

# Nioga Library System Technology Plan July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2010

**Mission Statement:** The mission of the Nioga Library System is to extend and improve library services to the residents of Niagara, Orleans and Genesee Counties by assisting local libraries in meeting the information needs of their communities through leadership, education, inspiration, and enhanced resource sharing (Adopted September 1994).

**Vision Statement:** The vision of the Nioga Library System is to guide the member libraries through the 21st century by continuous research and implementation of appropriate services and technologies (March 2001).

**Institutional Background:** The Nioga Library System is one of twenty-three public library systems in New York State. It was established in 1959. The System serves the three counties of Niagara, Orleans and Genesee. The chartered service population is 324,387 covering 1,409 square miles.

There are twenty-one member libraries and two contracting libraries.

The System receives the majority of financial support from the State of New York.

The Nioga Library System provides the following services to the member libraries:

- **Automations and Technology:** Nioga manages an integrated library system for the member libraries. It manages a telecommunication network (e.g. Frame Relay Network, Point to Point and Virtual Private Network). It also is the Internet Service Provider for the libraries. It provides access to online databases for journals, newspapers, magazines, encyclopedias and additional services. A reference resource ([www.ringonet.org](http://www.ringonet.org)) and a homework help site ([www.helpuknow.org](http://www.helpuknow.org)) are available through the Nioga home page ([www.nioga.org](http://www.nioga.org)).
- **Resource Sharing:** Nioga maintains the online public access catalog for books, videos, music, and many more resources owned by the member libraries. It facilitates inter library loan requests by placing requests for materials electronically to owning library. Its delivery system delivers the requested materials to and from all member libraries. Specific item requests not found within the Nioga system are forwarded to other libraries in the Western New York area and the State Library.
- **Education:** Nioga coordinates in-service training workshops in all areas of library service. It manages the trustee discussion meetings each year for the member library trustees in each of the three counties. Also, it offers trustee

training opportunities. Consultation is available to prepare library services for children, young adults, and adults. Additionally, these consultation services are available for special populations, including the physically challenged, educationally disadvantaged, aged, unemployed, incarcerated, and physically isolated.

- **Materials:** Nioga provides a pool collection of children's materials and large print books to supplement the collections of the member libraries. It offers story-time kits, flannel board stories, and library display kits. Nioga maintains a collection of print and non-print resources in many aspects of library service and management.
- **Grant Administration:** Nioga prepares applications and manages federal, state, and foundation grants to provide services to the member libraries and their patrons.

**Plan Justification:** The Nioga Library System seeks to ensure a future which will provide the member libraries with all needed formats of information, whether print or electronic.

The Nioga Library System uses information technology to provide technologically advanced information and independent learning resources for the use of the citizens of Niagara, Orleans and Genesee counties. The Library System strives to provide expertise in using those resources, and an environment that enhances study, supports lifelong learning, provides needed information and supports acquisition of knowledge. Technology expands the services that the Nioga Library System delivers to the member libraries and extends the capacity of the library beyond the traditional library walls.

Both the Library staff and Board recognize that planning is complicated by rapid changes in technology. This plan is intended to be continuously reviewed and revised as necessary in response to emerging trends in information technology, changing community needs, new partnership opportunities, and changes in funding available to the Library System. It sets out overall goals and general direction for the library.

**Technology Strategic Plan:** The following technology goals are listed in the Plan of Service for the Nioga Library System for 2007-2011. The Plan of Service was approved by Library Development of the New York State Library on January 12, 2007.

**Goal 1:**

**The Nioga Library System will enhance the access to and retrieval of print and digital information resources for member libraries and their patrons by expanding and enhancing the Nioga information portal.**

Provide a mechanism to member libraries to allow patrons to request resources electronically.

**Intended Result(s)**

Increase online circulation and public access catalog services to seventeen member libraries and two branches. (2007)

Achieve online circulation and public access catalog services for all twenty-one public libraries. (2007-2011)

Plan for Migration to Windows-Based based integrated system. (2007)

Install new integrated library system: circulation, cataloging, inventory control, community information and public access catalog. (2008-2009)

Establish benchmarks for use of electronic resources in 2007 and increase use of electronic resources and databases by 3% each year. (2008-2011)

Expand access points to the regional Virtual Union Catalog. (2007-2011)

Demonstrate and install adaptive technologies in at least one library in each of the three counties. (2008-2009)

Explore and facilitate patron initiated electronically placed interlibrary loan requests. (2007-2011)

**Evaluation Method(s)**

Track and monitor the number of “hits” on the information portal.

