

NLS Telephone Forum – 4-30-2014
(paraphrased)

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Welcome to the NLS monthly Open Forum telephone call. It's a rainy day here in Washington. Rainy, cold, hot, wet, all those things combined. I'm not exactly sure how it works, but it's actually miserable. We're glad you're on the call. Before we go any further, we'll go around the room and let people here introduce themselves...

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Karen Keninger; Paula Bahmani; Margie Goergen-Rood; Pamela Davenport; Neil Bernstein; Michael Martys.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

This has been a busy week for us. We've been planning for a conference next week and trying to decide what to take to wear. We're hearing the weather is in the nineties so thank goodness everything is inside and air-conditioned. Does anyone have any announcements before we go into questions?

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

I don't, except to say that I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the conference.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Okay then. We are ready to open it up for questions.

Question: (Abby Sheehan - FL)

I had a question from a patron. He was asking about the commercial audio books. He wants to know if it will increase the amount you guys are putting out – of new books.

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Yes. This is Karen and yes, we expect that over time it will increase the number of books that we are able to produce. Initially, we'll be ramping up rather slowly while we get all the processes in place.

Question: (Abby Sheehan - FL)

Okay. He heard a rumor somewhere about adding a new magazine feature to BARD, and I'm not really sure what he's talking about. Do you guys have any information...?

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)

Yes...In the upgrade we did about ten days ago, there was a new feature added to BARD that allows the patron to subscribe to a magazine. There's a little subscription button that shows at the top of every main magazine display page. If you're displaying all the new 'People' magazines, there's a new button at the top, and that button says, "subscribe to this magazine" and what the subscription does is that when new magazines come in, they will be automatically added to your wish list if you have not downloaded them already. When you go to subscribe to a magazine, you're also given the ability to update your user account settings and indicate that you want an email reminder as well, so that when a new magazine comes in, not only does it go onto your wish list, but you also get an email saying, 'I just put this on your wish list.'

Comment: (Neil Bernstein - NLS)

It's important to point out that this has nothing to do with Magazines on Cartridge. This is not...to have anything sent to your house. This is a BARD-only subscription that just adds the magazine to your wish list.

Question: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

And there's an Ops Alert, Paula?

Answer: (Paula Bahmani - NLS)

Yes, there was. It came from Michael Martys actually. I don't remember what the number was.

Question: (Juliet Relyea - FL)

We have another patron who asked about the list of magazines...He says that if it lists 1 to 5 magazines, the intro is number one, and then the magazines begin with number two and he said he sometimes gets confused. He was wondering if there was a way that you could have an intro and then have the first magazine be number one?

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)

The person who is best suited to answer that would be Michael Katzmann. He's not in the room, but we can forward that question on to him. I do know that the announcement – that thing that you say is number one – is actually a magazine...that tells you how to use the system when there are multiple magazines on there. That's why it shows up that way – but I don't know if it can be suppressed.

Comment: (Neil Bernstein - NLS)

I took a call from a patron just a few days ago on this very issue, and I've already written it up and sent it off to John Brown, Head of Engineering. He's actually looking into whether that can be remedied or not. To do so would take a software upgrade to the player, so it's not something that can happen overnight.

Question: (Lauren Abner - KY)

I have a question about a possible API for other devices like the VictorStream or the Book Port Plus. I have a patron who keeps bugging me asking 'is NLS going to make some sort of API' so that downloads can go directly to his device. He owns a VictorStream and a Book Port. He mentioned something about getting an email from one of the manufacturers mentioning (that) that was in process. Does anyone have any idea about what I'm talking about at all?

Answer: (Neil Bernstein - NLS)

We do know what you're talking about. We are doing it and we've already spoken to Humanware and APH about it, so it's in process.

Question: (Lauren Abner - KY)

Are there any other devices beside those two, that are involved in this?

Answer: (Neil Bernstein - NLS)

There are other manufacturers that we have spoken to. Pretty much all of them that are in the business but no one has come forward to say that they will be absolutely implementing a device...

Comment: (Michael Martys - NLS)

It might be good to briefly explain "API" for the rest of the callers...Neil was giving you the teaser for the conference which says he will be making a presentation on this topic at the conference.

Question: (Andrew Egan - RI)

So we have to come to the conference to hear Neil, right? (Laughter). This is a good follow up question I think: I know you've been working on the Android app and I'm sure that you're progressing along. The other part of that is for the iPad and the iPhone. Are you taking recommendations – since we've had it for awhile – as (what) people would like to see for the version 2 upgrade? Are you listening to people as they make recommendations?

Answer: (Neil Bernstein - NLS)

Absolutely. We are always listening and looking for good feature ideas. I will tell you we have a very long list, but anything you want to contribute, we would love to hear it. Before we do Version 2, we are working on a Version 1.1. The spec list for that has already been defined and we're negotiating it with the developer right now. Please send along any ideas you've got... You can send it to me by email: nber@loc.gov.

