VALE-OLS -- Frequently Asked Questions

Q: *What's the connection between VALE and OLE?*

A: For a number of years a VALE Open Library Systems (OLS) team has been working on a new vision for the VALE consortium, one in which New Jersey academic libraries would, where possible, unify policies, collaborate in their operations, and work to provide a sum greater than their parts. Part of this vision is the adoption of a shared, open-source, library system that will allow us to coordinate and support online services delivered at the network level yet decrease our reliance on commercial system vendors. Since 2007 VALE members have evaluated several open-source library products, including Evergreen and Koha, and determined that the efforts and potential of OLE are most aligned with this vision for VALE's future.

Q: *What are the advantages of VALE-OLS?*

A: VALE-OLS will allow New Jersey's academic libraries to…
  ❖ Participate in a shared, community-developed, next-generation library system that is efficient and easy to use for no more than the cost of what one would pay for a stand-alone legacy ILS.
  ❖ Offer users an online system that allows both resource discovery and direct borrowing across the combined holdings of member institutions. Users may borrow materials directly from member libraries by requesting them through the system and have them delivered to their own library
  ❖ Standardize how we acquire, catalog and loan materials in order to improve resource sharing and promote discovery of unique collections
  ❖ Benefit from new products developed by the OLE user community responding to its individual and collective needs, and from the ability of VALE to adapt these products to its goals and ends
  ❖ Enable library systems to communicate seamlessly with financial (ERP), learning management (LMS) and other institutional enterprise systems.

Q: *Who is* participating *in VALE-OLS?*

A: <u>Early Implementers</u>
  ✓ The College of New Jersey
  ✓ Drew University
  ✓ New Jersey Institute of Technology
  ✓ Rutgers, the State University of NJ
  ✓ William Paterson University

First Adopters
- ✓ Brookdale Community College
- ✓ Camden County College
- ✓ College of St. Elizabeth
- ✓ Fairleigh Dickinson University
- ✓ Kean University
- ✓ Monmouth University
- ✓ Montclair State University
- ✓ New Jersey City University
- ✓ Ocean County College
- ✓ Raritan Valley Community College
- ✓ Richard Stockton College of NJ
- ✓ Rider University

Q: *Will participation in VALE-OLS be mandatory for VALE member* libraries*?*

A: Participation in VALE-OLS is voluntary. No VALE institution will be obligated to participate. Every institution will have opportunities to explore VALE-OLS and decide for itself if it wishes to join.

Q: What *is the governance structure for VALE-OLS?*

A: A system of shared governance for VALE-OLS has been established by the VALE Executive Committee and ratified by the VALE Members' Council. All institutions participating in VALE-OLS will have an opportunity to stand for election to the Steering Committee.

Q: Will *the VALE-OLS system be a good choice for both large research institutions as well as for smaller academic institutions?*

A: VALE-OLS is envisioned as being flexible. It will have the advanced features and capabilities required by a large research institution. At the same time, it will scale equally well to smaller institutions, requiring only simple implementation and support.

Q: Will *libraries be able to try out the VALE-OLS system before deciding to join?*

A: Institutions who wish to participate in VALE-OLS can do so at no risk to their current collection or library automation system. They will be able to test VALE-OLS with their own data before making any commitment to join.

Q: *How much will VALE-OLS cost?*

A: The initial cost of membership shall be equal to or less than any VALE member institution's commitment to its current ILS in the year that it

joins VALE OLS. The annual cost of membership (as determined by the Steering Committee) will reflect the actual cost of running the system, including both operational and development costs.

Q: What *is the timeline for VALE-OLS becoming operational?*

A: VALE intends to begin implementing Kuali OLE as soon as it becomes available, currently projected to be July 2012. A one-year testing and development cycle is anticipated, with early implementers beginning to migrate to VALE-OLS during the 2013-14 academic year.

Q: *How will the protocols governing acquisitions, cataloging, patrons, loans and other operations be standardized?*

A: The VALE OLS Steering Committee will leverage the expertise of the VALE membership to help develop models of all these services. Models will then be refined and voted upon by the Steering Committee.

Q: What *will the OPAC be like?*

A: A discovery tool (catalog search interface) will be chosen from the available open-source, non-proprietary options. Individual participants will be able to customize the interface with their own institutional identity.

Q: What *is the amount and level of technical support needed to run the VALE-OLS system? How much additional support would be needed for customization?*

A: As the VALE-OLS system is hosted in a central location and maintained by designated technical personnel, the amount and level of technical support is minimal for participating libraries. However, a certain amount of customization will be possible at the local level. The level of support for any such customization will likewise be minimal.

Q: *How clean does my data have to be? What are the data cleanup standards?*

A: Institutional data will have to conform to mutually agreed-upon standards. Data cleanup standards are currently being developed by the Implementation Task Force.

Q: *Will member libraries be responsible for data cleanup?*

A: Although there may be some economies of scale and collaboration, each participating member will be responsible for ensuring that its records and files meet all required data and policy standards.

Q: *How will VALE-OLS keep track of currently enrolled students and currently employed librarians, faculty, and staff?*

A: Identity management will be a central component of the system, enabling strong individualization of collections to be maintained and access to resources provided based on the identity and role of the user. Rather than re-invent the wheel, VALE-OLS will leverage the identity management work of the individual institutions and NJTrust.

Q: *What will the VALE-OLS system look like?*

A: A test environment of VALE-OLS will be initially developed, used for demonstration and promotion, and eventually used as a training and certification environment as participants begin to join and migrate.

Q: *How will I keep up-do-date with VALE-OLS development?*

A: Abundant communication between and among VALE-OLS users, developers and administrators will be established at the outset and be used for news, announcements, and updates. This communications framework will eventually become the vehicle for improvement requests and resource sharing.

Q: *Will there be test servers?*

A: A VALE OLS test environment will be created for demonstration and promotion purposes as well as for training and certification activities prior to implementation.

Q: *Who will host the initial test servers?*

A: Not yet determined; possibly one of the early implementing institutions.

Q: *With* whom *and where would the server operations be based?*

A: Not yet determined.