

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Welcome to the Open Telephone Forum call. It's a pleasant 80 degrees here in Washington. I am Steve Prine, the assistant chief of the Network Division and, we'll go around the room and introduce the other people participating.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

John Brown, Engineering Section; Pamela Davenport, Network Consultant; Michael Martys, Automation; Neal Bernstein, Research and Development Officer; ... Boitano, Automation; MaryBeth Wise, Network Consultant; John Bryant, Production Control; Michael Katzmann, Materials Development; Judy Dixon, Network Division; Karen Keninger, Director; Ed O'Reilly, Collection Development; Vickie Collins, Network Consultant; Don Olson, BARD Operation.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

So, we're here to answer your questions. Karen, do you wish to say anything before we open it for questions?

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

I just want to say that it was delightful to see a number of you the last couple of weeks at the conferences and I think we got a lot of good information from some more of you at the Collection Development Advisory Group last week. I feel like I've seen you more in the last three weeks than normal, and that's delightful, so I want to say thank you for all the good input and we look forward to moving forward. And that's all I had to say.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

I think at this point then, we'll take the first questions.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

While we're waiting for questions – this is Karen again – I noticed that there was a flurry on the listserv over the issue of Talking Book Topics, and my sense from what I have seen and heard at this point is that you all think that the patrons would prefer to have a categorized TBT that is divided up by subject headings – and that the question of the index is not settled. There seems to be a lot of consensus that the index in TBT is not its primary feature. And that if we had to make some choices, the index might be able to go in favor of full annotations and more books. So if anybody has a strong opinion about that, you could weigh in on that as well.

Question: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

I have two questions if that's okay. The first one is kind of a procedural question. It has to do with Magazines on Cartridge. I just wanted to verify or find out if the magazines are identifiable by the barcode that is on the cartridge? Or if it's on the container? This is because I was talking to several patrons last week who are worried that they'll put the wrong cartridge in the wrong container.

Answer: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

The cartridge sent to the patron is tracked by the barcode and the internal serial number of the cartridge. It's not tracked at all by the barcode on the container.

Question: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

That's what I thought. Thank you Michael, I appreciate that. Secondly – this is a question about Digital Talking Book Machines and some of the battery discharge issues that we've experienced. We heard from an NLS staff member about a 12-hour charge being a sufficient number of hours left on a battery to circulate that machine. I wanted to know if there is an official statement to that effect forthcoming, or if that is true, given the situation where we have patrons complaining that "we don't have 29-plus hours anymore" etc, etc... Is it fair that they now have that expectation? Should we work to change the expectation? Or should we go ahead and replace all those 12-hour-or-less batteries with new batteries?

Answer: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

Well, I'll just say that if a patron has a genuine need for 29 hours on a machine, then by all means, give them (a machine with) a new battery, but I would say for the vast majority of patrons, as you heard - 12 hours is what we're saying is a serviceable machine which is good to go to a patron. We know that batteries will deteriorate over time. So, if we're expecting 29 hours out of the battery and we're going to replace them when they go below 29 hours, we'll be replacing them every month. So, there is a life on the batteries. They will deteriorate. Especially if the players are stored with the batteries connected – and they're "flattened" over months. It will deteriorate the state of the battery. If you test the battery and you're getting more than 12 hours out of them, (they're) good to go to a patron. As I say, unless they express a need for a capacity beyond that.

Question: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

That sounds good. Now when you say “test the batteries” are there plans for a battery charger/tester?

Answer: (John Brown - NLS)

So, yes, Mike. I saw your email from today. I can say “yes” there are plans for a battery adapter that will work with the IQ-Five. The existing analyzers we’ve been using for the C1 batteries. We’re working diligently with i-Tech to try and come up with a solution for that. And we hope that that is the case – that we can have a solution. In the interim I’m going to put out a Machines and Accessories report that details a procedure that can be used with the DTBM. Basically what you would do is that you would charge the battery. When you think it’s full, you play a long book until it shuts off due to low battery and once you start the machine again, you check the reading time in the book and that will give you a reasonably accurate estimate on how long the battery life is on that player or with that particular battery pack. So I’m writing up that procedure and hopefully I’ll be circulating that within the next couple of weeks.

Comment: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

I’ll just quickly way in with Talking Book Topics: I think a subject arrangement would be great. But I also think that because the order forms are arranged in numerical succession number order, we probably want to be careful about changing that order – whatever we do.

Question: (Library Staff – NLS)

The order of the order form?

Answer: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

Well – I was thinking the TBTR would match the order as far as the sequence goes. I am totally in favor of scrapping the index to create room for the subject heading of some sort.

