

NLS Telephone Forum – 01-30-2013
(paraphrased)

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Good afternoon. This is Steve Prine of the National Library Service. Welcome to the Open Forum call. On our end, we have Karen Keninger, Director; Deborah Toomey, Network Services; John Bryant, Bibliographic Control...

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Neal Bernstein; Mike Martys; Pam Davenport... Vickie Collins; Bob Axtell.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

At any rate, welcome to the call. I think we'll go ahead and start taking questions.

Question: (Christie Briggs - MT)

I would like an update on the NLS app. I have specific questions on that. Will the NLS app be compatible with the iPhone 5 or (the) iPad? Question number two: Will there be a web browser built into the app? And number three: How will the patron get book files onto their devices?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Yes, Yes and they'll download them.

Question: (Christie Briggs - MT)

And what's the progress of that app being released (and) available to our patrons?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

The progress is that we are working very hard on it and we're not sure when it's going to be released. It should be this year. It's not a web browser per se but they'll be able to search BARD using the app. Not the whole web.

Question: (Linda Montgomery - AZ)

Hello everyone. Well first I'd like to say I was very happy to see that a survey will be going out to gather information from users and non-users. Our administrator here at Arizona Rehabilitation Services Administration shared that with all of her staff in Services for the Blind division, already to let them know – and I announced it at the Governors Council meeting – to let them know that that will be coming, and we'll be looking for their assistance. Will we be able to see that survey before it goes out?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

I would imagine so. It's not quite finalized. It will be tested February 16 and then corrections, additions, deletions etc., will be made to the survey. The survey will be available both to be taken on the web and, with a toll-free telephone number that the patrons or non-patrons may call – but with the telephone, they'll have to schedule a time to take the survey, that is mutually convenient.

Question: (Caroline Ashby – NY8)

I have a follow-up to the iPhone app question and I'm wondering what the download process will be like. If there will be any unzipping? Or any more steps than just clicking to download the book – and voila! It plays!

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Well, there will be waiting of course. But no, there will be no unzipping. There will be actually two ways to get the books onto the device. One way will be to download it directly from BARD, in which case it will be pretty much a matter of just tapping on the name of the book and waiting for the download. It will be possible – if you have books that you've downloaded already – to side-load them through the iTunes application. iTunes is notoriously inaccessible, but for those who

are able to use it, you can do it that way as well by dragging either the zip file or the folder into the file-sharing area.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

In listening to the previous comments, it occurred to me, it could be useful to know statistically, the various kinds of devices that are being used for BARD. Maybe that's already part of the stats...but is that going to be a feature in which we will know how BARD is being accessed?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

John, do you mean you would like to know how many iPhones are accessing it and how many Androids are accessing it?

Comment: (John Mugford - NM)

That could be an example.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

We don't have any changes scheduled in that area but we will be able to capture the data. We can discuss what sort of future statistics changes we need to make. There is a subtle issue that has to do with partial downloads – that we'd have to resolve. Things like, with the iPhone and the Android – we'd probably have a substantial number of partial downloads, and somehow we've got to figure out how to count them. I guess what I'm saying is that we don't have anything on the books right now but we'll be acquiring the data and we'll talk about what changes we're going to need at the appropriate time.

Question: (Library Staff - NLS)

Are you asking this as a point of interest? Or something you'd like to see on a regular report?

Answer: (John Mugford - NM)

I think that if it isn't a major undertaking...it could be useful to know where the demand is coming from.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

I think before we get to that, John, you're going to hear from us about how the libraries will need to support these devices. I mean there is going to be a whole set of conversations we're going to need to have.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

You mean as far as instructing the users as to how to access via the device?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

We're at this stage where we're building the app, and when we have that well-in-hand we're going to have to transition to the next stage, which is, how we're going to support it.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

(Have) there been any estimated projections as to how much demand may come through patrons using those devices?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Right now we're using a number of 50,000 potential users, from the get-go. We'll refine that as we get more information but that's the number we're using for sizing the equipment.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

Are these among existing BARD users? Or will it be a combination of additional and existing?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Additional and existing. If you (or any other participants) have any insight (we'd like to) hear your thoughts.

Comment: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

Well, I'm in Seattle, after ALA, packing up. I'm on my accessible iPhone. I'm looking forward to downloading NLS books in the future. I know that Humanware just came out with a wireless VictorStream and, by the time the NLS app is available, the whole digital world could be eons ahead. I'm hoping there will be an app for unzipping and transferring books. I agree with whoever said that – maybe Mr. Martys – about needing to put things into the iCloud or iTunes, but, who knows? There may be other available options. One thing I wanted to comment on is the whole issue of gathering stats and just (to) remind everyone about privacy issues, and sending phone information through to the federal government – even though they probably already have it. But, from a library ethics and privacy point-of-view, we need to be very careful about that.

