

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Information Technology Report

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:
Report

ACTION REQUESTED BY:
None

CONTACT PERSON:
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DRAFT OF MOTION:
None

DATE: June 7, 2021

BACKGROUND:
Update on FY2021 and FY2022 Report on IT Resources and Major IT Goals

ATTACHMENTS:
None

FY2021 and FY2022 Report on IT Resources and Major IT Goals

June 7, 2021

Update on IT Resources as of June 7th

IT's current staff of seven is focused on keeping operations going and its project execution based on priority. Given resource constraints, the IT department is striving to decrease our technology debt. Replacing outdated technology will require investment, time, and additional resources. To address this, IT has requested additional investment dollars in FY2022 to hire a Chief Technology Officer and to fund project work related to the ALA pivot strategy. IT is also currently searching for a Systems Software Specialist to support project execution and will hire a temporary staff member in that capacity as a first effort did not yield viable permanent candidates. These resources are needed in order to meet the association's major goals for FY2021/FY2022 outlined below, including an effort to increase our security posture by implementing Multi-factor authentication in Microsoft O365 email and applications.

Major FY2021 IT Goals

Update on Goal 1: Upgrading Shibboleth (Single Sign-On software) to the latest version.

In order for the two main ala.org websites to be configured for https we needed a Shibboleth upgrade to be performed by our Shibboleth consultants. I'm happy to report we have an upgraded version running in our production environment and have successfully upgraded ALA Connect to use the upgraded version of the Shibboleth Single Sign-On software. We have had a few reports where members and staff could not log in and we're working through those issues as they arise.

Background Information:

Description: Upgrade Shibboleth Single Sign-On software to latest version

Deliverables:

- Remove blocker on turning https on the main ala.org website servers
- Work with Continuing Education vendor to add Single Sign-on
- Work with the Election vendor to add Single Sign-on
- Work with Booklist vendor to add Single Sign-on
- Remove a blocker from the iMIS upgrade project

Update on Goal 2: Install https on the main ala.org website servers.

The ALA IT Department is pleased to announce the release of full HTTPS support on www.ala.org. Achieving this goal required resolving an issue with the backend Drupal web server and the legacy Cold Fusion web server, and their links to the Shibboleth authentication system. This involved considerable coordinated effort between multiple consulting teams.

Background Information:

Description: Turn on https on the two main ala.org websites

Deliverables:

- Implement new caching software to support https
- Configure and test

Update on Goal 3: Monitor revenue and membership goals.

No further progress has been made on this goal. We are waiting on cross functional teams to be formed to help define the requirements for more dashboards to be created.

Background Information:

Description: Build dashboards to monitor the two major Association-wide goals in the Pivot Plan and associated key performance indicators.

Deliverables:

- Identify baseline dates and numbers
- Create dashboards to be able to monitor progress

Update on Goal 4: Assist with the new Continuing Education (CE) Learning Management/eCommerce System Implementations.

This project is currently underway, and we are waiting for the vendor's integration team to begin their work. The vendor is experiencing delays on their end for the start of this work due to prior commitments for other clients. The Learning Management/eCommerce System is scheduled to go live in mid-August 2021 due to extra time needed by the content creators for training and creating the actual content in the new system.

Background Information:

Description: Implement and integrate a new CE Learning Management/eCommerce System in conjunction with a cross functional team.

Deliverables:

- Assist with the selection of a new system
- Assist with the implementation
- Set up and test integrations
- Provide training

Update on Goal 5: Implement the eStore/eCommerce integration to the new fulfillment vendor.

The contract was signed at the end of April 2021. The integration work is currently underway. The eStore/eCommerce integration is scheduled to be complete on July 1, 2021.

Background Information:

Description: Work with the new fulfillment vendor to set up the integration to the eStore/eCommerce System

Deliverables:

- Fulfillment vendor is able to process orders from the eStore/eCommerce system

Update on Goal 6: Update Technology to Advance Membership Communications.

The migration of the blogs to the cloud is underway. Sympa is on schedule to be retired this summer. The Informz email marketing account merger has taken place and IT is working with the Informz stakeholders to use the newly merged account. The projects are scheduled to be completed in the summer/fall of 2021.

