

# **Annual Report**

## **Fiscal Year 2012**

*July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012*



### Major Accomplishments in FY 2012

- ➔ Major upgrade completed with Ethernet circuits for over 90% of network.
- ➔ New contracts signed with local Ethernet providers to reach additional sites.
- ➔ OPLIN router upgrade project from Cisco to Juniper is nearing completion.
- ➔ OPLIN implemented OpenDNS as a centralized Internet filtering solution.
- ➔ Three new statewide database subscriptions acquired with LSTA funding.
- ➔ SMTP authentication for outgoing mail became a requirement for security.
- ➔ OPLIN launched a revised and reorganized version of the primary website.
- ➔ E-Rate workshops and consulting services provided for Ohio public libraries.

The **Ohio Public Library Information Network (OPLIN)** provides broadband Internet connections and related information services to Ohio public libraries. Our primary mission is to ensure that all Ohio residents have fast, free public Internet access throughout the 251 independent local public library systems in Ohio, as well as the use of high-quality statewide research databases not freely available on the World Wide Web.

OPLIN is defined in the Ohio Revised Code section 3375.64 as “an independent agency within the State Library of Ohio, for the purpose of ensuring equity of access to electronic information for all residents of this state.” Planning for OPLIN started at the beginning of 1994 under the leadership of the Ohio Library Council (OLC), and it was established in the State Library budget in fiscal year 1996.

As a state government agency, OPLIN receives extensive fiscal support services from the State Library

of Ohio and contracts with the Ohio Office of Information Technology (OIT) for assistance with network management. As a result, less than 10% of the OPLIN budget is used for administrative costs, such as personnel, rent, equipment, and supplies. The remainder of the budget is used to purchase the services provided to Ohio public libraries, primarily Internet telecommunications (typically ~ \$3 million annually) and subscriptions to basic information databases (typically ~ \$1.5 million). Therefore, public libraries do not need to pay for these services from their limited individual budgets because OPLIN provides them.

OPLIN is governed by Director, Stephen Hedges, and a Board of Trustees composed of 11 members selected from the staff and past or present Boards of Trustees of Ohio public libraries, who serve for a term of three years. Since OPLIN seeks a variety of representatives from public libraries, board members are chosen based on location, library size, and skill. *The five staff members currently employed at OPLIN are below:*

#### OPLIN Staff Members

<b>Director:</b>	Stephen Hedges
<b>Technology Project Manager:</b>	Karl Jendretzky
<b>Library Services Manager:</b>	Laura Solomon
<b>Network Support:</b>	Vincent Riley
<b>Customer Relations/Support:</b>	Amie McReynolds



## OPLIN Services & Resources

Originally, OPLIN only provided two major, important services for libraries: Internet connectivity and databases. Over the years, OPLIN has grown beyond its initial mission to provide a host of other valuable services that public libraries would otherwise be unable to afford themselves. We provide these additional services and resources in a streamlined and efficient manner without incurring unreasonable or extra charges due to staff ingenuity and skill as well as by using free or open source solutions when available, and low-cost alternatives when not.

are crucial both to the public and staff, especially in this declining economy with limited budget funding and increased necessity for access to library resources and current technology.

- Internet connectivity
- Research databases
- Support Center assistance
- Email accounts
- SMS text messaging
- Dynamic Website Kits
- State DNS services
- Internet filtering grants
- OpenDNS filtering service
- E-Rate workshops
- Public Library Data Center
- OPLIN mailing lists
- Technology newsletters
- Social media/blogs

