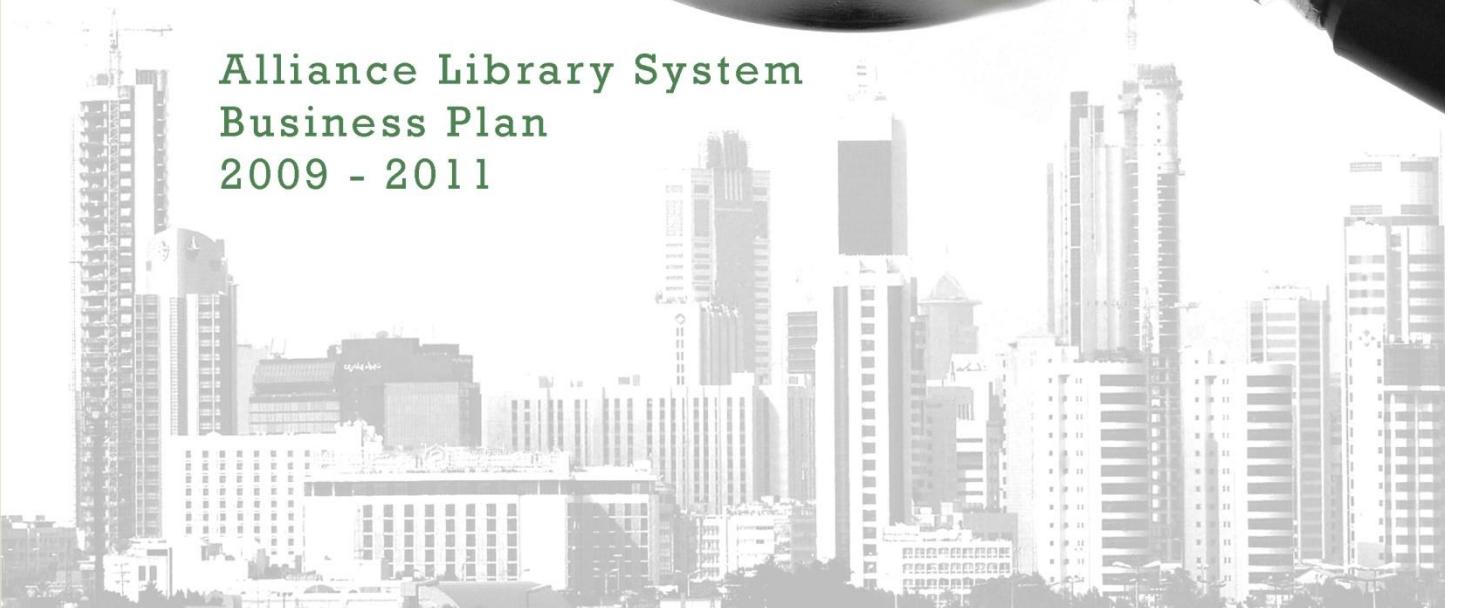


# Learning, Leadership and Cooperation: ALS Delivers!



Alliance Library System  
Business Plan  
2009 - 2011





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Alliance Library System  
Business Plan  
2009 -2011

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**Learning, Leadership  
and Cooperation: ALS Delivers!**  
Alliance Library System  
Business Plan 2009 – 2011

## 1. Introduction and Executive Summary

The Alliance Library System (ALS) Board of Directors is pleased to present **Learning, Leadership and Cooperation: ALS Delivers!** - ALS business plan for 2009 – 2011. This business plan is all about people and delivering great library service to them.

ALS' first business plan, "Strategic Pathways to Excellence," was developed in 1996 at a cost of \$28,025. It was a visionary document that outlined ALS' first mission, desired future, system values and role, as well as key objective and strategic pathways. The second plan, "ALS Strategic Plan," developed in 2002 at a cost of \$29,508, was similar in content to the first plan but more general in its key objectives and pathways. ALS' third business plan, **Making a Difference 2006 – 2008**, at a cost of \$10,500, included a restatement of the ALS vision, mission and values, plus yearly action plans and measurements in two key areas:

1. Enhancing member services
2. Strengthening organizational performance.

The fourth ALS' business plan for 2009 – 2011 is called **Learning, Leadership and Cooperation: ALS Delivers!** and at a cost of \$4,800, builds upon the previous plan with annual themes and specific goals for the next three years.



