads, Google to get an ordered list of titles in a series.
- WorkFlows and Enterprise are unforgiving and generally unhelpful with one-word titles, misspellings, and punctuation.
- E-content appears to rank higher in results than physical material.
- Lack of help, guidance for patron in accessing e-content – multiple barriers to entry in use of e-content.

Corrective Action (Immediate)

- Implement universal BLUEcloud Mobile App with templates/scoping for each SWAN library. [COMPLETE]
- Develop training program to address search strategies in WorkFlows and Enterprise. [COMPLETE]
- Configure Article Search (EBSCO Discovery Service) for all SWAN libraries within Enterprise catalog. [COMPLETE]
- Develop a report for libraries to check *Last Copy w/Holds in System Report* allowing staff to intervene when a patron has a hold on an item that cannot be filled [COMPLETE]
- Upgrade to Enterprise 5.0.1 and provide responsive online catalog.
- Modify search results display to highlight available resources and those owned by home library.
- Implement ability to filter on availability and on-order.
- Implement a FRBRized display of search results.
- Conduct usability testing on e-content usage and access.
- Participate in research/testing of SimplyE for consistent access to e-content.
- Develop online patron registration process with immediate access to e-content.
- Evaluate impact and, if possible, implement daytime (delta) harvests of Enterprise.
- Evaluate catalog OPAC/Discovery options, alternatives to Enterprise.

Strategic Direction/Big Ideas

- Implement Enterprise 5.1 and participate in SirsiDynix's Strategic Partnership Program for index enhancements.
- Conduct quarterly evaluation of Enterprise search analytics to identify both effective and problematic search results.

- Develop effective interconnections/services to surface popular subject, series, and awards within the catalog.
- Experiment with solutions to prototype public catalog options (e.g. VuFind, Pika, or OpenSearch).
- Use Web Services to create specific job functions extensions in Enterprise.
- Develop expertise in BIBFRAME and interface for specialized collection display/highlight.

Issue #3: Acquisitions Processing

Acquisitions was identified as a major roadblock to efficient processing immediately following migration of 19 new libraries in 2018. This timing coincided with member feedback collected during strategic planning work in the summer of 2018.

The addition of 19 new libraries added 12 libraries using Symphony Acquisitions, bringing the SWAN total to 27. The contention for run-time of tasks within the SWAN Symphony ILS created bottlenecks for some of the 27 total libraries using Acquisitions. This also constrains SWAN from adding libraries to our already taxed Symphony Acquisitions system. The bottlenecks however, do not affect all libraries using Acquisitions, only a subset.

Statement of Issue/Problem

Acquisitions processing within WorkFlows manages the required tasks. What is troublesome to library staff is waiting on report/task queue contention impacted by competing report/acquisitions processing throughout the membership. In other words, library reports must wait for either each other's reports or mid-day patron notification to complete.

- Ordering material is difficult and time-consuming, especially in the morning, due to the number of reports running in the consortium. As a result, staff schedules needed to change to balance report queues (some Acquisitions staff changed their hours from AM to PM).
- An on-order item must be processed if the library wants to allow holds to be placed on items waiting to be received. Adding on-order items also impacts how items are surfaced and displayed in Enterprise, making the on-order title appear in the list of all items instead of separated into a section visible only in the detail record display. This adds extra steps to the cataloging process when an on-order item needs to be deleted.
- Inconsistent communication and allowance of acquisitions reports to be scheduled outside of normal system hours (e.g. libraries joining in 2018 allowed to schedule acquisitions reports earlier than others).
- Symphony Acquisitions allows many variations in local practice which makes support difficult – what works for one library may introduce problems for another.

Corrective Action (Immediate)

Due to the urgency of the issues surfaced after new 19 libraries migration, priority was placed on addressing Acquisitions. As such, many of the corrective actions outlined have been implemented. But, it is worth noting that Symphony Acquisitions corrective actions are seen as band-aids as we wait for the anticipated cure (Strategic Direction = BLUEcloud Acquisitions).

- Reconfigure notification reports and timing to reduce report contention with acquisitions reports. [COMPLETE]

- Document acquisitions processing flowcharts for clarification on dependencies and report actions. [COMPLETE]
- Develop training on acquisitions overview and processes. [COMPLETE]
- Work with SirsiDynix to develop custom report to purge old fiscal cycles. Purge fiscal cycles older than 2 years. [COMPLETE]
- Reconcile vendor configuration which are creating errors. [COMPLETE]
- Participate in BLUEcloud Acquisitions Pilot. [COMPLETE]
- Work with SirsiDynix to enhance existing Book Invoice X12 reports to limit by vendor and library.
- Make vendor contacts and develop SWAN-library configuration standards. Maintain ongoing and direct contact with primary vendors.
- Work directly with B&T on efficient processing/cart settings, including shelf-ready implications.
- Work directly with Ingram on fiscal roll over and EDI file errors.

Strategic Direction/Big Ideas

- Continue involvement with BLUEcloud Acquisitions; implement BLUEcloud Acquisitions for new libraries. Communicate with vendor that this is our most critical application need.
- Automate on-order record and item record processing (add/delete based on order process).

Issue #4: Reports & Statistical Analysis

SWAN's strategic plan initiative focuses specifically on dissatisfaction with the staff interface WorkFlows and the public interface Enterprise. However, throughout the research conducted by the Task Force, the frustration with statistical reports and collection analysis within SWAN's BLUEcloud Analytics became apparent.

Statement of Issue/Problem

Library staff are the sole user of BLUEcloud Analytics. The tool is powerful and is likely the best analytical platform SWAN has provided libraries. The interface however is non-intuitive, and the organization of the hundreds of reports SWAN staff have created to meet library demands has made use of Analytics a frustrating, confusing place to work.

Corrective Action (Immediate)

- Provide ongoing BLUEcloud Analytics training and consultation as part of SWAN's curriculum of classes
- Create dashboards for library staff to review at-a-glance statistical activity relevant to their position/need.
- Create "Your Monthly Report" as a standard report to all SWAN libraries.
- Design templates in Analytics with the idea of having the "kitchen sink" of data available.
- Develop a method of providing inventory of reports with sample output and purpose.
- Identify and recreate reports available through other 3rd-party analytic tools to highlight collection development (e.g. Grubby items, dead-on-arrival).

Strategic Direction/Big Ideas

- Consider a 3rd party data repository for improved interface, performance, and to plan for a future beyond the BLUEcloud Analytics should SWAN decide to make changes to its library services platform.

Issue #5: Support: Communications, Documentation, & Training

SWAN support was positively acknowledged by members during our research activities. Specifically, development of documentation on the SWAN Support site (launched December 2018) and increased training curriculum with recorded online sessions were mentioned as positive efforts to improve support.

Statement of Issue/Problem

While SWAN has made positive strides in responding to support tickets, online documentation, and training, communication was surfaced in the focus groups. Trust issues were identified through the focus groups with a focus on communication from SWAN and between SWAN libraries leading to a lack of confidence, and thus mistrust.

Communication in SWAN exists within several intersecting spheres:

a) SWAN staff to Member library staff
b) Member to member
c) Member to SWAN staff to Vendor
d) SWAN consortium to Patrons
e) Member Libraries to Patrons

There is a need to remove “blame transfer” within these spheres and consider SWAN as the collective organization which comprises all parties working within the SWAN community of libraries, users, staff, and partners to share resources and services locally, statewide, and farther afield.

Corrective Action (Immediate)

- Reorganize SWAN organizational structure to provide clear line of first-level of support. [COMPLETE]
- Institute levels of severity in assessing issues and minimal time to respond to help tickets. [COMPLETE]
- Practice positive communication, provide alternatives instead of saying “no” – instead “yes, but here are options.”
- Seek input from the membership through more 10-second surveys based on recommendations from advisory groups, allowing full membership to know their input is heard and followed.
- Launch new networking groups as recommended by the membership (Outreach, ILL – 2019; Book Clubs, Public Service, eResources – 2020). [COMPLETE]
- Encourage member leadership in user groups. (Cataloging Users, Circulation Users, Outreach Users, ILL Users, Book Clubs Users, Public Service Users are led/co-led by member library staff in 2020). [COMPLETE]
- Clarify purpose and opportunities of user groups, encouraging participation.
- Extend training and consultation to members on-site in areas where libraries are underrepresented at user group meetings.

- Maintain an ongoing calendar of meetings with access to agenda, notes, and supplementary material available online for those who cannot attend in person.
- SWAN staff and Member library staff collaborate to develop/co-present training programs for members.
- Create and share standards and best practice recommendations, emphasizing neighborly practice, through the SWAN Support Site.
- Launch an online community forum and open discussion. [IN PILOT]
- SWAN staff and Member library staff develop standard scripts that can be consistently shared with patrons across the membership to facilitate consistent conversation (e.g. when will my hold be filled?)
- Take responsibility for proactive engagement with colleagues – members should feel empowered to lead discussions and network with peers.
- Examine patron messaging which originates from the system, notices and Enterprise for clarity of message and clear contact points for patrons.
- Develop and expand ongoing workshops including hands-on labs, web conferencing, recorded tutorials, open working labs, and reinforcement exercises.
- Develop and share with members an overview of communication channels and how these are used in communicating with the Membership. (SWANcom, Support Site news, Support Site known issues, Newsletter, agenda/minutes/packets of membership meetings, online forum)
- Create and distribute 10-second survey to assess membership desires in communication channel and content (e.g. Do members want SWANcom on library closings?)

Strategic Direction/Big Ideas

The largest idea which extends in all interactions between SWAN staff, SWAN member libraries, vendor partners, and our patrons is the need to **nurture trust**. Operating from a position of trust provides a foundation for tackling sensitive topics, facilitating difficult conversations, promoting compromise and striving towards excellence.

- Develop and adhere to communication style guidelines. This includes consistency of voice, vocabulary, and method of delivery.
- Follow consistent use of messaging options with clear expectations of which channel of communication is used in which circumstance.
- Consider role of Marketing/PR of SWAN, as an organization comprised of our collective staff and patrons.

Conclusion

Part 1 of the report should be viewed in the following light:

> There is no perfect system for SWAN, we will always be modifying the software to bend to our needs. Regardless of platform or software used, our two biggest areas of concern will continue to be holds and searching – the features that deliver the resource sharing benefits to patrons.

Many of the issues identified can be mitigated through standardization of policies and practice.

Standardization of Policies & Practices

The Clarity Task Force was asked to think without constraint and define the biggest idea that could have the most positive impact on our SWAN community. Again, the tension between local policy/practice and shared consistent operations surfaced. Standardization of policies and practice would solve many of the specific problems outlined in our listing of issues.

Finding a balance between members' desire to control their resources and prioritize their patrons and being equitable with easy to manage/follow configuration settings is a challenge. A utopian view of this in practice is not required to realize positive impact. Gradual movement toward consistency is effective and doable.

