

ADPNet: Managing a Mature PLN

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ADPNet = 10 Years

- Started with a two-year IMLS grant in 2006-2008
- Began with seven members; currently has nine, including two public libraries and the Alabama state archives
- Two routes to membership: join the LOCKSS Alliance or pay ADPNet directly
- Rotating leadership
- Only statewide PLN in U.S. (Indiana next?)

Challenges

Technical

Financial

Administrative

Cultural

{Technical}

Scalability

(growing network capacity
in a sustainable way)

The issues

- Network needs more storage for large content sets, but...
- Not everybody needs or can afford more storage
- Solution: “super-nodes” of 40+ TB at at least four member institutions (Archives, Auburn, BPL, and University of Alabama), smaller nodes at remaining institutions
- Result: a two-tiered preservation network
- Also on the docket: develop “a user-friendly, hotswap enclosure that is small form factor, low-power, cool and quiet” for IT-challenged institutions

{Financial}

Balance

(between keeping membership affordable and paying the bills)

The issues

- ADPNet has no paid staff or rented infrastructure
- Like most things in Alabama, it runs on sweat equity
- Revenue comes from ADPNet membership fees and storage charges
- One standing expense: the annual LOCKSS bill for the network
- Periodic expense: expanding or replacing network nodes
- Some members switching from LOCKSS Alliance to (cheaper) ADPNet memberships—effect on revenue
- Solution: recruit new members and/or raise ADPNet membership fees

{Administrative}

Simplicity

(keep the network low-
maintenance)

The issues

- Managing a growing network while preserving a lightweight administrative structure (two standing committees, monthly conference calls)
- Spreading administrative experience evenly among the members
- Coordinating effectively with NAAL and the NAAL directors
- Developing fair guidelines for using ADPNet funds
- Encouraging local initiatives (e.g. in technology)

{Cultural}

Engagement

(moving away from a vendor-centric service model)

The issues

- Overcome library/vendor mentality
- Replace it with an ownership mentality
- Remind deans and directors to make ADPNet a priority, and communicate that to staff
- Encourage participation on conference calls and committees
- Respect rotating governance duties
- Incentives/stipends?

Where we want to be

- Two-tiered network storage architecture and hardware diversity
- Easy on-ramp for new members and new content
- Growing (or at least stable) membership
- Stable finances and healthy account balance
- Affordable for small and large institutions alike
- Full engagement and support from deans and directors
- Lightweight administration with shared governance
- No paid staff

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