



Association of Research Libraries' (ARL) White Paper on Interlibrary Loan by Anne K. Beaubien, University of Michigan

Resource sharing through interlibrary loan and enhanced bibliographic access is one of the Academic Libraries of Indiana's strategic objectives. In June, 2007, Anne K. Beaubien, Director, Cooperative Access Services, University of Michigan Library, published a white paper through the Association of Research Libraries that helps to inform the conversation about resource sharing, particularly to understand changes in interlibrary loan borrowing patterns, based on ARL data during the period 1998 through 2004.

The author addresses four topics:

1. **Definition of Interlibrary Loan**, differentiating between *returnable items*, e.g., books, audiovisual items, microfilms, and *non-returnable items*, e.g., journal articles, conference papers.
2. **Statistics/Trends**, pointing out that ARL institutions have seen a 24% increase for the interlibrary loan of returnables between 1998 and 2004, while non-returnables decreased by 4% during the same period.
3. **Reasons for Increases in ILL Transactions**, identifying discovery tools that enhance awareness of returnables as a reason for the increase. These tools include indices, searching the Web, and Google Books. Another reason is that borrowing via interlibrary loan is easier than ever before with programs such as *Borrow Direct* and *ILLiad* utilities, and lastly, because of flat budgets at libraries for purchasing returnables.
4. **Description of Current Practice: Workflow for Borrowing Requests**, pointing out that most borrowing (for ARL) is placed via the OCLC WorldCat Resource Sharing system. The author mentions the advantage of posting non-returnable PDFs to a secure Web site, allowing the requester a reasonable period to read the document and/or to download it — a practice common with many libraries using *ILLiad*, *Ariel*, and other interlibrary loan systems.

Read this white paper at

http://ali.bsu.edu/archives/publications/ARL_WhitePaperILL_June2007.pdf. This paper is provided on the ALI website with ARL permission.

While on the topic of resource sharing, each readers' attention is directed to a white paper developed by the **Indiana Resource Sharing Task Force**, January 2007, "Wagging the Long Tail: Sharing More of Less; Recommendations for Enhancing Resource Sharing in Indiana."

[Submitted by Arthur W. Hafner, Dean of University Libraries, Ball State University, and ALI Board Member, 07-19-2007.]