The lack of standardization in policies leads to issues such as:

- Access to materials and services is inconsistent and at times frustrating for both staff who must follow policy and patrons who can observe these differences in action. Different policies at different libraries can confuse patrons, particularly those who view SWAN libraries as a shared collaborative of libraries working as a consortium. (e.g. a slight variation in circulation rules - 10 cents daily fine versus 15 cents can be confusing for patrons who visit multiple libraries).
- Relying on "best practices" can leave wiggle room for interpretation to disregard if others do not follow.
- Management of the system is more complicated when accommodating different rules for each library. Minute changes require an exponential level of complexity when applied across 100 libraries.
- Savvy patrons are already getting around the most restrictive loan policies by picking up items at less restrictive libraries.

Suggestions for forward movement:

- Define core standards/policies and enforce these when admitting new member libraries.
- Address "low-hanging" fruit – what can we all agree on?
- Recommend compromises we can live with.
- Create and use a shared language/behavior (e.g. QuickPick vs HotPick).
- Anticipate pushback and show examples of where we are already standardizing and succeeding (Boxed sets, auto renewals, pick up anywhere).
- Condense item types (e.g. BOOK_NEW and NEW-BOOK; PERIODICAL and MAGAZINE).
- Develop a path for libraries wishing to go fine free with an understanding of implications for neighboring libraries.
- Automate processes that can more consistently update item types/statuses (e.g. de-newing).
- Target work with libraries that have most complicated loan and hold maps to facilitate a gradual movement to more streamlined policies.
- Develop an annual audit and review with libraries assessing movement toward core standards.

The Task Force welcomes the opportunity to present its findings to the SWAN Board and to the membership.

Part 2: Clarity Task Force: Research Activities

Introduction

During the summer, members of the Clarity Task Force and SWAN staff gathered input from our members to help identify and surface areas of concerns regarding our Library Services Platform.

The following methods of research were deployed:

A. Time Studies of WorkFlows (screen recording at Circulation Desk) [Clarity Task Force]
B. Journaling Study (at Circulation and Public Service Desks) [Clarity Task Force]
C. WorkFlows User Interviews [SWAN Membership]
D. Focus Groups [SWAN Membership]

The Time Studies of WorkFlows and Journaling Study included libraries represented by Clarity Task Force members. Task Force members helped guide their colleagues in completion of these studies. These techniques did prove to be effective in surfacing issues and additional engagement with the membership in the future and in targeted functional areas is recommended as part of SWAN continuous efforts to gather input.

The interviews and focus groups included members of the wider SWAN community.

Clarity Task Force Research Activities

Each of the research activities resulted in written report capturing the information collected through the activity. Reports were compiled by SWAN staff using the input received through these activities.

A. Time Studies of WorkFlows: Our Methodology

Introduction & Purpose

This independent capture of WorkFlows activity allowed us to determine exactly what features of the software are most accessed and the efficiency of that work process. It helped identify areas where finding information of completing actions could be improved. It reinforced potential differences in periods of the day and at libraries, providing a range of activity patterns to observe. We hoped to uncover areas where additional training or configuration of the interface could be helpful.

With time slice studies, it is helpful to have a specific day/time for capture of screen recordings. This provides an opportunity to see a cross section of activity across multiple libraries within the same period – enabling review of both commonalities and uniqueness.

Analyzing the Data

Clarity Task Force members uploaded their recordings into their own folder in the team-based SharePoint project. SWAN staff downloaded these screen captures to secure storage for coding. The function of coding did not include any barcodes or personal identification. The analysis will capture functions enabled during the session. An example might reflect:

1. Discharge/Checkin > Scan item > Route to Holds > Print Hold Wrapper

2. Charge/Checkout > Scan user barcode > Respond "Checkout to User" to delinquent status > scan item barcode > Respond to Alert (previously had a copy of this title) Checkout to User > Click on Date Due > Modify

Immediately upon codifying functional use, the screencast was deleted.

Timeline for Data Capture

During the week of July 15th, Clarity members were be asked to help create screen captures at one Circulation Desk during the following time periods:

- Tuesday, July 16, 10:00 AM – 10:10 AM
- Wednesday, July 17, 12:30 PM – 12:40 PM
- Thursday, July 18, 6:15 PM – 6:25 PM
- Friday, July 19, 3:45 PM – 3:55 PM

This work was not intended to be exhaustive across all circulation work stations, but rather reflective of a typical use case.

Overview

Instructions to Clarity Task Force Library Participants

The following instructions were provided to the participants:

> This independent capture of WorkFlows activity will allow us to determine exactly what features of the software are most accessed and the efficiency of that work process. It will help identify areas where finding information of completing actions could be improved. It will reinforce potential differences in periods of the day and at libraries, providing a range of activity patterns to observe. We may also uncover areas where additional training or configuration of the interface could be helpful. With time studies, it is helpful to have a specific day/time for capture of screen recordings. This provides an opportunity to see a cross section of activity across multiple libraries within the same period – enabling record of both commonalities and uniqueness.

Participation

Six libraries participated in the study for a total of 23 recordings for analysis. The Clarity Task Force members uploaded recordings to a shared personal folder on the team-based SharePoint project site. These recording were immediately downloaded to a secure internal storage and removed from the team site to protect privacy.

Data was analyzed for functional activity with no recording of specific barcodes, either items or users. Functional processes were codified for consistent reporting and comparison. All data was collected and made anonymous without reference to the specific library. Libraries were codified by random selection of color identifiers.

A. Time Studies of WorkFlows: Data Capture

Issues Identified through Time Study

Summary of Activity

Data was analyzed from six libraries, representing 23 sessions. The data was analyzed as a composite set and not broken down by library.

Primary functional activities identified included:

- Discharge/Checkin
- Checkout
- User Lookup and Modification
- Onshelf Holds Lookup
- Bill Payment
- Item Search

The following table provides total and average time/activities recorded.

Average Time on Task:

- Active (performing a task) – 3:06 (3 minutes, 6 seconds)
- Idle (screen static at last state) – 6:54 (6 minutes, 54 seconds)
- Approximately 1/3rd of capture time functional operation was in progress

Average number of processes during session (note this is not the number of checkouts or checkins of items, but rather the activation of the functional task and all the associated items involved in that sequential process):

- Average processes per session – 4.3
- Discharge/Checkin – 1.35 (31%)
- Checkouts – 1.17 (27%)
- User lookup/modification – 1.17 (27%)
- Ohshelf holds lookup – 0.35 (8%)
- Item Search and Display – 0.13 (3%)
- Bill payment – 0.09 (2%)

While we did not analyze each task sequence separately, we did capture the time from start of Checkout transaction until completion. This correlates to a patron interaction where efficiency of the application software is critical.

- Number of Checkout transactions (represents number of patrons helped) – 28
- Average of all checkout transaction sequence per patron – 39 seconds
- Average per patron (no alerts) – 17 seconds
- Average per patron (alert – delinquent) – 49 seconds
- Average per patron (alert – holds available) – 59 seconds
- Average per patron (Chicago PL patron) – 84 seconds

Our sample showed that the checkout process is efficient, and patrons on average are helped from start to finish in less than 40 seconds. If no alerts are issued, that time to complete falls to under 20 seconds. The only checkout that took more than 1 minute was for an external reciprocal borrower where additional verification of patron record and potential lookup at the patron's home library is required.

Process Evaluation

This process of data analysis proved to be effective in showing interaction with a critical application within the SWAN Library Services Platform. As hoped, we were able to determine time-on-task for specific functional tasks that are part of a common circulation desk activity.

Participants indicated that data collection was not a difficult or time-consuming process and use of the recorded selected, activated via the Chrome web browser, did not present installation issues.

For 10 minutes of recorded activity, it takes approximately 20-30 minutes to codify the activity. More active sessions obviously take longer. This process did enable us to create a coding system that can be replicated and expanded for future analysis.

Codified Data Analysis

To understand the process of data collection, the following sample represents how information was codified and analyzed in the recordings. Start time of each transaction was logged. Time on task was calculated (Time of last step in transaction – Time of first step in transaction).

Time	Menu				Total Time in Tasks	Idle
					2:26	7:34
2:16	Circulation >Charge/Checkout			0:28		
2:18		scan user barcode				
2:20		alert - holds available > OK	shows inactive ID in alert			
2:39		scan item barcode				
2:44		close				
5:22	Circulation >Charge/Checkout			0:37		
5:23		scan user barcode				
5:37		scan item barcode				
5:44		scan item barcode				
5:49		scan item barcode				
5:55		email current chekcouts receipt				
5:59		close				
10:35	Circulation >Charge/Checkout			0:23		
10:38		scan user barcode				
10:39		alert - user deliquent	shows amount owed and notes (DL# NEEDS INPUTTING IN RECORD.			
10:44		check out to user				
10:50		scan item barcode				
10:58		close				
11:02	User > Modify User			0:58		
11:03		click on currrent patron				
11:05		Basic Info				

Observations

The following observations were noted which may highlight a need for more standardized procedures across the SWAN membership, additional training, and sharing of common practice amongst members.

- One library updates patron record with driver's license number. This is scanned and used as an alternate id. What security concerns does this raise collecting this information in the SWAN database?
- Observed delays between scanning and barcode and entry of that barcode point to different settings in barcode scanners – some send an automated carriage return, others not. While this is a library choice and can be set based on library preference, have we properly compared/contrasted difference for the membership to evaluate the appropriate settings for their library?
- Many checkins were for items already checked in. It appears libraries doing a double check-in before shelving, or perhaps items are re-scanned before final re-shelving in the service area.
- When re-registering a patron from another library, any additional features activated by their home library (e.g. Outreach, User Groups) is automatically turned on for their record, even if the new library does not use those features of the software.
- Alerts related to delinquency and Inactive IDs are prevalent. Is there a more efficient workflow than displaying alerts in these situations?
- Data clean-up (e.g. changing name/address information to all caps) may be more efficiently done through centralized activity arranged by SWAN staff.

Conclusion

This activity proved valuable in two aspects: evaluation of use of screen recording to observe application use and determination of efficiency of WorkFlows in performing circulation functions.

The data gathering was a straight-forward and easily replicable activity. While data analysis can take some time, targeted key functional analysis can provide much insight. This data collection method should be examined in other targeted work processes including cataloging and placement of holds. When extending this exercise in the future, a participation statement should be signed which indicates understanding of the process and purpose of the activity logging. Some activity logged in the sample did not appear linked to actual service-related activities (e.g. checking in items that were not checked out). Without detailed investigation it would be difficult to identify the purpose of these activities. They were included in this observational study.

Codifying discrete steps required to complete a circulation transaction showed that standard checkout and checkin processes are very efficient. Exception processing, such as registering a new patron, responding to delinquent status, and processing holds were more time consuming. These exceptions are quite prevalent and did not significantly add to overhead of assisting patrons. Verification and review of patron data was helpful in identifying potential system efficiencies (e.g. converting lowercase to uppercase via system processes instead of manual), as well as a legacy practice which was no longer desired (library immediately changed practice).