Count number of libraries (and branches) that have automated circulation control and public access catalog.

Track the number of “hits” on regional Virtual Union Catalog.

Track the number of “hits” on electronic resources and compare to previous year’s statistics.

Track and count number of patron initiated requests and compare and contrast this figure with library initiated requests from the same period.

**Goal 2:**

**The Nioga Library System will provide a mechanism for patrons of member libraries to access information and reference services electronically.**

**Intended Result(s)**

Initiate participation in *Ask Us 24/7* online reference service. (2007)

Train member libraries on use of *Ask Us 24/7* online reference service. (2007)

Publicize to patrons *Ask Us 24/7* online reference service. (2007-2011)

Increase the number of sessions in *Ask Us 24/7* Online Reference Service by 10% each year of participation in the program. (2008-2011)

### **Evaluation Method(s)**

Track and count the number of virtual reference sessions conducted.

Track and count number of “hits” on Nioga’s Information Portal.

### **Goal 3:**

**Act as a component of the Local, Regional and State Electronic Networks. The Nioga Library System will facilitate member library access into the local, regional and state electronic network, provide connections and guidance in the identification and use of these resources, and add content as appropriate.**

### **Intended Result(s)**

The Nioga Library System will communicate and cooperate with neighboring libraries (e.g. Niagara University, Niagara County Community College and Genesee County Community College) and the Western New York Library Resources Council, Division of Library Development and other agencies to broaden access to local, regional and state electronic resources. (2007-2011)

The Nioga Library System will develop and maintain a telecommunications infrastructure (e.g. Point to Point, Wide Area Network, Internet Connection and Virtual Private Network) that will allow member libraries access to the World Wide Web. (2007-2011)

### **Evaluation Method(s)**

Track and count the number of “hits” on content related databases.

Track, count and evaluate bandwidth utilization on various telecommunication networks.

Monitor and evaluate current trends in telecommunications and connectivity.

### **Technology Inventory**

- 1. Current Technology:** the Nioga Library System uses the Sirsi/Dynix Horizon integrated library system. The system provides all of the basic library operations, including check in/check out, access to the online catalog and the ability to place reserves. This was done in close collaboration with the twenty-one member libraries of the library system.

Nioga has a strong and close working relationship with the twenty-one member libraries and the State of New York in terms of technology. There are four major areas of cooperation: web services, access to electronic databases, a shared on-line catalog platform and telecommunications network. The cooperation delivers more “bang for the buck” to area taxpayers.

Seventeen member libraries connect to the host computer system (central site is located at Nioga Headquarters) via dedicated T1 point-to-point data circuits (six T1 data circuits), Frame Relay Network (one T1 into network, and ten 56kb data circuits from remote sites) and Virtual Private Network (via Time Warner Cable Company).

Four member libraries, which presently are not automated, have access to the Public Access Catalog (PAC) via cable (Time Warner).

The Nioga Library System serves as the Internet Service Provider to all member libraries (T1 data circuit).

Telecommunications systems provide the communication infrastructure for communication of electronic data. Nioga Library System maintains a multi-level telecommunication network for member library access to the host computer system and the World Wide Web. Various telecommunication technologies are deployed for this access: Point-to-Point T1 data circuits, Frame Relay Network, Cable Access and Virtual Private Network.

All member libraries have access to the State supported “NOVEL@Your Library Program”. NOVEL stands for “New York Online Virtual Electronic Library”.

Please see attachment for complete inventory.

- 2. Future Technology:** the Nioga Library System is continuously exploring the most current technologies to enhance the delivery of library services to its member libraries. The following areas will be explored in the next several years:
- Upgrade the software and hardware for the integrated computer system when appropriate to make the best possible use of the system.
  - Explore the pros and cons of self-check machines.
  - Explore new method of networking and resource sharing with other libraries, particularly with Niagara University, Niagara County Community College and Genesee County Community College, using advanced telecommunication capabilities and the Internet.
  - Maintain, update and expand community database, in collaboration with other regional agencies, containing information on a wide range of

community organizations, clubs and agencies. This database would be available to the general public via the internet.

