

May 2007

Library Services & Technology Act  
Five-Year Plan for Michigan, 2002-2007  
Evaluation Background

As part of the Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA), the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) requires the Library of Michigan to submit an evaluation of the LSTA Five-Year Plan for Michigan. The evaluation assesses the degree to which the LSTA program was able to achieve the goals for library service stated in the five-year plan.

The Library of Michigan contracted with W.J. Schroer Company after an open bid process to conduct an external review of the LSTA program. The W.J. Schroer Company examined the overall impact of the LSTA program, the level of achievement made toward the five-year plan goals and, in specific, the MeLCat and QSAC projects. The evaluation activities included gathering stakeholder input through focus groups and surveys. The evaluation has been submitted to and accepted by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The following document is the executive summary of the full report and data.

Overall, the evaluation was positive and noted the achievements made in the LSTA program since 2002. Both IMLS and the W.J. Schroer Company also note that the results are based on an evaluation that must be done well before the end of the five-year period the plan comprises. The recommendations from the Schroer evaluation, the State Librarian Town Meetings, input from the LSTA Advisory Council, and input from other venues will all be taken into account when we develop the Five-Year Plan for Michigan, 2007-2012.

Michigan  
LSTA 2002-2007 Five-Year Plan Evaluation

## Section I: Introduction and Summary of Impact

In support of the Library Services and Technology Act, the Library of Michigan focused on three goals in the 2002-2007 Five Year Plan for Michigan.

Goal I: Provide all Michigan residents statewide access to the widest possible range of information, library resources and services to advance and enhance their lives as workers, students, citizens, family members and lifelong learners;

Goal II: Increase equity of information access and library service by providing special assistance to areas of the state where library services are inadequate (underserved rural and urban communities), and to libraries that are working to provide service to persons having difficulty using a library;

Goal III: Foster innovation and technical improvements in information services by funding leading edge projects in libraries that meet and anticipate constantly changing needs for library services and information needs of Michigan's residents

To accomplish these goals, the Library of Michigan funded a blend of statewide and local projects. The elements of the Michigan eLibrary (MeL), and Quality Services Audit Checklist (QSAC) are the major statewide projects. Technological improvements to allow libraries to participate broadly in MeL and to develop innovative services and collaborations to serve local needs are the primary focus of local competitive grants.

Through the provision of the federal funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Library of Michigan has been able to make substantial progress in meeting these goals. As part of meeting the goals, the Library of Michigan has put significant effort and funding into statewide projects. These projects have provided services to all geographic areas of the state, to all communities regardless of local funding levels, and use technology in new ways to provide services, thus meeting Goals I, II and III. Michigan is a state where a significant proportion of the population, and thus libraries, are in rural areas or underserved urban areas. Statewide programs are an important way to reach the five-year plan goals for these residents and libraries.

The Library of Michigan collaborates with public, K-12, academic, special and tribal libraries in the use of LSTA funds. All statewide projects and competitive grant programs are open to all library types, as are the stakeholder groups that have reviewed databases for inclusion in MeL, developed procedures and policies for MeLCat, and have reviewed competitive grant proposals. As the Library of Michigan has worked with all segments of the Michigan library community during the period of this five-year plan, we heard that LSTA funding should be used for projects that provide the largest collective good of libraries and residents throughout the state. Michigan librarians have stated in word and deed that funding must support statewide programs with the broadest use.

Michigan  
LSTA 2002-2007 Five-Year Plan Evaluation

The Michigan eLibrary at <http://mel.org> is the Library of Michigan's centerpiece project. It includes a range of databases, a statewide library catalog (MeLCat), a Michigan focused Internet directory and historical Michigan digitization projects (MeL Michigana). Regardless of their location or local library funding situation, all Michigan residents can search the databases and download articles, reference material or electronic books, use practice tests, etc. Residents can also view archival materials in MeL Michigana and search MeLCat. Those residents from communities with participating MeLCat libraries can check materials out from all other participating libraries in a simple, patron-initiated online request. In fiscal year 2006, Michigan residents did over 44 million searches and nearly 10 million article downloads in MeL. MeLCat currently has 145 participating libraries, including almost 1/3 of public libraries and is on track to loan approximately 350,000 items between Michigan libraries this year. Through the use of competitive grant funds during the 2002-2007 Five-Year plan, libraries have upgraded their connectivity and catalogs to participate in MeL and MeLCat. Libraries have also used funds in support of digitization to prepare local historical materials for the Making of Modern Michigana and for inclusion in MeL Michigana.

In other areas, the Library of Michigan has developed the Quality Services Audit Checklist initiative, which serve as a set of quality standards for services, programs and administrative practices for public libraries and library cooperatives, thus improving local services by providing management and service benchmarks. The provision of competitive grants to libraries has also encouraged development of a wider range partnerships and programs in underserved areas than would be available with local funding, thus improving equity of access to quality library services. Some examples are a Braille transcription service for blind residents (Braille Connection) and family literacy programs in Saginaw (Power Up Your Reading) and Kalamazoo (Prime Time Family Reading Time).

LSTA funds are vital to the provision of statewide access and equity of service through MeL and other statewide projects and the improvement of local programs and services. The LSTA program provides the core funding for these resources in this time of state government budget reductions. Not only have LSTA funds supported these projects, but local libraries have also been able to leverage these funds. For example, both the Pere Marquette District Library and the Iosco-Arenac District Library were able to use public satisfaction with MeLCat integrated library system upgrade projects to pass local millages. Statewide purchasing of the MeL databases has also saved an estimated \$193 million in 2006 alone, based on what it would cost for Michigan's libraries to purchase access to these materials on an individual institution basis. Library Services and Technology Act funds have transformed how Michigan libraries collaborate and how Michigan residents find and use information and services.

**STATE OF MICHIGAN**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, ARTS AND LIBRARIES**  
**Michigan Five-Year Plan**  
**October 2002 through September 2007**  
**Library Services Technology Act (LSTA)**  
**Independent Evaluation**  
**Final Report**  
**March 24, 2007**

## **Background**

Every five years the Library of Michigan conducts a formal evaluation of the achievement of the goals set for the LSTA Five-Year Plan for the State of Michigan.

The results of this evaluation are designed to yield the following specific objectives:

1. **A summary of the impact of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) funds to support library services in Michigan**
2. **Overall review of results in achieving of the three goals identified in the October 2002-September 2007 LSTA Five-Year plan.**
3. **In-Depth Analysis and Evaluation conducted on two projects that used IMLS funds.**
4. **Progress in showing results of library initiatives or services**
5. **Garner and review feedback for suggestions of goals and objectives and recommend elements for inclusion in the next five-year LSTA plan for the State of Michigan.**

Each goal and its objectives/ targets have been reviewed to assess if the Library of Michigan surpassed, met, made progress toward, or did not work towards the goal. The objectives and targets of each goal will be evaluated and contain a description and assessment of the:

- ▶ Strategies, services, and activities used to meet objectives
- ▶ Outputs and outcomes to determine if objectives were met
- ▶ Impact of each objective on the quality of library services and their use

This five year evaluation includes specific research and evaluation instruments as described in the methodology (below). These were specifically selected to provide the qualitative and quantitative data which would allow a comprehensive evaluation of the Key Goals as well as meet the other outcomes of the evaluation as described above.

## **Methodology**

The methodology selected for the conduct of the evaluation includes a combination of qualitative and quantitative evaluation instruments. These included the following specific research initiatives:

### **Focus Group Surveys**

WJSchroer conducted four Focus Group Discussion sessions. These were conducted in the following markets:

- Ann Arbor
- Grand Rapids
- Gaylord
- Marquette

The method used was consistent with the method used in the 2002 LSTA evaluation by WJSchroer; by repeating the method as well as maintaining a consistent location (i. e. one SE Michigan, one group in SW Michigan, one group in Gaylord and one in the UP we minimized the potential for outcome differences due to changes in method or location.

The selection of Focus Group participants was conducted randomly using lists of Library Directors, IS/ IT Managers, and other senior library staff with designated LSTA responsibilities. The list was provided by the Library of Michigan. Participants were recruited for specific group sessions according to their geographic area, title and knowledge/ familiarity with LSTA process, funding and programs.

WJSchroer drafted the Discussion Guide which was constructed based on the Key Objectives to be evaluated. The Discussion Guide was designed to determine the extent to which project objectives were met, the impact of projects on quality library services, how well the LSTA projects were administered, how well the LSTA process was managed, and the future direction of LSTA in Michigan.