Related to processing items either through normal checkin or daily processing of transited items, it is common to perform a double checkin. While these introduces an inefficiency in terms of extra transactions, the practice eliminates errors where pop-up screens and appropriate action (transit, shelve, hold) may be missed.

Activity Log by Library

Identity Code	Session	Active Minutes	Idle	Processes	Functional Task					
					Checkout	User	Checkin	Pay bills	Item search	Onshelf Holds
blue	1	48	552	4		1	2			1
blue	2	217	383	7	3	2	2			
blue	3	189	411	6	1	4	1			
blue	4	59	541	2		1	1			
green	1	267	333	7	1	4	1	1		
green	2	354	246	5	1	2	2	0		
green	3	126	474	4	1	2		1		
orange	1	352	248	4	1		3			
orange	2	409	191	5	2		3			
orange	3	456	144	6	3		3			
orange	4	81	519	2	1		1			
purple	1	146	454	4	3	1				
purple	2	104	496	2	1		1			
purple	3	62	538	2	1				1	
purple	4	40	560	2	2					
red	1	43	557	3	1		2			
red	2	225	375	6	3	1	2			
red	3	139	461	3		3				
red	4	97	503	2			1		1	
yellow	1	270	330	4			2			2
yellow	2	144	456	10	1	3	2			3
yellow	3	263	337	7	1	3	1		1	1
yellow	4	181	419	2			1			1
		4272	9528	99	27	27	31	2	3	8
Average		185.74	414.26	4.30	1.17	1.17	1.35	0.09	0.13	0.35
		3:06	6:54							

Calculation of Checkouts

	Checkouts			
	Seconds	RBP	Deliquent	holds
	84	x		
	76		x	
	41		x	
	41		x	
	69		x	
	17		x	
	56			x
	104			x
	53			x
	54			x
	28			x
	28			
	37			
	23			
	28			
	13			
	26			
	20			
	27			
	16			
	26			
	70			
	60			
	17			
	23			
	33			
	22			
	1092			
Avg All	39			
Avg exceptions	16.75	84	48.8	59

B. Journaling Study: Our Methodology

Introduction & Purpose

Why use a journal? Journaling, or diary studies, are intended to provide a method of capturing noteworthy interactions with the software and how that impacts either daily operational work processes or providing services to end users. This is a common methodology employed within user interface design.

Our initial journaling/diary studies were conducted by either selected individuals or teams within the 8 Clarity Task Force libraries. Participation was optional.

Library staff were encouraged to make journal entries as close to the application encounter as possible to accurately capture the activity and impressions.

Personas

The Clarity Task Force developed three sample personas of staff who may be participating in the journaling/diary studies. These personas are provided as a reference in determining how the basic questions addressed through journaling may vary slightly based on persona.

Your specific job role and functions may differ; these personas are provided to illustrate the range of positions and job functions that may participate in the journal activities.

Anna – Adult/Young Adult Service

Anna staffs the adult/young adult A/V desk for approximately 8-10 hours a week. She also manages the department, so has both desk and back-of-house duties. Her primary duties involve collection development and assessment of use of the audio-visual collection for this population of patrons.

Bianca & Friends – Circulation

Bianca and her colleagues provide coverage of the main service desk for Circulation and also assist in back-of-house activities. Depending on location, Bianca and her colleagues may be assisting with patron registration, assisting with overdues and fine payment, checkout, check-in, and locating material on hold. In back-of-house, the team may be processing the pull list, transit of materials, or shelving. Bianca and her team decide they would like to maintain a journal across the team.

Maxwell – Technical Services

Maxwell is a part-time employee who works in Technical Services. This include processing of new materials, scheduling and monitoring acquisitions/loading of files, creating pre-cat records, and checking in serials.

Journaling Prompts/Questions

The following journaling prompts or questions may vary slightly based on your role in the library. Regardless of role, the purpose of the journaling is to capture interactions and work processes that rely on the automated system (Enterprise or Workflows).

1. What system were you using? (Enterprise/WorkFlows)

2. How did this make you feel? If you were working with a patron, did you sense their feelings? [feel free to use an emoji sticker!]
3. What task were you attempting?
4. Quickly/briefly list the steps you took
5. What information did you share with either the patron, a manager, or a colleague related to this event?
6. How did you resolve the issue or workaround the problem?
7. Comments
8. Date/Time (and initials if you are working on a team journal)

Instructions

Step 1 (July 15-19):

Clarity Task Force member works within their library to select 2 people/teams to participate in the journaling activity.

Step 2 (July 15-19):

Clarity Task Force member uses the bookmark prompts file to customize based on persona (e.g. remove references to patrons for back-of-house personas).

Step 3 (prior to July 22):

- Write brief persona, page 1 of journal for recipient(s)
- Distribute journals

Step 4 (July 22 – Aug 13th)

- Recipient(s) journal
- Clarity Task Force member checks progress
- If desired, rotate recipients for journaling

Step 5 (Aug 14th)

- Initial review at Clarity meeting

Journal Example

Page 1 Persona:

My name is Elizabeth and I am a part-time Acquisitions processing clerk. It is my responsibility to schedule and review loading of acquisitions files in Symphony. I work T,W,Th from 7:00 AM – Noon

Journal Entry 

1. WorkFlows – Reports
2. I'm confused and frustrated that this error keeps showing up.
3. Checking finished jobs for ediretrieveftp

4. Go to Reports > Finished Reports > look for status, see ERROR, open report, use the binocular thing to search for "error", find message, "Error – BWIBook" (that searching tip at least makes it faster to find where in the report this error is happening)
5. I told my Manager but they don't know what this means. I'm not sure if he told SWAN or if this is something that should be reported. Do I need to talk to the vendor?
6. Everything "looks" fine and comes in, but seeing ERROR makes me worry.
7. I just keep double checking that files come in ok, but I'd really like for that error to go away.

Background on this Activity

Excerpt From "Universal Methods of Design: 30 Diary Studies"[2]

Diaries or journals are guiding artifacts that allow people to conveniently and expressively convey personal details about their daily life and events to design teams.

Diary studies are ideal for collecting information from participants across time, sampling their thoughts, feelings, or behaviors at key moments throughout a day, week, or month.

Blank journals are issued to participants in person or by mail. The diary must be designed for porta-bility and ease of use. An overview of the topic of interest is included up front, with instructions on how and when to complete requested entries, and a sample entry. Participants may be requested to document each time they engage in a particular behavior, encounter a product or situation, or have specific types of interactions. Other studies may require regular entries at particular times of day, or a log of items in summary at day's end. When used within experience sampling, diary entries are made at random times when the participant is signaled by a device or alarm.

Each page entry should be guided with a brief question or prompt, with appropriate space for encouraging the desired length of text. Creative page formats can be used to invite other forms of recording as well, such as sketches or drawings, symbols, or photographs, text or visuals that can be circled or checked, or the use of provided stickers. A small set of questions or space for reflections, and a request for demographic information, is sometimes placed at the end of the diary.

Diary studies are useful tools in exploratory research, preparing the designer for further research by contributing to an understanding of participant user groups While diary studies are typically conducted with a relatively small sample, common themes and patterns can emerge. The synthesized information is intended primarily for inspiration and to indicate design implications for generative design. However, diaries can also be used in generative research. For example, journals are often issued to sensitize participants to research topics leading up to participatory design exer-cises such as collage, flexible modeling, or co-design workshops. In rare cases, diaries may be used for usability studies or evaluation, as a means of collecting feedback from users testing products in context over time.

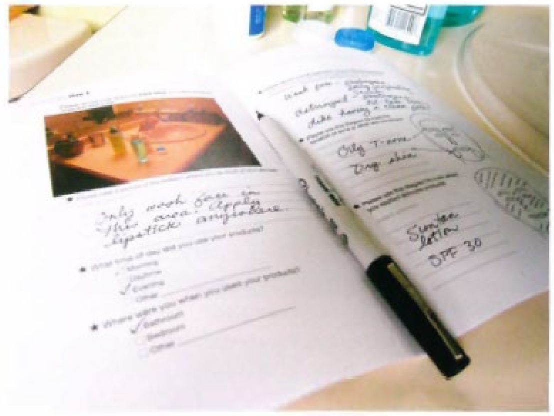
While traditionally diary studies have been completed with paper and pen, technology affords novel forms of entries such as digital photos, video, and audio that may be recorded on digital devices, and sent via email or

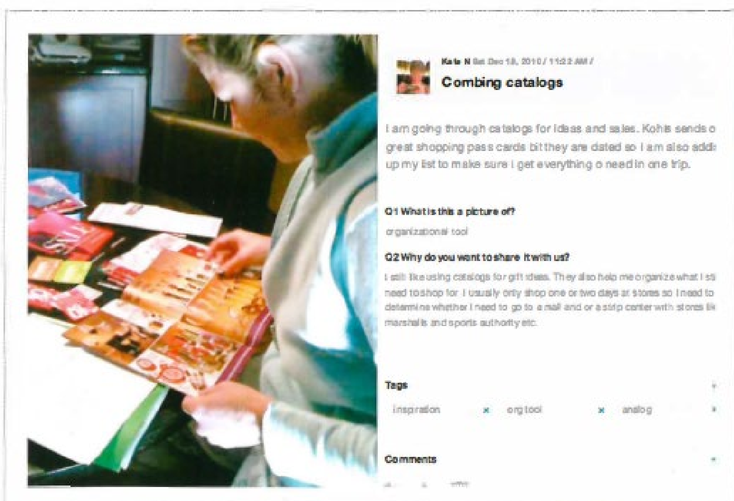
2 HANINGTON, B. (2019). Universal methods of design. ROCKPORT. pp. 66-67.

uploaded on provided sites. Digital diaries can also be completed as an integrated component of online or device interactions, with entry forms imbedded directly within software interfaces.

Design Phase:

Diary studies are used to sample self-reported participant interactions or events over time.





Above: Traditional diary studies are conducted using pen and paper journals, here for a study on skin care regimens..

Diary design by Aya Horiguchi

Left: Digital diary with user photo and text entries describing Christmas shopping experiences.

Courtesy of dscout.com / Gravity Tank

B. Journaling Study: Data Capture

Affinity Diagram of Journaling Activity

The journals were reviewed through an Affinity Diagramming exercise on September 11, 2019. In total, 14 journals were submitted by staff from public service desks representing youth, adult, and circulation staff. Other staff within cataloging/technical services departments participated within the two-week period. All the journals were submitted to Clarity at the end of the period and were analyzed using an affinity diagramming technique[3]. All journal entries were categorized and grouped around common themes.