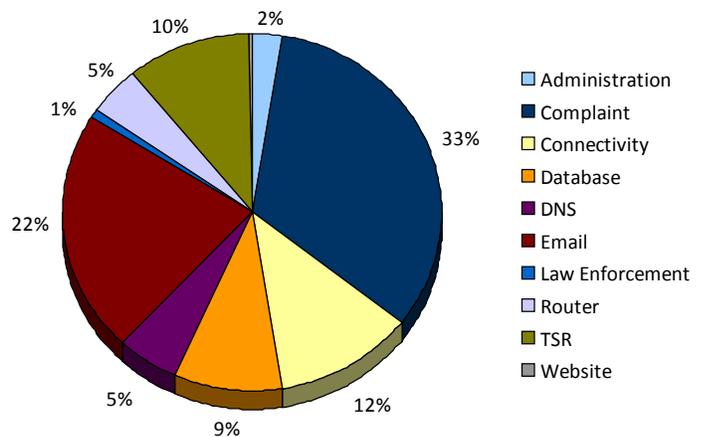
While the eventual consumers of our services are often members of the general public, our actual customers are in fact limited to the public library systems of Ohio. The goal of Ohio public libraries is to provide free and open access to all types of information resources and technology for the citizens of this state, and the services that OPLIN is able to offer libraries

Every year, OPLIN strives to implement changes to make our services more cost-effective and efficient. We use Linux-based software solutions when possible because they offer numerous advantages, including cross-platform compatibility with multiple operating systems and a large support community.

### Support Center Tickets

The OPLIN Support Center provides assistance to public libraries for a wide variety of technical questions and issues in addition to maintenance and monitoring services for networks and databases. In this fiscal year, Support Center personnel opened 2,183 tickets for 251 library systems (256 circuits) at 725 buildings in a total of ten categories.

We have found that ticket distributions remained fairly steady from last fiscal year; however, definite trends have continued to develop in recent years. Again, the majority of support tickets were related to complaint notices involving copyright and spam abuse (33%), email issues (22%), and connectivity (12%). Telecommunications Service Requests (TSR), including Ethernet circuit upgrades and T1 disconnects, accounted for 10%, while database problems were only 9% of tickets.





### Internet Connectivity

OPLIN provides an Internet connection for the Ohio public library systems in addition to connections for the State Library of Ohio and the four regional library systems for 256 total circuits. We have existing state contracts with Time Warner Cable (TWC), AT&T, and TW Telecom to supply these fiber and copper Internet connections. In addition, we have new contracts with local service providers, ComNet and Horizon, to replace T1 lines with Ethernet in areas that we previously were not able to reach.

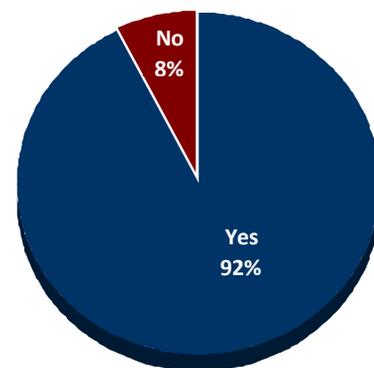
**Total number of Internet connections:**

- July 1, 2010* –  
193 T1 lines, 2 DS3, 61 Ethernet circuits
- July 1, 2011* –  
170 T1 lines, 2 DS3, 84 Ethernet circuits
- July 1, 2012* –  
20 T1 lines, 2 DS3, 234 Ethernet circuits

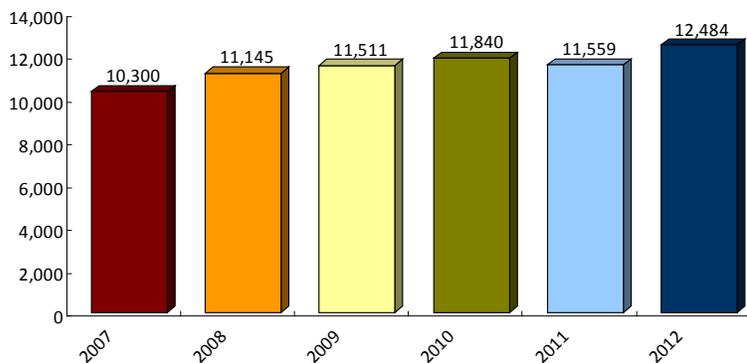
Due to the major upgrade project that was launched in FY 2011, the majority of the OPLIN network (over 90%) is Ethernet with only 20 T1 circuits remaining, mostly due to the lack of existing area infrastructure. The number of libraries that received circuit upgrades this year was 150, which is a substantial increase from last year. We expect to have Ethernet connections installed in at least another 12 libraries during FY 2013, which would mean that only eight libraries with T1 circuits will be left to upgrade.