### **Community Telephone Survey**

To determine the downstream impact of the programs/ services offered by the Library of Michigan through the public (and academic) libraries in the State of Michigan, a consumer perception survey was added to the evaluation structure. WJSchroer Company completed a telephone interview of 52 questions with a sample of N=125 library users randomly selected from throughout the State of Michigan.

The questionnaire was designed based on responses to the Focus Group Discussion guide. Further, questions for the Telephone Survey were also added based on information derived from the open-ended discussion and dialogue of the Focus Group Discussions as well as the results of the In-Depth Study conducted on the QSAC and the MeLCat programs (See Below)

### **On-line Survey(s)**

An online survey of Library Directors and other knowledgeable library professionals was conducted to determine the awareness, use and accomplishment of the Key Objectives as determined by the professional library community.

The survey instrument was developed based on responses to the Focus Group Discussion guide. Further, questions for the Online Survey were also added based on information derived from the open-ended discussion and dialogue of the Focus Group Discussions as well as the results of the In-Depth Study conducted on the QSAC and the MeLCat programs (See Below)

To assure validity of the on-line surveys of Michigan Librarians directly related to the use of MeLCat and/or Quality Services Audit Checklist (QSAC), all Library directors in the State were offered the opportunity to complete the survey. Further, Directors were instructed they may distribute the survey to knowledgeable senior staff and invite their separate completion of the survey. A total of 111 respondents completed the instrument. The survey instrument contained 60 questions, with four (4) open-ended questions. The survey took approximately 11 minutes to complete.

### **LSTA Brainstorming Session-MLA**

WJSchroer staff facilitated and solicited comments from Library Directors and other senior staff during two different workshops at the 2007 MLA conference in Detroit, Michigan. The two 90 minute sessions outlined current goals and objectives of the Library of Michigan as administrator of the LSTA funding in Michigan. Additionally, discussion of the past five years of LSTA funding, modification of program funding to include a reduction in competitive grants, the further development of the MeLCat system and other issues were presented for discussion.

Through a facilitated discussion comments and recommendations from the attendees were recorded and provided as part of the overall report (See LSTA Brainstorming Session-MLA).

## **In-Depth Analysis-MeLCat/QSAC**

WJSchroer reviewed applicable project data and conducted an in-depth analysis of results from the research studies noted above on for two LSTA funded projects:

MeLCat - An analysis to show whether the project has produced a significant advance in library service via establishment and effective implementation of a Statewide catalog and resource sharing system.

Quality Service Audit Checklist - An analysis to determine whether the project has yielded progress in forwarding the development of and demonstrating the results of library service quality standards and guidelines

## **Reporting**

WJSchroer conducted each of the above research studies and developed a set of findings and recommendations relating to the Key Objectives ( Attachment A) . Two copies of each individual report are provided. Additionally 10 copies of the Final Report (containing all management summaries and recommendations) as well as a CD (located in copy #1) containing all files and data collected as part of the evaluation process is included. The Final Report includes:

- Executive summary to include background
- Study methodology and data collection techniques
- Data analysis
- Findings
- Discussion
- Recommendations

**Section II. Overall review of results in achieving of the three goals identified in the October 2002-September 2007 LSTA Five-Year plan.**

**Goal 1 (Statement)**

**Provide all Michigan residents statewide access to the widest possible range of information, library resources and services to advance and enhance their lives as workers, students, citizens, family members and lifelong learners.**

**The Library of Michigan is making significant progress toward this goal. ( B+ )**

A letter grade of “B+” is awarded based on the progress and indicators of success identified including the fundamental strategy shift to statewide programs and both the selection and development of the application/ distribution of MeL databases and MeLCat program as services used to achieve the goal.

*Evaluator Comment:*

*The strategic shift denoted above appears to have generated a substantial improvement in access to a wide range of information across the spectrum of the library community.*

*Based on the evaluation results the Library of Michigan is encouraged to provide support in three key areas to achieve higher level results in support of this Goal: (See Lessons Learned for additional detail)*

- 1. Additional training/support to public and library staff in the use and promotion of MeL databases to the library patron.*
- 2. Higher resource allocation for the statewide public promotion and marketing of the MeL databases to stimulate patron awareness and use.*
- 3. Additional resources to eliminate difficulties in the mechanics of public libraries adoption of MeLCat.*

**Strategy**

The Library of Michigan made the decision or about 2002- 2003 to dramatically reduce funding to individual (or groups of libraries or library cooperatives) via competitive LSTA grants and, instead, shift resources to Statewide initiatives.

**Therefore the primary strategy adopted by the Library of Michigan in the achievement of Goal 1 includes the shift to Statewide initiatives as opposed to individual competitive grants.**



Throughout the research evaluation conducted with the professional community, the Library of Michigan received high marks for the shift from an individual competitive grant funding strategy to the use of Statewide programs.

- ▶ “Brainstorming” participants positively identified the use of statewide programs as a positive change and a better use of scarce resources than the individual competitive grants.
- ▶ Focus group respondents throughout the State positively identified the shift to statewide programs compared with individual competitive grants. When asked, while some respondents would like to see some competitive grant funding of projects, all agreed the shift to statewide projects was a positive change and yielded better use of dollars.
- ▶ Online respondents identified the perceived ideal mix of statewide and competitive programs varies with a plurality suggesting 60% statewide and a smaller subsample opting for up to 80% statewide vs. competitive.
- ▶ The MeLCat in- depth study found *“In general, most participants indicated that statewide resource sharing ought to be a priority with the Library of Michigan leading this effort.”*

## **Services and Activities**

Services/ activities developed and in the process of being implemented by the Library of Michigan for this goal include (but are not limited to) the purchase and distribution of information databases through the Michigan e Library (MeL) and a planned Statewide centralized union catalog of materials accessible by patrons (MeLCat) . Also included is the development of a quality service program initiative (QSAC) .

## **Outputs and Outcomes**

Outputs and outcomes for this goal include:

- ▶ Implementation of the strategic shift to statewide programs
- ▶ Professional (library community) satisfaction with the programs (i. e. MeL databases and MeLCat ) selected by the Library of Michigan in pursuit of Goal 1
- ▶ Professional community interpretation of progress toward this Goal based on results of interview and survey data.
- ▶ In- depth study analysis of the progress of MeLCat in pursuing full distribution of the program across all library boundaries.
- ▶ Patron perceptions of awareness of MeL databases and MeLCat ( even if not known as MeLCat) , use and satisfaction with these services.

## MeL

The selection and purchase of information databases for distribution to public, k-12 school, and academic libraries as one of the primary activities in support of Goal 1 received positive marks from the Focus group respondents :

*Goal #1 elicited a consistent set of high scores (mostly 8-10 out of 10) primarily driven by a view that MeL databases and (to a lesser extent) MeLCat have satisfied the Goal's mandate for "broadest access" to information. There is a high level of consensus on the Library of Michigan's achievement on this goal with good satisfaction with the "product" noted by most respondents.*

Online survey respondents similarly provided a high mean score to the "overall" question on the survey reflecting how effective Library of Michigan efforts have been in achieving the essence of Goal 1:

Goal 1	Mean Score (1-10)
Provide Statewide Access to Widest Possible Range of Information (Q. 4)	7.98

Additionally, when specifically looking at the use of the Michigan e Library databases, respondents were even more positive regarding the achievement toward Goal 1:

Goal 1	Mean Score	Top 2 Box Score
1. Statewide access to the widest possible range of information. . .	8.74	65%

While online respondents were not asked to score MeLCat against Goal 1, the results of the survey question regarding the key advantage of MeLCat clearly indicate improved "access" to users as the primary benefit:

*"The biggest advantage to MeLCat was seen as the "access to materials" identified by over ½ (55%) of respondents. Another 28% linked it to patrons as a needs satisfaction benefit. "*

The MeLCat in- depth report notes the movement toward Goal #1 was enhanced by the MeLCat achievements in the following areas:

### **Provide a statewide catalog for Michigan libraries**

√ A statewide catalog commenced in 2003.

### **Develop and operate an online shared catalog for all types of libraries**

√ All types of libraries, academic, public, school, and special, are able to access MeLCat, the online shared catalog.

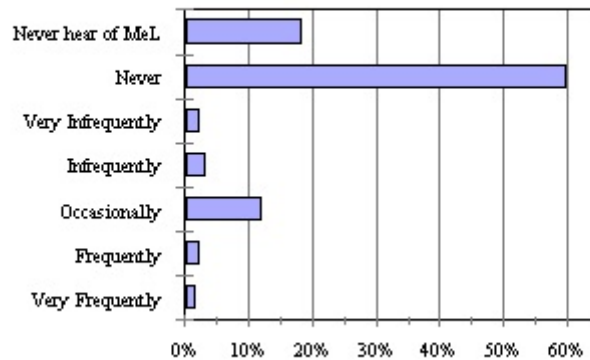
### **Provide, install, and maintain proprietary catalog software**

√ By 2004, all necessary software components were in place.

