

**Transportation Library Connectivity
Pooled Fund Study TPF-5(105)
TAC conference call – 6/5/09 – Minutes**

Quarterly Teleconference
Date: Friday, 6/5/09
Time: 10:00 AM-12:00 PM CT

URL: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/307243466>
Call-in number: 1-877-336-1286
Access Code: 3600843

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Agenda:

The three topics of this TAC conference call and Webinar were federated searching via a presentation from Ken Winter on VDOT's OneSearch product, the future of the pooled fund for FFY2010 and beyond, and the available funding for FFY2010.

Federated Search: VDOT OneSearch – Ken Winter, VDOT

1. VDOT has a federated search called OneSearch, which runs on the WebFeat Express tool. This is a hosted software solution that VDOT connects to that is customizable to meet VDOT's needs. There is no maintenance of the tool required by VDOT. OneSearch can be accessed at <http://ntl.bts.gov/exit/vdot.html>.
2. VDOT created a federated search tool because the number of relevant documents coming back from Internet searches overwhelmed employees. Staff was also confused by the number of transportation-related repositories and didn't have time to search all of them individually. They wanted one place to conduct a search and desired simplicity and speed over precision.
3. VDOT's goals for creating OneSearch included figuring out how to implement a federated search tool, to give transportation researchers a starting point, to reinforce the importance of cataloging and indexing holdings, and to share the tool and the process for creating it. VDOT wanted a simple tool that would broadcast a single search query to multiple databases and merge the collected results.
4. The debate of the federated search is about precision versus recall. Most searchers want quick results that cast a wide net, while librarians and researchers want precision.
5. VDOT selected WebFeat's tool for several reasons including flexibility, scalability, functionality, affordability and simplicity. WebFeat has over 16,500 library clients and has created, and maintains, over 10,000 translators.
 - o Each database that the tool searches needs a translator. Translators take WebFeat four to six weeks to build. VDOT has created 40 translators so far.
 - o VDOT has found implementing OneSearch to be fairly easy, but they have relied on WebFeat to do a lot of work for them.
6. VDOT has up to 50 databases that can be searched through OneSearch. Forty databases can be searched at one time.
 - o OneSearch search results are shown exactly how each database would show its results if you were searching it directly. Results can be exported and/or emailed. Results are also given in subsets so they can be narrowed down further.
7. Ken compiled a list of top 10 things to remember about a federated search tool.
 - o You must have access, including subscriptions, to the databases you want to search.

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- o A federated search will not find content that is not indexed or cataloged in the native databases.
 - o A federated search can't create new search functionality. The federated search can only do what the native databases can do.
 - o You can't control others' databases, but only pass searches on to them. Your federated search may be blocked by other databases, such as Google.
 - o Federated searching happens in real time; the more databases you are searching, the longer the search time.
 - o There is duplicated content among databases, which can confuse searchers.
 - o You may have to purchase more seat licenses if you are using a federated search to search a subscription database.
 - o Choose your databases wisely and only focus on those that relate to the information you want access to.
 - o Most federated search tools are for internal customers only.
 - o A federated search is not recommended for complicated searches.
8. Is a federated search tool right for you? It needs to increase the ROI on your subscription databases; it should increase the usage of subscription databases that otherwise may not get used. Also, patrons don't have the desire to search multiple databases. Federated searching is not a silver bullet but it is getting more affordable and flexible.
9. What has been the response from VDOT customers? The feedback on OneSearch has been positive. The tool needs to be explained to users and marketing and outreach are important. Customers are so strapped for time that they don't see a downside to the tool. Searching has increased by a lot because customers can search multiple databases at one time.
10. What is the cost of this tool? The WebFeat Express tool allows up to 50 databases to be searched and is approximately \$8,750/year for enterprise-wide searching.
11. How hard was it to sell this tool to VDOT? The selling of the database went well because VDOT encourages innovation and the use of new technology.