## 2. Alliance Library System

The Alliance Library System (ALS) is among the top multitype library systems in North America. Since its inception in July 1994, ALS has been known for its cooperative spirit, innovative programs and attention to excellent customer service. The Alliance currently serves 252 school, public, academic and special libraries in central Illinois. What makes the Alliance unique is its commitment to innovation, support of virtual librarianship, development of alternate revenue sources, dynamic website, Trends Report and the Consultants Certification Program.



ALS has a 13 member elected board of directors who are responsible for the delivery of library services under the Illinois Library System Act. They are entrusted with the responsibility of setting and overseeing policies, planning, funding, personnel and advocacy. The implementation of the policies is the responsibility of the Executive Director who works with both the Advisory Council and the Resource Sharing Alliance Users Group. Alliance is also responsible for supervision of the Mid-Illinois Talking Book Center (MITBC).

The senior management of ALS is composed of five Directors reporting to the Executive Director. As a member of the Management Team, each Director has a specific area of responsibility: Information Technologies (including RSA); Consulting and Continuing Education; Finance, Facilities and Human Resources; Innovation; and the Mid-Illinois Talking Book Center (MITBC).

The Alliance Library System has four primary responsibilities:

1. Delivery of library materials
2. Resource Sharing (RSA, bibliographic access, interlibrary loan, reciprocal access and automation)
3. Continuing Education
4. Library Development (Consulting)



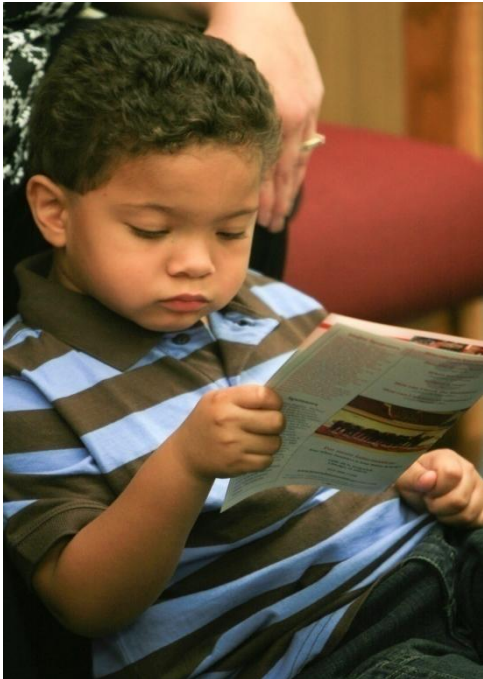
Alliance is home to the Resource Sharing Alliance (RSA) which provides automation services to its 198 member libraries and aggregates their resources to allow patrons seamless access to over 4 million books and other materials. Alliance is also home to the Mid-Illinois Talking Book Center (MITBC) which is responsible for talking book services throughout 60 counties in central Illinois.

In supporting these responsibilities, Alliance models and promotes the following strategies in all programs and services:

1. Libraries are essential to the communities they serve
2. Dynamic leadership promotes innovative library service
3. Partnerships and cooperation are essential to libraries
4. The best library service is closest to the customer

### 3. ALS Vision, Mission and Values

The Alliance Library System Board and staff are committed to:



#### **Vision**

The Alliance Library System envisions a future where:

- ▶ Collaboration results in easy access to information anytime and anywhere
- ▶ Community-based library services promote and enrich the democratic, cultural, educational and economic life of central Illinois
- ▶ ALS saves its members time and money by providing innovative library services that encourage economies of scale