The telephone survey demonstrates a disconnect and break between the trained online professional with awareness and access to MeL and the patron who is almost completely unaware of this product:

*“Librarian references to MeL appear to be minimal with most respondents never having heard of MeL and it either has never been mentioned or referred to by Librarians according to a plurality of respondents. Those with no children and those with a high school education and/or low household income appear more likely to have never heard of it. Respondents for the most part “never” access MeL. About 11% of respondents access MeL on an occasional basis. Fractional percentages of respondents claim to access it more than “occasionally”.*

**Q20 How Often Access MeL**



**Impact of this Goal on Quality of Library Services and Use**

It is believed the continued implementation of the strategy in pursuit of Goal #1 along with the dedication of support behind the continued use of the MeL databases and the further implementation of the MeLCat centralized union catalog will have significant impact on the quality of library services in the State of Michigan.

Michigan citizens now have access to a wide array of commercial databases with an incredible amount of verifiable data. This represents a substantial improvement in the quality of Library services available to patrons in this state over the past 5 years. This data may be accessed quickly and easily by going through local library websites or through the Library of Michigan website.

Michigan citizens are increasingly capable of being able to order materials from any other library in Michigan as a result of the continuing development and implementation of the MeLCat system. While this system is not complete, nor is it without implementation problems, many Michigan citizens (those covered by the 1/3 of libraries currently connected to the MeLCat system) find the materials they desire dramatically more available in most cases than what was available prior to the start of this initiative. It appears clear that upon completion this service will offer all citizens of Michigan a dramatic increase in access to materials they have not had before.

## Goal 2 (Statement)

**Increase equity of information access and library service by providing special assistance to areas of the State where library services are inadequate (under served rural and urban communities) and to libraries that are working to provide service to persons having difficulty using a library.**

**The Library of Michigan is making some progress toward this goal. “B“ “C- ”**

The “B” score is awarded for the value of the MeL databases and the MeLCat program serving to increase access of information and materials to under- served libraries.

There does, however, remain high speed connectivity problems for some rural libraries. (Without enhanced connectivity programs like MeL databases and MeLCat cannot be effectively utilized. ) The “C- ” score is awarded based on limited progress regarding that part of the Goal of “assisting persons with difficulty using the library”.

### *Evaluator Comment*

*The increased access via distribution of MeL databases and the increased access via the development of MeLCat are significant. However, to better hold itself accountable and to minimize confusion relating to this Goal it is suggested the Library of Michigan break this Goal into two separate and distinct objectives of:*

- ▶ *Increase access of information and materials to under-served libraries*
- ▶ *Increase access to persons with difficulty using the library*

*Without this separation it is our view the Library of Michigan will continue to have difficulty maintaining a clear focus on this larger Goal and will certainly struggle with being evaluated against this Goal which essentially has two quite different outcomes.*

*Finally, it is suggested that an additional goal (sub-goal?) be developed of insuring all libraries in the State have access to a high speed Internet connection. (See Lessons Learned for Additional Detail)*

## Strategy

Success toward this Goal is driven, as noted above, by the **global primary strategy** adopted by the Library of Michigan (see above) of a shift to Statewide initiatives as opposed to the funding and support of individual competitive grants in pursuit of individual library movement toward this Goal.

## Services and Activities

Services/ activities developed and in the process of being implemented by the Library of Michigan for this goal include many of the same services/ activities noted above.

These include (but are not limited to) the purchase and distribution of information databases through the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) and a planned Statewide centralized union catalog of materials accessible by patrons (MeLCat). Also included is the development of a quality service program initiative (QSAC).

## Outputs and Outcomes

### Outputs and outcomes for this Goal include the following metrics:

- ▶ Perceived or objective increase participation in programs designed to increase equity of access for rural or under-served libraries (i. e. MeLCat)
- ▶ Perceived or objective measurement of assistance to those individuals who have difficulty using a library.
- ▶ Perceived/ measurable increase in access to high speed connectivity by rural or under-served libraries which continue to be limited to dial-up Internet service
- ▶ Perceived patron awareness of products/ services designed to respond to the “equity of access” objective.
- ▶ Objective measurement of demand for products/ services implemented to provide “equity of access”
- ▶ Objective measure of the number of patrons who fall into the category of “having difficulty using the library”

Focus Group respondents commented on the bifurcated nature of the Goal and provided separate measurement metrics:

*This goal is more difficult to measure as it is in reality two goals:*

- ▶ *Under-served and rural library information equity of access*
- ▶ *Assisting those patrons who have difficulty using a library*

*“Respondents provided generally high scores in each of the Focus Groups on the first part of the goal, The MeL databases and MeLCat as initiatives which helped distribute information to many under-served libraries around the State. In Gaylord and to a lesser extent in Marquette, however, respondents pointed out the dire need of some smaller libraries to receive support to upgrade their connectivity status. In effect, the benefit of MeL databases and MeLCat are lost to libraries who are still not capable of accessing a high speed Internet connection.”*

### **Finding**

**The goal of providing increased equity of access via the use of MeL databases and MeLCat appears to be met in most parts of the State.**

“Some respondents were far more critical of the second part of Goal #2. Those respondents identified areas they did not believe were being addressed included:

- ▶ Lack of foreign language support/ collections (especially) in locations where ESL populations are high throughout the state
- ▶ Lack of programs/ resources in support of physically handicapped and/ or other patrons with difficulty accessing a library
- ▶ Lack of support/ programs for prison/ mental health institutions or other public limited access environments.” (Note: the Library of Michigan’s ability to provide access to these institutions is hampered by restrictions from the Department of Corrections.)

### **Finding**

**The goal of providing increased access to people who have difficulty using a Library does not appear to be met.**

Goal #2	Mean Score (1-10)
Increase equity of Information Access and Library service by providing special assistance to under served libraries and to people having difficulty using the Library (Q. 6)	7.20

Online respondents provided a positive but significantly lower overall score (compared with Goal #1) for the efforts of on this goal.

Goal #2	Mean Score	Top 2 Box Score
2. Increase equity of information access to under served libraries and to libraries providing service to patrons who have difficulty using service	8.37	69%

**Online respondents** again provided a positive but somewhat lower score to MeL efforts as they relate to Goal #2.

**Online respondents** reveal mixed levels of tracking of the MeLCat use. Almost 40% of respondents are not currently measuring use or requests for MeLCat services. Another 25% are measuring use and 30% are measuring requests. While these metrics do not entirely equate with demand, an ongoing track of this data should provide growth trends and some sense of overall awareness for the service. (Q. 48)

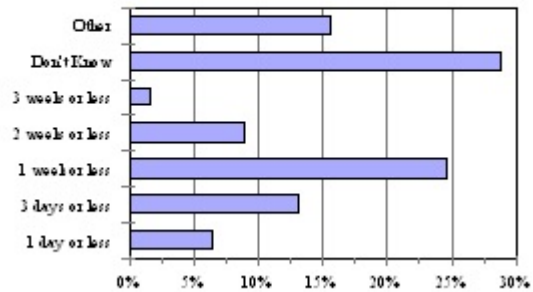
A plurality of respondents (45%) believe 0-20% of their patrons are aware of MeLCat services. Another 23% believe 21-40% are aware and smaller percentages believe more than 40% are aware. (Q. 49) While some awareness is tracked it appears patron awareness continues to be a challenge for this goal.

Somewhat more than 1/3 of respondents believe the interface between their library system and the MeLCat system is “very smooth”. (Q. 50) Another 18% believe it is a “smooth” interface. About 29% believe the interface is either “not smooth at all” or “not smooth”.

Patrons demonstrate limited awareness of the MeLCat service (irrespective of whether they know the name or not of the program). 40% of respondents have never heard of getting a book from another library. About 10% of respondents claim to make this request often while about 17% have requested this on a “several times” basis with 15% taking advantage of the service “frequently”. Educationally, those with a BA/BS are more likely to request a book more often. Those with a middle income are also more likely to use this service.

While almost a 1/3 of respondents “don’t know” about 1/4 of respondents believe a book may be delivered in a “week or less”. Another 20% believe a book will be delivered in 3 days or less.

**Q33 How Long Take to Get Book From Another Library**



Overall, speed of book delivery is perceived to be on average a 5.86 out of 7.0.

