PALS and Open Source
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PALS has been working with open source technologies including an electronic resource management (ERM) system, an openURL link resolver, a discovery tool, and an integrated library system (ILS). While these tools provide benefits to your staff and patrons, there are challenges in the configuration and setup. In this session we will share our experiences with working in the open source community - both the obstacles and opportunities.

Goal: Financially sustainable, high-quality library tools
Solution: Open Source

Goal: to provide libraries with a Web 2.0 Discovery layer for the OPAC.
Solution: MnPALS Plus
Based on: VuFind from Villanova University.
http://plus.mnpals.net/
http://vufind.org/

Goal: to offer libraries an affordable and flexible link resolver that provides their patrons with seamless delivery of full text.
Solution: PALSconnect Linker
Based on: reSearcher CUFTS and GODOT from Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia.
Example journal A to Z list: http://cufts.mnpals.net/CJDB/NCT/browse .
Simon Fraser researcher: http://researcher.sfu.ca/ .

Goal: to provide libraries with an affordable Electronic Resource Management System, which streamlines the management of these resources and makes resource information readily available to library staff and patrons.
Solution: PALSconnect ERM
Based on: the ERM module of reSearcher CUFTS.
Example resource A to Z list: http://cufts.mnpals.net/CRDB/MTC .

Goal: to provide libraries with an alternative to complicated, expensive traditional ILS.
Solution: Evergreen
http://egdev.mnpals.net/opac/en-US/skin/craftsman/xml/index.xml
http://evergreen-ils.org/

For more on any of these open source tools, visit the PALS website:
http://www.mnpals.org/

What have we learned?

Support and Training
- Functional
  - These tools have been created by real users -> they work!
  - Intuitive end-user interfaces
  - Evolutionary process
- Affordable
  - Start-up is costly; documentation is scarce
  - BUT, not much time spent waiting for changes, if you have tech support
- Control
  - No enhancement request process
  - Immediate feedback
  - Feeling of ownership
- Quality
  - If assembled properly, the result is a solid, yet flexible product

Technical Services
- Functional
  - Source code available -> we can enhance and customize the application
  - There is a group of developers that are in control
  - Don't want to be off by yourself
  - Need to load software updates
  - Can make it work for a consortium
- Affordable
  - More tech staff time and skills required
- Control
  - We control our own destiny
- Quality
  - Faster bug fixes

Administration
- Functional
  - The products work!
- Affordable
  - It takes longer than you think it will
  - It takes a team
  - Need stakeholder buy-in
- Control
  - Flexible investments
  - Choose your provider
- Quality
  - Strength of the community
  - Customized services

Summary: It's all about SERVICE!

Through Our Work
Knowledge Grows