

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Welcome to the combination November-December conference call. We have 32 participants on the line. We're from several locations, so we'll start with the group down in the Adams building downtown. My name is Richard Smith, Chief of the Network Division, and to my right is...

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Steve Prine, Network Division; Vickie Collins, Network Services; Kristen Fernekes, Publications and Media Section; David Perrotta, Network Program Specialist; MaryBeth Wise, Network Services;

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

And at Taylor Street, can you introduce all the NLS staff?

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Sure, this is Paula Bahmani, Education and Training Specialist; Shana Osborne, Equipment Control Officer; Neil Bernstein, Research and Development Officer; Karen Keninger (Director); Judy Dixon, Consumer Relations Officer; Don Olson, Network Services.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Well great, I'm glad to have you here. Again, we are between the holidays and between continuing resolutions... We had a few questions and I don't know if anyone is here to answer them so, I'll probably give you short answers. Someone wanted to know about the pilot projects for Duplication-on-Demand. I didn't hear Michael Katzmann, who is running that project here, so basically...in general everyone is doing well with that pilot program. I know one of the six libraries is gung-ho in getting materials out... but the rest are going forward and we're going to go a few more months, but we're talking about having a panel discussion with that group – at the annual conference – so we will be looking at that. Someone else asked if there was a prototype for the next-generation player – with wireless download capability – and would it be demonstrated at our conference? The answer to that is, probably not. That's a little further down the road. Someone asked if the MOCA devices were being used as a long-term accessory or a short-term transitional? And basically the MOCA pilot is testing whether the interface will work around the country and also, how it's working with BARD. So it's not a long-term accessory as it is. It's a pilot project. Someone else asked that if indeed, they were seeing a lot more Science Fiction & Fantasy titles coming out of our Collection Development. Historically, that's been a low-demand item... and Ed isn't here to answer that question but, we'll take that to him – maybe the next call. Anyone else...want to mention anything that's going on in Washington (DC)?

Comment: (Kristen Fernekes - NLS)

Hi everyone. This is Kristen Fernekes from the Publications and Media section. I wanted to bring up something that we have coming up, and I think that I may have referred to it in previous calls. We're sending out some information to ask you guys all the questions based on – we have some upcoming outreach that will start in February of 2018 – in the middle of the month. This is going to be...one advertisement (that will be) running at 3-week intervals, so this will be national television and national radio advertising that will begin. We're very excited about this outreach, and, what we're trying to check in with the Network Libraries about is, when the ads run, the ads will actually direct individuals to both our website and to our toll-free telephone number. And of course, as you all know, the toll-free telephone number asks people to identify their state so that they can be directed to their local library for information and assistance.

The thing that we're trying to make sure about now is that the libraries actually have the capacity to accept voicemail. Not just that you have recordings that will answer the phone, but where people will have an opportunity to leave you a message. The reason that we're doing that – of course – is, these ads will be running at various times of the day and evening, so people may be trying to get in touch with you after hours. We just want to make sure that people have the opportunity to leave you a message, and that you can respond to them the following day or when you get the opportunity to. So, Vickie is going to be reaching out to individual libraries to check to see that (A) you have voicemail that can accept messages, and then (B) also the recorded messages that you have are recent and up to date. Sometimes I forget what my voicemail message was – going out – because I recorded it so long ago. So that's what we're going to ask people to check on, so that this is as easy a process as possible when these advertisements start to run. Just to assure everybody – the estimates that we have now – we don't believe that any one library will have a rush of telephone calls – maybe 60 in one day (network-wide).

Comment: (Vickie Collins - NLS)

So, thanks to those who have already responded to the email, and for those of you who haven't, we look forward to hearing from you. Everything has been positive, so far.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Excellent. That's it for Adams. Anything up at Taylor Street?