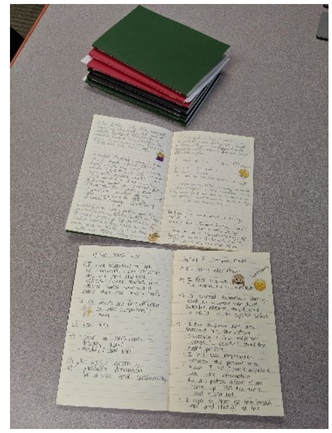


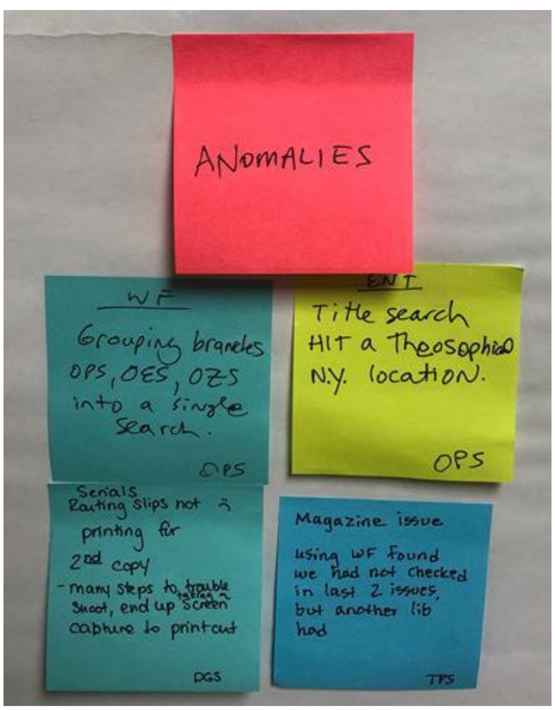
Figure 1 Journals completed within Clarity study

Five SWAN staff (Tara, Crystal, Aaron, Scott, Dawne) participated in this exercise to summarize the journal entries submitted. Journals were returned to the owning libraries upon capturing the topic clusters.

For diagramming we used the following color coding

Blue = WorkFlows
Yellow = Enterprise
Red = Topic clusters

Throughout the issues identified, selected images of the affinity diagramming are included.



[3] Pernice, K., & Pernice, K. (n.d.). Affinity Diagramming: Collaboratively Sort UX Findings & Design Ideas. Retrieved from https://www.nngroup.com/articles/affinity-diagram/.

Issues Identified through Journaling Activity

The issues identified within this journaling and affinity diagram process are meant to be qualitative and not quantitative. The goal of the research was to identify the frustrations of library users, and not necessarily identify how widespread the issue is. Issues fell into the following three major areas:

- Holds related
- Search related
- Others (from cataloging to software related)

Holds Related Issues

The journaling identified a wide number of issues with holds. Some of the issues are software related but many others are SWAN related.

1. Non-holdable new items/restrictive policies

Library users are frustrated by items being available but are restricted from having a hold placed on the item due to the libraries owning that item blocking holds to outside patrons.

2. Hold queues difficult to estimate

Library staff find the task in WorkFlows difficult when asked routinely by library patrons if they can tell them where they are in the hold queue. This is particularly difficult with popular titles that have extremely large queues. Currently, a hold queue on a popular title could include (1) suspended requests that are rising in the queue, but not actively filling the hold, and (2) items that are restricted to only home library patrons, thus being unavailable to fill any other holds in the queue. Providing a patron, the answer "you are 20th in line" while true, provides no accurate estimate on the length of time the item will become available to them.

3. Library staff would like to re-order hold queue

One library indicated that the need to reorder the hold queue is a function desired within WorkFlows but SWAN refuses to grant. The need arises from patrons placing a hold on a title that could be filled faster on another title record (the hardbound with 60 copies vs the paperback with 10 copies). Holds cannot be migrated from one title to another title but are instead recreated on the appropriate title by library staff who then would like to place the patron approximately in the hold queue order as compared to the original hold.

4. Duplicate records, leading to mismatched holds

At various points within the consortium's constant addition of new items, there will be duplicate records. Duplicate title/bibliographic records will be merged and thereby the hold queues will also be merged, retaining the correct hold queue order. But until those records are merged, a title level hold could be waiting on a duplicate record with only one to few copies.

5. Communication/support regarding holds

Library staff indicated that SWAN staff being unsure about holds processes or configuration leads to them having less confidence in the system.

6. Item on shelf could fill hold but does not

Within SWAN's Symphony configuration with holds (specifically called "demand management"), a patron will have a hold filled by a member library, but the locally available item is not triggered first. This can lead to a scenario where an item is transiting from one library to another, but the local copy could have immediately filled the hold.

Search Related Issues

The searching in WorkFlows and Enterprise and the returned results directly impacts the ability for library staff and patrons to quickly locate items available or optimally place hold requests.

7. Holds & relevancy

Enterprise will display search results where the title with the most available copies is listed lower on the results (or the second page), and an item (perhaps newer) that does not have as many available copies is listed higher up on the list. Patrons will place a hold on the first item they see, rather than examine the list and pick the better title option.

8. Library relevancy

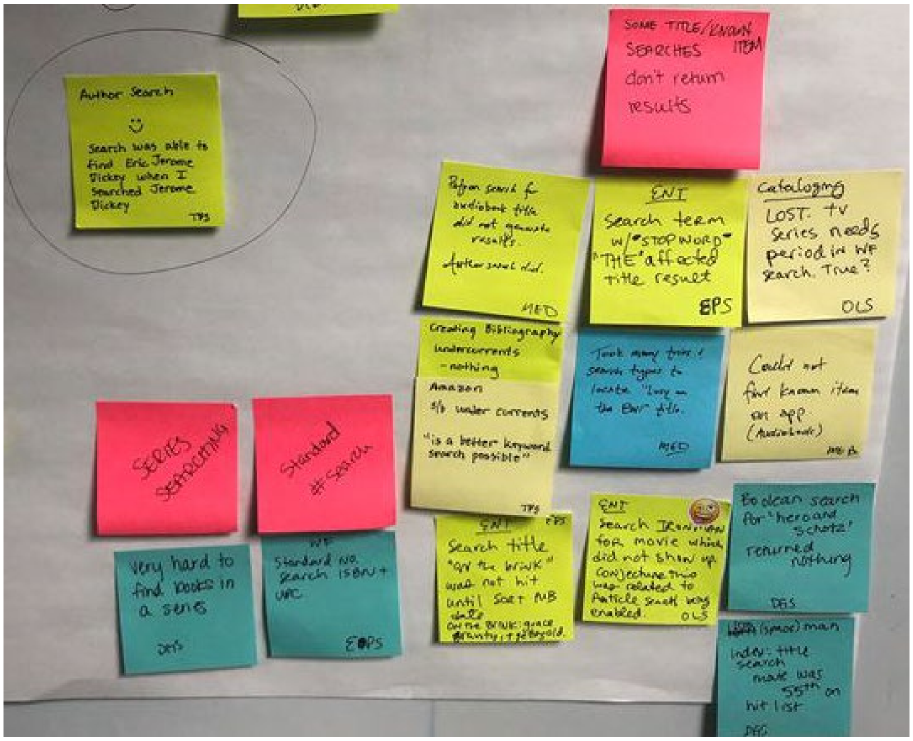
Enterprise search results do not account for owning library within the Enterprise profile. Staff expectation is to have title search results give a priority in the results list of what the library owns.

9. Enterprise/WorkFlows results mismatch

A title search in WorkFlows will bring back different results when compared to Enterprise. This is due to each interface utilizing its own unique index (keyword, title, author, etc.) and not a common, shared index between WorkFlows and Enterprise.

10. E-content surfaces above physical content

The eResource Central content appears higher up in Enterprise search result lists, pushing titles with the most copies available further down the results list or onto a second page of results.



11. Series searching

It is difficult to search for title series in WorkFlows.

12. Standard number searching

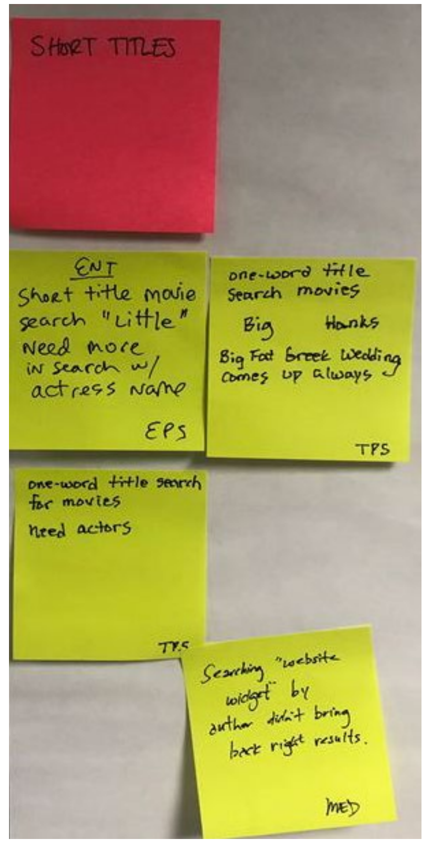
Searching standard numbers in WorkFlows can vary day-to-day depending on the amount of records being added/modified/improved by cataloging libraries.

13. Some title/known item searches do not return results

Library users perform a search and know they own the copy, but for some reason their search results returned do not list the item. This is due to a variety of issues, such as library staff using incorrect search indexes in WorkFlows, starting with incomplete titles or titles with short names (It, Us, Smile, etc.). This also occurs in Enterprise.

14. Short title searches

One-word title searches require either the author's name or a related performer in the film in order to accurately bring back the result.



15. Limiting searches

Library users will attempt to use the format facets in Enterprise to narrow the results. The Enterprise facets will reset under certain conditions, making library staff redo the search facet limit. This will be the case when Enterprise is used to narrow to locally owned collection titles or expanding the search to all libraries. WorkFlows was also indicated as being problematic for sorting by format. Youth services staff would like to use limits by picture books, readers, junior fiction, etc.

16. Placing holds after searching & generally avoiding WorkFlows search & using other tools first

The journals indicated widespread practice of searching in Enterprise first and then using the selected title in Enterprise to perform a more specific search in WorkFlows in order to place the hold for the patron. Enterprise was noted as being much easier or "user friendly" in regard to searching.

Other Issues

Within the journals, we have identified the following.

17. Cataloging

Records from "dead" inter-library lending with non-SWAN libraries require some cleanup. These are items that remain in the catalog but are of no use to libraries and impact the search.

18. Serials checking sorting

The Symphony Serials functions are not consistent in listing chronology, issues received do not sort in descending order. In addition, there is incongruity in how serial issues display to patrons in the catalog – reverse chronological order is preferred in all interfaces.

19. Desire more actions in one screen

Library users indicated they would like to have the ability to perform an action or a step at various places within their processing, rather than stopping to perform a step elsewhere. This was noted within WorkFlows by cataloging, circulation, acquisitions, and desk staff.

20. Transit cancel option

When checking in an item that either belongs to another library or is on hold at another library a transit box will appear. This pop up has two options, “Put Item In Transit” and “Cancel.” When pressing the Cancel button or closing out the pop up, the item will appear to be on the shelf at the library it was being sent to. The item will show as being on shelf, but it is of course not found there-- the item was checked in that day at another library.