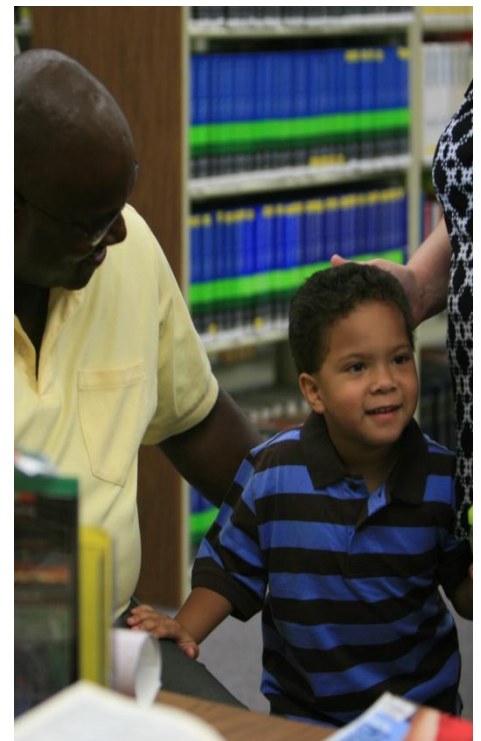
#### **Mission**

The Alliance Library System enhances the effectiveness of libraries by facilitating resource sharing, training, partnerships and advocacy. ALS is committed to helping members provide essential library services to their communities.

#### **Values**

The Alliance Library System values behaviors that support the vision and mission. All Alliance staff consistently model the following values:

- ▶ Listening to our members
- ▶ Ensuring every decision is linked to the ALS mission
- ▶ Focusing on actions that specifically improve service
- ▶ Seeking change and innovation for the growth opportunities they provide
- ▶ Promoting a culture of integrity and respect
- ▶ Treating customers with empathy, the way we want to be treated, as outlined in the ALS Customer Service Charter
- ▶ Having the courage to engage in direct and honest communication
- ▶ Making it easy to do business with ALS
- ▶ Modeling dynamic leadership and promoting lifelong learning
- ▶ Always smiling and saying thank you



## 4. Forces of Change

The Alliance Library System's business plan is designed to support the Illinois State Library Strategic Plan: 2008 – 2011 Plan, the ILSDO Strategic Plan 2009 – 2011 and the annual ALS Trends Report. Forces of change that will directly affect library service over the next three years include:

1. The economic downturn (which will have a **huge** effect on all libraries)
2. Increasing operational costs as fuel and healthcare expenses escalate
3. Increasing importance placed on environmental sustainability
4. The expanding service expectations of members and their customers
5. The endless need to support library infrastructure and technology

## 5. Action Plans 2009 – 2011

In the next three years the Alliance Library System will focus on two key areas:

1. **Enhancing member services**
2. **Strengthening organizational performance**

To enhance member services and strengthen organizational performance, Alliance staff will focus on the following annual themes:

- 2009 **ALS Goes Green**
- 2010 Growing Grants
- 2011 Marketing Our Services



### 5.1. Enhancing Member Services

To enhance member services, ALS will roll out the following Initiatives:

#### 2009

- The Consulting and Continuing Education Department will visit all members and pilot the ALS Knowledge Based Consulting Project
- Group purchasing will be expanded and connected statewide
- The IT Department will upgrade the ALS and MITBC websites
- The Innovation Department will investigate 3D websites
- RSA will roll out additional functionality for the online catalogue
- MITBC will participate in statewide, long range planning for talking book centers and pilot new electronic outreach activities
- Continuing education workshops will focus on the 2009 theme **ALS Goes Green** and include: reintroduction of the popular ALS luncheon series and piloting the Directors' Summit for small and midsized public libraries.

## 2010

- The Consulting and Continuing Education Department will visit all members using ALS Knowledge Based Consulting and investigate the feasibility of electronic consulting
- The RSA will develop and pilot an RSA Director's Mentoring Program for new members
- Alliance, RSA and MITBC will pilot live electronic chat capabilities to improve member and customer service
- MITBC will test new electronic outreach activities and facilitate the transition from cassette to digital audio books
- Continuing education workshops will focus on the 2010 theme **Growing Grants** and include: ALS luncheon series, evaluation of the Directors' Summit for small and midsized public libraries and an open house series for members to meet grant agencies and successful grant writers



