

# What is LION?

## Organization

Libraries Online, Inc. (LION) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization formed by its members in 1982. Our 28 libraries share an Integrated Library System and other services from the Middletown office. Public and academic member libraries in south-central Connecticut use the system to service their 234,000 patrons with 830,000 shared unique titles linked to over two and one half million items in their local collections. LION currently operates the Innovative Interfaces Sierra library system.

LION is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of a designated representative from each member library (usually the Director). Membership in LION is obtained by applying to the Board, and is confirmed by the signing of LION's Membership Agreement - which outlines the responsibilities of LION and the member. The LION central office is responsible for system management including capital purchases, maintenance of the system hardware and software, administration, operations, insurance, documentation and training, contract services, and enforcement of all warranties. Members are responsible for active participation in LION, for entering into the integrated library system all patron and bibliographic information, and for sharing their collections within the consortium.

Member participation is outlined in LION's General Policies and includes attendance at LION Board meetings as well as the participation of designated representatives in those committees dealing with functions used by LION members. Currently they include the Bibliographic, Circulation, and User Experience Committees. Other task forces may be established from time to time by the Board. Recommendations from these committees serve as the primary input to the Board of Directors in its role of setting standards and policy. The committees serve as working groups to resolve day-to-day procedural issues and as forums for sharing common concerns. Each member library also designates a single individual as that library's Project Director. This person serves as that member's routine contact person for LION business such as coordinating training, updating documentation, coordinating local equipment installation and repair work.

## Public Services

The LION system drives the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) which gives the library patrons great access and control. The OPAC allows the patrons to search both in the library and remotely via the internet. They can search by title, author, keyword, or call number. They can search all LION libraries at one time or narrow their search to a specific library or material type. Results are returned in groups of brief entries and with a click, full title entries can be displayed.

Within the displays are features that LION has contracted from third party providers. From Syndetic Solutions, we receive pictures of book jackets, summaries, and reviews for most

of our titles. From Library Thing for Libraries (LTFL) we get tags which describe the books and which can be used to find similar titles. From LTFL we get patron supplied reviews, and our patrons can add their own reviews. LTFL also provides links to other similar titles in our own collection which might be of interest to the patron.

LION library patrons can place their own holds, renew checked-out materials, and review their patron record (including current holds, checkouts, and fines) at any public access workstation in the library or from anywhere via the internet. They can maintain a history of their borrowing (they must Opt In for this); create title lists without placing holds; save searches and (if they choose) have them run automatically, looking for newly added titles. They can even update their phone number and email address.

We have a mobile catalog which is designed to be compatible with smartphones and tablets. It is accessible via a mobile phone browser or via an app in the case of the iPhone and the Android phones. It provides almost all of the functionality of the web catalog.

### **Borrowing Services**

The LION libraries circulate over 3,400,000 items annually, and patrons renew over 745,000 times. The libraries process over 512,000 holds annually, three quarters of which are placed online via the OPAC. The system automatically produces a variety of reader notices – holds available, courtesy notices, overdues, and bills – sent via email and post.

The online information provided by LION's shared system allows LION library patrons and staff to take full advantage of resource sharing between member libraries. In FY2011, over 320,000 items were loaned through intra-LION loans. LION libraries are full participants in the State Library's Connecticard and deliverIT programs.

LION offers downloadable audio books through OverDrive. The collection consists of over 3300 titles which can be downloaded to personal computers, transferred to portable players, and burned to CDs. Patrons can access these titles from their homes via the internet any time of the day. LION also offers downloadable eBooks which can be read on PCs and Macs and transferred to portable players like the Amazon Kindle, the Sony eReader and the Barnes & Noble Nook. They can also be downloaded and viewed directly to iPhones, iPads, and Android devices. The collection now has over 9400 titles.

LION now offers ZINIO downloadable magazines. The collection has over 175 titles with back issues to the Fall of 2013.

### **Bibliographic Services**

LION provides centrally supported, shared cataloging. LION's bibliographic services minimize behind-the-scenes work by library staff, enabling libraries to focus staffing resources on public services. LION adheres to very high cataloging standards. The LION cataloger searches the OCLC database for those titles not found by members in the LION

Bibliographic Databases. For this purpose, LION libraries need to create only a short Initial Search Record (ISR).

In 2008, LION outsourced authority control to Marcive. The complete bibliographic database was processed and updated by Marcive, and is now maintained by them through monthly updates.

LION contributes its entire MARC bibliographic and holdings database to the State Library through quarterly updates.

The LION system also hosts online access to library created databases of community information and local newspaper indexes.

### **Staff Services**

Libraries Online, Inc. licenses the Sierra software from Innovative Interfaces. LION staff has full operational, maintenance, and user support responsibility for the entire LION-owned System. LION continuously monitors the integrated library system, and loads and tests new software releases when necessary.