The total network bandwidth usage for libraries at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1, 2011) was 1,350 Mbps, and at the end of the year (June 30, 2012) was over 2,000 Mbps, which has prompted the need to upgrade our core router hardware to handle additional bandwidth. Libraries are eligible for a circuit upgrade for increased bandwidth if the circuit maintains an average of 70% utilization during peak afternoon hours over a specified time period. Based on area network infrastructure, we try to upgrade circuits to broadband Ethernet when possible, which is newer technology and rapidly replacing older T1/DS3 connections. A single T1 line has a capacity of 1.54 Mbps, DS3 (bundle of 28 T1s) has 44.74 Mbps, and Ethernet carries a range of 2 to 500 Mbps on our network.

As for public wireless access, libraries manage their own setup and costs if they choose to provide Wi-Fi for their patrons, and 670 out of 725 public library buildings currently offer free wireless to their user communities, which has increased from last year. These libraries allow patrons to use their own laptops or mobile devices on the wireless network while some libraries also provide loaner laptop or tablet computers.



*Wireless Access*



*Number of Public Computers*

The number of computers available for public use in libraries has increased to 12,484, and the computers available for staff use is 10,367, for a total of 22,851 computers in Ohio public libraries. Typically, these numbers have continued to increase as the use of technology and Internet access became a necessary focus of public libraries, however, budgetary cuts and use of patrons' own laptops and other devices might be possible reasons for the slight decrease last year.

***OPLIN paid about \$2.80 million, or \$233,200 per month, for public library telecommunications.***



## Internet Filtering Assistance & E-Rate Program

Internet Filtering Assistance grants were provided to Ohio public libraries to satisfy a legislative requirement that OPLIN offers to assist local libraries use filters, which helps them in becoming CIPA-compliant (Children's Internet Protection Act) or maintaining CIPA-compliance. To become eligible for these awards, a library had to install or maintain Internet filtering technology on any of its public access computers to screen out inappropriate, obscene, or illegal materials. (Filters used primarily to block viruses and malware are not eligible for funding.) The grant funds were awarded to libraries in three categories: 1) new filtering measures (top priority); 2) upgrades/expansions of existing filters; and 3) maintenance or renewal of existing filters.

OPLIN will no longer be awarding filtering grants to libraries in FY 2013 due to our new statewide contract with OpenDNS to provide a web-based Internet content filtering system for all Ohio public libraries. We began offering 90 libraries the opportunity to participate in the OpenDNS filtering service in January 2012 and purchased the remaining filtering licenses for use in July 2012.

The federal E-Rate program, administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), provides discounted rates to assist schools and libraries in obtaining affordable telecommunications and

### Internet Filtering

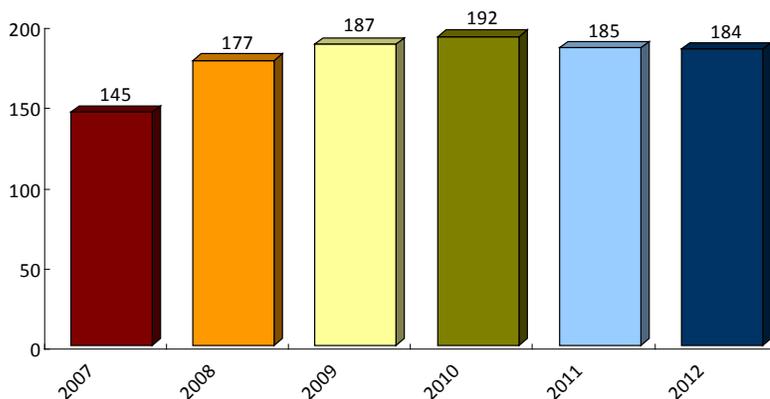
*OPLIN awarded \$81,000 in grants to 42 libraries, and 170 libraries currently use Internet filters.*

*As of June 30, 51 libraries were using OpenDNS.*

### E-Rate Program

*184 public libraries filed for E-Rate refunds and were awarded approximately \$3.6 million.*