In effect, it appears a plurality of patrons are unaware of the program. . . thus making it difficult for them to access this service. Additionally, there is evidence library staff are not aggressively promoting or otherwise attempting to build awareness for MeLCat on any kind of significant scale.

**Goal**

**33% of the libraries in Michigan will have their holdings reflected on the statewide resource sharing system by 2006.**

The goal of 33% of Michigan libraries participating in MeLCat was not reached.

Currently, just over 13% of all libraries in the state of Michigan are MeLCat Participants. Over 13% of the libraries in Michigan may have their holdings reflected on the statewide resource sharing system by the end of the 2006 calendar year.

The In- depth study of MeLCat reveals the current level of participation in MeLCat as of Fall 2006 :

<b>Michigan Libraries Applying/Participating in MeLCat - Fall 2006</b>					
Type of Library	Total	MeLCat Applicants	%	MeLCat Participants	%
Academic	159	40	25.16%	20	12.58%
Public	384	206	53.65%	70	18.23%
Special	140	6	4.29%	2	1.43%
Cooperative	13	4	30.77%	0	0.0%
Total	697	253	36.29%	92	13.19%

## Goal

### **Enhanced resources on the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) and an effective searching/authentication portal will be in place by 2005.**

As of September 5, 2006, the MeLCat statewide catalog had 6.83 million bibliographic records with over 19.4 million items, or holdings, of the participating libraries. MeLCat has the potential to more than double in size in the next three years.

September 2005: Bibliographic records in MeLCat – 5.98 million

September 2006: Bibliographic records in MeLCat – 6.83 million

## Finding

### **Enhanced resources on the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) and an effective searching/authentication portal will be in place by 2005.**

√ Bibliographic records increased by over 15% in two years enhancing the resources available on MeL.

√ The searching/authentication portal was put into place in January 2005.

## Goal

### **Ability of Michigan residents to search for materials from any Michigan library.**

Residents of Michigan are able to expand their resource options through the use of this electronic statewide library catalog. By accessing MeL at <http://MeL.org>, entering their Michigan driver's license number or state I. D. number, anyone can search the database, however, only patrons of participating libraries can order materials through MeLCat.

- a. Expansion of access to information and materials  
Bibliographic records in MeLCat has exceeded 6.85 million and items available in MeLCat has reached 19.4 million.

## Finding

√ Anyone can access and search for materials.

☒ Only patrons of participating libraries can order materials through MeLCat.

- b. **Sub-goal-Expansion of access to information and materials**

√ MeLCat holdings alone increased by over 5 million items from October 2005 to October 2006.



## **Goal**

**Interlibrary loan fill rates for libraries participating in the resource sharing system will increase by 20% by the end of their first year of participation.**

## **Finding**

This output target was in the Five- Year plan, but did not get included in the planning for MeLCat. Pre- MeLCat fill rates were not collected. The Interlibrary loan fill rate for libraries participating in MeLCat has risen from 83. 2% in August 2005 to 88% in August 2006 (an increase of 5. 77%).

## **Goal**

**Library patrons will receive requested materials via the statewide resource sharing system, on average, within five days of the initiated request by 2007.**

## **Finding**

A turnaround study was conducted November 11, 2005 through December 9, 2005. At that time, 305 libraries were on MeL Delivery. It was reported that the average overall turnaround is 3.01 days. The goal is met.

## **Goal**

**Add libraries to MeLCat in phases -  
Goal - 550 libraries in five years**

## **Finding**

One hundred libraries have been added to date. The goal of reaching 550 libraries to be added to the MeLCat system may be achieved within the five year time frame.

## **Goal**

**Plan promotional activities and develop a coordinated marketing plan to achieve broad awareness of the increased statewide services available via the Michigan e Library website**

Promotional activities have been targeted wholly towards the staff of libraries. Little has been done from the state level to increase the awareness of the general public. The goal of achieve broad public awareness has not been met. The position of MeL Coordinator has been unfilled for several years. A coordinator was hired several months ago to fill that position. A marketing plan will be written this quarter.

## **Impact of this Goal on the Quality of Library Services and Their Use**

Progress against this goal may have significant impact on the quality of Library services and their use particularly as it relates to rural/ under- served libraries and special populations of people who have difficulty using the library.

As noted in the discussion of Goal #1 the use of MeL databases and MeLCat are tools that will significantly enhance access to rural and under- served libraries as well as to some individuals who may have access to computers but may not have physical access to their libraries.

As noted, the ongoing development of MeL databases and the further development of MeLCat are important aspects of movement toward this goal. However, the resolution of high speed internet access to under served libraries and the further development of programs/ services in support of those who have difficulty using the library will be important as well.

### **Goal 3 (Statement)**

**Foster innovation and technical improvements in information services by funding leading edge projects in libraries that meet and anticipate constantly changing needs for library services and information needs of Michigan’s residents.**

**The Library of Michigan appears to be making limited progress toward this goal. “C +”**

While some respondents in the research studies argued the development of MeLCat represents “leading edge” technology, the preponderance of comments received from library directors and other senior staff interviewed suggest this program, while of value in Goals 1 and 2 is more of an application of largely existing technology than part of a “leading edge” technology or innovation program. There did not appear to be other significant initiatives sponsored by the Library of Michigan which would qualify in support of this Goal.

#### *Evaluator Comment:*

*While the Library of Michigan does not appear to be funding “leading edge” technology or innovation as the term would be popularly construed the application of the current technology involved in enabling a Statewide initiative the size and scope of MeLCat provides its own set of “leading edge” problems. Many of these problems are technology related and may serve as market opportunities for a (leading edge or not) technology solution. The Library of Michigan may consider stimulating the development of such a solution through the RFP or other bid process. Such an effort would serve the dual goal of further smoothing the implementation of MeLCat as well as providing evidence of commitment in support of Goal #3. (See Lessons Learned for additional detail)*

### **Strategy**

Success toward this Goal is effected by a subordinated component of the **global primary strategy** adopted by the Library of Michigan (see above) . As part of a shift to statewide initiatives the challenge of exploring “leading edge” technology is eschewed for the more mainstream technology challenge of attempting to get the MeLCat “system” to smoothly interface with the spectrum of individual library systems existing throughout the State.

### **Services and Activities**

Services/ activities developed and in the process of being implemented by the Library of Michigan for this Goal primarily include the implementation of the Statewide centralized union catalog of materials accessible by patrons (MeLCat) .

## Outputs and Outcomes

**Outputs and outcomes for this Goal include the following metrics:**

1. Perception of library community regarding Library of Michigan support of leading edge technology.
2. Objective increase in participation in MeLCat as evidenced by the resolution of technology conflicts and other system issues which may hinder participation not otherwise limited by growth constraints for reasons of capacity, etc. unrelated to technology.
3. Perceived or objective measurement of resolution of technical problems experienced by individual library administrators as they “join” MeLCat.
4. Perceived/measurable satisfaction of patrons in requesting and receiving materials as ordered in a tiMeLy, efficient fashion.

### Goal #3

Focus Group respondents provided a mixed set of scores on Goal #3. Some respondents provided high scores for this goal believing the movement forward on MeLCat and the MeL databases represented “innovation”. Others disagreed citing the comparative backwardness of MeLCat as an indicator of just the opposite. Still others believed MeLCat was an important step forward (“moving from a car to a bus system. . . but that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t be looking at a magnetic light rail system”) but did not qualify as true “innovation.”

Irrespective of the view of MeLCat respondents regarding the technology involved in the MeLCat system, the prevailing view was the Library of Michigan was by and large not supporting real “innovation”. This was partly due to the lack of individual grants which some respondents suggested did provide innovative thinking, even if there was limited applicability for all libraries.

Additionally, credit was given in many cases for “innovative ideas” but then points were taken away for poor implementation or mechanics (i. e. MeLCat).

<b>Goal #3</b>	<b>Mean Score (1-10)</b>
Foster Innovation and Technology Improvements (Q. 8)	7.09

Online respondents provided a significantly lower score (overall) to the effectiveness of LSTA programs as they relate to Goal #3 than to Goals #1 and #2.

Goal #3	Mean Score	Top 2 Box Score
3. Foster innovation and technical improvement	7.74	44%

Notably, perceptions of the (MeL) databases in support of Goal 3 are significantly lower (than scores provided for Goal 1 and 2) although are still favorable with a mean score of 7.74 (out of a possible 10.0).