Comment: (Paula Bahmani - NLS)

I just wanted to say something really quickly about the MOCA library trial and pilot. I wanted to thank all the library staff who participated in the library trial and to those of you who submitted responses to the survey. We do appreciate your input. Since no libraries expressed an interest in beginning the pilot during the holiday season by the November 30th deadline, we are planning to begin distributing devices to patrons after the first of the year. NLS staff on the MOCA team are putting together some talking points to help identify some participants, and we will distribute that to Network libraries in the next week or so. Once we receive the last batch of MOCA devices, we will QA them for proper cartridge connections. At that time, we'll no for certain how many devices we have, and how many participants will be needed from each library. We're estimating not more than four patrons per library. And of course, libraries who may wish to have less than four patron participants may do so. We're still working on the rollout plan and we'll share details with the libraries when they are finalized. In the meantime, please start thinking about patrons of your libraries who meet the following criteria: Patrons who currently are not BARD users and who have never had a BARD account; patrons who are active readers – 3 or more books per month; patrons who can be easily contacted by telephone; patrons who are flexible and cooperative and who would be willing to return the device if a cellular connection cannot be reached. Libraries will also continue to serve these patrons with books by mail during the pilot.

Comment: (Shana Osborne - NLS)

Thanks Paula... I wanted to give you guys a little additional information regarding the DTBM remote-control that was released. As you know, that (designation) is AC030. We've had so many questions. I just wanted to give some additional information. The remote does come with two AA batteries. We are not equipped to provide replacement batteries. Double-A batteries are pretty standard. You can pretty much pick these up anywhere – even your local dollar store if necessary. In addition, the range on a remote is about 15 feet. Of course, that's dependent upon the utilized environment as well. There's no application required for the remote controls – and there are no serial numbers on the remotes as well. The discretion on who you issue those to is solely up to the libraries. We currently only have the 5000 in stock. We don't have a date on when we will receive additional supplies for the remotes – and when we do receive them of course we'll provide notice. Thank you.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Thank you. I don't hear anyone else from Taylor Street. I think with that, we can open the forum up to questions from the field.

Question: (Michael Lang - KS)

I had a question from our State School for the Blind and they were wondering if there was any movement on the NFB braille transcriber certification? The braille certification program.

Answer: (Judy Dixon - NLS)

We're in the final stages of preparing that contract. We had expected for it to be awarded at the end of last week but it should be awarded any day now.

Question: (Catherine Rubin - NC)

I had one question about the remote control. Does NLS plan to mention the availability of these remote controls in Talking Book Topics, or other ways? And if so, when?

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

The answer is "no." We're going to leave it to the discretion of the libraries to distribute those – mainly because there is a limited number.

Question: (Joshua Berkov - NC)

If the federal government were to shut down, does that mean that BARD will also shut down?

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

(Last time) BARD itself was actually able to continue on a limited-staff basis – but there is no guarantee if it will or not, so unless Karen has more information – Michael Martys isn't here.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

And of course if any problem comes up with BARD, there won't be anyone to fix it because it's not considered an "emergency" system.

Question: (Joshua Berkov - NC)

Second question – regarding the remote. If there are no serial numbers on the remotes then, do we either have to come up with our own barcodes or numbers to check them out to patrons? Or are these considered consumable – which I wouldn't think they would be?

Answer: (Shana Osborne - NLS)

That would be up to the libraries. It's an accessory that you would issue like any other accessory.

Question: (Erica McCaleb - FL)

I had a quick question about MOCA. For the patron pilots. I was just curious – I know that the first test-period was restricted to regional libraries. I was curious if subregional libraries would be able to help with the patron pilot or if that is restricted to just regional libraries?

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Well, it is restricted to regional libraries because we have a limited number of MOCAs.

Question: (Kim Charlson - MA)

I have two questions. One I think might be for Kristen – about the media campaign. I'm wondering when the radio spots and the television spots are finalized and, if there's any way they could be put on a website and the links sent out, so that we - as Network staff - could view them and hear them so that we're aware of what the ad campaign is?

Answer: (Kristen Fernekes - NLS)

Sure. We actually can do that. We've gotten first cuts on both of those, so - we wouldn't want to share them quite yet because we're making some final revisions to them – but we can certainly make sure that they are some place that you can see them. Just to give you a little information, we have put stuff in the newsletter, to talk a little about what the narrative is – so I would suggest that you look at that – but we will absolutely look for a way to make sure that those are viewable by the Network Libraries before they go out. The first three-week period in which these are going to be shown, start in mid-February. We've got a little bit of time, but we will definitely keep that in mind. That's a good suggestion.

