Statewide e-Book Platform Planning Begins

Since the State of Connecticut approved development of a statewide platform for the distribution of e-Books to library users throughout the state, planning has been underway with intense information gathering to follow very soon. As of this writing, a statewide library survey to help inform the development and direction of the platform was released; it will close on August 1. A vendor Request For Information (RFI) to guide the process of selecting a State Library consultant has been released. Library focus group sessions are being planned to gather input about the platform from library workers of all types throughout the state. These will be scheduled after the statewide survey has been completed. The Project Coordinator is Eric Hansen; questions can be directed to him at Eric.A.Hansen@ct.gov.

iCONN e-Book Collection Grows

Using surplus funds, we expanded our collection of new OneClickdigital (OCd) e-Books. With input from iCONN’s Database Committee and special attention to award-winning titles, iCONN selected another 581 titles for acquisition in May. Including 84 classic titles that OCd makes available to iCONN at no charge, this brought the total collection to 716 e-Books. Though circulation figures remain small, the percentage increase in checkouts and holds in May and June was significant, as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Checkouts</th>
<th>Holds</th>
<th>Checkouts per day</th>
<th>Percent Change Checkouts</th>
<th>Holds per day</th>
<th>Percent Change Holds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May-14</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>83.61%</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>40.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun-14</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6.03</td>
<td>61.61%</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>70.32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iCONN Usage Statistics for FY 2014

In FY2014, there were a total of 9,429,240 page views (a measure of when search results are actually viewed) in databases provided in iCONN: 14.2% from public library patrons; 10% from school library patrons; and 75.8% from academic library patrons. The total represents a 24.4% increase over the previous year. On July 1, 2013, iCONN completed a large migration of databases provided by Gale Cengage Learning to databases provided by EBSCO so FY 2014 was our first fiscal year with the new resources. Despite the discontinuance of dedicated business and health resources provided by Gale Cengage Learning, usage of EBSCO resources alone was more than 50% greater than usage of Gale Cengage Learning resources alone. The change to EBSCO also restored access to Consumer Reports and magazines provided by Time, Inc. To strengthen resources in the health and business categories, iCONN provided the freely accessible and highly rated MedlinePlus and PubMed resources from the National Library of Medicine and provided a separate iCONN OneSearch for Business search widget that provided access to more than ten million business-related articles.
Tip: Finding Foreign Language Titles in reQuest

Many of your patrons ask for materials in foreign languages. reQuest has a language limiter search to help you assist your patrons. Choose reQuest's Advanced Search option. In the search box, search for the title, author or subject you want or if you do not have something specific to search, try something generic like fiction as an All Headings search. On the right side of the screen click on the Language button in the "Limit results for Library Catalogs" section. You will see two columns of languages to choose from. Click on the box to the left of the language to select it and click the Submit button.

High Priority Resources

We conducted a statewide survey to determine library preferences for the most important resources to add to iCONN.org. With 231 responses from libraries of all types, the survey yielded the following rankings:

- Streaming video – such as Discovery Education, Films On Demand
- Pro-con issues (closely follows streaming video) – such as Opposing Viewpoints in Context
- Business directory – such as ReferenceUSA
- The Hartford Courant, 1923-1988 (closely follows business directory)
- Children’s encyclopedia – such as Britannica, WorldBook

Although our current budget will not allow us to acquire any of these resources, the rankings will guide our future budget requests.

iCONN EBSCO Links for Schools

iCONN learned from its Database Committee that our usual IP authentication does not always work well in schools because many students access databases with their mobile devices. These devices often have their own data plans and therefore operate outside of the school network. To address this growing issue, iCONN approached EBSCO to produce "token-embedded URLs" for each product, and EBSCO complied. The school's account name, username and password must first be embedded for each link to work. Account names, usernames and passwords are available from EBSCO Support at support@ebscohost.com and (800) 758-5995. A list of the links with placeholders for the account names, usernames and passwords is available here:

http://www.cslib.org/iconnsitemap/staff/urltable.aspx

We hope this will be helpful to school libraries in Connecticut.

New Book Recommendations Tab and Link

You will now see on reQuest screens a menu bar option for Book Recommendations. There is also a link on the bulleted list on the main iCONN Search screen for Book Recommendations as well as a button on the classic menu pages. These options will bring you to a page of free readers advisory services and recommendations.