21. Patron registration & searching

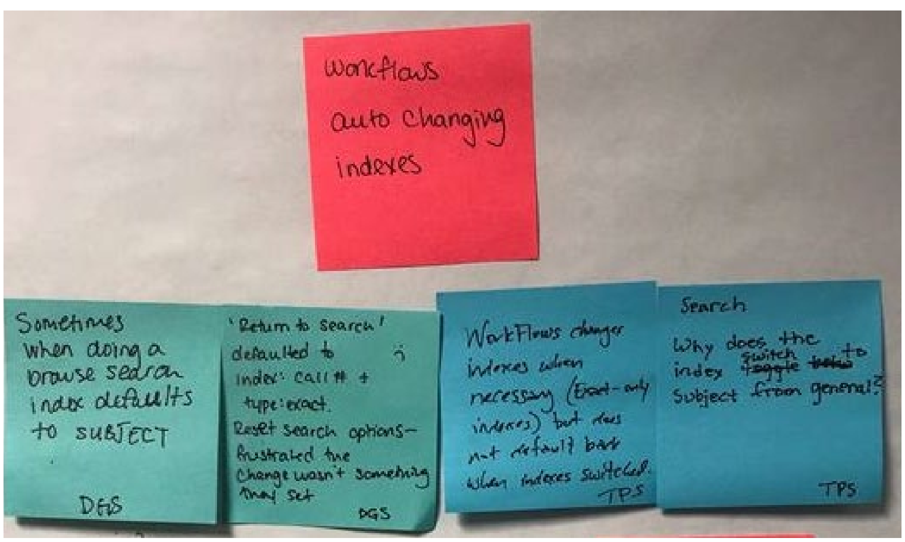
Searching the large patron database in SWAN’s Symphony also presents issues. For example, when the patron has already been entered in the system but the initial search by staff does not find the existing record. Then, during the registration process the library staff realize the patron record already exists. This can be frustrating as the registration process takes longer to either restart the registration steps or fix steps already completed.

22. Availability conflicts

There can be confusing status of items in Enterprise versus what is indicated in WorkFlows. The item returned showed “on shelf” in Enterprise, but the actual data in WorkFlows shows the item was returned within that hour and was on a cart. Patrons and library staff cannot locate the item on the shelf, only to realize later it was on a shelving cart.

23. WorkFlows auto changing indexes

WorkFlows will sometimes change indexes during a search without users understanding why. After completing a browse search the index defaults to subject index, or variations on this index changing.



24. Too many clicks

Attempting to complete a task in WorkFlows will require “too many” clicks either during patron registration, placing holds, or within cataloging.

25. Insufficient permissions or perception of insufficient permissions

Library users indicated frustration over the Symphony logins provided by SWAN and that some logins used at the library do not have permissions to complete a task, so they log out and back in with a circulation login to place the hold, etc. While SWAN could easily fix this on a per library per login basis, some library users are struggling with their daily work because of the login permissions.

26. Long-running overnight processes

The Symphony Reports is a system utilized by both SWAN staff and library staff. The conflict to library users is in the area of Symphony Acquisitions when their scheduled or queued report needed to process a step in Acquisitions is competing for time with scheduled patron notices, overnight maintenance tasks, etc. This will cause a library user's report to wait for the SWAN staff scheduled report to complete. This could be ongoing daily conflicts set at specific times with patron notification or special one-time scheduled data cleanup such as a patron search index being rebuilt overnight.

27. Instructions on scheduling Symphony processes

Library users of Symphony Acquisitions can see that some of the practices recommended by SWAN are not being followed by the other libraries using Acquisitions. This lack of practice is frustrating to those libraries trying to follow the guidelines but can see others "breaking the rules."

28. Software issues

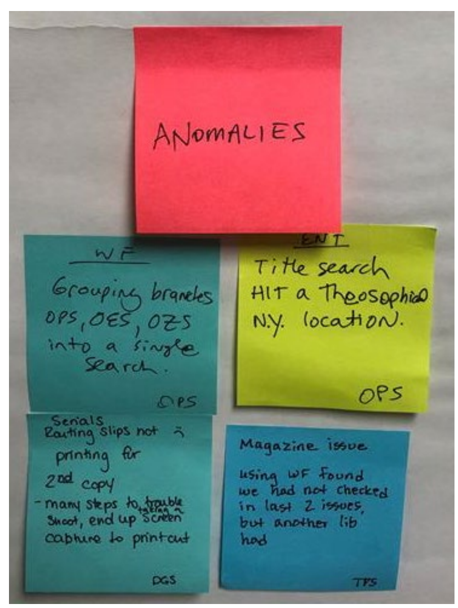
WorkFlows closes for no reason, or Workflows froze during check-in process, or that Enterprise was slow, or an Enterprise record with many items all showed a status of unknown. The likely cause of all of these issues is network related, but the impact of these moments is affecting library users.

29. AV Item/Case missing item or mismatch

Sometimes items returned will not be in the correct case. Typically, this is audio-visual material that was shared and returned, requiring some follow-up with patrons.

30. Library Branch Catalog Holdings

Branch agency issues specific to the journal entry were related to The Theosophical Society of American using Symphony to indicate library items held in a library location in New York, and how Oak Park Public Library staff contend with searching three locations (Main, Dole, and Maze).



C. WorkFlows User Interviews: Our Methodology

Introduction & Purpose

One-on-one interviews were conducted with staff who use Symphony WorkFlows in their daily operations. The first set of interviews focused on circulation functions. These interviews provided direct contact with the members working within the SirsiDynix Library Services Platform application.

User Experience Manager Tara Wood and User Experience Consultant Crystal Vela conducted interactive interview sessions with circulation staff from three libraries to identify areas where SWAN can improve training and documentation, identify and share strategies for efficiency, and provide enhancement requests to SirsiDynix.

In total, interviews were completed with three participants. Three to five participants is standard in this method of user research.[4]

Timeline & Participants

Interviewees were recruited from the Circulation User Group meeting held at RAILS on June 19th, 2019. For this research project, we sought participants that have experience using Workflows daily to assist patrons and run daily processes. Three circulation department heads volunteered, two from south side libraries and one from a northwest side library. Interviews were completed over the July 2019 month.

- Jane Young, Acorn Public Library District
- Barbara Bronkala, Alsip-Merrionette Park Public Library District
- Emily Cotterman, Itasca Community Library

Methods

Crystal Vela moderated the interviews and Tara Wood took notes. Through a think-aloud protocol, participants gave step by step instructions on how to use Workflows to perform common tasks including searching and placing holds, to registering patrons and paying bills.

Summary

While we expected that participants would identify a large range of issues, we were surprised to find that most common tasks are working well; the participants interviewed were confident with Workflows and had positive feelings about using it in general. The issues participants noted with Workflows were minor annoyances not major problems. SWAN will be able to take several of these minor annoyances and make recommendations to SirsiDynix for interface enhancements to the patron display interface and transit information popups.

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[4] "The first three users are very likely to encounter the most significant problems related to the tasks you're testing[…]It's much more important to do rounds to testing than to wring everything you can out of each round. Testing with just a few users makes is easier to do more rounds." - Steve Krug, Rocket Surgery Made Easy

Participants also noted confusion around billing and handling damaged items. Their issues were not with Workflows as much as with the larger complexity of those processes.

Interview Script: Workflows Circulation Functions

Introduction

Hello, my name is Crystal a UX Consultant for SWAN and this is Tara the UX Manager at SWAN. We are here to better understand how you use Workflows for your everyday work in Circulation. I estimate that this interview will take up to an hour. During this time, we will go over some questions and I will ask you to show us some of our process is in Workflows as well. I will ask the questions and Tara will be taking notes. We would like you to treat us as if you're responsible for training us; we are here to learn.

Just a few things before we begin. We would like you to know that to the extent possible, we will take your comments to be confidential. We will take both your comments and other interviewees and compile them without names. Also, this interview is entirely voluntary on your part. If for any reason you would like to stop, please let me know. We can end the interview.
Do you have any questions for me?

We are going to proceed now.

Warm-Up Questions

- Tell me about your role in the library.
- How did you come to be in this role?
- What ILS's have you worked with—like Symphony, Horizon, Millennium?

Questions

1) Tell us about the last time you had difficulty searching for an item for a patron
    a) How did you search? What information did you have about the item?
    b) What limiters or facets did you use?
    c) How often do you find yourself searching for a topic, vs. A title, vs. An author? Etc.
2) Placing holds
    a) What is your first step when a patron comes up and wants to place a hold on an item?
    b) Walk us through your process in Workflows.
    c) "Becoming" By: Michelle Obama
    d) How would you change the pickup library for a patron?
    e) How would you suspend the hold for them?
    f) How would you cancel a hold?
    g) How would you cancel an available hold?
3) Talk about process running the pull list and handling missing items
    a) What times of day do you run the pull list? How frequently do you run it?
    b) What do you do when you can't find the item on the shelf?
4) Talk about process handling damaged items
    a) Items from your library for your patron
    b) Items from another library for your patron

5) Billing a patron and paying for an item
    a) Items from your library for your patron
    b) Items from another library for your patron
6) Talk about what you do with items that are not on your clean holdshelf report?
7) Registering new patrons
    a) Tell us step by step how would go about registering a patron.
8) Tell me about your process to modify a due date
    a) On a patron-by-patron basis
    b) Modify due date for an entire day

Follow Up

- Is there anything else you think we should know?
- You find a library genie and you get one wish to come true, on Workflows. What is your one wish?

Conclusion

Thank you so much for participating. Those are all the questions that we have. If anything, else occurs to you after this interview, please let me know. We might follow up with you if we have any follow up questions. Do you have any questions? Thank you!

C. WorkFlows User Interviews: Data Capture

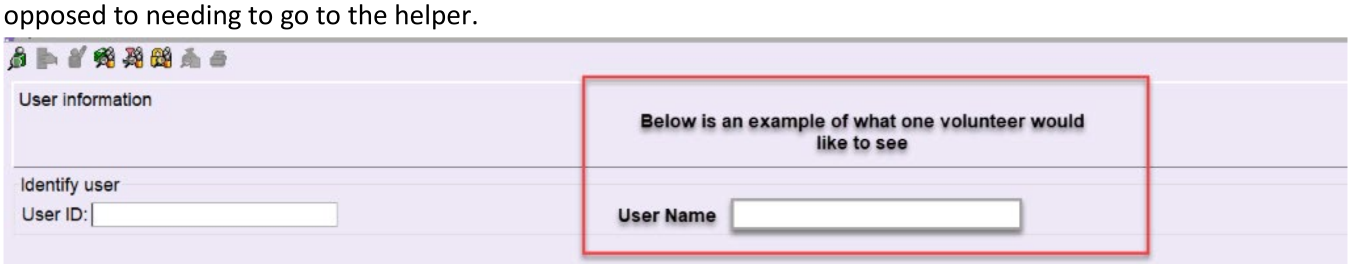
Issues Identified through User Interviews

Patron Registration

Each library has a few ways of searching for a patron based on their own in-house criteria. Initially some limit their search to their library and if the patron is not found they will widen it to include all SWAN libraries.