Question: (Danielle Miller - WA)

I was hoping you could give a brief recap or overview of where we are with the digital magazines.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Well, we have two contractors working on that and we think we're about ready to launch. I'm expecting at least one of them to be able to launch hopefully in a week or two. So, as they launch, they're going to begin by library. The library will be notified about a week before they start, and once they say they're going to start sending them to your patrons, all of the patrons served by that library will begin to receive the digital magazines. How often the cartridges will come to any individual will depend on what magazines they subscribe to. At the same time we're going to continue to ship the cassette magazines for two months, so those folks will receive both cassette and digital during that time. As the producers begin to ramp up and do more, they will add more and more libraries. We're not certain how fast that will occur, because we're not sure exactly how the number of cartridges that have to be sent out every week, will grow.

Question: (Danielle Miller - WA)

Just to confirm - with the cassette and digital – will they be getting the same issue, for example, in two formats? We may get some confused calls about that, or perhaps I misunderstood.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

They probably will get the same magazine in two formats. We're going to continue to send the cassette magazines as a safety but they will also get that magazine along with others, perhaps, on cartridge

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

It's been nearly two months since the "dimming" of Northstar. Any new light on the horizon regarding a cartridge distributor?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

We are working on that issue very hard. We have something that we're lining up. We haven't yet gotten all of the ducks lined up but we expect that we will have that done pretty quickly and that we will then be tooling up and...getting cartridges here this spring.

Question: (Ruth Hemphill - TN)

Back to the magazines in two formats – I'm just curious. You're phasing libraries in gradually. If Tennessee should happen to be the last library phased in...would they also get two months of both formats?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Yes.

Question: (Christie Briggs - MT)

A couple things: Who was that masked man who talked about Humanware, wireless Stream, gathering stats and privacy issues?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Mike Marlin from Sacramento

Question: (Christie Briggs - MT)

Thank you. And the other question I had goes back to Northstar cartridges. Karen, thank you so much for the update on that. Will that new contract include - as it did with Northstar - the LBPH network, as far as getting cartridges for us at the price that NLS is (paying)? Or near?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Yes. I believe so.

Question: (Susan Roberts - FL)

With the digital transition in magazines, what will be the maximum number of cartridges a patron may keep at one time?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

That's going to vary by patron – what they subscribe to. There is an algorithm in the software that will keep track of how many they have and, in my mind it will be something like three months' worth or, six cartridges – whichever occurs first.

Question: (Susan Roberts - FL)

I have another question. Once the patron reaches their limit, will you all be sending an overdue notice to that patron? Or will we need to do that?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

The plan is that the overdue notice would go to you – to the library.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

I was wondering when the next brightly-colored copy of Library Resources for the Blind and Physically Handicapped would be (available).

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

That's a good question. Unfortunately I don't have a date to give you at the moment. We're looking at putting the statistical information up on the Network Library Services website at the moment and that's our next goal. In the interim, if you're looking at address information you can always print off the "Find a Library" list.

Question: (Richard Smith - MO)

I have a couple questions. I noticed the new statistics (have) a place for local materials being downloaded. How does it look for local audio materials being available through BARD?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

I guess I don't understand the nature of your question. Are you talking about the process of delivering materials to NLS? There are like, two dimensions to that. There is a policy part and there's a technical part. I can only answer for the technical part, in that, from a technical perspective, a lot of the technical components are in place. I don't think we're as far on the policy side, so I'll let my colleagues talk about that.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

We have an awful lot going on right now, and that's one of the things on my desk, to work through with staff, in terms of policy, Richard, and we are working on that. It was to be bumped up to the top of the list at the beginning of the year, so we're working on that. I'm hoping to get it done soon. I can't give you a for-sure date.

Question: (Richard Smith - MO)

Is John there for the Music Division? I was curious if someone could get the top ten downloads off of BARD for music or, foreign downloads. I'd like to get that just to put a space in my newsletter to emphasize the music materials that are available and foreign-language materials that you guys are putting up there and...a few statistics to put up there.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

So let me just summarize Richard. You want us to list the top ten music items and the top ten special foreign?

Comment: (Richard Smith - MO)

I don't need them in the monthly report or anything. Maybe quarterly – to say “here are things that are interesting (to) people across the country from our music collection.”

Comment: (Library Staff – NLS)

I was just going to point out Richard, it is on the site itself. There is a “most popular” mainstream books. There's also a “most popular” music downloads, within the music section of BARD.