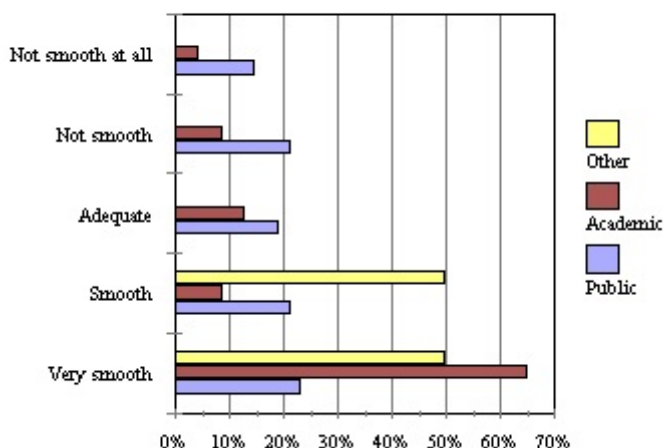
**Outcome: Perception of Library Community in supporting leading edge technology solutions.**

**Finding:**

**There is not a perception among the Library community at large the Library of Michigan is providing significant tangible support to leading edge technology solutions.**

**Q50x59 Smoothness of Library-MeLCat Interface by Type of Library**

While the specific question of MeLCat contribution to Goal #3 was not asked it would appear the series of questions relating to the interface between the MeLCat system and the individual library systems represent the challenge from an innovation technology standpoint:



Somewhat more than 1/3 of respondents believe the interface between their library system and the MeLCat system is “very smooth”.

(Q. 50) Another 18% believe it is a “smooth” interface. About 29% believe the interface is either “not smooth at all” or “not smooth”.

Public libraries, however are much more likely to indicate the interface is less than smooth while academic and other libraries are more likely to feel the interface is very smooth or smooth. (Q. 50x59)

There is not a significant difference from this finding within public libraries by class size. (Q. 50x59)

Library co-op members are also more likely to indicate the interface is less than smooth while non co-op members would be much more likely to say the interface is “very smooth”. (Q. 50x60)

With a mean score of 7.17 and a progressive curve up the scale respondents tend to believe the MeLCat process is a lot of extra work for the director and her staff. (Q. 51) Librarians were much more likely to indicate MeLCat meant a lot of extra work compared with library directors and department heads. (Q. 51x57) Further, the smaller the library the more “extra work” was perceived to be levied on staff. (Q. 51x59)

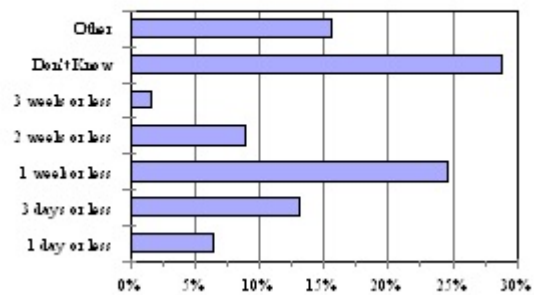
**Outcome: ...perceived resolution of technical problems**

**Finding:**

**While there are some libraries with a “very smooth” interface there are a plurality of libraries which still report interface challenges.**

Telephone survey respondents (patrons) who were aware of MeLCat (although not necessarily by that name) gave good scores for access and delivery.

**Q33 How Long Take to Get Book From Another Library**



40% of respondents have never heard of getting a book from another library. About 10% of respondents claim to make this request often while about 17% have requested this on a “several times” basis with 15% taking advantage of the service “frequently”. Educationally, those with a BA/BS are more likely to request a book more often. Those with a middle income are also more likely to use this service.

While almost a 1/3 of respondents “don’t know” about 1/4 of respondents believe a book may be delivered in a “week or less”. Another 20% believe a book will be delivered in 3 days or less.

Older respondents tend to believe books will be delivered faster while younger respondents are more likely to “not know”.

Overall, speed of book delivery is perceived to be on average a 5.86 out of 7.0.

Speed of book delivery is largely seen as a positive with only fractional percentages of respondents scoring at a “3” or less.

**Outcome:**

**Perceived/measurable satisfaction of patrons in requesting and receiving materials**

**Finding:**

**Patrons at participating libraries are satisfied with the effectiveness and relative efficiency of the service and delivery timing. This goal is met.**

## **Outcome**

**33% of the libraries in Michigan will have their holdings reflected on the statewide resource sharing system by 2006.**

## **Finding**

**The goal of 33% of Michigan libraries participating in MeLCat was not reached.**

Currently, just over 13% of all libraries in the state of Michigan are MeLCat Participants. Over 13% of the libraries in Michigan may have their holdings reflected on the statewide resource sharing system by the end of the 2006 calendar year.

## **Finding:**

**While there is an increase in the number of libraries which have their holdings reflected on the statewide resources sharing system, that number has not kept pace with the stated goal.**

## **Impact of this Goal on the Quality of Library Services and Their Use**

As the Library of Michigan works toward full implementation of the MeLCat initiative progress against the defined technology challenges which currently inhibit the absorption of new libraries into the system may have a significant impact on all libraries within the State of Michigan. Further, to the extent that new technology solutions may reduce the amount of redundant work facing libraries participating in the MeLCat program this too may have a significant impact on the quality of Library services and their use particularly as it relates to libraries that are smaller, with fewer staff support resources and less in the way of technological/ system expertise .

**Library of Michigan  
LSTA Key Objectives/Goals  
2002-2007**

**Goal 1**

**Provide all Michigan residents statewide access to the widest possible range of information, library resources and services to advance and enhance their lives as workers, students, citizens, family members and lifelong learners.**

**Goal 2**

**Increase equity of information access and library service by providing special assistance to areas of the State where library services are inadequate (under served rural and urban communities) and to libraries that are working to provide service to persons having difficulty using a library.**

**Goal 3**

**Foster innovation and technical improvements in information services by funding leading edge projects in libraries that meet and anticipate constantly changing needs for library services and information needs of Michigan's residents.**



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**Michigan Five-Year Plan**  
**October 2002 through September 2007**  
**Library Services Technology Act (LSTA)**  
**In-depth Evaluation**  
**MelCat**  
**Final Report**  
**March 24, 2007**

**The Michigan eLibrary Catalog (MeLCat) is the statewide catalog and resource sharing system being built for Michigan's libraries and residents.**

When crafting Michigan's LSTA Five-Year Plan of Service (2002-2007), the Library of Michigan and an outside evaluator conducted several forums around the state, soliciting feedback from public librarians regarding the development, implementation, and evaluation of a statewide LSTA program. Seven forums (Grand Rapids, Marquette, Petoskey, Cadillac, Lansing, Livonia, and Frankenmuth) were held October 2001. In general, most participants indicated that statewide resource sharing ought to be a priority with the Library of Michigan leading this effort. The overwhelming majority felt that MeL and its components should be continued and expanded. The fiscal year 2005 appropriations from the Institute of Museum and Library Services were used to launch the MeLCat project. MeLCat was established with the intent to be the "anytime, anywhere" information delivery service with an ultimate goal of serving and linking all Michigan residents to the information they need, when they need it.

The MeLCat Statewide Catalog is a centralized union catalog with up-to-date holdings from all participating libraries. A union catalog is a database that contains the holdings of multiple libraries. Each library has its own catalog, Integrated Library System (ILS), and the ILS communicates with the MeLCat software which is the database of all the participating libraries. The database lists not only the holdings, but the holdings' status in real time (checked out, available, etc.) New materials and holdings are updated daily. Libraries' holdings for the same title are brought together so that a patron searching for a specific title will see one entry in MeLCat followed by a list of all the holding libraries with real time availability of the item listed next to each library.

The patron can place holds through MeLCat directly into the ILS at the holding library because the two databases communicate. Before this kind of system, a union catalog listed the material, but a patron could not tell if it was available and would have to have the library arrange checkout and delivery for them. That is now all automatic and immediate (status, placing holds, requesting delivery location) through MeLCat and is initiated and completed by the patron without library intervention.

Library participation is voluntary.

MeLCat includes:

- ▶ Holdings regardless of the library automation system used by the participating libraries
- ▶ Records for statewide licensed resources
  - ▶ NetLibrary books
  - ▶ Full-text journals
- ▶ Holdings of unautomated libraries
- ▶ Book reviews, tables of contents and cover art, when possible

MeLCat does not replace local integrated library systems (ILSs).

Groups of libraries are being added three times a year. If all Michigan's libraries participate, MeLCat could grow to more than 12 million unique titles with more than 48 million items, including books, CDs, videos, DVDs and other library materials.