- Search by full name
- Search by nickname
- If patron is a woman, use only first name

A library brought up that they would like to see an additional box to search by name right away as opposed to needing to go to the helper.



Other ILS Experience

Two of our interviewees have experience with other ILS software, specifically Millennium; while one has only worked on Workflows at a few different libraries.

- It was noted that the list of patrons that recently returned items is a missed feature.

Start Search for planning holds

The interviewees demonstrated the numerous ways they would place a hold based of specific circumstances.

- Place hold straight from the Place Hold Wizard

- Use Item Search and Display wizard to search for holds
- Looks patron up first and then looks up item
- If the title is unknown, uses the Search Item Status

Search Strategies for Items

Many item searches start at the circulation desk, especially for patrons with limited mobility; however, it is also common for patrons to be sent to an adult services or reference desk for more in-depth searches. Most are asked to do title searches more often than author and topic searches. Searches also start as a basic search without limiters, although, some have expressed that they will limit to their library first to make sure they have it on shelf prior to having to place hold.

Training

With a "revolving door" of staff, frequent training in registering patrons is necessary and most challenging for one library. Billing a patron and paying a bill is challenging and they look for clarification in the circ "bible", which is a combination of SWAN documentation and local procedures.

Feelings about Workflows

During our interviews we discovered that for the most part the feelings about Workflows are positive.

- "I like Sirsi for the most part, I think it works."
- "It's in my blood now." (snaps fingers).

Misconceptions

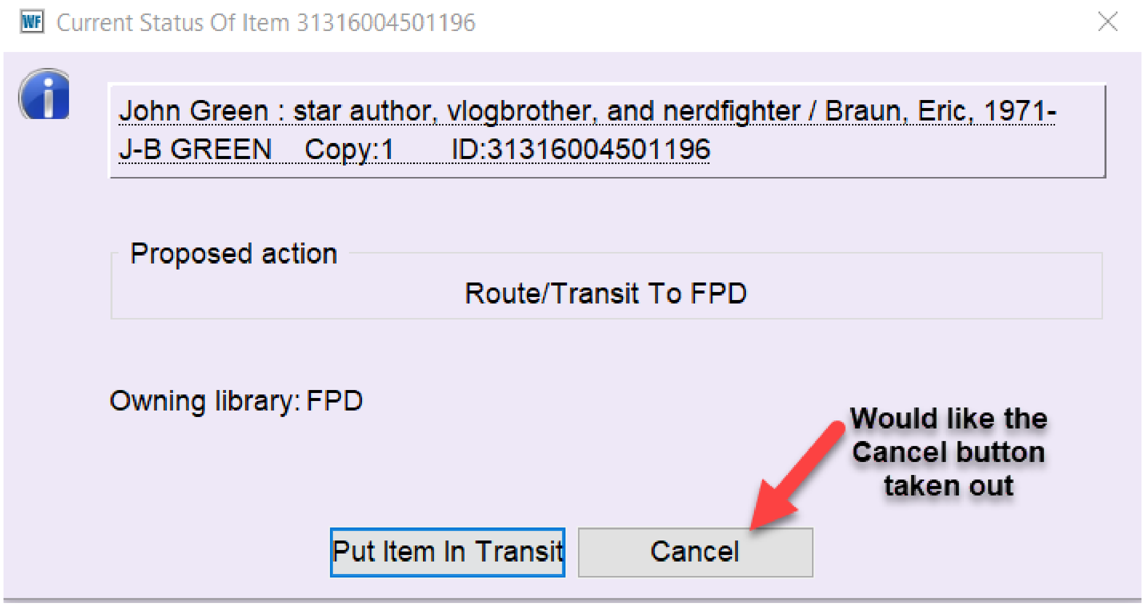
A few misconceptions were uncovered, which directly affect the difficulties they find when training staff.

- Patrons always need to clear their fines before they can be re-registered at their new home library.
- Cannot use right-click/context menu options, especially for marking an item lost. "I know the wizard is the right way to go."

The little things with Workflows: Issues & Annoyances

- Not Circulation related but would like the Serials module to be to put in price when they check in a serial all from the same screen.
- Wants a pop up in Display User and Checkout wizard when a patron is barred.

- When putting an item in-transit the cancel option should be taken away, if accidently pressed it puts the item "on shelf" at the home library.



Damaged Philosophy, Documentation, and ILL Fears

There is a general discomfort around damaged items that were borrowed from libraries. If the item was their own, libraries seem to have a lenient policy and will not charge their patron for the damage. When the item was borrowed from another SWAN library any signs of wear and tear are heavily noted so as not to be charged by the item's home library upon return, "We're so paranoid here." One library "blames SWAN" when they must charge their patron for a borrowed item that was damaged. Overall, the Damaged and Unusable guidelines that SWAN provided were found to be very helpful and were pinned to cubicle walls.

Damaged and Unusable documentation can be found on the SWAN website:
https://support.swanlibraries.net/documentation/64708

Search Feelings

- Likes
    - "I don't have a lot of difficulty searching."
    - "I know it keeps the last item and remembers it. I love that!"

- Dislikes
    - Title looking for one weren't are not showing up. Ex: Woman
    - "Why don't all titles show up together? This irritates me."

Things that Work

It was revealed that there are many things that our interviewees have no issues with the following tasks.

- Holds
    - Suspending/Unsuspending holds
    - Modifying a hold
    - Change pick up library
    - Canceling holds both available and unavailable
- Items on Shelf with Holds Reports (Pull List)
    - Frequency and time of day the report runs, varies between 1-3 times per day depending on staffing. The reasoning behind running it more often is to help patrons will get their items faster.
    - “I love that we can run it anytime. I love that we have that freedom.”
- Missing Items on Pull List
    - Libraries check the library for the materials and if not found they will check it out to the generic missing user. If the item is 3-4 years old, one library will assume that the item is lost and check it out to the generic discard user.
- Missing Items on Hold Shelf
    - Check on the shelf to make sure it wasn’t mis-shelved. Will call the patron to make sure the patron doesn’t have it. Will then checkout to the generic user. One library didn’t see this happen often at all. Another library will keep track of these missing items on a spreadsheet with notes/tracking messages.
- Bills
    - No difficulty paying bills on a patron record. The right click function is from a patron record is often utilized to pay a bill on a patron record.

D. Focus Groups: Our Methodology

Introduction & Purpose

Focus groups were conducted to allow members to engage with a small group of colleagues in a structured discussion seeking to review processes, identify methods of current practice, limitations of the environment, workarounds developed to solve problems or create efficiencies, methods of seeking assistance, and desired outcomes.

SWAN Assistant Director Dawne Tortorella moderated 4 focus groups consisting of between 5-10 member participants. SWAN User Experience Manager Tara Wood served as observer to provide note taking. A written report of the focus group recurring topics and themes follows, which identify areas where more evaluation and inquiry is needed.

Timeline

SWAN conducted focus groups in August-September of 2019 to illicit feedback and provide an opportunity for in-depth discussion around topics of importance for the membership. Four sessions were held throughout the geographic reach of our SWAN members. These sessions were held at the following locations.

- Batavia Public Library, August 21
- Tinley Park Public Library, August 23
- SWAN Headquarter, Westmont, September 10
- Oak Park Public Library, September 13

The focus groups were advertised through SWAN support site news posts, SWANcom posts, and within the SWAN newsletter. Libraries were encouraged to send representatives. Members were asked to send one representative only. Libraries where multiple staff registered were told staff may be bumped if waitlisting occurred. Registration was capped at 10 members per sessions. No session exceeded waitlist parameters and all participants who registered were accommodated.

Of the twenty-seven participants, ten were from libraries that joined SWAN in 2018.

Invitation to Participate

The following announcement went out to the email membership list SWANcom and via news posting; followed up by SWAN's e-newsletter.

SWAN's five-year strategic plan contains an initiative to develop a shared diagnosis around some member library dissatisfaction around the Symphony integrated library system and the Enterprise catalog. To this end, SWAN formed the Clarity Task Force of 8-member library staff to assist with that diagnosis.

As part of our work to collect member input we will be conducting focus groups to encourage members to share with a small group of colleagues in a structured discussion.

We are seeking to review processes, identify methods of current practice, barriers in use of library system software (Symphony WorkFlows and Enterprise), workarounds developed to solve problems or create efficiencies, methods of seeking assistance, and desired outcomes.

Dawne Tortorella will moderate four focus groups consisting of between 5-7 member participants. Tara Wood, Manager of User Experience will serve as observer and note taker. A written report of the focus group recurring topics and themes will be used to identify areas where more evaluation and inquiry is needed. Participant feedback will be anonymous and not associated with an individual or a library in the final report.

To provide as much representation as possible across the membership, only one person from your library will be able to participate in this round of focus groups. There will be additional opportunity for feedback and input when we release the report from our research later this fall.

If you are interested in participating in a focus group, please register through L2. We will reserve space on a first-come basis, but may need to adjust if we find multiple people from the same library have registered. Participants will be confirmed and provided with initial discussion questions.

Focus Groups Date/Time/Location:

- *August 21 10:00-11:30 AM – Batavia Public Library*
- *August 23 2:00-3:30 PM – Tinley Park Public Library*
- *September 10 10:00-11:30 – SWAN Headquarters (Westmont)*
- *September 13 2:00-3:30 – Oak Park Public Library (Main)*

Focus Group Discussion Questions

Thank you for participating in this focus group. Your honest feedback and discussion is critical to our work in identifying areas that work well, as well as those that require attention. I will be asking a series of questions to elicit discussion.

Staff will be observing and note taking during the focus group. These notes will be used to compile the final written report consolidating feedback from all groups. Your feedback will be anonymized in our reporting, so please share your thoughts and experiences freely.

1. Explain your role in the library and how you interact with Symphony WorkFlows or Enterprise on a daily basis.

2. If you have a question or are unsure about a process or procedure, where or who do you go to for assistance? How successful is this process for you?

3. Please describe one scenario which presents the most difficulty in assisting patrons while using Symphony WorkFlows or Enterprise.

4. What situation is the most difficult to manage in the software in your daily work, either patron related or as part of your ongoing duties?

5. Have you heard colleagues discuss difficulties in working with Symphony WorkFlows? Or Enterprise? If so, can you share their experiences to the best of your knowledge, and to what degree you agree

with those assessments?

6. Have patrons presented challenges directly to you in using the SWAN catalog? If so, can you share those challenges or provide an example.

7. What resources have you used to learn more about Symphony WorkFlows and when was the last time you referred to one of these resources?

8. Have you attended any training sessions? If so, what was your experience? How about online training through SirsiDynix Mentor?

9. Do you manage staff? What areas do new staff struggle with the most? How do you help them?

10. Describe a small case “workflow” that works well within Symphony WorkFlows.

11. How involved are you in determining circulation and hold map rules? Do you find your policies easy to explain to patrons when asked about items within your library as well as other SWAN libraries?