Comment: (Library Staff – NLS)

At the moment, the most popular item is “Ragtime Piano Solos: Easy Piano.”

Question: (Ruth Hemphill – TN)

Just a follow up to John Mugford's question about library resources. Is a Magazines and Special Media catalog coming out? When was the last one out anyway? I seem to remember one being announced in a survey. I could be wrong though – for 2010 – I don't remember ever getting it. Of course I might have neglected to order it. I've done that before. I'm assuming you're not going to put one out now until they're available on cartridge.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

That's correct. We hope that will start within the next couple of weeks or, the month so this is something we'll be looking at doing this fiscal year.

Comment: (Danielle Miller - WA)

I was hoping that with the new BARD stats, that the new foreign-language materials could be broken out so we can see how many of our users are using foreign-language and how many of the foreign-language titles are being downloaded, rather than...the audio non-music and the braille non-music. So, to have that split would be really nice. The other thing is that we're very upset at Steve Prine for not walking five blocks to visit us!

Question: (Library Staff - NLS)

This is Mike Martys. In that statistics request, what exactly would you like to see? What would you envision for this modification?

Answer: (Danielle Miller - WA)

Well there's that table, and it has the number of people this month, the number of people since the beginning – since October – going as columns. As rows, it has Books – Non Music audio, Magazines, Institutions. I'd just like to see “Foreign Language” added as a row – with the same columns.

Question: (Library Staff - NLS)

One clarifying question: So when you say Foreign Language, do you mean "Special Foreign" which are DBFs or do you mean any book in our collection that is not in English?

Answer: (Danielle Miller - WA)

I suppose THAT, because I'm not totally clear on what the difference is, other than the book number. I mean, I'd like to know how many people are downloading Spanish and Russian and Hmong and whatever else we have, regardless of a division, unless it really isn't a foreign-language book. That might be a lack of understanding on my part.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Right now we have a special category called DBF that basically represents "special foreign" which are acquired through...

Comment: (Danielle Miller - WA)

Yes the ones that (the) foreign-language chap is buying and procuring.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

And then, there are actually foreign-language DB books. Mostly Spanish.

Comment: (Danielle Miller - WA)

I would want all of them and if technically you have to divide it into two lines by whatever type of internal categorization or book number you have, that's fine because I can add them. I guess I'm looking for the total number of books in foreign languages downloaded by Washington patrons.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

I can't say when we would do it but I can add it to our list.

Question: (Andrew Egan - RI)

I'm not sure if this was asked before because I came late to the meeting but have you heard about the national three-year campaign by the Connect Complete Ad Council that is promoting digital access and digital literacy? They call the program "Everyone On." Is that something that the National Library Service will be participating in?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Well unfortunately Jane Caulton, the head of our Publications and Media section, is not here. So I would have to admit that I had not heard of it.

Comment: (Andrew Egan - RI)

I'll forward some information to you. I think it should be...starting in March of 2013 they will be promoting libraries as access points for digital literacy as well as digital access, and certainly with downloading, that's important to us. If they do a good promotion, it might be helpful to us.

Question: (Sharon Ruda - IL)

The C2C grant is being directed by the Illinois State Library. There are a number of states that are involved. In fact, they almost had the person who is in charge of it here in my office but she left just before this question came up. You can find information, of course, online about it. It's kind of interesting, and the number of states – I think its Colorado and Ohio and, I can't remember the rest. ...It's very interesting and it is a big advertising promotion and, getting people to connect directly at their libraries, so, like I said, you can do a Google search and come up with some information. Now, on another question – and I may have missed an answer to this – when we were talking and getting all the information about the magazines – which would be wonderful if we actually had that all written out – originally you had said that there would be some publicity sent to all magazine users. Is that still on the agenda? Or do the (network libraries) have to come up with a message to all subscribers?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

We're including a message now on all cassette magazines...It's more detailed than some people may like.

Comment: (Sharon Ruda - IL)

That's good to know. We have been getting questions and I wasn't exactly sure what to tell people other than the very general thing.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

There will be some instructions on the cartridges when they come out. If they're not familiar with the Bookshelf, there's a brief instruction for that, and there's a thing with each magazine that tells them that they have to send the cartridge back.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

And...we will be providing detailed instructions and information on the system for the librarians. It will be up on the web actually, and we've been working on getting that finished.