Question: (Kim Charlson - MA)

My second question is a MOCA question, and I think Paula may have touched on this. We sent in names of patrons that we thought would be good candidates for the pilot test with patrons. And now – as generally happens – because we have to talk to them and tell them what this is, they tend to call us back and say "did I get picked, did I get picked?" So I'm kind of wondering what the timeline is to identify them so that I can have an answer ready the next time they call and say "did I get picked?" because they're so excited about being a considered a pilot-tester that, I can let them know one way or the other – if they did get selected or not selected. So if there is a way that you can help me manage that process, I'd love it.

Question: (Paula Bahmani - NLS)

Kim, how many patrons did you send in?

Answer: (Kim Charlson - MA)

Either three or four names.

Answer: (Paula Bahmani - NLS)

Okay. As I said before in my discussion earlier, we're thinking it's not going to be more than four. (The number could go down) because we haven't had a chance to QA the last set of deliverable MOCA devices, and that may render some of them not useable...we're pretty sure it's not going to go up. We're supposed to get those next week I believe, and then it shouldn't take us longer than a week to QA them, and then we'll have a better answer for you. ...I think that there's a probably a good likelihood that all four of your patrons will be able to participate.

Comment: (Vickie Collins - NLS)

We should mention too, Kim – really NLS is not making the decision about who the patrons are. We're just setting the criteria and also we'll be determining the number of patrons. The actual patrons themselves – we don't know, so we won't be able to make any determination as to whether they're in or out – as long as they meet the criteria. If there is somebody that's had a BARD account previously, that's problematic. That's not going to meet the criteria, so there are those kinds of factors to consider.

Comment: (Kim Charlson - MA)

Right, and we should have certainly screened those out before we committed names to you, so I just wanted to be sure that I'm saying the right things and that I'm managing their expectations and that kind of thing.

Comment: (Vickie Collins - NLS)

We haven't yet requested those names because there are various components that we will need when we request the names, so we'll be letting all the libraries know the data that will be needed to submit the names.

Question: (Sue Greene - MI)

I have a question on the white batteries. I wondered when they would be off backorder – if they had a timeframe for that?

Answer: (Paula Bahmani - NLS)

Shana has left. She had to step out. It would probably be best if you could email her – and she can probably provide that information for you.

Question: (Sue Greene - MI)

So probably my questions on the remote – I should do that also?

Answer: (Paula Bahmani - NLS)

Yes.

Question: (Susan Hammer-Schneider - ND)

I have a question about the remote. Is this something that's always going to be available? Or is it a short-term thing? We're just wondering how many to order and how it's going to go over with the patrons that do have the Standard machine – we're thinking about Duplication-on-Demand right now and, to use it with that – and, just wondering what the future holds on these remotes.

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Well again Sue, the main thing is that the remote will be able to enable the Standard machine to act like an Advanced machine. For Duplication-on-Demand, that's not necessary. The Standard machine does the "Bookshelf" which is good for multiple books on a cartridge. So the remote just provides for the Standard machine to have some of the features of the Advanced machine. We got 5,000 of them. Again, we've got 500,000 machines out there – so, we're limited this time around. We're hopeful we'll be able to get some extra ones in the future.

Question: (Susan Hammer-Schneider - ND)

Is this because you're not making any more Advanced machines?

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

By the time we decide to make new machines, we may be into the new wireless machine.

Question: (Ricardo * – CA9)**

I have two questions: The first one is, when someone went to order the remote controls, it said there were zero left. Should we just put in the order anyway and hope that we'll get some – in San Francisco?

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Yes. I hope we didn't send out all 5,000 to one library! Yes put those in and I'll mention to Shana tomorrow to double-check.

Question: (Ricardo * – CA9)**

And the second one was about the conversion of foreign language into digital book format. I was wondering if all the RCs in foreign languages will be available in digital format? Or just the ones that have been made already?

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

I think that it's a continuing process so, it continues on for the foreign language – out of the East. So, we'll continue on with that project.

Comment: (Ricardo * – CA9)**

Okay. Thank you. I looked up some information we got about it and, I think there are four Mandarin titles, and I would like to be able to offer more for our Chinese-speaking patrons.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Well, with that I guess I'll go "ho ho ho, happy holidays!" We'll talk to you at the end of January – the last Wednesday of January. We'll go back to the last Wednesday of the month after this month.

No more questions or comments.