

**Report to the
Alliance Library System Board of Directors
June 18, 2009
Executive Director's Report**

I am always relieved when the Trends Report is finished. It truly is a group effort, and one that is garnering ALS international attention. This year the world has changed so very much, I felt it appropriate to modify the Trends Report significantly. The report highlights four important socioeconomic changes;

1. A major shift in the attitude of many Americans and the emergence of a "personal renaissance" characterized by personal integrity, honesty and self-discipline.
2. Change is the buzz word in 2009, it's everywhere.
3. Libraries are back in fashion!!
4. Technology is still trendy, but not #1 this year

The demographic section has been completely updated with the addition of some timely employment/unemployment statistics. Economic trends focused on the decline of library budgets over the last 12 months, referenda and tax revenues. There is also a hefty section about grants and trends in fund raising. So, what do these trends mean to the central Illinois library community?

1. **We need to really listen** to the customers we serve and give them what they want; if not, we may very well be out of business. It's that simple!!
2. **Now is the time to test new services, programs** and methods of reaching the customer.
3. **We need to ramp-up customer service and we need to do it NOW.** Each and every staff member has to take personal responsibility for improving the library experience for the customer. It's all about them.



The *ALS Watch List* appended to the Trends Report, highlights libraries that are pioneering new programs, technologies or applying business models to librarianship. This year the list includes four academic libraries, including WIU; three library systems, including ALS (of course!!) and, in the public library section, we recommend 18 libraries, including Illinois libraries; Bartlett, Champaign, Homer, Schaumburg and Kankakee Public. There are 17 new libraries on the list this year highlighted in red. This "best of the best" list is beginning to garner national attention as folks appreciate our insights and research. One click and you can immediately link to the libraries and see what we are talking about; it's all in one place. We thank all the libraries on the list; they are great models and remind me why libraries are just the best place to work!!

Once passed by the ALS board, the Trends Report will; be on the ALS website, shared with the membership, presented to the State Library and for the first time launched at the American Library Association conference in Chicago, July 13th. I would particularly like to thank Val, Genna, all the Consultants and M team, plus Sandy and Geri for their patience and attention to all the details that make up such a complex document. The Trends Report is truly an example of the teamwork and passion that makes ALS great!

After one year of operating our own delivery service, I am truly amazed at the growth in usage. We estimated a seven to nine percent increase yearly over the next five years, not the 29 percent in the last six months! The increases are primarily due to; a better OPAC (RSA's online public catalogue), because folks can access resources more readily and an increase in overall library usage in the last year.

The following chart is a state wide actual data count of interlibrary loan material over a two week period in October 2008 and then again in April 2009. ALS overall numbers are still low comparatively, but at our current rate I expect to be at 85,000 deliveries for a two week period within five years. This puts a huge strain on our resources. However, with plans to add a fifth delivery route to relieve the heavier routes in FY2010 (finances allowing); ALS will continue to meet the rising needs of our customers. It is good to be needed!!!

State Wide Delivery

	October 2008	April 2009	Change
ALS	29,799	38,497	29.19%
DLS	58,022	70,454	21.43%
LCLS	83,069	94,570	13.85%
LTLS	78,747	78,607	-0.18%
MLS	276,219	319,956	15.83%
NSLS	171,856	195,794	13.93%
PALS	277,782	272,640	-1.85%
RPLS	71,999	77,534	7.69%
ShLS	47,611	50,799	6.70%
	1,095,104	1,198,851	9.47%

2009 was the fifth year for ALS Summer Camp; a series of programs specifically targeted at school librarians. There was a three day camp in Quincy and a three day camp in East Peoria. Participants attended workshops on; ISAIL, the new Illinois School Library Science Curriculum, Collaboration 101, Reading 2.0, ILL Training and RSA 101 Q&A to name a few. It was a huge success again this year despite a lower registration, which may very well be a sign of the times and the lagging economy!

ALS Summer Camp Expenses

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Total Attendance	148	258	299	143	118
Attendance / day	25	51.6	58	39	29.5
Total staff hours	98	145	135 hrs	125 hrs	125 hrs
	\$2,254	\$3,335	\$3,105	\$2,875	\$2,875
Total expenses **	\$3,254	\$5,337	\$5,222	\$4,414	\$3,709
Cost/participant	\$21.98	\$20.68	\$17.46	\$30.86	\$31.43

Note: ** 2009 total expenses include: lunch, publicity and total staff costs at \$23 / hr

The Innovation Department has submitted three large grant applications this month, hoping to continue our pioneering work coordinating text messaging reference services, promoting the digitization of library collections and another large FINRA grant to promote financial literacy to the XYZ generation (that's folks under 30). We have great expectations that these three grants will be successful and have a very positive impact on our members.

It's June so there are summer reading programs in over 100 public libraries across central Illinois. The 2009 theme, **Read on the Wild Side**, has been extremely popular. For example in Quincy they normally expect 1,900 kids to participate but this year over 2,200 children showed up for the kick off program!!

The ILA IREAD Committee has selected **Scare up a Good Book** as the 2010 summer reading theme, which will be great fun? Illinois illustrator Jill Thompson, of the *Scary Godmother* series, will create the 2010 poster, which I am sure will be a huge hit as well.



It has been a hectic beginning to the summer, but all these efforts enable members to provide better library service to their customers and remain positive and able to effectively lead their libraries in these challenging times.

It truly is a great time to be a librarian!

Kitty Pope
 Executive Director
kpope@alliancelibrarysystem.com