



Illinois Heartland Library System

TO: IHLS Board of Directors
FROM: Leslie Bednar
DATE: May 19, 2022
RE: Automatic Material Handler

We have learned quite a bit throughout the Request for Information (RFI) process that added to our existing vision and goals for a potential automatic material handler (AMH). It is important to state here we are focusing on the last part of the acronym—I (Information). This is first and foremost an information gathering endeavor, and I thank the board for the trust you have placed in our team to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize the large amount of data involved.

One question we have heard from members involves the number of items their library may have to re-barcode. This can be an exhaustive task and one we aim to limit for all members:

- an initial scan of member library materials traveling through our three hubs indicated roughly one-half of our members place barcodes on the outside of their items. We will conduct further analysis to test this hypothesis and gain a more complete picture of the breadth of materials requiring a new barcode.
- library systems using an AMH system suggest that not all a library's collection circulates via interlibrary loan. We can collect specifics about SHARE member materials potentially impacted and arrive at a more realistic picture of the size of the challenge for each member.
- barcode duplicating equipment can dramatically decrease the time needed to re-barcode.

We have discussed strategies internally for IHLS staff to assist in this process without the need to travel to member libraries.

Data Analysis

IHLS received responses from 4 vendors as of close of business yesterday, May 23. Vendors who responded on time are: Biblioteka, Lyngsoe, mkSolutions, and TechLogic. Greg Pronevitz, our consultant, has responded to all vendors on our behalf. IHLS staff will analyze the responses in concert with Mr. Pronevitz and he will prepare a written report for the board.

Next Steps

After the initial review of the responses, we will pause on this process. Our finance staff are heavily involved with the annual audit and audit fieldwork begins in early August. The ability to layout our next steps including a communication plan for members will be enhanced with thoughtful consideration. Sometimes you have to go slow to go fast.

IMAGINING TOMORROW ~ DELIVERING POSSIBILITIES TODAY!

Staying true to our [Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals](#) is top of mind as we consider the viability of a change to our members' interlibrary loan workflow. We appreciate the role of the board as we consider the impact to all stakeholders and truly appreciate your support.

Thank you.