NEW AUTOMATION SYSTEM
FOR THE
WARREN COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE LIBRARY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Warren County Community College Library is open not only the students of Warren County Community College, but also to anyone who may reside within the county. Despite WCCC library’s best efforts to serve the college and the county, it is greatly limited by its current automation system, Bibliomondo.

The purpose of this project is to change and upgrade the automation system at Warren County Community College Library in order to better serve instructors, students, and patrons. The new automation system would be available from off campus, would be flexible to fit the college’s growing needs, and would offer a more functional Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC).

SETTING

The Warren County Community College

Warren County Community College (WCCC) is a small, rural college that serves Warren County in Northwestern New Jersey. Warren County has a population of approximately 102,437 people (New Jersey by County), with a steady growth increase.

According to WCCC’s Strategic Plan 2005-2008:

During the previous twenty years, the population of Warren County increased by 26%; from 1990 to 2000 the population increased by 15%. According to the United States Census and Claritas, Inc., a national market research firm, the County’s population is projected to increase an additional 32% over the next sixteen years, bringing the County population to a total of 141,057. (Strategic Plan 2005-2008)

First established in 1981, the Warren County Community College “serves approximately 1,700 full-time and part-time students, in addition to students in non-credit programs and courses” (About Us). As the population of the county increases and
changes occur in demographics, the student body reflects this and increases every year, straining the existing resources of the college.

Additionally, technology is also changing on a constant basis, requiring that the library be able to support the changing technology needs and expectations of all users, but especially the institution’s core users, the students and faculty.

**Library Mission and Programs**

The library’s mission is centered on supporting the goals and objectives of Warren County Community College, focusing on academic programs and curriculum of WCCC, both on campus and at a distance, and the teaching methods of the faculty. To meet this mission, the library makes a concentrated effort to provide materials that will supplement the course offerings of WCCC. There is an emphasis placed on developing the library’s online collection, “in response both to the growing availability of electronic information and to students’ and faculty members’ increased comfort with and knowledge of internet-based resources” (*2008 Self-Study Report*).

The library performs all the customary services that an academic library should, including bibliographic instruction, inter-library loan program, general reference services, and basic circulation duties. In addition to this, the library is also responsible for providing AV equipment for instructors and trouble-shooting computer technology.

**Library Facilities**

The WCCC library is open six days a week, for a totally of 72 hours. The library contains approximately 30,000 books, 150 print periodicals, 150 tapes/CDs, 1,000 Videos/DVDs, and over 40 subscription databases. While the library contains all the usual collections, such as main, reference, and reserve, it also houses special collections.
In 2006, WCCC library, ‘in partnership with New York’s Foundation Center…was awarded Cooperating Collection status and has a special collection of grant writing materials for organizations and individuals, as well as access to the Foundation Center’s electronic databases” (2008 Self-Study Report). Additionally, the library also houses a Small Business Center Collection, the Center for Teaching Excellence in Higher Education Collection, and a juvenile collection to support PreK-12 teacher training.

The library also functions as the main computer lab for the school, with over 20 computer workstations that are available for student and public use.

**Library Staff**

The WCCC library has 6 employees – the library director, a full-time reference librarian, a part-time reference librarian, and three part-time circulation assistants. The library usually has 1-3 work study students that also offer additional support.

**STATEMENT OF NEED**

The library’s current online catalog is BiblioMondo’s Portfolio. This system is used to locate all physical materials owned by the library. A first generation online catalog, BiblioMondo was procured by the library over five years ago. While this catalog is functional, it is not the ideal fit for the ever growing and changing needs of the WCCC library. WCCC’s library requires a new automation system that is in keeping with current technology and best practices for academic libraries, needed to satisfy the needs of the patrons and students at WCCC.

One of the greatest issues with BiblioMondo is a lack of support for the system, which is based in Montreal, Canada. Communication with BiblioMondo’s technical
support has been difficult and time consuming because the representatives are native French speakers and only have minimal command of English.

Adding to the weakness of the system, there is no off-campus access to the library’s catalog. Off campus access was supposed to have been available in 2002, but has yet to be implemented. The college’s IT department has tested the ILS and has found that BiblioMondo lacks sufficient security, therefore IT will not allow it to be accessible off campus.

Finally, the OPAC system that comes with Portfolio is not very user-friendly. It only allows students and patrons to perform simple searches, not allowing advanced search options, and is often confusing and hard to understand.

Clearly a solution is needed to meet campus infrastructure needs. Lack of technical support, a system which lacks security and robustness, and a diverse and complex user population equals to a perfect storm of infrastructure problems for the library.

**PROPOSED SOLUTION**

**Purpose**

In order to accommodate the growing needs of the WCCC library, as well as to fix the current issues that the library is having with its OPAC system, it would be prudent to purchase a new OPAC. This OPAC would have to be something that is flexible and dynamic, able to grow and change with the library itself. The new OPAC would also have to satisfy the WCCC IT department so that the college’s students and other patrons can have off campus access.
After much research, LibLime’s KohaZOOM appears to be a well suited solution. One of the key features of KohaZOOM is that it has both web and phone-based support. Additionally, it is hosted off site, eliminating the security issues that WCCC’s Library currently has, allowing the OPAC to be available off-campus from any computer anywhere. Finally, KohaZOOM has an advanced search engine that makes library’s records fully searchable and “allows access to them through exact Boolean search expressions and relevance-ranked free-text queries” (KohaZoom Hosted Service).

Product

Koha began when “the Horowhenua Library Trust, a New Zealand consortium, was in need of a new automation system” (Breeding). The result of this need was that they reviewed the existing automation systems and found them all lacking, unable to provide what they needed, deciding to contract a company to create a Web-based automation system for them. In 2007, Koha was acquired by LibLime, becoming one of LibLime’s primary ILS platforms. (Dalziel) LibLime is “an Integrated Library Systems (ILS) systems provider” that “provides service for open source ILSs, rather than only providing support for their own proprietary ILS” (Dalziel).

What is ideal about LibLime’s KohaZOOM is that it uses open source software, which is a flexible software that allows its users to customize it to their needs. “The interface is customizable and can be made to match a library’s existing web design” (Dalziel). As a library’s needs change, so too can that library’s use of KohaZOOM.

Additionally, Koha has a “high-performance indexing and retrieval engine” which will allow WCCC Library users to perform better searches on the OPAC. Koha, as an
ILS system, has a “robust and usable OPAC interface. The importance of interface is hard to overestimate: for many library users, the OPAC is the library” (Dalziel).

**People**

All aspects of this project can be done with the existing library staff, with the help of LibLime’s consultants. Support of this set up is included with the price of the Start Up Service Package.

**Placement**

Once KohaZOOM is implemented at WCCC Library, the OPAC will be available to anyone who wishes to search it from any internet connected computer. Back office functions including technical processing, cataloging, and database management will be supported by the library through the ILS staff modules, all available from computers on campus.

**BUDGET**

**Budget Proposal Request**

Currently, the library pays $15,000 per year for BiblioMondo. For the first year of KohaZOOM, the WCCC Library would purchase the Start Up Service Package, which is $34,233. After the first year, it will only cost $9,536. *(KohaZoom Hosted Service)*

WCCC is seeking a grant to pay the initial difference of $19,233.

**CONCLUSION**

Due to the limitations of the current automation system, Warren County Community College Library is seeking a new system that will help to fit the growing
population at the college. After researching the available options, LibLime’s KohaZoom appears to be what the college needs, offering the security, support, search options and functionality of a 21st century ILS.
Bibliography