Internet access. All public libraries are eligible to receive E-Rate refunds by simply completing some required forms, and once reimbursed, libraries can spend the money on anything that they need. The OPLIN discount averages 50% to 60%, but can range from 20% to 90%, which can be a critical source of additional revenue due to widespread budget cuts. Because it is so important for libraries to claim their E-Rate funds, OPLIN and the State Library sponsor E-Rate workshops presented by Lorrie Germann, Educational Technology Consultant at eTech Ohio, to assist public libraries in completing these forms. All Ohio public libraries are required to submit E-Rate forms to OPLIN annually, regardless of whether the library itself participates in the E-Rate program.



**Number of Libraries – Filed for E-Rate**

*OPLIN received approximately \$2.21 million in E-Rate reimbursements in FY 2012.*

*We received a favorable ruling on our appeal of denied E-Rate funds for FY 2006, resulting in almost twice as much reimbursement as typically received in a year.*



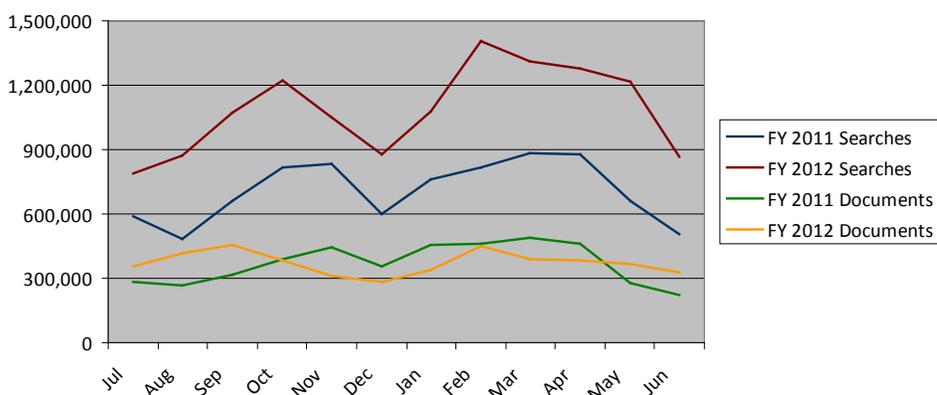
### Ohio Web Library – OPLIN Databases

The Ohio Web Library is a vast collection of 304 electronic information resources, or databases, provided by Libraries Connect Ohio (LCO), composed of four library networks – OPLIN, OhioLINK, INFOhio, and the State Library of Ohio.\* LCO can cooperatively purchase access to these statewide resources at a cost-effective rate whereas most individual libraries would never be able to afford them on their own. Within the

or directly from the website maintained by OPLIN, located at <http://www.ohioweblibrary.org>.

*In FY 2012, a total of 13,034,127 searches were performed, and 4,471,516 documents were retrieved.*

These numbers remain consistent with the overall trend that both searches and documents typically increase each year, however, searches have substantially increased while retrieved documents have only slightly increased. This discrepancy can be explained by the addition of two new statewide database subscriptions – Ancestry Library Edition and Mango Languages. Ancestry, in particular, is popular with library patrons and has generated increased usage.



### OPLIN paid about \$1.31 million for statewide databases.

licensed databases are 12,862 full text journals, magazines, and newspapers (publications with ISSN), and these research databases are available for free to all Ohio residents either through public library websites

Starting July 1, 2011, the Ohio Web Library collection includes three new database resources – Ancestry Library Edition, Mango Languages, and World Book Early World of Learning. Also, H.W. Wilson merged with EBSCO Publishing on May 31, 2011, but this has not affected access to World Book Reference Bank.

### Ohio Web Library Statewide Databases

- American & English Literature
- Ancestry Library Edition
- The ART Collection
- Biography Reference Bank
- EBSCOhost Databases
- EBSCO Academic Source
- EBSCO Business Source
- EBSCO Kids Search
- EBSCO Newspaper Source
- EBSCO Student Research Center
- Facts on File Science Online
- Job and Career Accelerator
- Learning Express Library
- Mango Languages
- NewsBank (Ohio Newspapers)
- Oxford Reference Online
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
- World Book Online
- World Book Early World of Learning
- World Book Kids

\* Funded in part through an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) LSTA grant awarded by the State Library of Ohio.



