

## WiLS USER SURVEY – COMMENTS

Open-ended comments were solicited in three main areas; additional input was sought from non-members.

A. Current WiLS Services: Cooperative Purchasing, ILL, OCLC

B. Comments on “things WiLS does especially well” and “services your library could not live without.”

C. Responses to “what problems have you experienced in the relationship?” “how could WiLS fix the problems” and “what else could WiLS do for your library?”

### A. Current Service Programs

1. **Cooperative Purchasing** - 81 total comments falling into four categories – Kudos, Criticisms, Neutral and Suggestions. The Kudos tended to come from School Districts; the complaints were most often from Academic libraries.

**Kudos** – 45 comments such as:

With cooperative purchasing, our school district is able to purchase more databases. The discounts for library supplies is also a very valuable asset to our district.

I like the ability of ordering many of our resources from one source. Service has always been great.

We have negotiated some of our own database licenses in the past few years due to need in demanding program areas. Negotiating database licenses is very time consuming. If we did this all the time I would not have time to do my other two jobs.

Cheryl Bradley always does a great job. Thank you Cheryl! Your work and pleasant manner are much appreciated.

**Criticisms** – 9 comments such as:

While cooperative purchasing is essential for WiLS, it seems that the practice behind cooperative purchasing could be enhanced. We have had a few experiences where it seemed that the prices were not negotiated with for the best interest of the library,

The level of discount offered is often eaten up by the WiLS fees. Tracking of billing and renewal dates is somewhat inefficient. Resources get canceled because bills have to be requested rather than just being sent or because WiLS staff fail to notify us

Sometimes we are contacted by the vendor for renewal before we are contacted by WiLS. This is probably overenthusiasm on the vendor's part but it can be confusing for staff who do not know that we purchase a particular product via WiLS.

**Neutral** – 5 comments such as:

We purchase supplies from Demco and Highsmith, using the WILS discount.

We are a small library in the System and NEED the help of our sister institutions.

We only use the Demco discount from WiLS. We don't subscribe to any databases through WiLS cooperative purchasing agreement, though I wish that we did.

**Suggestions** – 13 comments such as:

Need to make more district business offices and administration aware of its advantages.

Would like to see additional vendors/products available through the cooperative purchasing program

Many of us have purchased products directly from vendors (because not enough other libraries were ordering at that time). It would be interesting if WILS could ask everyone what products they purchase directly and then renegotiate those prices whenever enough libraries are ordering the same one. This would help to gather those individual orders into group orders.

2. **WiLS ILL** - 28 Comments on WiLS ILL grouped into four categories – Kudos, Criticisms, Neutral and “other.” There was no significance by type of library.

**Kudos** – 13 comments such as:

Their service is very good. I personally wish they did not charge, but their prices are much more reasonable than some colleges. I always get immediate service when I call. Gold Stars to Bob Shaw and his co-workers. When I started many years ago, they walked me through some really tough days... I will always be in their debt.

WILS service is excellent. The staff are the best. We could not provide are excellent customer service without their services.

We don't use it often, but it's good to know that it's there when we need it, and we've gotten good service from the few times we've needed it. (One time they even called us to suggest a different lending string to save us money!)

**Criticisms** – 2 comments

We avoid going to WILS whenever possible because of the cost, but I still think it provides an essential service.

I find having to go through WILS for all my UW-Madison requests to be extremely annoying especially when UW-Madison can come direct to us. Sometimes when I call with problems follow up with slow. I do find many of the staff though enjoyable to work with.

**Neutral** – 6 comments were “neutral” in that they did not speak specifically to WiLS ILL or were more of a “don't know” type comment

I have also used Tech Search when I was with a corporate library for many years. It enabled our corporate library to have access to articles outside of our collection.

I can only use WILS if my need is not urgent. Most of my ILL requests require 1-2 day turn around.

**“Other”** – there were 7 of these

We strongly believe that OCLC ILL is the best way to deliver high quality, efficient ILL service. It is frustrating to see mega \$\$\$ spent on WISCAT/BadgerCAT with different catalog and ILL vendors and contracts so short that the bugs are just being eliminated when it is time to negotiate a new contract.

Felt forced into using OCLC for ILL, but the service has been good for our patrons. Unfortunately, it is also going to be costly. And it renewed the chasm (both real and perceived) between the OCLC and non-OCLC libraries.

WiLS serves to subsidize UW-Madison so the latter doesn't have to maintain a full ILL department the way other Wisconsin libraries must. This is essentially unfair.

