Centralized Bibliographic Services Proposal

2021 MORE Budget planning

Patron access to MORE's shared resources across 50 libraries' collections depends on those resources being findable. A cornerstone of findability is the bibliographic record: the electronic description of a book, movie, album, toy, game, sporting equipment, or any other library resource.

It's important for findability that each bibliographic record accurately and completely describes a library resource. It's equally important that all of these descriptions work in concert, so that relationships among resources become apparent and predictable. This requires consistent adherence to cataloging standards.

While MORE's Cataloging Certification option aims to help library staff consistently adhere to standards, the task has proven unmanageable. The ongoing need for IFLS staff to train, check, re-train, correct, and monitor the bibliographic work of certified catalogers at MORE-member libraries is beyond the current capacity of IFLS staff, and does not make the best use of either IFLS staff or MORE-member library staff time.

Significant efficiencies can be gained by IFLS staff taking more direct charge of database quality control: supplying accurate and complete bibliographic records with an eye toward the database as a whole. For the 2021 MORE budget, consider adding funds for Database Quality Control for this purpose. The estimated cost to be added to the MORE budget is $112,000.

How would this affect my library?

Technical services responsibilities would change slightly, but processes would largely remain the same.

- MORE-member libraries[1] would continue to:
    - Order materials
    - Receive and unpack materials
    - Prepare materials for circulation
    - Add item records to bibliographic/title records in the MORE database
    - Maintain item records
- MORE-member libraries[2] would no longer:
    - Find bibliographic records outside the MORE database
    - Edit and maintain bibliographic records

Current CABS participants would no longer pay for that service separately; Shared Services participants would continue to pay for receiving and processing services only.

Is it a problem if we don't have "consistent adherence to standards"?

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[1] Except IFLS Shared Services participants, which would continue ordering materials only
[2] Except some select libraries with professional technical services departments

Yes, because it limits findability. If patron access is limited to locating a physical item on the shelf, the resource is not being fully-utilized, and expenditures on materials and discovery software are not being maximized.

What kind of problems, specifically?

- **Duplicate records:** more than one record describing the same title causes patron confusion, delays in holds being filled, and additional staff time to ensure that copies match title records.
- **Incomplete data:** missing information means titles are left out of search results, other catalogers can't determine whether or not the record describes the item they have, and records provide insufficient information for patrons to determine if a resource meets their needs.
- **Inaccurate data:** searches produce unhelpful results that erode patron confidence in library services.