12. Are there features of Symphony WorkFlows that your library currently does not use, but you would like to pursue? Perhaps you don’t know what those features might be, so let’s share enhanced features you know your library or others are using.

13. How often do you experience disconnects or failures in connecting to Symphony WorkFlows? Do you notice periods where the system is slow? (NA)

14. What additional information would enable you to better manage your work within Symphony WorkFlows? Or functionality?

15. If you have recently joined SWAN as either a member of a smaller consortium or a standalone library, what differences are noticeable – both positive and negative.

16. How often do you interact with colleagues at other SWAN libraries? Do you attend user group meetings? If so, are they useful? If not, how could they be more worthwhile or better suited to your work schedule?

17. What other Library Services Platforms (ILSs) have you worked on and can you offer come observations and comparisons?

18. If you were talking to someone outside of our SWAN community, how would you define SWAN?

19. What recommendations do you have for the SWAN staff to help you do your job more easily and improve service to patrons?

Attendance and Representation

Twenty-one libraries were represented, with twenty-seven attendees in total. Four attendees cancelled or did not show up for the session, representing an additional three libraries who would have been represented had registrants attended.

Areas of functional responsibility were well represented. The breakdown by primary functional area included:

- Reference & Public Service – 13
- Technical Services – 9
- Circulation Services – 8

Three of the participants managed both Technical and Circulation Services and are reported in both areas. The Reference & Public Service attendees represented both adult and youth services.

Discussion Process

Sessions were ninety minutes in length. Dawne Tortorella, SWAN Assistant Director, facilitated discussion. Tara Wood, SWAN User Experience Manager, took notes. Members of the Clarity Task Force observed at their hosted site location (Kerry Halter, Batavia; Kristina Howard, Tinley Park, Colleen White, Oak Park).

Participants were guaranteed anonymity and therefore all responses are compiled into a composite overview of findings. Addendum A provides the introductory script and leading questions. Based on discussion, additional inquiries were made.

D. Focus Groups: Data Capture

Summary of Discussions

While each focus group surfaced unique comments and experiences, common threads related to core applications (Enterprise, WorkFlows, BLUEcloud Analytics) surfaced from the discussions. In addition, discussion included observations, opinions, and recommendations regarding support, communication, and networking within the membership and with SWAN staff.

Application Usage

Enterprise

Enterprise is used daily by the majority of the focus groups participants, primarily supporting patrons. A typical process is assisting patrons with finding titles and placing holds on these items. This usually includes juggling between Enterprise and WorkFlows to locate items and assist in placing holds for the patron. Often another external tool such as Amazon, IMDB, or GoodReads is added to the arsenal of tools when assisting patrons locate material in the catalog. When the patron has multiple titles of interest, this can be a laborious and lengthy process. Patrons notice the awkward interchange between tools and time/frustration experienced by staff assisting.

Given the awkward exchange between Enterprise searching and locating the patron/item record to place a hold on, some staff actually request the patron to log in to Enterprise for them to assist. Others will use the patron barcode and guess the PIN in order to access the patron account in Enterprise. Staff want the ability to log into a patron's account using the same interface they have when assisting them with searching and placing holds.

Library staff noted that patrons will sometimes place a hold associated with a bibliographic record that is not the best choice for receiving a local copy. This is due to the duplicate titles created through format or edition differences. Some patrons look for the library's copy for placing a hold, but generally, patrons place a hold on the first match returned. One library noted that this pattern of placing holds on a less desirable copy (not my library's copy) with ESL patrons. We may be presenting information in a confusing way to these patrons who also are reluctant to seek our help.

Display of due dates in Enterprise search results and detailed displays can lead to patron dissatisfaction where they sometimes question long due dates or will modify behavior (not place hold) assuming it will soon return to the library.

Difficulty in the mechanics of searching was identified in the following areas:

- Short-title and one-word titles are especially challenging.
- Spelling errors or similar spellings can produce useless results.
- Punctuation and congruent symbols/words (e.g. "and" vs "&") not interpreted as expected.
- Facets/filters are not responsive immediately upon selection and are particularly challenging for children.
- Editions and formats are problematic – often there is an appearance to the patron of duplicate records which technically are not duplicates (e.g. hardcover and paperback editions; DVD, Blu-ray/Combo pack).
- Inclusion of e-books and their prominent ranking in results.
- Subject heading search and embedded links do not provide same results and sometimes do not provide expected results.

Reasons searching in Enterprise preferred over WorkFlows:

- Book covers are available in Enterprise.
- No record limit on returned results (WorkFlows has the imposed 200 search results limit).
- Patron interaction provides a teachable moment.

Enterprise wish list as expressed through Focus Groups:

- Ability to more easily place holds on patron's behalf within Enterprise.
- Provide an online registration form where patrons can immediately set their own PIN and create a library card.
- Daytime (Delta) harvests of Enterprise would improve both patron and staff experience, but particularly helpful for staff (currently only a single nightly harvest runs).
- Simpler search interface for children.
- Responsive display on tablets and mobile devices.
- Remove due date display on checked out items.
- Numeric and consistent display of serial issues.
- Subject headings which are more patron-focused (e.g. birds vs ornithology)
- Limit searches or provide direct search of categories such as picture books.

- User-friendly series search, especially in children's titles.
- Guidance to help patrons place hold on most appropriate record where duplicate titles (e.g. format, edition) exists.

WorkFlows

While strong negative emotions exist related to use of WorkFlows, the tool does not impede staff ability to complete tasks. It is the primary tool for mission critical work including circulation, cataloging, and acquisitions.

The majority of issues raised concerning Symphony WorkFlows can be attributed to inefficiencies, its perceived antiquated interface, and the scale of the SWAN consortium.

Difficulty of using WorkFlows is often associated with procedures libraries must follow as part of the consortium rather than use of the tool to complete a task. These procedures often include detailed steps which require a specific order of operation and rules to follow (e.g. damaged items).

Discussion in two of the four focus groups included problems associated with the system which are actually human errors. Staff are not careful in processing and reading screens or are faced with repetitive unhelpful pop-up screens which impede efficient processing. For example, some libraries have moved to a double checkin process (once to process item, second time before reshelving). This has greatly reduced errors where item was not properly checked in, leaving it on the patron record and leading to difficult conversations when the item was located on shelf.

Competency in use of WorkFlows comes from rote usage. WorkFlows is not intuitive, but with practice and daily repetition of tasks, staff are competent. Time away from desk and WorkFlows quickly makes for rusty skills. WorkFlows options of nested versus tabbed windows introduces personal preference which may lead to inconsistencies in how other colleagues use the system and train others. Staff are not aware of the customizations that can be done to make for more efficient processing based on their specific preferences and tasks. Some customizations, such as access to WorkFlows behaviors is restricted.

There is a tension between wanting more and less functional access. At times a reduced, simple set of common tasks is desired, at other times, a more robust – "give me access to everything" approach is desired. There are inconsistencies in what staff can do with specific role accounts (e.g. CIRC, CIRCSR, TECHSR, REFILL) often leading to staff required to login to different accounts based on what task they need to perform. This leads to inefficiencies.

When working at a busy public service station, staff often keep tabs open of patrons/items which require follow-up. Once there is time, staff can return to complete review and processing of those records.

One library mentioned the need to add a brief record for items not found in the catalog as part of a circulation function. [*Note: This may be related to items that have been weeded/discarded and are presented by patron for checkout.*]

Due to scale, the Symphony Reports queue contention is a problem, especially when a particularly long running report is scheduled. Some libraries no longer run cataloging bibload reports which may be the preferred method of bringing in records; instead they need to use SmartPORT to bring in single records in order to avoid report contention. Also related to scale, consortium-wide processing, like Clean Holdshelf reports, make exception processing difficult (e.g. libraries cannot change hold dates for patrons). And consortium-wide cataloging processes should be reviewed for impact on libraries (e.g. leased titles and impact when DISCARDS are physically removed from catalog).

While libraries mentioned Symphony Acquisitions processing as being more cumbersome than past practice in previous consortium, another library shared they have changed their practice and while different, their revised processing is doable. Contention for report processing is a challenge for report intensive acquisitions processing. Some libraries would like to be able to have items auto created when placing orders through Acquisitions. Attempting this auto creation of items was inefficient due to lack of item level detail being populated, and it took more time to check these auto-created records than to just create them manually. A more automated process would streamline this work.

Accrued fines and marking item lost without immediate payment create difficult encounters with patrons. The system seems inflexible in dealing with payments. Some patrons have difficulty placing a hold when they have items overdue. Patrons can't pay fines before bringing the item back; would like to pay fine and then renew.

Workaround strategies as expressed through Focus Groups::

- Holds management is an area where staff have developed techniques to ensure patron holds are on the most appropriate bibliographic record to minimize time to fill. Some libraries run daily reports to identify holds recently placed and verify that they are associated with the best record for filling the hold with a local copy.
- Two different approaches are used when moving items from new collections. Some libraries use a weekly report that automatically "denews" items; others use Global Item Modification for moving items between collections, selecting specific time frames for this process (e.g. end of fiscal year when orders are frozen, staff can adjust schedule).

WorkFlows difficulties as expressed through Focus Groups:

- Limit of 200 search results is a barrier.
- Lack of knowledge/confidence in effective searching. Enterprise and WorkFlows search strategies are different.
- WorkFlows antiquated interface is off-putting to staff and is not scalable for low-vision users as the icons do not scale.
- Interface requires much clicking to find information or function desired. Often clicking is used as hunt and peck method of discovering what information is needed.
- Running reports on demand due to report contention.
- Report queue contingency causes delays in sequential processing of acquisitions steps/reports.
- Fines and payments – when and how to process payments and bill for the myriad of situations encountered.
- Managing staff and training new staff presents the most challenge in WorkFlows. Some libraries specifically recruit for WorkFlows experience.

WorkFlows wish list as expressed through Focus Groups:

- Numeric and consistent display of serial issues (and same in both Enterprise and WorkFlows).

- Ability to customize toolbars and behaviors.
- Reduce unnecessary pop-ups – those which always results in an “OK” response (e.g. user is delinquent at checkout and checkin).
- More streamlined printing features (e.g. selecting only items of interest to print on due date receipt).
- Ability to reorder the hold queue. [*Note: SWAN’s last ILS allowed this.*]
- Access to batch edit items directly in WorkFlows rather than request through a support ticket.
- Use of Bookings module for equipment and Library Of Things items.
- Need a better way to manage family cards and groups, including how to pay bills.
- Automate creation of item records with acquisitions orders.
- Would like to be able to place blanket holds for additional copies.

BLUEcloud Analytics

BLUEcloud Analytics is noted as a powerful product with great capabilities, but the gap between effective use is large.

Mixed responses were shared in effectiveness of BLUEcloud Analytics and confidence in using the application. Those libraries using BLUEcloud Analytics most effectively rely on internal staff who are their go-to people for running reports.

