Title
NGTS (Next Generation Technical Services) Management Team Final Report

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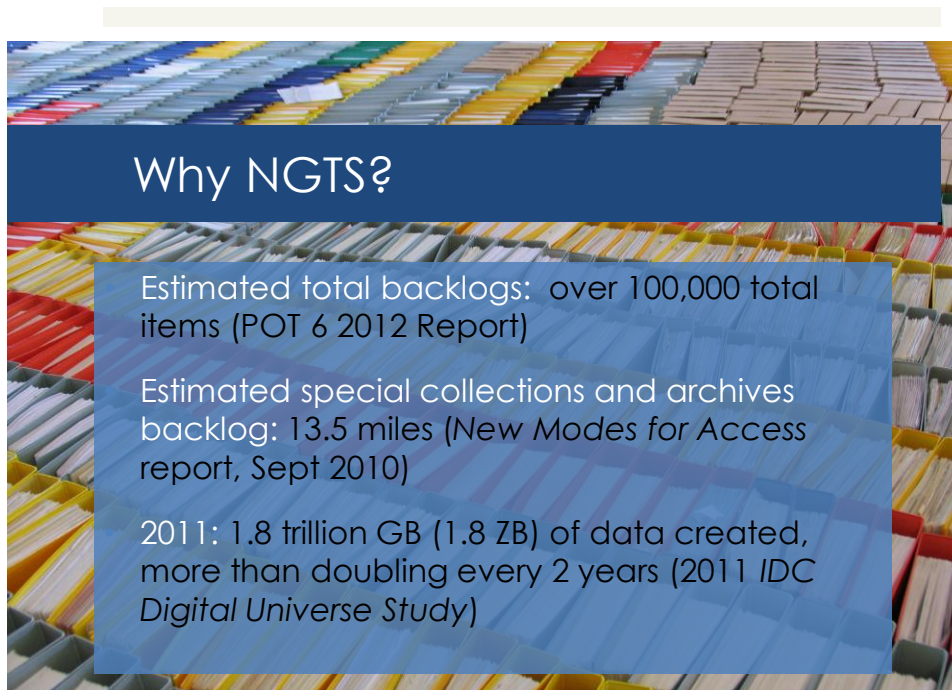
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NGTS Management Team Final Report

August 2013

Background:

The goal of the Next-Generation Technical Services (NGTS) initiative was "to move Technical Services operations to the network level and to pursue a transformative approach to the 'backend' infrastructure needed to support the user discovery experience."

In the first phase of NGTS (NGTS1, August 2009 - February 2010), task groups were charged with rethinking Technical Services operations so that they better support the full range of UC collections. The NGTS 1 reports made recommendations for more efficiently and effectively collaborating on the management of "commonly held" resources (i.e., resources held by several of the campuses), and surveyed the range of Technical Services support for less commonly held resources: non-Roman language materials, special collections, UC scholarship, and born-digital materials.

Subsequently, in March 2010, Phase 2 (NGTS2) task groups were charged with building upon the analysis and recommendations made by the NGTS1 task groups. Three NGTS2 task groups were charged with making recommendations to address the following critical issues in order to improve the library user experience:

- Achieve efficiencies systemwide by rethinking the tools, cataloging practices, organizational structures, HR support, and financial infrastructure needed to work at the network level with common, enterprise resources;
- and, thus, free up resources for all the campus libraries to focus on the digital, the special collections, and languages that make our libraries valued and valuable.

The Final Reports from the three NGTS2 groups were reviewed by the Council of University Librarians (CoUL), the Systemwide Operations and Planning Advisory Group (SOPAG), and the All-Campus Groups (ACGs) to prioritize the many recommendations.

In December 2010, CoUL identified the High Priority recommendations for UC to pursue:

1. Move to a deposit account model to reduce the number of recharges processed by CDL Acquisitions and the campuses and streamline the process
2. Implement the HOTS systemwide Shelf-Ready recommendations.
3. Implement a "good enough" record standard for all of UC.
4. Expand and adjust the Shared Cataloging Program.
5. Develop a systemwide model for collection services staffing and expertise.
6. Implement efficient "More Product, Less Process" (MPLP) tactics for processing archival and manuscript collections.
7. Support streamlined processing workflows and reuse descriptive data with systemwide use of the Archivists' Toolkit.
8. Systematically and efficiently digitize high-use, high-priority collections for access to UC primary resources.
9. Implement a coordinated, systemwide solution for creating and managing digital objects.
10. Using the University of California Curation Center (UC3) micro-services as the foundation, develop and implement infrastructure to manage the unique digital assets created or purchased by the UC system.

NGTS Management Team (NGTSMT) and the Power of Three groups (POTS)

In early 2011, SOPAG implemented a new structure in order to investigate, plan for, and achieve the high priority recommendations. The NGTS Management Team (NGTSMT) was charged by SOPAG to coordinate the implementation processes associated with the medium- and high-priority recommendations selected by CoUL. The Team provided overall management of the Power of Three groups (POTs) and approved recommendations from the POTs and forward to SOPAG. The Team established both overall timelines and timelines for initiating and sequencing individual POT activities and prioritized the work of POT groups in consultation with SOPAG. A Project Manager provided overall direction and communication with the project managers assigned to each POT. A Communications Manager coordinated the dissemination of

communications about the NGTS Implementation and managed ongoing feedback and comment avenues.

