A Modest Proposal: Trusted Pick-Up Points For Interlibrary Loan For Distant Users

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A Modest Proposal: Trusted Pick-Up Points for Interlibrary Loan for Distant Users

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Library Responsibilities for Distance Education Support

- A basic principle of distance education programming for a school that also does in-person instruction:
  - distance education instruction should be roughly equivalent to in-person instruction in terms of value, coverage, rigor, and (here is where the library comes in) access to resources.
  - This is an accreditation issue, as well as one of equity, and I think it’s likely that accrediting agencies will be taking a very close look at this over the next few years.
Shipping to Distant Users: The Sooner Xpress Model (University of Oklahoma)

- Patrons requesting home delivery would enter the preferred shipping address on the request form.
- The item was checked out to their account right before packing to ship.
- The library paid outgoing postage.
- The library provided a return address label, and the patron was responsible for return postage.
- Due dates were adjusted to allow for shipping time.
Interlibrary Loan to Distant Users under the Sooner Xpress Model

- The item is requested by the patron, and is delivered from the lending library to the ILL department at the borrowing library.
- The borrowing library receives the item.
- The borrowing library then checks the item out to the patron, ships it to their home address with a return address label, and eventually receives the returned item back.
- The borrowing library then ships the book back to the lending library.
The Trusted Pick-Up Points Model

- Borrower requests an ILL physical item, and specifies a trusted pick-up library convenient to their physical location.
- Trusted pick-up library receives the item on behalf of the borrowing library.
- Borrower presents their *bona fides* and picks up the item at the trusted pick-up library.
- Borrower returns it to the trusted pick-up library, which returns it to the lender on behalf of the borrowing library.
Discussion at OCLC SHARES Town Hall

Challenges to overcome include issues with trust between libraries, financial responsibility for the material, technical infrastructure for tracking and communication, and patron privacy.

- It’s a lot of work to set something like this up for an uncertain amount of uptake, at least initially.
- The issues are similar to those involved in setting up reciprocal onsite borrowing, and also overlap somewhat with issues that arise with libraries sending materials they’ve borrowed via ILL to patrons at sister campuses overseas.
- A pilot would have the best chance of success within a consortium. One consortium, around Washington DC, did discuss a similar idea at one time.
- Impacts on budgets from the pandemic crisis will force us to be creative and to collaborate in new ways as we seek to provide services to our patrons.
- What about lenders shipping ILL material directly to patrons? That also runs into issues with trust, and additional patron privacy issues.
Other Innovative Models for Getting Materials to Distant Users

- Controlled Digital Lending
  - White paper by Kyle Courtney: https://controlleddigitallending.org/whitepaper

- Direct-to-Borrower Demand-Driven Acquisition of physical items
  - Purchased book is shipped directly to user and processed upon return to library
  - This could allow us to purchase selected items available in physical format only as needed while we are still in pandemic mode