

MORE Administrator's Report

May 2025 – MORE Directors Council

MORE ILS Evaluation

MORE is in the midst of evaluating the staff-facing software in use by all libraries in the consortium. Since 2012, MORE has used Sierra, an ILS (integrated library system) from vendor Innovative. Other ILS products are available for library consortia, including in the state of Wisconsin. An ILS Task Force made up of library staff, library directors, and IFLS staff has been meeting regularly. The group has:

- Explored the current ILS landscape
- Conducted a survey on Sierra among library staff and director
- Distributed requests for information and received responses from 3 companies about 4 ILS products: ByWater Solutions (Koha), SirsiDynix (Symphony), and Innovative, a Clarivate company (Sierra and Polaris)

Next, the Task Force will analyze RFI responses, organize product demos, evaluate products, and ultimately make a recommendation about MORE's ILS use in the future to MORE Directors Council by this fall.

Task Force members have dedicated significant time and expertise to this project already, and staff and directors across MORE provided valuable input via the Sierra survey. Many thanks to all!

MORE Database Updates

After 7 years with IFLS and many more with several school and public libraries in the area, MORE Database Specialist Bonnie Clausen is retiring at the end of the month. We are so appreciative of Bonnie's expertise, diligence, and warmth, and we wish her the best in retirement!

Jodi Kiffmeyer has been hired as the new part-time MORE Database Specialist. Jodi is currently a staff member at Chippewa Falls Public Library, and has also worked at Rice Lake Public Library and the Chippewa Valley Museum in Eau Claire.

Innovative Users Group Conference

In April, MORE staff attended the Innovative Users Group (IUG) Conference in Chicago, but missed the PLA Conference in Minneapolis due to icy roads.

As expected, MORE's ILS Evaluation project informed a good portion of my information-gathering and meetings with vendors at IUG. I attended several sessions focused on the Polaris ILS, another ILS product from our Sierra vendor, Innovative. (Polaris is under consideration by the ILS Evaluation Task Force as a potential alternative to Sierra.) I came away with a good impression of the Polaris development and support team, and users seem just as willing to collaborate and share ideas as Sierra users have been. I also attended sessions where ILS migrations and evaluation processes were discussed. It was particularly enlightening to hear from consortia using Sierra but considering (or recently considering) an ILS change.

My IFLS colleagues Deb Faulhaber, MORE Database Manager, Jackee Johnson, MORE Support Specialist, and Julia Reid, MORE Database Specialist also attended IUG:

Deb Faulhaber, MORE Database Manager

I was thrilled to join my IFLS and L.E.P.M.P.L. colleagues traveling to Chicago for the Innovative Users Group conference, April 12th – 15th, 2026. On the train we bumped into librarians from the Northern Waters and Wisconsin Valley Library systems. Connecting with fellow Wisconsin ILS and cataloging counterparts has become a beneficial aspect of attending conferences. Although we “see” them at virtual meetings for the Statewide Bibliographic Standards committee, it’s a pleasure to speak to them in real time. We have shared goals and rely on the partnership we have created working on the statewide [wicatalog](#) project. Teamwork is a huge part of how MORE’s Database Maintenance team works and to partner with the larger statewide group has been invaluable. Attending the birds of a feather lunch sponsored by WILIUG, the Wisconsin-Illinois Innovative Users Group, was a fun time that allowed us to meet & chat with librarians from northern Illinois libraries.

Pre-conference was Sierra Academy: Technical Services. This was an all-day learning experience aimed at workflows in Sierra. It was helpful to see alternative procedures and sometimes see improvements we could in our own approaches. It was supposed to include a bit more information on serials, but cataloging was the main topic when we ran out of time.

One of Innovative’s legendary employees, Martha Rice Sanders, was working at her last IUG conference before retiring this year. I attended two of Martha’s sessions, both on authorities. I also attend other cataloging and collection maintenance sessions. The Cataloging and Consortia forums are full of information and different viewpoints on how other consortia do similar things to MORE.

I felt fortunate to spend time interacting with all the interesting librarians who attended and presented topics.

Jackee Johnson, MORE Support Specialist

The Innovative Users Group Conference in Chicago was a great mix of learning, connecting, and a little bit of fun along the way.

The conference started off with Sierra Academy Tech Services sessions, followed by updates on product roadmaps (Vega and Sierra) that gave a helpful look at what’s coming next. The forums—covering Cataloging, Acquisitions, Consortia, and System Administration—were especially valuable. It’s always energizing to hear how colleagues across the country are tackling similar challenges, sharing tips, and asking the same big questions.

A few standout sessions included “Streamlining Technical Services Workflows,” which focused on using data to rethink both physical spaces and processes, and a quick but useful session on switching acquisitions vendors—timely insights, especially with all the changes after Baker & Taylor’s closure.

Beyond sessions, the Wisconsin/Illinois IUG Lunch was a highlight—great conversations and a chance to connect with familiar faces from around the state. The conference also added some fun with a “space cats” treasure hunt throughout the event.

Travel was part of the adventure too—we drove to Tomah and hopped on Amtrak to Chicago, which made getting into the city much less stressful. And on our last day, we had a surprise reunion, spotting former IFLS staff member Kathy Setter who came for a conference dinner.

All in all, a productive and enjoyable few days!

Julia Reid, MORE Database Specialist

The IUG conference was an inspiring week of learning and connecting that kicked off with a bootcamp style dive into Sierra at the *Technical Service Academy: A deep look on cataloging and serials workflows skills refresher & accelerator*. This day-long session provided tips and tricks to optimize our use of Sierra for cataloging, as well as modifications we can make to improve overall workflows for database maintenance tasks.

Similarly, the Demystifying Sierra Authority Control session built upon the information learned during the pre-conference training by focusing on how we can best utilize Sierra Headings Reports to provide consistency and accuracy in our records and improve our patrons' experiences with the catalog. I enjoyed learning from seasoned experts at Innovative during such sessions, as well as from our colleagues at sessions like the Cataloging Forum. This open forum sparked discussion on a variety of timely topics, such as how AI generated works impact local cataloging and collection management policies.

We also fostered connections with our colleagues from around the country at events like the Birds of a Feather luncheon for the Wisconsin Illinois Innovative Group (WIILUG); it was rewarding to finally meet in person folks that I had attended virtual meetings with over the past year. I also appreciated meeting with our Sierra representatives to discuss the ILS evaluation project currently underway.