2010 and Beyond – All

1. The group had a discussion regarding the direction of the pooled fund study in FFY2010 (10-01-09 to 9-30-10) and potentially in FFY 2011 (10-01-10 to 9-30-11). WisDOT will continue to lead the current study TPF-5(105) through FFY 2010, but at that end of that period a new study will need to be launched, if members wish to continue the effort, with a different state in the lead role.
- o John would like to see some form of Library Connectivity pooled fund continue beyond FFY 2010 with special projects involving the three TKNs. This promotes unity and resource sharing between the groups. This may help bring new members to the pooled fund and allow others who are not able to join the study benefit from what we are doing.
 - John feels that having individual pooled funds for the regional TKNs may not be as effective. One unified network is an advantage for smaller libraries. Having one consultant looking at the national picture and giving libraries suggestions on things to do is very helpful. It also makes it convenient to bring in speakers, such as Ken Winter, to provide education on topics that individual librarians wouldn't have time to learn on their own.
 - o Kathy echoed John's sentiment. She wonders what the pooled fund members would be able to do individually without this study. She would like to continue the pooled fund to show others what can be done and would like the study to have a national scope if it continues.
 - o AJ would like the pooled fund to identify other shared needs. What can we all do together that has not been identified yet?
 - o Hank feels one of the best things about the pooled fund is the exertion of peer pressure on agencies without libraries or that don't support libraries. The study allows staff from those organizations to attend regional and national meetings. There is also peer pressure among research directors to have their libraries come up to par when they see what their peers are doing. Hank also feels that the pooled fund sponsorship of members to attend the SLA conference is a great benefit. SLA is the best place for librarians to learn about the cutting edge of their field, as well as to engage in networking, resource sharing and problem solving..
 - o Bonnie likes the idea of having one pooled fund because all of the libraries have to look at best practices, networking and technology. The pooled fund saves individual libraries time and money.
2. The group also discussed NTL. What is the role of NTL? What if NTL doesn't get funding for the NTKN in the transportation reauthorization bill? How do the libraries keep moving forward with a national network?

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- o John said that if no funding comes through for the NTKN, then a pooled fund study in some form would be needed to continue the momentum. He is not sure the regional TKNs by themselves could keep that momentum going. Maybe librarians could go to their research directors and ask for ideas on alternative funding sources if NTKN is not funded.
- o Pat asked what the relationship between TKNs and NTL should be. Are TKNs viewing NTL/NTKN as providing guidance to them or is it the other way around?
- o Marie sees Amanda as a fearless leader and is happy to take guidance, coordination and leadership from her. Marie feels that Amanda is very receptive to others' ideas and is both a leader and a peer.
- o Hank feels that Amanda and NTL know what's going on from both a policy perspective and a national perspective. NTL can set things in motion that benefits everyone, especially around communication and funding issues. NTL has access that individuals don't.
- o Sandy said that NTKN is the guide for the regional groups to follow. Individual libraries can implement the ideas coming from the national level.
- o John feels that Amanda should be asked if she needs additional resources/staff to carry out her vision and what that would be.
- o Dale feels that the regional TKNs have greater impact by focusing on what's happening in their local areas. TKNs get greater participation at the local/regional level and bring participants into the broader community. Amanda, at the national level, can do things that individuals can't and individual libraries can provide her with political support.
- o AJ voiced that Amanda is very easy to work with and very supportive. He wonders what would happen if a different person was in her position at NTL. He feels that the big group approach needs to be tempered and everyone's needs should be kept in mind.
- o The current business plan for the NTKN calls for \$13.5M from the reauthorization bill. John asked what the plan is for alternative funding if the NTKN is not funded in the reauthorization bill. John also asked how the work in the business plan would get carried out. Will staff be added to NTL or will NTL contract out the projects? John would like to see a visual representation of who would be doing what.
 - Maggie said that nothing has been formalized yet about who would actually do the work of the business plan.

FFY2010/Contract Year 5 budget

1. There are a couple of options of how to work with the pooled fund budget for FFY2010/Contract Year 5.
 - o There will be a balance of about \$273K for FFY2010/Contract Year 5, which would mean current services and benefits could continue at approximately the same level as Year 4 without states having to commit further funds. This assumes full members wouldn't use any funds for extra travel and that special projects would not be funded at a higher level than currently.
- OR
- o Members who have not made commitments for FFY2010/Contract Year 5 would be asked to do so. The TAC would need to decide what to do with the extra funds.
2. The group was not asked to make any decisions regarding the budget on the call, but to share their initial thoughts. This topic will be discussed in further detail later in the summer.
3. Hank likes the Outsell webinars and presentations. He feels they are worth every penny the pooled fund spends on them and would like to have more of them next year. He would also like to have money for travel to regional and national meetings. He feels this benefit is a good selling point of the study.
4. Marie asked if some members haven't made a commitment for FFY2010/Contract Year 5, are they still members?
5. At this point WisDOT experienced a phone outage that abruptly ended the teleconference for everyone. Maggie will send out a formal survey to all TAC members in early July asking for their input on the issues discussed, so that a draft work plan can be prepared and approved prior to the September 17 annual meeting/Webinar.

The teleconference ended at 11:50am.