### **MeLCat Purpose, Goals, and Targets**

**Project Purpose:** The project will provide a single statewide catalog solution for Michigan Libraries.

**LSTA Purpose:** Library technology, connectivity, and services

**State Goal:** Goal 3. Foster innovation in information services

**IMLS Primary Performance Category:** Provide access to information, resources and ideas

**IMLS Secondary Performance Category:** Provide tools for the future

**Primary Services:** Information Access and Services, Interlibrary Loan, Virtual Library Services

**Secondary Services:** Document and materials delivery, Resource sharing, Portals and related Web projects, Virtual union catalogue

**Primary Users:** Statewide public

**Number of Persons Served:** 9,938,444

**LSTA GOAL 1: Provide all Michigan residents statewide access to the widest possible range of information, library resources and services to advance and enhance their lives as workers, students, citizens, family members, and lifelong learners.**

### **Project Objectives**

- ▶ **Provide a statewide catalog for Michigan libraries**
  - ▶ **Develop and operate an online shared catalog for all types of libraries**
  - ▶ **Provide, install, and maintain propriety catalog software**
- ▶ **Ability of Michigan residents to search for materials from any Michigan library**
  - ▶ **Expansion of access to information and materials**
- ▶ **Materials obtained thru shared delivery system**
- ▶ **Add libraries to MeLCat in phases - 550 libraries in five years**  
Year 2 - 5: 120 to 150 libraries

### **Key Output Targets**

- 1. A statewide resource sharing system, complete with patron-initiated interlibrary loan and delivery, will be in place by 2004.**
- 2. 33% of the libraries in Michigan will have their holdings reflected on the statewide resource sharing system by 2006.**
- 3. Interlibrary loan fill rates for libraries participating in the resource sharing system will increase by 20% by the end of their first year of participation. (Fill rate – the fulfillment of requests)**
- 4. Enhanced resources on the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) and an effective searching/authentication portal will be in place by 2005.**

### **Key Outcome Targets**

- ▶ **Library patrons will receive requested materials via the statewide resource sharing system, on average, within five days of the initiated request by 2007.**

**LSTA GOAL II: Increase equity of information access and library service by providing special assistance to areas of the state where library services are inadequate (under served rural and urban communities), and to libraries that are working to provide service to persons having difficulty using a library.**

**LSTA GOAL III: Foster innovation and technical improvements in information services by funding leading edge projects in libraries that meet and anticipate constantly changing needs for library services and information needs of Michigan's residents.**

## Evaluation of Progress towards MeLCat Purpose, Goals, and Targets

<input type="checkbox"/> Successful Completion
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Incomplete

**Project Purpose:** The project will provide a single statewide catalog solution for Michigan Libraries. Upon its completion, Michigan residents will be able to search for materials from any Michigan library, thereby greatly expanding their access to information and materials.

### **Project Objectives**

- ▶ **Provide a statewide catalog for Michigan libraries**
  - ▶ **Develop and operate an online shared catalog for all types of libraries**
  - ▶ **Provide, install, and maintain propriety catalog software**

In 2003, The Library of Michigan contracted with the Michigan Library Consortium for implementation services relating to the Michigan eLibrary Catalog, or “MeLCat.” This statewide resource sharing service consists of several components including a portal or gateway to MeL, a union catalog of all participating libraries, a delivery service, a training program, and administrative structure.

The Michigan Library Consortium created an administrative structure for the governance and operation of MeLCat.

MeLCat has two standing policy committees:

1. The MeLCat Statewide Catalog Policy Committee

Charge: To advise the State Librarian and MeLCat Project staff on policies for the statewide catalog, including:

- \* Database standards
- \* Record loading
- \* Records for statewide electronic resources
- \* User interface design, e. g. , indexes, scopes, display, naming conventions
- \* User services provided
- \* Problem reporting
- \* Standards enforcement
- \* Evaluation

## 2. The MeLCat Resource Sharing Policy Committee

**Purpose:** To advise the State Librarian and the MeLCat Project staff on policies for statewide resource sharing.

**Scope:** Statewide resource sharing policies encompass these areas:

- ▶ Patron record standards and privacy
- ▶ Patron interface for requesting materials
- ▶ Resource sharing services provided
- ▶ Borrowing and lending policies and best practices
- ▶ Participating library requirements
- ▶ Problem reporting and resolution
- ▶ Evaluation

**Tasks:**

- ▶ Develop resource sharing policies for MeLCat, including:
  - ▶ returnables
  - ▶ INN-Reach policy tables
  - ▶ INN-Reach standardized coding and displays
  - ▶ reciprocal borrowing, i. e. , " visiting patron"
  - ▶ statistics
- ▶ Develop MeLCat resource sharing policies that all participating libraries will agree to as a requirement for participation.
- ▶ Develop MeLCat resource sharing policies for new system capabilities as they become available, including:
  - ▶ automatic forwarding of requests to the next potential lender
  - ▶ NCIP (for circulation and for patron authentication)
  - ▶ non- returnables
  - ▶ lender of last resort

**Membership:** Members are appointed after a nomination process for two-year staggered terms, beginning in January. There are 14 members, representing a variety of types of libraries and library automation from across the state. There are 7 vacancies to fill for terms beginning each January.

A portal was chosen and installed. Document delivery service was identified and installed. A vendor was chosen for the MeLCat union catalog and resource sharing service.

In 2004, The Michigan Department of Information Technology began maintaining a secure, efficient hosting environment for Michigan's statewide catalog.

### Evaluation

#### Provide a statewide catalog for Michigan libraries

√ A statewide catalog commenced in 2003.

#### Develop and operate an online shared catalog for all types of libraries

√ All types of libraries, academic, public, school, and special, are able to access MeLCat, the online shared catalog.

#### Provide, install, and maintain propriety catalog software

√ By 2004, all necessary software components were in place.

#### Key Output Target

- A statewide resource sharing system, complete with patron-initiated interlibrary loan and delivery, will be in place by 2004.

### Evaluation

A statewide resource sharing system, complete with patron-initiated interlibrary loan and delivery, will be in place by 2004.

√ By 2004, over thirty libraries were successfully using MeLCat, the statewide resource sharing system, complete with patron-initiated interlibrary loan and delivery.

#### Key Output Target

- 33% of the libraries in Michigan will have their holdings reflected on the statewide resource sharing system by 2006.

### Evaluation

33% of the libraries in Michigan will have their holdings reflected on the statewide resource sharing system by 2006.

☒ The goal of 33% of Michigan libraries participating in MeLCat was not reached.

Currently, just over five percent of all libraries in the state of Michigan are MeLCat Participants. Over 13% of the libraries in Michigan may have their holdings reflected on the statewide resource sharing system by the end of the 2006 calendar year.

#### Key Output Target

- Enhanced resources on the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) and an effective searching/authentication portal will be in place by 2005.

### **Evaluation**

**Enhanced resources on the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) and an effective searching/authentication portal will be in place by 2005.**

- √ Bibliographic records increased by over 15% in two years enhancing the resources available on MeL.
- √ The searching/ authentication portal was put into place in January 2005.

### **Evaluation**

**Ability of Michigan residents to search for materials from any Michigan library**

- √ Anyone can access and use MeLCat to search for materials.
- ☒ Only patrons of participating libraries can order materials through MeLCat.

- **Expansion of access to information and materials**

- √ MeLCat holdings alone increased by over 5 million items from October 2005 to October 2006.

### **Key Output Targets**

- **Interlibrary loan fill rates for libraries participating in the resource sharing system will increase by 20% by the end of their first year of participation.**

### **Evaluation**

**Interlibrary loan fill rates for libraries participating in the resource sharing system will increase by 20% by the end of their first year of participation.**

- ☒ **This output target was in the Five-Year plan, but did not get included in the planning for MeLCat. Pre-MeLCat fill rates were not collected. The overall MeLCat fill rate is 88% (an increase of 5.77%).**

### **Key Outcome Targets**

**Library patrons will receive requested materials via the statewide resource sharing system, on average, within five days of the initiated request by 2007.**

#### **Evaluation**

#### **Materials obtained thru shared delivery system**

√ Participating Michigan libraries on July 1, 2004 began the inaugural year of the new MeL Statewide delivery service. In March 2004, the Library of Michigan and the Michigan Library Consortium announced the selection of the provider for this piece of the Michigan eLibrary project.

**Library patrons will receive requested materials via the statewide resource sharing system, on average, within five days of the initiated request by 2007.**

√ MeL Delivery successfully met this target in 2005. The average turn-around time was 3.01 days.