Question: (Susan Roberts - FL)

A follow up on the magazine question. You said you'd be rolling out, library by library. Will you be providing all of us out in the network, a list of the order and the estimated dates that they will start with the digital rollout for magazines?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Do you want the quick answer? No (laughter)...The problem with giving dates is that we just do not know how long it's going to take. Each producer is going to start with approximately 5000 patrons in the first tier – so that would be 10,000. In the second tier, they would ramp up another 20,000. It may take a week for them to be able to do that. It may take several weeks. And then, after the second tier, maybe another 18,000 and then 18,000 and then maybe the last 13 or 14 thousand people. But we really don't know until they start doing it.

Question: (Susan Roberts - FL)

Will it be possible, then, to give us at least the order? And maybe a two-week heads-up notice, or something of that nature?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Well we were certainly planning on at least a week's...notice. Can we do two weeks John?

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

I don't know. We'll have to find out from the producers if they think they can. The problem they have is that it depends so much on what each person subscribes to, as to how many cartridges will be generated in a given week. They'll have to tell us how much lead time they can give us. We'll ask them though and see if we can make it two weeks. We had planned on a week, but we'll see if we can get it to two weeks.

Question: (Mary Jane Kayes – CA9)

Back to the DBFs. We ran across – quite by accident the other day – some DBFs that have “9000” numbers, that appear to come from Canada. They're in both English and French. Some of the French are in BARD, but not all. One English is in BARD but not all. None of them appear to have links to BARD from Voyager.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

If you could send the list of those titles – just the book numbers. We'll get it to David Fernandez-Barrial and he and Bob Axtell can look at it and figure out what the problem is.

Comment: (Mary Jane Kayes – CA9)

Well, they seem to have been produced in Canada, which is exciting, but we're questioning whether we'll be able to interlibrary loan them as well.

Question: (Library Staff - NLS)

Are they DBFs?

Answer: (Mary Jane Kayes – CA9)

Yes. DBF 9-whatever. ...I just wanted to give the group a heads-up without going to the listserv about it and, I'm really excited that we're getting Canada back.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

If these are really DBFs, that means they are titles that we purchased from Canada in the past. This isn't foreshadowing new international relations.

Comment: (Mary Jane Kayes – CA9)

Well rats, okay. And it's kind of weird to have English-language titles as DBFs too.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

I think the TIGAR books are all DBF. Somebody should explain TIGAR because I'm not...

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

The TIGAR Project is an international project through WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization) whereby, with permission of the publishers we are able to exchange books, and they have set up a system so that they can get copyright clearance, and we have picked up some books from Canada through that program, and that might be what you're seeing there.

Comment: (Mary Jane Kayes – CA9)

I'm looking at one right now. I can't go to the full record but it's DBF99981 "On to Victory" in English, and it was Toronto CNIB 2011.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

That's very likely one of these TIGAR books that we're getting, and the reason it would be a DBF is because it has come in through the TIGAR project.

Question: (Christie Briggs - MT)

Along that same line that Mary Jane was just discussing with you, could you please develop an Operations Alert to the Library Network about this, so that we can notify our patrons in a newsletter.

Question: (Library Staff - NLS)

About TIGAR?

Answer: (Christie Briggs – MT)

Yes. Or about searching BARD by the DBF 9 series and that some of the titles will be in English.

Question: (James Gleason - MA)

I apologize if this issue has come up before. I came to the call a little bit late. Probably once or twice a week, I'm still getting emails and comments from patrons about – on BARD - the magazines and books being listed concurrently in the Recent Editions section. Speaking for myself, I really don't see the problem with this, but it's still coming up and so I guess on behalf of these folks, with the new version of BARD coming out...being able to filter just books, and just magazines...I didn't anticipate there would be this many people saying something. I thought maybe one or two people saying it repeatedly...I'm not sure where the confusion is coming in for

them...(but) they really are registering their displeasure with having the magazines and the books listed in the new section. That's pretty much about it.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Thanks James. I should also point out that they are registering their pleasure with having the magazines and books listed and in fact, thanks to everybody who forwarded answers from patrons to our request for information last week regarding this particular issue. We got a lot of answers. I've read every single one that's come our way. You can't point to any single source of discontent for this. Some people just don't like having the extra stuff to wade through. Some people don't understand why there are magazines in a book list, even though it's not a book list, and any number of reasons why people don't like this. There are also several reasons why people do, and what we're trying to do is put together all the feedback we've gotten and make an intelligent change to BARD that will satisfy the folks who don't like it without trying to offend the people who do. That's a tall order and it may end up that there is no solution. We may do nothing about it. We also got plenty of messages from people saying that it bothered them at first, but they got used to it. So, we're getting it from all ends of the spectrum and, stay tuned, we're going to try and do this right.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Well...we thank everybody that participated on the call, and we will be talking to you next month.

No more questions or comments.