LION's Sierra system includes the following software modules: Acquisitions, Cataloging, Circulation, Community Resources (including local information and newspaper indexing), WebPAC, and Serials Control.

To assure each library a standard level of service, LION provides and maintains a set number of PC workstations based on the size of the library. LION's current policy is to replace one quarter of each library's allotment every year. LION can provide service and support for most of the equipment and software which libraries own.

LION staff provide consultation and training in support of the LION system, e.g. local system administration, cataloging, use of peripheral devices, LION custom software and reports, etc. A full set of Innovative Interfaces user documentation is available online to each member institution.

LION will provide email accounts for all library staff members through a dedicated mail server. Many LION members have their websites hosted on LION's webserver.

Barcode labels for every library patron and item are available through LION. LION maintains and controls the numbers used (in order to prevent duplicates), is responsible for administering the ordering cycle, and for assuring quality control.

LION performs onsite and remote support for member-owned or LION-owned network hardware and software including connections to the Connecticut Education Network and DSL or Cable circuits. LION also supports local area networks and wireless networking in the libraries.

All LION systems operate 24/7. Emergency after-hours support is available.

### **Systems**

The Sierra ILS runs on two IBM x3850 servers. As configured, it will support 500 simultaneous users including 250 staff sessions. The system will support 5,000,000 bibliographic records, 3,000,000 item records, 500,000 patron records, 250,000 order records, and 100,000 serials records. The hardware and software are supported under contract by Innovative Interfaces. Support includes full hardware replacement, operating system patches and upgrades, Sierra software enhancements and upgrades, and a 24 hour Helpdesk.

The Connecticut Education Network (CEN) provides LION and its members with network telecommunications. The LION office has a 100 Mbps Fiber Optic circuit. The libraries have a mix of RLAN DSL, cable, and fiber circuits connecting to the LION central site. The LION office has Cisco routers which are protected by a Cisco ASA 5520 Firewall and a Barracuda spam filter. Each library has a Cisco router or switch, depending on the type of connection. All of our central site equipment is connected to Uninterruptable Power Supplies (UPS).

The LION E-mail server supports over 500 accounts. Access is available through a Web Browser interface and/or through an email client like Outlook or Eudora.

### **Funding**

LION is funded completely by member fees. All fees are set by the Board of Directors annually. LION maintains a substantial capital reserve to buffer the members from any short term budget concerns. The reserve will be used for major system upgrades or replacements. It could be used to cover the shortfall if a member were to leave the consortium during a budget cycle. It has been used to mitigate the startup costs of new projects like downloadable audio books.

## LION Members

| <b>MIDDLESEX COUNTY</b>               | <b>NEW HAVEN COUNTY</b>                       | <b>NEW LONDON COUNTY</b>                  |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Durham Public Library<br>Durham       | Clark Memorial Library<br>Bethany             | Phoebe Griffin Noyes<br>Old Lyme          |
| Russell Library<br>Middletown         | Case Memorial Library<br>Orange               | East Lyme High School<br>East Lyme        |
| Essex Library Association<br>Essex    | Hamden Public Library<br>Hamden               | East Lyme Public Library<br>East Lyme     |
| Ivoryton Library<br>Ivoryton          | Woodbridge Town Library<br>Woodbridge         | Public Library of<br>New London           |
| Brainerd Memorial Library<br>Haddam   | Meriden Public Library<br>Meriden             | Mitchell College Library<br>New London    |
| East Haddam Libraries<br>East Haddam  | Guilford Free Library<br>Guilford             | Otis Library<br>Norwich                   |
| E.C. Scranton Memorial<br>Madison     | Blackstone Memorial Library<br>Branford       | Bill and Gales Ferry Libraries<br>Ledyard |
| Acton Public Library<br>Old Saybrook  | North Haven Library<br>North Haven            |   |
| Westbrook Public Library<br>Westbrook | Atwater and Smith Libraries<br>North Branford |   |
| Levi E Coe Library<br>Middlefield     | West Haven Public Library<br>West Haven       |   |
|                                       | Willoughby Wallace Library<br>Stony Creek     |   |
|                                       | Wallingford Public Library<br>Wallingford     |   |

## LION STATISTICS 2016

|                                       |                        |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Unique Titles in LION Database        | 834,000                |
| Items (copies) held by LION Libraries | 2,596,000              |
| Patrons Currently Registered          | 230,000                |
| Circulation (annual)                  | 3,014,000              |
| Renewals (annual)                     | 710,000                |
| Employees (fte)                       | 7                      |
| Software                              | Sierra Release 2.3.0_4 |