The Power of Three (POT) working group framework was established by SOPAG for NGTS implementation as a departure from the past practice of forming systemwide task groups with representatives from every campus and CDL. Instead, POTs were envisioned to be nimble groups comprised of experts from the UC Libraries that would consult broadly in formulating and assessing actions and policies. These working groups were also empowered to charge "lightning teams" with specific, well-defined tasks that would assist in the completion of POT deliverables.

1. POTs were small
2. Lightning Teams, relatively lightweight
3. Widespread involvement and distribution (over 140 total from all campuses and CDL)
4. Project Managers (experienced) and Project Analysts
5. Communications role

The high priority recommendations were grouped into four broad areas to focus on the projects and infrastructure needed to transform the technical services that support the 21st Century UC Libraries Collection(s):

1. Cooperative Collection Development
Develop a system-wide view of collections that would allow libraries to develop richer collections and to leverage selector expertise. Consider and propose actions that balance increased efficiencies of centralized collection development with more diverse multi-campus collection development.
Transform Collection Development Practices = POT 7

Collaborative Collection Development

POT 7 - Develop a system-wide view of collections and transform collection development practices

TASK	ACCOMPLISHED
Recommend strategies for collecting traditional & non-traditional digital collections system-wide & multi-campus	Shared print agreements and digitization projects inventoried and documented 2012
Redefine the roles and responsibilities of UC bibliographers	80 page report Spring 2013 under review

2. Collaborative Technical Services

Develop the standards, policies, and practices (addressing technical issues, human resources, and other factors) that will move UC libraries toward integrated technical services expertise and operations.

Transform Cataloging Practices = POT 2

Collaborative Technical Services

POT 2 – Transform Cataloging Practice

TASK	ACCOMPLISHED
Implement consortial shelf-ready program	Assessment report submitted, in pilot testing Spring/Summer 2013
Define UC Cataloging Record Standards	Standards established and serving as basis for collaborative cataloging work among campuses

Maximize effectiveness of Shared Cataloging Program = POT 5

Collaborative Technical Services

POT 5 – Maximize the Effectiveness of Shared Cataloging

TASK	ACCOMPLISHED
Assess SCP record distribution	Completed, confirmed value of Shared Cataloging. Now a pilot to extend to include contributions from other campus(es)
Evaluate SCP decision-making structure and priorities	Recommendations adopted and implemented by Joint Steering Committee

Develop system-wide Collections Services staffing = POT 6

Collaborative Technical Services

POT 6 - Develop system-wide collections services staffing

TASK	ACCOMPLISHED
Existing shared staffing agreements and projects	Inventoried and new models recommended
Existing and needed tools in support of TS operations	Inventoried and collaborative acquisitions now, i.e., Catalogers Desktop
Eliminate current backlogs	Backlogs inventoried. Audio CD's now in process. Hawthorne effect for CJK?
Identify models for shared collection support services with POT 7	These will be taken up in new UC Advisory Structure 2013

3. Collaborative Digital Initiatives
Develop policies and practices and implement the technology infrastructure to provide for collaborative UC digital services.
Build the system-wide infrastructure for digital collections = POT 1

Collaborative Digital Initiatives

POT 1 – Build the system-wide infrastructure to support digitized and born-digital collections

TASK	ACCOMPLISHED
Submit DAMS requirements	Defined
Investigate DAMS software products: build vs acquire	DAMS Development underway based on POT 1 LT reports

Accelerate processing of archival and manuscript collections = POT 3

Collaborative Digital Initiatives

POT 3 – Accelerate processing of archival and manuscript collections

TASK	ACCOMPLISHED
Deploy Archivists' Toolkit system-wide	Completed - Adopted by HOSC, to be continued as CKG
Define minimal collection record specification	Established and included in *UC Bibliographic Standards for Cooperative, Vendor, and Campus Backlog Cataloging*, 2012
Implement More Product Less Process practices	Successfully implemented by UCI. Documented in *Guidelines for Efficient Archival Processing in the University of California Libraries*. 2012

4. Financial and Technical infrastructure
Develop a fiscal framework for system-wide collaboration. Implement an integrated technical infrastructure to facilitate these collaborations.
Simplify the recharge process = POT 4

Financial and Technical Infrastructure of Collaboration

POT 4 – Simplify the recharge process

TASK	ACCOMPLISHED
Deposit account system	Implemented improvements in simplifying the recharge process for acquisition of shared resources under ongoing assessment
Library Financial Data Best Practices	Adopted and in effect
SPOT 2 – Develop a stable funding model for system-wide work	Funding models for different collaborative scenarios identified and in process of adoption
SPOT 3 – Monitor national developments in ERMS, Databases of Record, ILS	Charge in process to assess campus interest and conduct updated environmental scan

Overall Accomplishments

1. Learned how to be smarter about identifying what we CAN do effectively together
2. Gained knowledge of operations, staffing, workflow at all of the campuses through inventories, surveys, interviews
3. Built a network of cross campus and often cross functional relationships that have enabled the UC Libraries, individually and collectively, to redefine what Technical Services now is.
4. Broadened the scope of technical services to include support for all types of collections and resources.
5. Process improvements for systemwide projects:

   - Developed and refined a set of best practices as well as project management templates and tools for consistent system-wide project management and oversight. These have formed the basis for portfolio management under the new advisory structure.
   - Created and implemented a mechanism for tracking project assets during the projects. This has ensured that the large amount information gathered during the initiative will outlive the short lifespan of the working groups.