WILS ILL is the access point for UW-Madison libraries at this time. If that was not the case, WiLS ILL would not be needed.

Unfortunately ILL staff is not available today to guide me in filling out this section but I do know that our ILL dept. avoids using WiLS as much as possible due to costs. Although I am not in the ILL dept., I have long thought that WiLS ILL services unfairly subsidize UW-Madison so the latter does not have to fully staff their own institution's ILL Dept. This is unfair to other libraries in the state who are already also paying a membership fee to WiLS and a transaction surcharge to WiLS.

3. **WiLS OCLC** - 59 comments in this section with some clearly more directed to OCLC than to WiLS OCLC. Categories include Kudos, Criticisms, "OCLC not WiLS focused," "don't know" and "other." Comments came from all types of libraries.

**Kudos** – 17 comments such as:

WILS staff has always been helpful when I had questions.

When I try to call OCLC directly I always get stuck in a loop in the call system. WILS is worth it just to be able to pick up the phone and talk to some directly and get an answer in an efficient time frame.

We wouldn't be anywhere near as well organized and up-and-running as we are without WiLS. I've also never been made to feel stupid when I've asked what may have been obvious questions.

Kirsten Houtman is my primary contact for FirstSearch product questions, support, and training, and she is fantastic!

**Criticisms** – 15 comments such as:

My sense is that OCLC drives too much of WILS efforts, and frankly creates a conflict of interest. While WILS can point technically to how they are not an agency of OCLC, in practical terms, over the past twenty years, they have grown more and more focused on the promotion of OCLC over the promotion of cooperation among Wisconsin libraries.

The surcharge for WiLS products is costly. But there is no way currently to work directly with OCLC.

I believe Wisconsin should consider consolidating with Minitex for OCLC services. Increasingly in recent years when one contacts WiLS for OCLC services one is simply referred on to OCLC directly. Additionally, in the recent past WiLS has offered classes on things like maintaining a hard drive - classes that have nothing to do with WiLS services and I think have been offered simply to keep WiLS "busy".

I don't think WiLS staff puts enough importance on the need for training. Training sessions I have attended are not well put together, and not very informative.

It is sometimes difficult to get reliable information about purchase costs for OCLC products. The bills are difficult to interpret.

Being the contract agent for OCLC puts WiLS in the role of vendor. When is this a conflict of interest with serving Wisconsin libraries as a whole? My answer would be BadgerCat and furthering the rift of large vs small libraries for interlibrary loan.

**"OCLC not WiLS related"** – 10 comments such as:

We love having to access OCLC. It has saved us time and that means money.

I am the cataloger. OCLC is my friend.

I'd like to see serious exploration into an OCLC discovery tool (some version of WorldCat) that could replace our local online public access catalog. Development is needed.

**Don't Know, or need more information** – 12 comments such as:

Would appreciate more information about OCLC-related WILS services that are available to small libraries such as mine.

I don't personally use OCLC because our cataloging is done at the district level. I know the catalogers use it regularly.

**Other** – 3 comments including

I think it is a sad fact that WiLS and R&L can't work together and provide ILL for the state of WI. We have two agencies competing for a very limited pot of money.

I like World Cat very much but am confused by the fact that Wiscat still exists. It's confusing when trying to look up holdings especially of high school libraries from two separate catalogs. Is it possible to move to one catalog? Preferably, WorldCat?

**B. What WiLS does well; what services your library could not do without**

There were **171 responses to “what does WiLS do well.”** Things mentioned included 73 specific to Current Services, 60 specifically about responsiveness of staff, 21 spoke directly to various WiLS events and training with half of these focused on WiLSWorld Conference or including WiLSWorld in the statement; 9 identified the value of leadership, 7 were “don't know” and 1 was a negative comment (“what WiLS does well is charge for services”).

I am extremely happy with the support that the WiLS staff provides; for OCLC products, in response to questions about datadases,etc. I can call or email at anytime and expect a prompt, courteous and knowledgeable response. I know these staff members by name due to their proactive training and promotion (WiLSWorld for instance).

Communication and support are outstanding. Whenever I have called with a question or a problem, I have talked to a real person and had my question answered or problem solved before I got off the phone.

I believe that the communication coming from WiLS is excellent. There is always an update coming, especially where there are problems with OCLC or other services - a note is sent from WiLS. I also think that the training that is provided by WiLS is top notch. The staff knows their stuff and when in doubt, I have always been contacted with an answer within a day or so.

remaining connected with member libraries; advocating for reasonable pricing for OCLC and other cooperative services; helping to establish connections - when appropriate - beyond the WiLS organization.