Question: (Terry Soave – MI9)

Hello – thank you for taking our questions: I have a couple of questions: 1 – related to multi-state center boxes for recall XESS – we’ve had some difficulty receiving our boxes – we were told they were shipped, but we haven’t received them as far as we can tell. We’ve checked with some other libraries, but it seems that the boxes are not labeled in any way – so we’re trying to negotiate how we can get another shipment – we were told that we were only allotted so many boxes and because their showing as already shipped – we have to make a special request to get additional boxes shipped out – so I guess I’m just asking that in the future if this process continues – that those items could be marked in some way – so that we know where they’re coming from and what they’re for.

My other question relates to the Wiki – as we’re getting into this and collecting more information – we’re trying to get up as much information as we can – including things like – records of these kinds of conversations that we’re having with NLS staff. So my question is - when we get this kind of information from the NLS staff members whether it’s a network consultant or an answer to a specific question regarding a process – is it okay for us to share that information – if we attribute it to the person that it came from? – or if you have any recommendations on how we might go about doing that.

Answer: (Library Staff – NLS)

(Group laughter.) ...You can certainly share it.

Comment: (Terry Soave – MI9)

It really is helpful for us to have that kind of information – I cannot express that enough – we are all sort of sitting around the table looking like “Eww.” (as in mistake of unmarked boxes.) Okay great – thank you.

Comment: (John Bryant – NLS)

We can (and will) ask the multi-state to mark (label) their boxes somehow, that are coming for the recall. So that you’ll know what you’re getting, and you’ll know what to do with it.

Comment: (Library Staff – NLS)

It might be good to ask the staff member if it’s okay to share their names.

Question: (Carl Keehn – NC)

Good afternoon – Is there any update on the status of digital cartridge for purchase?

Answer: (Michael Katzmann – NLS)

Okay so the manufacturer is about to produce the pilot and then the pre-production run – for NLS. We have quality assurance inspectors who will be at the plant in the 1st or 2nd week in June. Hopefully, if everything goes well – sign off on the mass production. SO we expect the first production will be mid to late June – they’ll probably go about a month before they will start producing any of the third party cartridges. So I wouldn’t expect to see third party cartridges to arrive before

sometime in August. We are hoping to get cartridges to our book producers in early July. I wouldn't expect you to see green cartridges until August at the earliest.

Question: (Carl Keehn – NC)

And – is there any idea as to what they'll cost or will it be a matter of contacting the manufacturer?

Answer: (Michael Katzmann – NLS)

You can contact ALCOR – they can give you an estimate – based on the current cost of memory. Because the 2 G memory is becoming less available – the minimum size of multi-cell cartridge will be 4G – you will be able to buy the 256 and 512 cartridges which will be the cheapest – and they should be able to give you a very good estimate – because the price of that memory has been fairly constant. Bear in mind that the 4Gb is likely to go up or down.

Question: (Ruth Hemphill – TN)

I just have a couple questions and comments – Someone earlier said – sorry I was late – 12 hours is a serviceable machine to go to a patron. I vaguely remember we were told to tell patrons not to run them all the way down – has that been addressed with newer firmware?

Answer: (Michael Katzmann – NLS)

The battery longevity – they should not be run all the way down. Our recommendation to patron is that they leave them plugged in or if they use them off batteries, when they're finished with the batteries, just to plug them into the power outlet. There's absolutely no detriment to having them plugged in all the time. It will keep the battery in the best condition by doing that. What does damage the batteries is if the player is turned off and is just left for months on end – the battery will drain and self-discharge – and that's not good for the battery.

Question: (Ruth Hemphill – TN)

Good – then I told them the right thing yesterday. I told a patron not to let it run down, and I wanted to be sure I had that right. His battery would not recharge, and I told him he'd have to send it in. Did I hear someone say there was a battery recharger that you're planning, that will work with the existing analyzers that are currently being used with the C1 Players?

Answer: (John Brown – NLS)

That's correct – The I-Tech – the Unit is an IQ5 – we're trying to work with the to produce something that will work with the digital battery. It's in development. If we're able to succeed with that then we'll let you know when it's time to order.

Comment: (Ruth Hemphill – TN)

Great! Glad to hear it. My other comment is kind of for Terri from Washtenaw and NLS2 – I really appreciate the Wiki. I think everyone in the network knows that I'm not a tech person – but I'm sure that's going to be a great resource for all of us to get stuff. And I sure hope you NLS people know that we share your comments even if you don't tell us we can.

Comment: (Library Staff – NLS)

We might as well tell you that you can (quote us to Wiki).

Question: (Unidentified Caller)

Hi I am wondering how things for the Braille Summit are going. Are you having a good number of registrations?