## 2011

- The Consulting and Continuing Education Department will visit all member libraries and evaluate the effectiveness of Knowledge Based Consulting
- The IT Department will redesign the ALS/RSA/MITBC website
- The Innovation Department will increase the number of group grant opportunities for members
- The RSA will reevaluate online services and the RSA Director's Mentoring Program
- Administration will review and revise the ALS Customer Service Charter
- MITBC will actively market the new digital audio book and player
- Continuing education workshops will focus on the 2011 theme **Marketing Your Services** and include: the ALS luncheon series and an electronic series about effectively marketing the library



## 5.2. Strengthening Organizational Performance

Over the next three years the Alliance Library System will focus on strengthening organizational performance and effectively managing infrastructure needs by implementing the following initiatives:

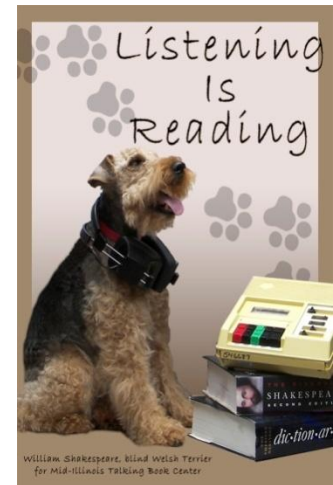
### 2009

- The Human Resource Department will review and revise all job descriptions and The ALS Personnel Policy Handbook
- The IT Department and RSA will restructure
- MITBC will streamline internal procedures to accommodate the new digital audio book
- The Finance Department will evaluate financial software options
- The Innovation Department will seek opportunities for library students to intern at the Alliance Library System



### 2010

- The RSA will consult with members and revise the RSA Bylaws
- MITBC will develop and implement a marketing strategy to promote the new digital service.
- Alliance/RSA/MITBC will evaluate electronic communication services with members and customers
- The Finance Department will complete migration to new financial software
- The Innovation Department will investigate and test potential external revenue streams and revenue sources for audio books



### 2011

- The Human Resource Department will review and revise all job descriptions and The ALS Personnel Policy Handbook
- Administration will consult and draft a new ALS' business plan
- The RSA will reevaluate staff and member services
- MITBC will evaluate internal digital audio book procedures
- Alliance/RSA/MITBC will implement recommendations for improved communication services with members and customers

## 6. Conclusion

The Alliance Library System's business plan addresses the critical challenges facing libraries in central Illinois over the next three years. **Learning, Leadership and Cooperation: ALS delivers!** is also about hope and expectations. It is a visionary document that looks to innovation and new technologies to champion our vision. **Learning, Leadership and Cooperation: ALS Delivers!** builds upon the legendary strengths and innovation of Alliance members and is reflective of the broad range of programs and services Alliance provides.



**Learning, Leadership and Cooperation: ALS Delivers!** will be used by the Alliance Library System Board of Directors and staff to ensure that resources and programs reflect our vision, mission and values. The plan also ensures that innovative programs and learning opportunities are developed in response to member needs. As a result, all of Alliance's efforts are focused on actions that will keep members on the leading edge of technology and innovation. **Learning, Leadership and Cooperation: ALS Delivers!** is all about people and delivering great library service to them.





# Alliance Library System

## Customer Service Charter

The Alliance Library System is dedicated to providing excellent multitype library service with innovative programs and technologies that continuously improve service. We are dedicated to treating customers with empathy, the way we want to be treated. The Alliance Library System Board of Directors and staff take pride in listening to our members and pledge to provide:

- ▶ Timely, reliable and cost-effective delivery services
- ▶ Collaborative and seamless resource sharing
- ▶ Practical and intellectually challenging continuing education
- ▶ Knowledgeable, relevant and effective consulting services
- ▶ Responsive, leading-edge information technologies

To accomplish these customer service goals we are committed to:

- ▶ Engaging in honest, direct, and concise communication
- ▶ Making it easy to do business with Alliance
- ▶ Modeling dynamic leadership and lifelong learning
- ▶ Always smiling and saying thank you



## Alliance Library System

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