#### **Evaluation**

#### **Add libraries to MeLCat in phases -**

**Goal - 550 libraries in five years**

**One hundred libraries have been added to date. The goal of reaching 550 in the first five years will not be met.**

#### **Evaluation**

**Plan promotional activities and develop a coordinated marketing plan to achieve broad awareness of the increased statewide services available via the Michigan eLibrary website**

**Promotional activities have been targeted wholly towards the staff of libraries. Little has been done from the state level to increase the awareness of the general public.**

**The position of MeL Coordinator has been unfilled for several years. A coordinator was hired several months ago to fill that position. A marketing plan will be written this quarter.**



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**In-depth Evaluation**  
**QSAC (Quality Service Audit Checklist)**  
**Final Report**  
**March 24, 2007**

In February 2002, State Librarian, Christie Pearson Brandau, appointed a committee of 22 library directors, trustees, and public library cooperative directors to oversee the development of quality service standards and guidelines for public libraries in Michigan. It is believed that benchmarks would give credibility, inspiration, vision, funding justification, and service uniformity and consistency.

QSAC was formed for six key reasons.

Quality measures:

- ▶ Help libraries gain credibility in their communities
- ▶ Provide a shared vision for library service
- ▶ Give library directors a powerful tool for educating staff, board members, government officials, and the public
- ▶ Display achievements with the current level of funding
- ▶ Provide a base and explanation for increased funding
- ▶ Inspire libraries toward improved service statewide

Two years in the making, the Quality Services Audit Checklist (QSAC) contains seven categories of quality measures for Michigan's library community.

The seven categories include:

1. Human Resources
2. Governance/ Administration
3. Service
4. Collection Development
5. Technology
6. Facilities/ Equipment
7. Public Relations/ Marketing

The measurements within each category are intended to be customer-focused, measurable, easy to understand, attainable and appropriate, not so burdensome that they crush good intentions, incentive driven – not punitive, and results-based.

Mission:

To develop measurable benchmarks for public libraries to use in developing quality service in Michigan libraries

LSTA Purpose:

Library technology, connectivity, and services

State Goal:

Foster innovation/ technical improvements in information services

IMLS Primary Performance Category:

Provide tools for the future

Primary Users:

Library staff and volunteers, Public library trustees, Statewide public

Target population

# Served: 9.6 million 384 public libraries and 13 cooperatives

Primary Services:

Library Development

Secondary Services:

Strategic planning

Start Date:

12/01/01 End Date: 09/30/03

**Project Purpose:**

- 1. Organize a Statewide Advisory Committee on Quality Measurements for Public Libraries**
- 2. Assist the committee in devising measurable standards of quality for public libraries**
- 3. Inform the library community of the creation of such standards**
- 4. Monitor the certification of libraries qualifying for measurable standards of quality**
- 5. Encourage libraries to use QSAC certification as a tool in leveraging support from their local governments**

**Evaluation of Progress towards QSAC Purpose, Goals, and Targets**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Successful Completion</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Incomplete</b>

**Evaluation**

**Organize a Statewide Advisory Committee on Quality Measurements for Public Libraries**

√ The Statewide Advisory Committee on Quality Measurements for Public Libraries was successfully organized in February 2002.

**Evaluation**

**Assist the committee in devising measurable standards of quality for public libraries**

√ Measurable standards of quality for public libraries were devised in three tiers. The first tier, Essential, was field tested by 30 library directors.

**Evaluation**

**Inform the library community of the creation of such standards**

☒ The number of libraries applying for any QSAC level did not reach the desired level and has waned pointing to the need for more concentrated marketing and training.

The successful QSAC qualification of libraries attending QSAC Workshop is more than 40 percent which indicates that more libraries could qualify if they purposefully applied for qualification under direct guidance.

### **Evaluation**

**Monitor the certification of libraries qualifying for measurable standards of quality**

**Applying for QSAC certification is based on an honor system. There is no third party check. While data can be analyzed regarding class, operating funds, and region, no data exists regarding any improvements made by libraries in their quest for certification.**

**Certification Goals**

**The 2004-2005 Certification Goal of 100 libraries was not reached. Goals for subsequent years and goals for each tier of certification do not exist.**

### **Evaluation**

**Encourage libraries to use QSAC certification as a tool in leveraging support from their local governments**

**While written testimonials from individual libraries exist touting the value of the QSAC certification process, no data exists indicating that any libraries have used QSAC certification in leveraging support or increased funding.**

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**Section IV**

The outcomes of the initiatives funded by the Library of Michigan in support of the LSTA Goals include measurements found in the following measurement tools:

**Online Survey**- A scientifically valid survey instrument completed by a statistically significant sample of library directors which tracks a spectrum of outcomes from perceived LSTA goals of the Library of Michigan to the perceived patron awareness of MeL databases. (See Management Summary and Recommendations - Online Survey)

The data contained in this online survey may serve as baseline measures which may be tracked and re-measured at future dates. This will allow for the development of trendline data to determine progress of a series of metrics in support of the Library of Michigan goals and objectives as they relate to the professional library community.

**Community Telephone Survey**- A scientifically valid survey instrument completed by a statistically significant sample of library users which tracks a spectrum of patron outcomes from perceptions of a quality services improvement initiative (QSAC) to use of Inter-library loan (i.e. MeLCat) and/or their awareness and use of electronic databases (MeL) at their library. (See Management Summary and Recommendations - Community Telephone Survey)

The data contained in this community telephone survey may serve as a baseline measure which may be tracked and re-measured at future dates. This will allow for the development of trendline data to determine progress against any of a series of metrics related to the Library of Michigan goals and objectives as they relate to the patron of library services.

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**Section V-Lessons Learned**

Lessons learned for this evaluation include observations and suggestions regarding:

Strategy

Goals

Implementation of tactics in support of Goals

**Strategy**

**Observation:**

The strategic shift from a focus on competitive grants to the development and implementation of Statewide services was initially resisted by a significant portion of the Library community. However, the value-added benefit of the MeL databases and the development of a statewide catalog of materials (MeLCat) has become apparent and the largest majority of respondents in the various research studies conducted strongly support this strategic shift.

**Lesson Learned**

This strategic shift, though initially somewhat unpopular has proven to be an effective/efficient use of resources and is recommended. Library representatives now agree the “greater good” philosophy makes more sense, saves time and insures a benefit for all over the prior system of competitive grant writing.

**Lesson Learned**

There did not appear to be a coherent communications effort developed to “inform and persuade” the Library community regarding the rationale behind the reduction in competitive grants and the substitution of Statewide initiatives. (Some respondents in studies conducted were not fully aware the competitive grants were discontinued). Such a communications plan may help minimize confusion and insure Library management/trustees at least understand the changes in policy (whether they agree totally

with those changes or not is another matter.)

## **Goals**

### **Goal #1**

#### **Observation:**

The functional transition to MeL databases appears to have been accomplished smoothly with minimal problems for Library administrators. However, training on the databases, both functional and in terms of staff promotion of their use to the patron appears to have been limited in terms of scope and access. Further, marketing and promotion of the databases appears limited and awareness among the general public of the databases is not optimal. Library administrators do not see public promotion of the databases as part of their responsibility.

#### **Lesson Learned**

Training for resources such as the MeL databases may be provided on both a classroom and online basis to facilitate the broadest possible receipt of the information and the subsequent use of the assets (MeL databases) by Library staff.

#### **Lesson Learned**

Staff need training in not only the use of the databases but also in the introduction of the databases to patrons and the encouragement of the patrons in their use.

#### **Lesson Learned**

Patron access and use of the databases will require awareness building and demand stimulation efforts be initiated by the Library of Michigan. This awareness building may come in the form of direct advertising/promotion to the patron or in the provision of materials and expertise to the libraries for their implementation at the local level.

#### **Observation**

The development of the MeLCat statewide catalog and resource sharing system is seen as a positive step toward increased access and distribution of the "widest possible range of information". Where effectively implemented the program is seen as a substantial "value-added" service of the Library. The implementation of the program statewide, however, has taken more time and resources than anticipated and technical interface problems exist with some users. Capacity restrictions have limited the rate at which new users may be brought on. The initiative has the capability of requests being patron generated.

**Lesson Learned**

Consideration may be given to adopting a statewide software system compatible with the MeLCat system and providing subsidies or low interest loans for individual libraries to adopt this interface. This may facilitate Library-MeLCat system compatibility, reduce extra and redundant staff work challenges in this area and provide more efficient service delivery.

**Lesson Learned**

Patron generation offers the potential to reduce staff cost and improve efficiency and customer satisfaction increases. Providing marketing and communication support both at the library level and to the general public direct may allow for patron generated requests and demand stimulation allowing program success without significantly burdening library staffing (outside of fulfillment).