Answer: (Karen Keninger – NLS)

We have 80 some people registered for the Braille summit, which is pretty much maxing us out - which is delightful. We're very pleased about that. We're going to be able to stream the panel discussion. We will be getting information up on our website relatively soon about what the link is for that. We're also going to be putting them up on YouTube once they're done, to archive them. We have some really cool panels up with all types of people from many corners of the braille world. I think it's going to be a very lively bunch of discussion around braille for two and half to three days. So, it's going very well. There will also be feedback loops for people that are unable to attend. We'll have a Twitter feed and also an email address. We're hoping to get participation not only from the 80 or so people, but from others around the country who are interested but unable to attend.

Comment: (Richard Smith – MO)

It would be nice if you put that "12 bars is sufficient, you don't have to return the machine" in probably Talking Book Topics - in the preamble to it, so that everyone gets that message. And, if you put it out in a bulletin, we'll put it in our newsletters also. That would be nice.

Answer: (Library Staff – NLS)

We'll be putting that number out in the M&A (Machines and Accessories report) I was referencing, and it's going to talk about a procedure for using the machine to test your battery. That figure will be in this M&A.

Questions: (Richard Smith – MO)

Who gets those? (Laughter)

Answer: (John Brown – NLS)

MLA's and volunteer repair groups gets these M&A's. And they're online as well – you can pull them off the network docs website.

Question: (Richard Smith – MO)

Have you signed any contracts for commercial books?

Answer: (Karen Keninger – NLS)

Yes actually – was that an announcement that was made yesterday? - we have signed one contract with Hachette and we've got that one in the can.

Question:

And that's backwards titles and new titles?

Answer: (Karen Keninger – NLS)

That's right. Yes, we will be getting their backlist and new titles as they come out, and we have a lot of work to do on how to handle that. We're working on it.

Comment: (Richard Smith – MO)

Well, MO will beta test them all for you – you know that.

Question: (Martin Landry – MT)

Hi there – you may have covered this already: With our weekly magazines that are direct from the producer. We're running into people that are getting on the delinquent list. When they resume, will that be with the next available issue?

Answer: (Michael Katzmann – NLS)

When they become non-delinquent – When they return the cartridges...they will receive all the issues since they last got a cartridge (all the missing issues).

Question: (Martin Landry – MT)

Okay – so let's say they were on a monthly loop, and they were out for four months – will they get four sent or just two?

Answer: (Michael Katzmann – NLS)

They'll probably get one cartridge with four magazines on it... What we will institute is a limit – so that when they leave and return to a subscription – for two years for example – we don't want to send the 2 years of back issues. We'll probably set up a maximum limit as to how far back we should go. At the moment, it's all their missing issues.

Comment: (Martin Landry – MT)

Okay – then thank you. We just started seeing the weekly ones going delinquent and I just didn't know what to be able to tell them as they return them and what to expect down the road.

Comment: (Ruth Hemphill – TN)

I just have a follow up to what Rich said about the 12 hours on Talking Book Topics. I just would hope that you would consider doing that. I can see reasons for not – but one of the things our patrons have told us they like about the players is that they can get 29 hours of charge time on the battery and then when they don't anymore, they're very concerned. But I can see reasons to not include too, but I thought I'd just throw that out. Secondly, you can probably tell me it's in some report somewhere: what do we do to restore to put someone in non-delinquent status on magazines?

Answer: (Michael Martys – NLS)

Well right now, the option you have is to call up the patron and return their cartridges. But, hopefully next week I'll be able to deploy some updates to the web pages and you will see the appearance of something that I call the Lost Button. Which will let you mark cartridges as lost as well as the Resend Button, which will allow you to resend the cartridge to a patron.

Question: (Ruth Hemphill – TN)

That will be on BARD?

Answer: (Library Staff – NLS)

Yes. It's through the Magazine pages that you get to the BARD.

Question: (Ruth Hemphill – TN)

As Administrator, yeah. Okay, if you're going to send them like 4 of the monthly issues. Do they have to have that particular cartridge back in six weeks again?

Answer: (Library Staff – NLS)

Yes.

Comment: (Ruth Hemphill – TN)

Okay, so that have to read fast when they catch up. I can see that.

Question: (Terry Soave – MI9)

I'm wondering if there's a place that we can access the announcements that play at the beginning of the MOC - If that's accessible to us, or if you could make it accessible to us?

Question: (Library Staff – NLS)

What do you mean by the announcements – which ones are you referring to?

Answer: (Terry Soave – MI9)

Any announcements that are included on the MOC that our patrons are hearing, that might be useful for us to know what language you're using. And what exactly is being included in terms of cartridge due dates, book shelf feature, anything like that.