BLUEcloud Analytics is difficult to manage and use. Setting up standard, simple reports is difficult. The complexity of tool use is both application-based and impacted by the number of choices and wide range of reports available in SWAN’s Analytics. Library staff want the skillset and ability to easily design their own reports rather than always relying on reports developed by SWAN or via request to SWAN for specialized reports.

When requests are submitted to SWAN for special reports, those requests are answered in a timely fashion. They also appreciate being able to view the wide array of reports developed for other libraries within Library Specific Reports.

Some libraries rely on BLUEcloud Analytics reports to help identify catalog records requiring attention. Those who do not keep an eye on records (e.g. on-order, brief ILL records) negatively impact the catalog.

Difficulties with Analytics as identified in Focus Groups:

- Knowing the range of reports available and what they should be used for.
- Volume of reports available is overwhelming.

Analytics wish list:

- More capability to design reports without SWAN assistance.
- Concise list of required/recommended reports.
- Explanation of report selection criteria and data elements available.
- More consistent use of maintenance related reports and proposed action to take (e.g. identification and clean-up of on-order records).

SWAN Support & Help

Typically, within a library, there is a primary contact for SWAN-related issues where questions and requests for clarification first go. Some libraries allow all staff to submit SWAN help tickets, other libraries have those reviewed and submitted by a lead staff member serving as SWAN liaison. Primary internal staff supporting WorkFlows/SWAN related questions are circulation experts and IT within the library.

Help ticket submissions are quickly acknowledged but sometimes it takes longer than desired to resolve an issue. While ticket response is immediate and trackable, sometimes emailing SWAN staff directly does not result in an immediate confirmation. SWAN staff should acknowledge receipt of email from members.

The SWAN Support Site is a primary source for information and documentation. Improvements in searching and content were noted with the December 2018 revisions. Documentation available is considered helpful and used for staff training purposes. Many use SWAN supplied documentation to create internal manuals, adding library-specific policies and procedures. Members typically do not share these internal manuals with colleagues in other libraries but would like to if there was a mechanism for doing so.

Resources provided by SirsiDynix, including Mentor, the SirsiDynix support site, and the internal help system within Workflows are rarely used. Generally messaging from SirsiDynix is questioned unless it is filtered through SWAN to indicate if it applies to our consortium. Targeted messaging and links to selected resources on the SirsiDynix support site are considered helpful.

Library staff would like a short overview of features available and how they are used in SWAN (e.g. Outreach, User Groups). Ideally this would be a recorded session.

Specific mentions regarding SWAN support:

- Kudos to SWAN for making online recording of training available.
- Patron-facing YouTube videos are helpful and could be promoted more within the library to help our patrons.
- Some library staff miss the ability to pick up the phone and talk to someone at SWAN. However, they appreciate that they can request a phone call when submitting a ticket and SWAN staff will arrange a follow-up phone call at the agreed time.
- Staff is wonderful. Tickets are answered right away.

Communication & Collaboration

Communication topics cover both patron notifications and messages/notices to SWAN members.

Patron Notification

There was minimal discussion on patron notification. The following was noted:

- Hold pickup reminders are confusing to patrons.
- Items not renewed should appear at the top of the autorenewal message instead of the bottom.
- Some patrons are not happy with the automated calling. Staff appreciate not having to call patrons, but we have patrons who do not listen to messages.

SWAN Member Communication

It is not clear when a SWANcom email is used versus news posts or known issues. Library staff are not clear when they should report problems and have been told in the past that they do not need to report problems – SWAN staff already know. Others reported that they recently noticed a shorter SWANcom with basic information and a link to a more in-depth post. That was helpful in that they did not need to read the entire post to know if it applied to them.

Recent problems resulting in tracking of known issues was considered a public relations fail as libraries reported the problem via a SWAN support ticket and were referred to the known issue page on the SWAN support site. Staff felt they should have been better informed of the known issue process and how that information is reported.

It is difficult to know what is possible with the SWAN library service platform software and new features. Staff also understand it is difficult for SWAN staff to decipher which features/functionality may be of value to the membership when they hear about things from SirsiDynix. Also, the volume of information to review and disseminate is extensive.

One participant would like to see a shared SLACK channel for SWAN topics, especially for those with similar job functions.

Collaboration with Colleagues

Staff want avenues for networking with colleagues. Many feel SWAN's user groups are too large, do not afford an opportunity for discussion with peers, and largely consist of SWAN staff presenting information.

To be most effective, compiled notes from meetings should be developed into best practice documents, when sharing practice and procedures. Documentation on the support site is more easily searched and discovered than looking through meeting notes.

When asked what an optimal networking group size for collaboration was, 12-15 attendees was suggested. Geographic spread of SWAN membership makes meeting attendance and networking difficult. There is a desire to increase use of online meetings and trainings to allow more people to participate. Members were largely comfortable with meetings held centrally at RALS Burr Ridge location and could not attend meetings very far from their library. When gathering at meetings, introductions are important, even if repeated, to promote collegiality.

Often, SWAN user groups do not feel like a safe place to share feedback or ask questions that may acknowledge a lack of understanding or experience. It was noted that the Cataloging User Group meetings tend to focus on projects SWAN is working on rather than collaboration between members.

Colleague-to-colleague conversations at different libraries are often triggered by a problem. These conversations tend to be tense rather than focused on shared problem-solving. This tension leads to avoidance in those difficult conversations. Clearer guidelines from SWAN would help alleviate some of the discrepancies (e.g. damaged items) library staff experience. Most library-to-library interaction is based on billing related issues related to damaged material. The interpretation of damaged and unusable items creates friction and disparity of practice between member libraries. Some communication between libraries is sparked by confusion over policy where some member library staff provide incorrect information to patrons. For example, special library cards and public library cards – when are duplicates ok?

The lack of reference librarian networking as a formal SWAN user group was also noted. Topics discussed in technical and circulation user group meetings will impact reference staff, yet they do not have a method of easily finding out about these changes (e.g. changes in AV cataloging/catalog display).

Some library staff would like to be able to share training with colleagues at other libraries. Others miss being part of a smaller group where informal gatherings promoted more sharing. It was suggested there be a group email for sharing with colleagues in similar positions.

Branding & Collateral

SWAN libraries appreciate having things like the Mobile App bookmark available. Others want to minimize SWAN branding but appreciate having digital copy of SWAN created material for customization at their local library.

Technical Stability

While the system uptime was noted as exceptional, a minority of libraries mentioned frequent disconnects which require restarting WorkFlows. Most mentioned occasional disconnects; some mentioned rare occurrences of this. For those who do experience disconnects, they report that this has increased within the last several months. When this happens, it tends to impact all workstations within the library.

Generally, staff do not notice slowness in WorkFlows, but occasionally do with Enterprise.

Policies and Consortium-wide Practices

Generally, library staff can explain circulation and hold policies within their own library but are unable to for other member libraries. They refer staff to the other library for explanation. The inconsistency in due date calculations on same type of material is difficult to explain to patrons. Generally, patrons understand newer material may have a shorter due date based on demand.

Decisions on circulation and holdability are made primarily by selectors/technical service. Some library staff express local board and administration make these decisions based on recommendations from staff. Most circulation staff feel they do not have a say in these policies although they are primarily responsible for enforcing them and explaining discrepancies/differences to patrons. When ordering material of new item types, generally an existing loan rule is selected to fill the need. Sometimes, new circulation rules are required and those go through a SWAN help ticket request to set up.

Circulation limits are restricted by ILS item types, rather than the class of item, so some patrons are able to outsmart controls. Symphony user profile limits such as number of items a patron can have overdue cause problems when these patrons as reciprocal borrowers visit other SWAN libraries.

Universally, participants would like to see more uniform and consistent use of ILS item types. A proliferation of item types has occurred to support statistical reporting and special loan rules/ability to place holds. Different item types used throughout the consortium, not at my library, create a challenge in determining circulation due date – often items circulate longer or shorter than intended.

Technical Services staff would like more uniformity in item level information, much like standards at the bibliographic record level. Work-arounds in both cataloging and circulation have been made to accommodate Library of Things.

Inconsistency of fine rates across the consortium creates cumbersome calculations when assisting patrons.

Confusion exists over how on-order items are holdable now versus previous consortium. The lack of standard practices in what is/is not holdable by other library patrons leads to confusion.

In a perfect world, all policies would be synchronized, with each library giving a little to reach compromise. In a real world, budgets and local control make this impossible.

Participants would like to see a core set of simplified standards for ease of explaining to patrons. For example, rather than having library-specific names and rules for "hot" items, could there be agreed upon naming and rules for these items consortium-wide.

Feelings/Emotions to Note

For several members involved in the migration to SirsiDynix there is a feeling that SWAN was promised functionality and services that have not yet been developed or delivered.

It was noted that SWAN, as a whole, does not utilize the human capital and expertise within the member libraries. One participant noted that SWAN staff have an attitude that they know better and the emotional impact of joining SWAN has been the hardest part of joining the consortium.

Defining SWAN

Focus groups were asked to define SWAN. It was understood that SWAN is about resource sharing and it is a partnership between approximately 100 libraries. Library staff expressed "If we are not able to provide something directly, we can get it for you from one of our partner libraries." The benefits of resource sharing and a shared patron database are often taken for granted by our patrons and our staff.

Libraries new to SWAN noted that since joining SWAN their external interlibrary loan requests are way down. The volume of material available for sharing in SWAN is incredible and quickly received. The SWAN network allows us to provide such a larger body of resources than we could financially afford on our own.

Issues Identified through Focus Group Activity

When asked what recommendations participants had for SWAN staff to help make their jobs easier and improve service to patrons, the following large categories were identified:

Holds Management

Holds management topics run the gamut from needing consistent cataloging and the impact of duplicate (or near match) records, placing holds on best record for patrons, modifying hold queues, anticipating queue wait time, efficient transit of items, and managing high demand hold/purchases.

These topics touch all functional areas of the consortium including acquisitions, cataloging, circulation, delivery, interlibrary loan, and policy.

Searching

Searching strategies are unique and inconsistent between Enterprise and WorkFlows. Library staff want the search experience in all tools to be predictable and effective in ranking returned results. Identifying the gaps in library staff desired search results may be data related (bibliographic data/item data) and/or impacted by index/search ranking and display.

Communication & Collegiality

Encourage more and different member library staff to get involved. Provide structured guidelines on how we communicate with each other (SWAN staff to members, member to member, members to SWAN staff).

Use the collective power of the consortium to facilitate group purchasing and collaborative projects.

Research Activities Conclusion

The four methods of research surfaced numerous issues for the Clarity Task Force. This report is not the conclusion of all research activities needed but serves as a blueprint for future research in SWAN using any of the four methods. For example, SWAN User Experience staff will continue to interview library staff users in various departments or with specific duties throughout the year as part of ongoing research and input. The screen recording was a valuable tool that could be utilized in other areas of the library.

This report serves as the foundation for the SWAN Clarity Task Force's final recommendation to the SWAN Board, Executive Director, and member libraries. We hope that showing in detail how this research was conducted that libraries and other library organizations can conduct their own research into how users interact with various components of the library services platform used.