**Lesson Learned**

The difficulty in resolving technical interface issues and bringing on new libraries at an acceptable rate has the potential to negatively impact the credibility of the entire program. Consider re-allocating resources from other LSTA funded programs to bring MeLCat back on track.

**Lesson Learned**

A 20% fill rate improvement goal could not be verified due to a lack of data collected at the beginning of the program. Objective evaluation calls for the establishment of benchmarks to insure later trend data may be measured against a baseline.

**Lesson Learned**

Not all library staff appear fully trained on MeLCat. Additionally, some staff may not be adequately trained in promoting/use of the MeLCat system to stimulate demand/interest among patrons. Consider use of online training and adding training modules (live and online) for the purpose of demonstrating and promoting MeLCat to patrons.

**Goal #2****Observation**

Many of the benefits accruing to Goal #1 in the form of enhanced access



to information may be said to accrue to Goal #2 for under served libraries. This is especially true when barriers to use do not inhibit small libraries from taking advantage of these programs.

### **Lesson Learned**

The use of programs like MeLCat and the MeL databases can be a boon to resource and staff short libraries throughout the State and are recommended.

### **Observation**

Some small libraries and libraries in the UP are unable to obtain high speed Internet connections. This, in effect, inhibits them from being able to take advantage of programs like the MeL databases and MeLCat. Also, small libraries are disproportionately lacking in qualified technology support. Smaller libraries also frequently do not have enough staff to send to training for technical issues, database training, or new process and procedure training such as MeLCat.

### **Lesson Learned**

To the extent small libraries are inhibited from taking advantage of these programs it places them a greater disadvantage from other libraries, further distancing them from being competitive. Examples such as the lack of high speed Internet connectivity and too small a staff to send for training place these libraries at an extreme disadvantage. Establishing sub-goals for subsidizing high speed internet connection and providing online training help neutralize those disadvantages.

### **Observation**

The incorporation of two distinct outcomes in one large goal complicates achievement of the goal for the Library of Michigan and makes evaluation difficult and complicated.

### **Lesson Learned**

Consider separating the two outcomes contained in Goal #2 into separate goals. These may both be considered macro goals extending the list of Key Objectives to four, or the Library of Michigan may wish to incorporate one of these goals under a related objective (i.e. "equity of information access to...under served libraries" with Goal #1)

## **Goal #3**

### **Observation**

The definition of "leading edge" projects is somewhat broad and leads to

difficulties in achieving this objective given the perspective of a variety of interpretations of the term. Further, innovation could be construed to mean the application of current technology in unusual or different ways which could reflect the MeLCat environment.

### **Lesson Learned**

A definition of the term “leading edge” could mitigate against some levels of misinterpretation or at the least members of the library community using their own perspective of what this means to assess Library of Michigan efforts against this Goal.

### **Lesson Learned**

The definition of innovation may specifically be described in such a way as to enable both a more specific and an opportunity for the Library of Michigan to remain faithful to the Goal within the confines of the definition as provided (i.e. Innovation as the application of existing knowledge/protocols or technology to new or different applications resulting in new or modified services which continue to meet the evolving information and entertainment.)

## **Implementation of Tactics in Support of Goals**

### **Observation**

Overall, when considering MeL databases and MeLCat there is a focus on objective program content but minimal resources allocated to marketing, promotions or communications, both internally and externally. Library administrators agree with this approach but resent the lack of marketing support behind these initiatives.

### **Lesson Learned**

Communications/promotion and marketing are no longer optional in a complicated services environment where the end goal involves patron awareness, use and application of new and different programs or resources. Since it is clear individual libraries do not see the marketing or promotion of these services as their responsibility the promotion/marketing of any service provided by the Library of Michigan may need to have the promotion component bundled or otherwise provided with costs already factored in to the equation.

### **Observation**

The implementation of the MeLCat system is running into some technical snags.

### **Lesson Learned**

While technical snags in a Statewide initiative with hundreds of libraries with a variety of software systems is understandable options such as technical assistance teams or other technical assistance may prove helpful to minimize frustration and enhance the ability of libraries to become functional.

### **Observation**

MeL databases have been provided without any kind of time line or window of expiration. Some library administrators (especially academic library administrators) are seeing the databases as a permanent support (and reduction to their costs) and are adamant no new initiative take the place of the databases.

### **Lessons Learned**

The use of a “sunset” provision for support services like MeL databases would encourage libraries to begin seeking an independent source of funding. As it stands now libraries have every incentive to resist further change to this program.

### **Observation**

It would appear small libraries are less likely to adopt QSAC because of the limited staffing and resources available. Other libraries may be similarly unlikely to adopt QSAC because directors may be unable to convince their staff or trustees of the value of the program to the Library.

### **Lesson Learned**

The ability to subsidize very small libraries with some support to minimize barriers to their participation may be an important incentive to stimulate small library participation.

As with the other initiatives the self-contained or “bundled” marketing and promotion materials provided to libraries may assist both in marketing internally and externally.

### **Observation**

Many of the libraries implementing one or more of the three major goals: QSAC, MeL or MeLCat tend not to establish benchmark or baseline data and keep track of usage, statistics for requests or other fundamental data measures.

**Lesson Learned**

As part of the need to track usage, demand, requests, utilization and other performance metrics all libraries participating in LSTA programs may be asked to establish measurement tracks and collect data on specific performance metrics as part of the agreement wherein the library is the recipient of some service or benefit from the Library of Michigan.

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## Section VI: Evaluation Process

### A. Participants

Development of the RFP: Advisory Council members.

Data Collection & Interviews: Library of Michigan staff and contract staff.

Focus Groups: Senior administrative library staff from public and academic libraries throughout the state, primarily directors.

Brainstorming Sessions: Michigan Library Association conference session attendees. Session evaluations showed directors and front-line staff from public, academic, K-12, and special libraries and library cooperatives.

Consumer Phone Survey: Random survey of Michigan residents with library cards throughout the state.

Online Library Survey: Senior administrative library staff, such as directors, and front-line library staff, such as reference librarians, from various library types throughout the state.

### B. Evaluator, Methods & Time Table

#### Evaluator

The Library of Michigan put out a request for proposal (RFP# DHAL06-001) for the evaluation of the LSTA program. The WJ Schroer Company submitted the winning bid. The WJ Schroer Company bid was selected based on price, methodologies proposed and prior experience with the library community. The methodologies proposed by the WJ Schroer Company for focus groups and surveys looked explicitly to public libraries, academic and school libraries and staff using LSTA provided projects, which is appropriate for the Five-Year Plan goals' intended audience. Finally, the WJ Schroer Company had extensive experience with public libraries and library cooperatives throughout the state, which is important due to the statewide nature of the LSTA Five-Year plan projects.

#### Methods

The methods proposed and accepted included:

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1. A general review of the LSTA program files and interviews with LSTA staff.
2. An in-depth assessment of the two LSTA programs the Library of Michigan selected for sections III and IV of the evaluation.
3. Four focus groups around the state with library leaders
4. Two brainstorming sessions at the Michigan Library Association conference
5. A randomly selected consumer telephone survey.
6. An online survey of library staff from all library types and staff levels.

The in-depth analyses specifically reviewed project data and surveyed participating libraries as part of the focus groups and surveys for MeLCat and the Quality Service Audit Checklist (QSAC). The purpose of the analysis of MeLCat was to show whether the project has produced a significant advance in library service for section III of the evaluation. The purpose of the analysis of QSAC is to determine whether the project has produced progress in demonstrating the results of library service for section IV of the evaluation. Information on these projects may be found at <http://www.michigan.gov/mel> and at <http://www.michigan.gov/qsac>.

As a whole, these activities determined the extent to which LSTA project objectives were met and analyzed impact of the projects on quality of library services. The evaluation also worked with library stakeholder to examine how well the LSTA projects were administered, how well the LSTA process was managed and the future role of LSTA in Michigan

Time Table

May - June 2006	Data collection from LSTA staff.
July – October 2006	In-depth analyses of MeLCat and QSAC, design data surveys and arrange focus groups.
November 2006	Focus groups November 7 – Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti – SE corner of state November 8 – Grand Rapids – SW corner of state November 8 – Gaylord – Central upper Lower Peninsula November 9 – Marquette – Central Upper Peninsula Brainstorming sessions November 12 – Detroit, Michigan Library Association Conference
December 2006 – January 2007	Completion of phone and online survey questionnaires and data analysis.
February – March 2007	Completion of consumer phone and library online surveys, data analysis and final report on current five-year plan.