Obstacles/Challenges:

1. Lack of common technical infrastructure and overall willingness to develop or build one.
2. Lack of common financial infrastructure.

3. Lack of enough local incentives to collaborate vs continue to work at campus level.
4. Budget and staff reductions that affected participation and limited travel for face to face meetings.
5. Staff involvement due to staff reductions on campuses.
6. Key stakeholders in current processes were asked to serve as change agents– but some were especially resistant to this role.
7. Limitations of the System in which we work, need to balance local priorities with what we can do collaboratively.
8. Changes in libraries' leadership during the various phases of NGTS.

Evolving Outcomes

- Processes and structural definitions for collaboration
- Understanding, application of project management practices
- Expanding upon collaborative models as well as commons standards and practices
- Gained knowledge of operations, staffing, workflow at all of the campuses through inventories, surveys, interviews → Culture shift
- Broadened the scope of technical services to include support for all types of collections and resources.
- Process improvements for systemwide projects
  - Best practices
  - Project management templates and tools
  - Mechanism for tracking project assets during the projects.

Pilot-projects and Continuing Issues to Transition into the New UL Advisory Structure

The experience and knowledge gained in implementing the Next-Generation Technical Services initiative significantly informed the modification of the UC Libraries' advisory structure. The new structure has been designed to support the strategic planning, development, implementation, operations, and continuous improvement of shared library services and collaborative activities. Oversight and assessment of projects initiated under the NGTS implementation to pilot and implement shared collection management services will be transitioned to Strategic Action Groups within the new advisory structure:

1. Implementation of the UC Digital Library Collection (UCDLC) digital asset management system and services, led by CDL, will be included in the portfolio of Strategic Action Group (SAG) 2: Access, Discovery & Infrastructure.

2. Investigation of a consortial shelf-ready contract, led by UC Riverside, will be included in the portfolio of Strategic Action Group (SAG) 3: Collection Building & Management.
3. Cooperative cataloging of audio CDs, led by UC San Diego, will be included in the portfolio of Strategic Action Group (SAG) 3: Collection Building & Management.
4. Expanded UC shared cataloging of electronic resources, led by UC Irvine, will be included in the portfolio of Strategic Action Group (SAG) 3: Collection Building & Management.

The proposal for a financial model and process to support UC Libraries' collaboration was submitted to the Council of University Librarians in April 2012 for action and implementation.

POT 7's reports on redefining collection development and the role of the bibliographer within UC libraries are part of a longer range process. Recommendations and next steps will be taken up by SAG 3.

CoUL has developed a charge for investigation of the feasibility a shared next-generation ILS or Resource Management System. SAG 3 has been assigned to launch a project team with this charge as a priority item.

Two other pilots were proposed under NGTS, but did not gain sufficient commitment from the campuses in order to be launched. Assessment of the implementation of efficient archival processing guidelines and cooperative cataloging to eliminate backlogs for Chinese materials have been forwarded to SAG 3 for further consideration.

Lessons Learned & Questions

- Sufficient planning early on is often key to a successful shared service
- Timely communication keeps everyone on the same page and helps clarify reporting mechanisms
- Stable funding is necessary to the viability of any shared service
- Commitment and support of library administrators
- Changing culture takes time... and patience
- Have we identified the strengths or traits and capacities we want to build or retain as individual campuses, and which we see exchanging as part of collaborating as a system?
- What are the traits or capacities—and related resources--we will deliberately let go, in order to advance and grow as a system? On the other hand, when is retaining competition between campuses healthy and of long-term benefit to the University of California as a whole?
- Could we have started sooner with concrete pilot projects before doing comprehensive information gathering and recommendations? On the other hand, did the initiative need to become "big enough" and establish sufficient traction/weight to garner individuals' commitment of time and effort?

As the UC Libraries look ahead to strengthened collaboration and shared priorities supported by a new advisory structure, the implementation of common, reliable, and effective technical and financial processes and infrastructure continue to be critical for success.

As individual project teams and the NGTS management team have found, successful inter-institutional collaboration requires a substantial overlay of effort and coordination as well as a strong foundation of commitment.

Individually, the UC Libraries will need to continue to identify and define our strengths, traits, and capacities, and affirm our commitments in relation to the system as a whole. Together, the UC Libraries must continue to advance initiatives and activities that will be of mutual benefit, and of greatest benefit to our users.