- Continue to collaborate with member libraries to increase bandwidth.
- Replace and upgrade older telecommunication equipment and software at all member library locations.
- Provide staff with appropriate, ongoing job related training in order to use the integrated library system at its optimal level.
- Provide staff with appropriate, ongoing job related training necessary to use Internet and other electronic resources to their greatest potential.
- Provide staff with appropriate ongoing job related training necessary to performs routine PC and printer maintenance.
- Explore using videoconferencing equipment to provide staff with training and continuing education possibilities.
- Establish a computer training laboratory for staff training.
- Develop an electronic reference service network for the Nioga Library System.

**Budget:** the Nioga Library System purchases name-brand hardware and software to ensure optimum durability and serviceability. Through this rotation system Nioga is able to derive a useful life of 3 to 4 years on many pieces of equipment. The specifications for computer standards are reevaluated and revised if necessary every three months. The general purchasing philosophy is we have tried to stay on the cutting edge, but not the bleeding edge.

Equipment costs continually decline while power of the hardware and software continue to increase. To attempt projecting costs beyond 2007 would be pointless.

A variety of sources fund equipment and software purchases. These sources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Nioga's Operating Budget
- Nioga's Capital Fund
- Categorical State Aid
  - State Automation Aid
  - Central Book Aid
- Grants
  - Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Fund
  - Regional Bibliographic Grants
  - Special Legislative Grants and Unrestricted Legislative Grants
  - Local and National Foundations
- Library Automation Association Funds

Nioga's Operating Budget, State Automation Funds and Library Automation Association pay for telecommunication costs.

Based on Nioga's experience with the Universal Services Program the discount Nioga receives is 50% on telecommunications.

The Board of Trustees of the Nioga Library System have committed significant resources from Nioga's Operating Budget, Nioga's Capital Budget and Nioga's Categorical State Aid to maintaining and enhancing automation, library technology and telecommunication services. The governing body of the Library Automation Association also has committed significant resources to maintain and enhance the integrated library management system.

The following is a budget summary related to system automation activities:

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Repairs/Maintenance				
PC & Peripheral Equipment	4,500	5,875	7,000	9,000
Repairs & Maintenance				
Software Maintenance:				
Integrated Library System	64,500	66,400	67,000	69,000
Capital Expenses for				
Integrated Library System	7,500	8,000	249,000	8,000
Cost Allocated to Computer				
Services	10,500	11,500	17,500	17,500
Bibliographic Cataloging	64,000	64,500	67,500	69,500
Telecommunications				
(data circuits)	42,455	47,500	48,987	54,569
Telecommunication Hardware	10,500	10,500	10,500	10,500
Training (Technology)	5,000	5,000	6,000	6,500
Travel Expenses	3,500	3,500	3,750	3,800

**Evaluation:** the Executive Director and the Technology Staff of the Nioga Library System are responsible for the day to day operations and evaluation of

automation, library technology and telecommunications services provided to the member libraries.

They use the usual tools for monitoring and evaluation, including statistics and consumer comments/suggestions. They also keep abreast of new developments and determine which new developments might be of use to the library system.

The Technology staff report to the Executive Director on a regular basis. The Executive Director and Technology staff meet regularly with the Technology Advisory Committee.

The Board of Trustees of the Nioga Library System have charged the Technology Advisory with monitoring the progress of the current Technology Plan and suggesting mid-course corrections response to new developments and opportunities as they arise.

The Technology Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Executive Director and the Technology Staff. A survey will be sent to the member libraries asking for their review of the annual goals of the Technology Plan.

Updates will be given to the Technology Advisory Committee and a report from the Technology Advisory Committee will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees of the Nioga Library System.

The Technology Plan July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2010 was reviewed by the System Advisory Committee.

The Technology Plan July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2010 was unanimously approved for submission to Library Development by the Board of Trustees of the Nioga Library System at the March 27, 2007 meeting.

Approved by New York State Library: Library Development  
May 1, 2007