## Email & SMS Services

OPLIN email service is extremely flexible and easy to use for libraries, and we currently provide web-mail storage capacity of 1 GB per user. In June 2011, OPLIN migrated to a new user-friendly, web-based mail application called Zimbra. Specifically, Zimbra Open Source Edition (OSE) provides an updated appearance and additional features for webmail (<http://mail.oplin.org>) users, and an advanced administration and management console for OPLIN staff to increase workflow and efficiency.

In addition, OPLIN offers two active Linux mail servers to provide public libraries with options for increased functionality, reliability, and security. One mail server (<http://mail.oplin.org>) is used mainly for staff email accounts and accessing webmail, while the

other one (<http://lists.oplin.org>) is used for mass ILS notifications and distribution lists as well as for hosting OPLIN and library-related listservs.

In June 2012, we increased email security and began requiring SMTP authentication for outgoing mail due to public library computers becoming compromised by malware and sending spam. This change only affected regular staff email accounts, not integrated library systems (ILS) or distribution lists in which mass mail is being sent to patrons. Libraries should use the listserv mail server (<http://lists.oplin.org>) to send ILS library notices and other bulk mail because the SMTP requirement is not enabled for these types of uses.

Last fiscal year, SMS text messaging service became widely available for public libraries to use in conjunction with their ILS servers for sending patron notices, and we recently switched to a more reliable provider, Trumpia, in April 2012.

### SMS Text Messaging Statistics

- Over 78 library systems are now using SMS
- Total number of text messages sent: 265,575
- First week of FY 2012: 3,493 msg/wk
- Last week of FY 2012: 4,854 msg/wk

*OPLIN provides approximately 2,295 total email accounts to Ohio public library staff members.*

## Dynamic Website Kits

Since April 2008, OPLIN has been offering Dynamic Website Kits to Ohio public libraries, a service that provides modern, updated websites with advanced features and options at a modest price. The cost includes the initial setup, maintenance/upgrades, hosting, and free training at OPLIN. Professional sites are essential to meet the changing needs of library communities in addition to showing patrons that libraries are still vital and relevant institutions. Website Kits are built with Drupal, a popular content management system (CMS), for ease of use, ability to update content, and custom appearance. These sites are standards-compliant, which provides increased accessibility and usability.

*The total number of Ohio public libraries using the Web Kit service is 46 with 16 completed in FY 2012.*

### New Dynamic Website Kits

- Bexley Public Library
- Centerburg Public Library
- Champaign County Library
- Claymont Public Library
- Germantown Public Library
- J.R. Clarke Public Library
- Kate Love Simpson Morgan County Library
- Marvin Memorial Library
- Meigs County District Public Library
- Mount Gilead Public Library
- Oak Harbor Public Library
- Orrville Public Library
- Pataskala Public Library
- Perry Public Library
- Rodman Public Library
- Southeast Regional Library System



### OPLIN Financial Highlights

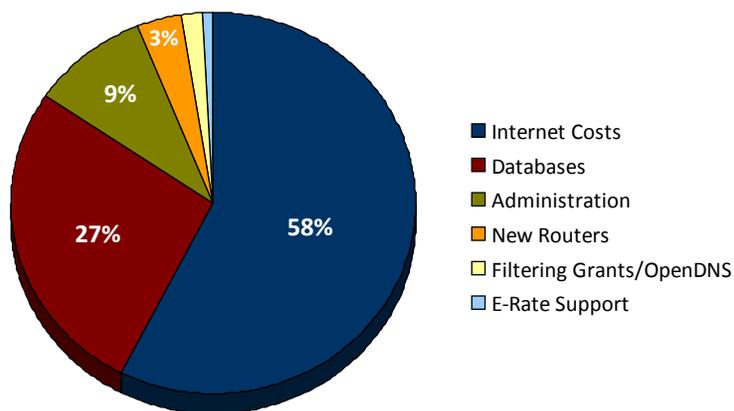
The State of Ohio budget experienced more fiscal stability and growth in FY 2012 than in the previous few fiscal years, but the overall objective of Governor Kasich is unchanged: Restrain state spending while improving services to taxpayers. OPLIN continues to operate within these goals with less than 10% of all expenditures going toward administrative costs, including personnel, and all remaining funds are used to provide direct services to Ohio public libraries.