Background Information:

Description: Improve Membership communications by updating the technology

Deliverables:

- Complete Blogs Migration to the Cloud
- Complete the Sympa Migration to ALA Connect
- Complete Informz (Marketing Automation Service) email marketing account merger

Major FY2022 IT Goals

Goal 1: iMIS Upgrade

Description: Upgrade our iMIS Association Management System

Deliverables:

- Implement web-based access to the iMIS Association Management System
- Provide additional dashboards

Detailed Description:

iMIS is our current Association Management System (AMS) for our membership database which contains dues, donations, subscriptions, orders, and committee volunteer activity records. An iMIS upgrade in FY 2022 provides us with additional time to figure out the best long term AMS solution. It also provides us the opportunity to simplify our complex business rules (i.e., New Membership Dues Model implementation). The iMIS system is heavily integrated with approximately 25 other systems. These systems exist both in our internal and external infrastructure (cloudbased). Due to its size and complexity, replacing the AMS is a multi-year project requiring an assessment, RFP, vendor selection, and implementation.

Goal 2: Clean up data in the iMIS membership database

Description: Remove erroneous or redundant data from iMIS membership database

Deliverables:

- Identify attributes in the iMIS membership that need to be removed
- Examine records for inconsistencies
- Define and develop the merge routine
- Train MRS on how to merge duplicate records

Goal 3: Work with all revenue generating units to identify and establish new revenue products or services

Description: Create technology products to sell

Possible Deliverables to explore:

- Data trackers for programs to sell (work with PPO)
- OverDrive – build a program to stream the best programs
- Put content behind a pay wall – create channels for data streams going in and out.
- Track what libraries need and deliver paid subscriptions to data
- Place advertising on websites
- Repackage content to sell

Goal 4: Continue to monitor revenue and membership goals

Description: Build more dashboards to monitor the major Association-wide goals in the Pivot Plan

Deliverables:

- Identify baseline dates and numbers
- Create dashboards to be able to monitor progress

Goal 5: Adopt Data Center as a Service Design model

Description: Contract with a consulting firm to perform Data Center as a Service (DCaaS) design to prepare to move offsite data services to the cloud

Deliverables:

- Develop a plan to move all offsite data services to the cloud.

Detailed Description:

When we moved to the new headquarters office, we anticipated moving most of our infrastructure to the cloud. However, there was not enough time, resources, or money to move approximately 140 virtual servers and infrastructure to the cloud for the move. Instead, it was decided to reduce the footprint at the new headquarters office and contract with a co-location facility for approximately two years to house our internal infrastructure. This DCaaS design project in FY 2022 will lay out the plan to move the co-location services to the cloud as originally planned. Moving to the cloud will reduce the likelihood of network and server outages, will enable us to host our servers and network infrastructure offsite instead of paying for and maintaining our own, will provide 24/7/365 support without requiring costly overtime charges from consultants, will free up IT staff time for projects, and will allow staff to access the datacenter, view their dashboards, and run reports from anywhere at any time.

Goal 6: Website Strategy Consulting

Description: Contract with a consulting firm to explore our future Website Strategy

Deliverables:

- Develop a plan for future websites

Detailed Description:

Our support for our version of Drupal (our Web Content Management System) for the main ala.org website and Drupal commerce sites ends in November 2021, which is FY 2022 for ALA. These upgrades will buy us time to move or replace these applications going forward and are necessary to provide security updates so the systems will not be breached.

Our Content Management System (CMS) and Website Strategy Assessment in FY2022 will guide us in replacing or upgrading our main ala.org Drupal Web Content Management System to create the ability to organize content by topic with a focus on our external audience instead of organizing content by ALA's internal structure.

IT Operations 2015 to 2021 Overview: TrackIt Support Ticket Closes /Opens

Priority	FY 15 – 16	FY 16 – 17	FY 17 – 18	FY 18 – 19	*FY 19 – 20	**FY 20 – 21	Total
1 – Urgent	416/429	509/528	433/453	476/524	412/418	324/338	2570/2690 (96%)
2 – High	754/779	725/761	626/664	564/604	1138/1171	1045/1137	4852/5116 (95%)
3 – Medium	588/623	621/664	487/520	504/574	518/547	269/325	2987/3253 (92%)
4 – Low	350/363	385/411	305/331	255/305	131/139	73/87	1499/1636 (92%)
Service Requests & Queries	38/42	48/51	41/47	18/21	31/31	18/21	194/213 (91%)
(Priority Not Entered)	995/1031	638/666	571/619	515/572	2/2	3/3	2724/2893 (94%)
Total	3141/3267 (96%)	2926/3081 (94%)	2463/2634 (93%)	2332/2600 (89%)	2232/2308 (96%)	1732/1911 (90%)	14826/15801 (93%)

*Note in 2019 we upgraded the TrackIT System which nearly eliminated priority not entered. The increase in high priority ticket activity was due to the move.

**In 2020-2021 the numbers are lower because during the pandemic staff started working remotely and reporting issues through Microsoft Teams and email, also there were five furlough weeks, and a reduction in staff overall.