Comment: (MaryBeth Wise - NLS)

I'm just calling in remotely just to say to everyone, we have about 185 attendees and we expect a few more to be registering for the conference. So, that's a really exciting number – and for the preconference we have about 70 to 75 people, so looking forward to seeing you all there and I'm sure that we're going to have a wonderful time to be together and to share ideas.

Question: (James Gleason - MA)

Two things: One – I just wanted to say ‘thank you very much for taking down the iOS device survey information from the BARD Admin page. That cleans it up a lot. Number two is that all of our BARD technical support people are going to be at the NLS conference. Is the BARD Ops team going to be available and ready to answer questions that our patrons have, while we’re away?

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)

The regular download support folks are not going to be at the conference...so we’re not expecting any disruption in service. We should maintain our normal support efforts.

Question: (Richard Smith - MO)

I wanted to know if the Multi State’s will do local books that you’ll put up on BARD. With a hard copy for those of us who need them. The digital books: DBNs and DBCs and DBFs?

Question: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Through an Interlibrary Loan or using your quota?

Answer: (Richard Smith - MO)

Permanent Interlibrary Loan, using the quota.

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

That’s two different things.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

That IS two different things. But, you can interlibrary loan one of those titles for a patron, or you can use your quota to get a copy for yourself.

Question: (Richard Smith - MO)

The other question I had was ‘Will there be a table for outreach materials to swap with other libraries at the conference’?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

We’ll check on that. I’m not in charge of the conference, and the people who are, are off to Oklahoma. We’ll pass that along and see if they can arrange anything, but I’m not sure Richard... We’ll find somewhere to put it.

Question: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

Looking forward to seeing you guys in a few days. I have a question that’s a follow up to something that I was communicating with Mike Martys and/or Neil about, regarding permalinks to BARD records. Sort of like the ones that are used in Voyager. We were able to obtain the permalink to go directly to a BARD download. For example, in a bibliography. But, we are still having trouble with a couple of other items and one of those is electronic braille records. Where can we find a permalink to have a direct download to an entire BR download in BARD. Secondly, are there permalinks to the info pages so that – in some instances we may want to use that rather than going directly to the download – so that the patron can read about it on the BARD page. If this is too technical, maybe we can talk offline.

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)

For the first part of your question, is there a permalink to get the entire braille book? As you know, the links in the catalog are to individual braille volumes. That was an intentional decision.

Question: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

But the records on BARD are single entry point...

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)

They are, but they’re not permalinks, and this is not so much a technical issue as a policy issue. I’m going to have to follow up with my colleagues on the policy... So in other words, we can technically do it, we just have to make sure that there are no problems doing it... And then (for) the second part of your question: we never designed BARD for permalinks to the info pages. That doesn’t mean we can’t do it but we would sort of need to understand what the

requirements are that you have and what you're thinking to do. Obviously, if we do this, we'd want to try to make a system that works as best as it can for as many libraries as it can. Maybe the first step would be for you to shoot us some ideas about what you're thinking in this area – and then we can talk about how we would go about doing this.

A while ago when you were asking me about the book permalink, and I said 'try it now, it should work ok.' I never heard back from you, so I presumed it worked ok.

Comment: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

I'm sorry, I thought I had responded. Yes it works great and, for everyone else listening, this all came about because if you link to a BARD record from some other source – a Word file or whatever – the second time that you went in, it would not take you directly to that book, it would just take you to the BARD main page. So, Mr. Martys was able to help us with that.

Comment: (MaryBeth Wise - NLS)

I'm just calling to answer Richard's question about the table: Yes, I did get your message and there will be a table in the back of the General Session room to display items that you'd like to bring. Network libraries are encouraged to bring any brochures or things they would like to share and there will be a couple of display tables in the back of the room (one for Richard and one for everyone else – just kidding).

Comment: (James Gleason - MA)

Michael, If you could bring some information about posting permalinks from BARD, that would be great, because, I know our monthly Recommended Reads list that go out – we include the links. We were having the same trouble and we worked around it the best way we could. I tried it again with the links from BARD and it's working just fine.

Question: (Mary Jane Kayes – CA9)

I had a patron the other day who wanted the very latest upgrade for his player, and knew that a friend of his had a version labeled "8" and I think that's the version that's just the magazine upgrade. It's not available for download on BARD and I was wondering if there was a reason for that or just an oversight.

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)

Actually, this question did come up a while ago. We went to the engineers and brought this to their attention. The engineers were basically of the opinion that the only people who needed Version 8 were the people that were using the Magazine on Cartridge system. Version 8 was included with the MOC cartridges and therefore they felt that there was no need for anyone to download it. They were primarily thinking that it would just possibly cause another problem. If it didn't provide a distinct advantage, why risk a possible problem? That was their thinking. If a person is participating in the Magazine on Cartridge system, they actually get it along with the cartridge.