As in the past, we use free and open source software (FOSS) whenever possible on our network and staff computers for monetary as well as for quality reasons. OPLIN also actively seeks opportunities to collaborate with other state agencies to improve efficiencies and control costs. As library demand for Internet bandwidth continues to rise dramatically, we take particular care to identify cost-effective means of providing reliable and sufficient Internet access to all OPLIN participants.

OPLIN received \$3,689,401 from the PLF in FY 2012, which was \$12,749 less than the \$3,702,150 amount received in FY 2011. The slight difference is due to

payroll (number of pay periods in each fiscal year).

Time Warner Cable (TWC), AT&T, and TW Telecom have master state contracts with the Ohio Office of Information Technology (OIT) for fiber optic circuits. However, TWC does not charge extra for long-haul Ethernet, which should save money and also control connection costs with the competition since we have more options. Currently, the majority of our Ethernet circuits are provided by TWC due to better service and lower costs.



<b>Financial Report</b>			
<b>REVENUE</b>		<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	
Public Library Fund	\$3,689,401	Internet Costs	\$2,798,440*
E-Rate Refunds	2,209,875	Databases	1,306,807
Website Kits	21,216	Administration	458,204
		New Routers	168,775
		Filtering Grants/OpenDNS	81,000
		E-Rate Support	45,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,920,492</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,858,226*</b>
Gain drawn from FY 2006 E-Rate Reimbursements			\$1,062,265*

\* FY 2012 bills can still be processed until November 30.



## OPLIN Changes

Perhaps the biggest change coming from OPLIN in FY 2012 was the agreement with OpenDNS to provide optional Internet content filtering to all Ohio public libraries and the phasing out of the filtering assistance grants (see page 4). OPLIN now spends less money to support filtering, yet has the capability of serving all public libraries, rather than the 40-50 libraries which typically received grants in the past before our earmarked funds were depleted.

Throughout the 2012 fiscal year, the OPLIN Board put extensive work into a thorough review of our services and the amount of benefit each library system receives from OPLIN. Budget constraints limited the possibilities for new services, however, and ultimately the Board had to concede that the type of services they would like to provide – with the exception of the centralized content filter from OpenDNS – were not financially possible.

In April, the Board performed its annual review of the Strategic Plan and decided to add a new objective:

*“Convince legislators that OPLIN services should not be funded from the Public Library Fund.”* Even though OPLIN funding only amounted to slightly over 1% of total PLF funds in FY 2012 (\$3,689,401 from \$354,000,000), the Board strongly believes that transferring OPLIN funds from the PLF before it is distributed to the counties is an unnecessary burden on an already distressed fund. Furthermore, funding from the PLF inhibits OPLIN’s ability to collaborate in projects with other entities since OPLIN funds are originally intended to support public libraries and should not be used in any other way.

OPLIN continues to closely monitor the ongoing consolidation of Internet services among other state agencies and watch for opportunities to leverage such activities for the benefit of public libraries. If there is an opportunity to improve Internet and online content services for public libraries, we want to be ready.

### OPLIN Board Members – FY 2012

- Jeff Wale (Chair), Toledo-Lucas County Public Library
  - Jamie Mason (Vice-Chair), Rocky River Public Library
  - Karl Colón (Secretary), Greene County Public Library
  - Gary Branson (Treasurer), Marion Public Library
- 
- Don W. Barlow, Westerville Public Library
  - Jill Billman-Royer, Southwest Public Libraries
  - Jason Buydos, Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County
  - Benjamin Chinni, Euclid Public Library
  - Karen Davis, Sylvester Memorial Wellston Public Library
  - Sondra Plymire, Muskingum County Library System
  - Rebecca Schultz, Portsmouth Public Library



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