


The British Columbia Libraries Cooperative

A presentation given by
Edel Toner-Rogala
at the BCLA Conference
April 24, 2010



A Definition...

The BC Libraries Cooperative is a limited-liability, non-profit corporate body registered under the Cooperative Association Act of BC.

The Cooperative is the legal governance structure under which **Sitka**, the Evergreen ILS instance in BC, and **Bibliocommons** are managed.

The Cooperative harnesses the tremendous buying power and cost savings of a consortium while at the same time providing the corporate ability to limit risk.



What the heck does that mean?

Governance

BC Libraries Cooperative Members “own” the Cooperative and guide and shape its services, policies and direction through the Members Council and the Board of Directors.

The Cooperative Business Model

Cooperatives differ from traditional businesses in that they exist, not to maximize their profits, but to promote the economic success of their members. This creates reciprocal incentives for the cooperative to serve its members and for the members to support the cooperative.

Purpose

The Cooperative's primary purpose is to address the common needs of members through shared solutions which benefit the Cooperative's members and the people and communities in BC that they serve.

Endorsed Solutions

All services offered by the Cooperative must be “endorsed” by the Members.

Use of only Endorsed Solutions prevents the adoption or use of a hodgepodge of competing products and interests and allows the Cooperative to harness the tremendous buying power of a consortium.

Members Council

Members Council, consisting of participating libraries, is responsible for overall operational decision-making, such as approving budgets, work plans, etc.

The Members Council is led by a Chair, elected by Cooperative Members. The Chair of the Members Council also serves as Chair of the Board of Directors.

Board of Directors (BOD)

Working whenever possible by consensus, the BOD consists mainly of elected Members and has responsibility for:

- day-to-day activities such as preparing agendas and voting priorities on advice from the Business Function groups, Committees and Working Groups;
- day-to-day operations and Endorsed Solutions; and
- reviewing recommendations and annual work plans and budgets.

Business Function Group (BFG)

Made up of member libraries using an Endorsed Solution, the BFG provides users with a fair and equitable process for continuously improving the service by:

- reviewing and prioritizing requests for changes/enhancements;
- making recommendations for annual improvement budgets and work plans;
- escalating issues as required, and
- reporting back to the Members Council and the users of the designated service.

As new services are added, new BFGs are formed.

Committee and Working Groups

The BOD establishes standing committees and working and advisory groups as required to support the activities of the Cooperative.

Committees and groups are composed of individuals appointed by the BOD. Participants are selected from Member organizations, the Ministry (PLSB), or other organizations. The BOD appoints a representative from each committee (Chair) who is responsible for reporting to the BOD or Business Function Group on the Committee's activities.

Generally, ad hoc committees and groups are set up to research specific issues, assess their implications, and recommend appropriate courses of action to the BOD or in support of Business Function Groups.



The BC Libraries Cooperative is a Work in Progress

Next Steps

- Board to update the Transition Plan
- Finance Committee/Board to revise the Sitka Fee Schedule, based on the results of the Town Hall Session on April 20
- Finance Committee/Board to complete work on draft of 2011 Budget in time for the Members Council meeting this fall
- Board to undertake a strategic planning process and have a plan in place for adoption by Members Council in 2012.



And...

**COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE,
COMMUNICATE!**



Questions? Comments?