Question: (Mary Jane Kayes – CA9)

Is there an upgrade coming soon – so we'll all be on the same number?

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)

Not to my knowledge. When there is a release that requires it to be put out to everybody, they'll bump the number and move everybody but, right now I don't know of anything that's on deck.

Comment: (Richard Smith - MO)

I just got scared because of all the talk about permalinks because I have about 150 bibliographies on my website. Can someone check my "Recommended Readings" and see if I have the right permalinks?

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)

We can do that Richard, but I have a feeling that you're going to be fine. The problems that people have reported had to do with repeated use of permalinks – and it had to do with BARD properly bringing up the login page. The problems didn't have anything to do with what people were putting into their own personal documents. It had to do with the way permalinks worked on our end. Therefore, I feel pretty confident in saying that if they were working before, they'll be working now... There are actually programs that will automatically check all the links on a web page and give you a report.

Question: (Catherine Durivage - MN)

One of my staff asked about the magazine notification in BARD. Whether there was a way to be notified that an issue is available, but not have it added to the 'wish list.'

Answer: (Michael Martys - NLS)

No, we don't have that right now. The email comes with the wishlist. There isn't a way to have the email come without it going on your wishlist. I guess that if there's a lot of demand for that, we could put it back on our list of possible new features.

Comment: (Catherine Durivage - MN)

Some people might not want their wishlist cluttered up, they want to know it's available.

Comment: (Michael Martys - NLS)

Historically, we've often gotten requests from people (to) have BARD send an email. We've sort of been resisting that because we're sort of concerned about the consequences of that, which is, because email is not 100% reliable, if we did build this big system that generated all kinds of email messages, then you'll start getting questions from patrons about "why didn't I get an email at this time?" We felt that we had to be careful about how we deployed email, and if we did, it had to be for a very specific use. That's been driving our policy behind the use of email. It's technically possible to send out email for anything that happens in BARD but because email is not reliable it often causes other kinds of problems.

Comment: (Catherine Durivage - MN)

We wondered if there was a way to build it into the administrative function, so that libraries have this feature rather than the general populace.

Question: (Michael Martys - NLS)

You mean like having us notify the library folks when something happens in BARD?

Answer: (Catherine Durivage - MN)

Or, that we could set it up as an administrator account or a library account...so that we're notified when a magazine is not loaded.

Question: (Michael Martys - NLS)

If there were a webpage on BARD that gave you a very short, precise, terse, up-to-the-minute list of what's new on BARD, would that solve this problem?

Answer: (Catherine Durivage - MN)

Possibly. I'm getting conversation from a staff person that's not in my room. It's not easy for me to ask why this is important but we do get questions. Instead of going into BARD to check if a magazine has been loaded, we would get that notification. We do get questions about magazines...

Question: (Neil Bernstein - NLS)

You're saying that function would work for your library BARD account?

Answer: (Catherine Durivage - MN)

Yes...Maybe that feature could be setup as a feature for libraries to know and we could possibly turn it on or off...

Comment: (Neil Bernstein - NLS)

If you're not using your library accounts wishlist you can go ahead and subscribe to as many as you want to know about and you'll get the email. It'll clutter up your wishlist but if you're not using it...

Question: (Michael Martys - NLS)

The wishlist will be auto-purged after a year... Can you shoot me an email message so that I can follow up on this with you?

Answer: (Catherine Durivage - MN)

Yes and I will be at the conference, too.

Question: (Susan Roberts - FL)

We've had a couple of patrons in the last couple days express problems they're having with the Post Office over the order form in the March-April Talking Book Topics. They're pre-printed with the patron's address on them and also the library's address. The formatting seems to be quite odd. The patron's address is centered like it would be if they were the addressee, and then instead of the library's address being there, and the patron's return address being in the upper left-hand corner, it's down at the bottom of the panel. The post office is refusing to deliver them because of (confusion over) who's the addressee and who's it from? Has anyone else had a problem?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

This is the first we've heard of it but we can certainly follow up and look...

Comment: (Susan Roberts - FL)

I can send a photocopy of it to you...

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Yes please send a photo of that.

Question: (Pete Gagliano - LA)

Do we have a new successor to the For Sight contract for the recyclables?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Unfortunately not. We're looking at probably July before that contract is awarded.

Question: (Pete Gagliano - LA)

So I have lots of cassettes I need to just box up and hold, correct?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Yes, I'm afraid so.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Well, if there are no further questions, we will sign off and we look forward to seeing many of you at the conference starting this weekend and next week in Oklahoma – and we will be with you again on the phone call next month.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Thanks everybody!

No more questions or comments.