

Technology Report

12/2021

Content Filtering

Our current iBoss appliance solution is nearing its end-of-life and requires extensive custom scripting. We have begun the process of finding a modern replacement product that will be easier to maintain and support. We hope to maintain the functionality of the current system. We have had to re-assess the primary candidate we had because they are dropping a feature that we require. We have participated in product demos for several possible replacements. We are in the process of evaluating the candidates.

Backup Collaboration

Replication between the Madison and Eau Claire head-ends is working. We are now working with Monarch to pilot adding the first system to the Backup. Monarch is in the process of reconfiguring their WAN to connect to the backup and collaboration system.

Network Automation

An initiative has begun to utilize automation pertaining to the SCLS network. We have chosen the Ansible platform to assist in the orchestration, maintenance, and modification of network hosts in an effort to increase efficiencies while maintaining integrity of network configurations and to further promote standardization.

The network automation project consists of several key objectives. The following will highlight these goals and the current status.

1. The ability to make sweeping modifications/additions to network hosts in a segmented, scalable way.
 - a. **Accomplished** – The Ansible server is in production. Further operation development will be completed as needed.
2. Methods to assist in the provisioning of new network devices during refresh or emergency scenarios.
 - a. **In development** – Initial work will be completed by end of year with testing and improvements made during process evaluation in 2022.
3. Tools to aid the Technology Team in performing network-related tasks to bolster collaboration and inclusion amongst members.
 - a. **In discovery** – Various rudimentary tools have already been developed but hold significant dependencies do not use the Ansible platform. While they are functional and useful, they lack a certain manageability and method of delivery required for continued operation and adoption. Estimated time of delivery in mid to late 2022.

Grants Update

All funds for the 2019 E-rate cycle have been retrieved and final checks to libraries went out mid-October. Fund requests for the 2020 E-rate cycle have been requested. We are gearing up to begin the

process for the 2022 E-rate cycle. We applied for mobile hotspots and data through the ECF program for 3 libraries and we have not received confirmation of the grant yet. One of the libraries dropped out on 11/15/2021. We are now preparing to work on the ARPA grant. We gathered input from libraries and we issued a survey to garner general interest. We will pick items based on the level of interest and the ease of purchasing and implementation. We have submitted the pre-application and are waiting to hear back.

Cost Formula Work Group

We are convening a Cost Formula Work group to meet in 2021/2022 to review the cost formula in preparation for the 2023 budget. Primary areas of focus include the network fees and support fees for RFID tagging stations.

Annual Report pre-fill

SCLS staff spent time this past year revising processes and documentation related to the prefill of the ILS annual report data. Each October, SCLS staff do a test run to generate the Annual Report data, and this year's test run went swimmingly (improved accuracy, much less time spent troubleshooting than in previous years)!

Database subscriptions

Staff have been meeting regularly with WiLS staff in preparation for end-of-the-year database renewals and subscription changes.

Help Desk phone number change

On November 29, On Monday, November 29, SCLS switched back to our original Help Desk number and added a new toll-free option:

- 608-242-4710
- 855-583-2148 (toll-free)

Your library should have received updated "SCLS Technology & ILS Support" cards in Delivery. Please review and share this information with all staff at your library and be sure to recycle the old, outdated "SCLS Technology & ILS Support" cards.

As a reminder, the SCLS Help Desk is available Monday through Friday, 8:30am until 5pm. Issues can be submitted by phone, Help Desk portal, or email. After-hours support for urgent system-wide or building-wide issues will continue to be provided using the after-hours support phone number.

The SCLS Help Desk is a service for library staff only. Contact and support details can be found here: <https://www.scls.info/technology/help.html>. Please do not share this contact information with library patrons.

Virtual Server Platform

The Dell PowerEdge R630 servers SCLS uses to host virtual servers will be retired in March 2022. They have been in production for six years. The new PowerEdge R650 servers have been ordered and have an estimated ship date of February 2nd because of supply chain disruptions for many of the components.

Software Upgrades

Deep Freeze: The disk locking software on public stations has been upgraded to the latest version.

SCCM: The software SCLS uses to deploy software and to remote into computers for support calls has been upgraded to the latest version.

Firefox: Firefox 94 has been deployed to staff workstations. This the current supported version for Bibliovation.

Windows 8 retirement

Microsoft is ending support for Windows 8 on January 10th, 2023. This means they will no longer be issuing security updates and we would like to have all the Windows 8 PCs replaced or upgraded by the end of 2022. We are very close to making this happen with only a small number of Windows 8 PCs remaining on the network at the end of November 2021.

Please check your Status reports to see how many Windows 8 PCs you have remaining at your library and make plans to speak with Craig about ordering PCs if you haven't already.

SCLS will be disconnecting any remaining Windows 8 PCs from the network at the end of January 2023.