Staff are great: very helpful and knowledgeable. Website provides a lot of answers to questions. Webinars are great to save on travel time.

staff responsiveness --work to provide consortial pricing on variety of services and products --keeps abreast of national and international emerging trends in libraries and information management --work to improve services and anticipate needs of libraries

The conferences and meetings that WiLS sponsors are exceptional; particularly WiLS World. WiLS staff are fantastic in responding to questions by phone or email. (And they are very nice when you ask stupid questions.) I see great promise in the collaborative projects that WiLS is providing leadership for (like WHO) and I hope that they are able to build momentum for that. I'd also like to see other initiatives started and I think that WiLS is one of the only organizations that work across all library types.

They seem very responsive to changes in the library world - I particularly appreciate their WiLS World every year. They always seem pretty nimble and supportive of The Next Big Thing, willing to lead other institutions down the path.

WiLS is a terrific source of information about new tech stuff, the organizer of the best library technology conference in the midwest (WiLSWorld), and a group of really nice, really smart, hardworking people.

WOW, this survey is emitting feelings of low self worth. The cost of everything is going up these days faster than the income budget potential, I think this may be part of the charge behind your (mostly unwarranted) criticism. Perhaps more education on "who WILS" is may stop this. I have only personally dealt with representatives from WILS for 3 years. I really don't know if WILS is part of DPI, UW-Madison, or a secret agent working with OCLC to take over the world. :) I don't really care. But if people don't know much about an organization they tend to make things up. Just a thought... Honestly, some database vendors drive me nuts (Proquest & Oxford) and it is easier to deal with Cheryl for most of our services than 20 independent vendors that don't return calls in a timely manor. The fact that I don't have go through a 12 step phone menu to reach anyone at WILS also makes my day.

Facilitate interlibrary loan between various types of libraries.

I find Mary always understanding about problems and Bob Shaw and Al Wenzel are great. For the most part the staff is very approachable.

Another **179 comments were made on "services your library could not do without."** Comments were mainly focused on Current Services, with a few exceptions, exemplified by the following:

The ILL service!!!!!!!!!! Especially the rush service!!!!!!!!!!

Consortial purchasing of e-resources; we couldn't live w/o this, but just wish to see the process/procedures more clearly outlined and disclosed.

OCLC cataloging, ILL via OCLC and for on-campus items. Negotiating with OCLC for good rices for same. Coordinating the WPLC selection of Overdrive products.

I work for a museum, not a library, but I think that the work WiLS is doing with the WHO project is very important -- especially the efforts to reach out to non-library institutions with cultural heritage collections -- both manuscript and 3D artifacts.

I don't know if I wouldn't live without it, but I would surely miss it! I'm guessing that I benefit from WILS by what they do collectively, and I'm not even aware of it.

Discounts on the databases along with thier wonderful renewal notices and reminders.

oclc related services. but it's the "couldn't live without" factor that is disturbing. Once we "can't live without" something, WILS has given the impression numerous times in the past of wanting that position in order to take advantage of it.

WiLSWorld is a terrific conference - great topics and speakers and well-organized. I would like to see more focus on public library issues. It's great to see nationally-known speakers. WorldCat. I use it for personal and library use.

Pretty much everything. We are a very small school so we wouldn't be able to afford the number of databases that we have without the WiLS cooperative purchasing. The ILL service is top notch and when I have a question they get back to me right away. I have come to depend upon the speedy service that WiLS provides when it comes to interlibrary loan.

### **C. Comments from Non Members**

Institutions were asked to indicate their level of familiarity with WiLS prior to the survey, and whether or not they would like to know more about WiLS Services. Comments were separated into “non ILL” and “non OCLC” users.

Of the Non OCLC users (118), 54 were “not at all familiar” with WiLS prior to the Survey, 60 were “slightly familiar” and 4 indicated they were “very familiar.” Of these institutions, 30 stated some interest in learning more about WiLS. Those that were not interested in further information most often said that their cataloging needs were being met through their book vendors, their library system, or through WISCAT.

Of the Non WiLS ILL users (145), 54 were “not at all familiar” with WiLS prior to the Survey, 69 were “slightly familiar” and 22 indicated they were “very familiar.” Of these institutions, 33 stated some interest in learning more about WiLS. Those that were not interested in further information most often said they either did not do ILL, or received ILL as needed through their district or their library system.