Answer: (Library Staff – NLS)

It's the one for the multiple magazines, and then there's something at the beginning of the magazines saying: When you're finished reading this, send this back. We could just post it on the web I guess

Question: (Terry Soave – MI9)

We don't know what our patrons are hearing. It's hard to give you feedback, when we don't know what they're hearing. Does this monthly and weekly magazine say that it's due back in a month and a week?

Answer: (Library Staff – NLS)

No, they don't. There's one other that you should be aware of. We're in the process of a test cartridge that we're going to send to every library: so you'll actually have a sample of what a patron will receive. And that cartridge will have the sample messages on them. I think it'll have the current message. We can put up that announcement as an MP3 file. Or just post the text. Is that what you want Terry?

Comment: (Terry Soave – NLS)

We really just want to have access so we know what our patrons are being told. Are there any plans to add different terminology so that patrons will be clear on when these items are due?

Answer: (Library Staff – NLS)

Actually yes. We can get you what we currently have and if we update it, we'll send that out as another Ops Alert. There's trouble with the OPS alert system at the moment, so it may be a little bit before we get that straightened out.

Question: (Stephanie Schott – AK)

We have a magazine cartridge mystery – one was returned to us and it was completely stripped. From listening to the conversation today – it seems like if we return it on behalf of our patron, it should come off of their list?

Answer: (Library Staff – NLS)

Yes.

Question: (Stephanie Schott – AK)

So, who do we send back to - CMLS?

Answer: (Library Staff – NLS)

National Audio in Missouri would be it.

Question: (S. Miles Lewis - TX)

Just curious if there's progress or any update on the redevelopment of LCM recording and markup software.

Answer: (John Brown – NLS)

There is progress – we had posted a solicitation to have a replacement tool made. We evaluated the bids, we've made our recommendations, and we're in the process of awarding it right now. So, the development cycle for this new tool will be approximately 6-9 months. Once it's available for release, we'll make an announcement to the network.

Question: (S. Miles Lewis – TX)

Can you all speak to its price range?

Answer: (John Brown – NLS)

The license fee, or cost per copy. The license fee right now it looks like: it'll be less than \$1k.

Question: (S. Miles Lewis – TX)

And this is recording and markup?

Answer: (John Brown – NLS)

This is recording and markup complete. It will not encrypt the book for you. You can record, you can import. If you record it in another program you'll be able to import that, and then of course your nav. points and your label text.

Question: (S. Miles Lewis – TX)

Is there in process a network guideline for markup of books and magazines by local studios?

Answer: (John Brown – NLS)

Well, we've started a few guidelines. There will be a guideline coming out that will list basic requirements for submitting locally produced materials to BARD. And then there is a separate guideline: what we're calling a generic DTB primer. The intent of that is to explain some concepts of making a DTB - some of the terminology. We're trying to make that particular document sort of generic, not tool-specific so it won't be a how to do it in this tool because there are a couple of different tools as to how to be able to do this, so it's more of a conceptual: "Here's what things are called, and here's how they work together to make a book."

When the new tool is finished there will of course be user guide and help files, and a way to get through that. And once we know what that final tool looks like we might be able to tailor some additional documents to that. It will provide more of a how-to guide for this specific tool. That would be in the future after we're done with the development.

Question: (Unknown Caller)

Hello again – just to follow up on what Miles was asking about this LCM replacement – will it be accessible with screen readers?

Answer: (John Brown – NLS)

At the moment there is some accessibility with it. Its a commercially available tool. So our plan is phase one of the development is we're going to get the tool out there. Get it produced to make our books and then the way our contract is structured we have options to make enhancements – improvements. Then we can certainly look at improving any accessibility elements that are lacking in its existing form.

Question: (Unknown Caller)

Wouldn't if its Federal procurement – wouldn't it have to be accessible?

Answer: (John Brown – NLS)

I guess it would meet minimum 508 guidelines –

Question: (Unknown Caller)

Oh because it's partially accessible in its current form you mean?

Answer: (Library Staff – NLS)

Right.

Comment: (Unknown Caller)

I'll be interested to take a look thanks.

Comment: (John Brown – NLS)

The way it looks like it's structured now: most of the menus and the controls are accessible with shortcut keys. So, I think it would be for the most part, usable by screen readers.

Comment: (Unknown Caller)

That would be a huge leap beyond LCM, so that's a good thing. Thanks!

Comment: (Steve Prine – NLS)

I will reiterate what Karen said at the beginning of the call. For the people from NLS that got to attend the regional conferences. We certainly enjoyed being out there and spending some time. And, we've gotten three of the four conferences resolutions back, so we're working on those. Oh, we've got the 4th one. We will be responding to those shortly within a short period of time. We look forward to speaking with everyone at next month's Open Forum call. Thank you.

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No more questions or comments.