OPAL E-RESOURCES TASK FORCE
FINAL REPORT

BACKGROUND

We began our work by considering the issue from a macroscopic level, namely, by thinking about why we are exploring the issue and what we want to accomplish. We identified the following guiding statement to help us as we discussed and formulated ideas about addressing these complex issues:

The OPAL Electronic Resources Task Force (OERTF) will examine the concepts, resources, and methodologies associated with providing access to electronic resources through efficient channels that are intuitive for users and promote their use through sustainable maintenance and updating processes.

Building from that, we discussed a number of other high-level and interrelated issues including:

- User search and discovery behaviors, as well as user expectations.
- The term “catalog”, what it means and where the traditional catalog fits into today’s information systems landscape.
- Specific classes of material, their unique attributes and the impact on discovery.
- Current and emerging systems that facilitate discovery of electronic resources.
- Current and future OhioLINK initiatives and their implications for this project.
- The impact that political and economic realities might have for setting priorities and for allocation of resources.

ASSESSMENT/ANALYSIS

More closely related to the specific tasks charged to the group, we reviewed the current process for integrating records into the OPAL catalog. We also reviewed practices employed in other libraries and consortia through an informal email survey and review of literature and websites to identify practices within United States library consortia.

Based on those discussions and research, we determined that:

- Current process for integrating records is inefficient and ineffective and will only get worse over time.
- The traditional library catalog is less effective than other systems in supporting discovery of and providing access to many types of materials.

It is also worth noting that the inefficiencies in the loading process are universally-recognized and are not isolated to our own processes. Again, the experiences of the consortia we surveyed, including OhioLINK’s, support our assessment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With those points in mind, we make the following general, preliminary recommendation:
OPAL, as a group, should focus its resources on facilitating access to information through most efficient and effective channels and systems.

This emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness should be considered both in terms of allocation of collective resources and in terms of discovery and providing access for end user.

More specifically, we make the following recommendations about integrating records into the OPAL Millennium catalog:

1. Discontinue integrating records into the OPAL catalog for electronic journals, web sites, abstracting and indexing or full-text databases and digital images and objects.

2. Continue, as much as possible, to support integration of records describing electronic monographic works, e.g., books, videos, sound recordings, into the OPAL Millennium system.

The rationales for these recommendations are detailed below.

Also, we present an additional recommendation for consortium activities related to next-generation discovery systems. We felt this necessary given how central discovery and access issues are to the work and suggested outcomes of this group. That recommendation is outlined below.

Finally, within the rationale for discontinuing record loading for specific classes of materials, we present recommendations for potential solutions that we believe better support discovery of and access to these materials. These recommendations are presented as “suggestions,” some of which are outlined in fuller detail as appendixes to the main report. We hope the Executive Committee and Directors Council will strongly consider these suggestions, although we expect this consideration would be separate from the acceptance or rejection of the recommendations outlined within the main document.

RATIONALE FOR SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES

1. Discontinue integrating records into the OPAL catalog for electronic journals, web sites, abstracting and indexing or full-text databases and digital images and objects.

The rationale for excluding each class of materials from the catalog is outlined below, along with suggested consortium activities to support providing access to these materials.

Electronic journals

As we discussed and researched the issues related to e-journal cataloging and the catalog, we determined that other systems better facilitate discovery and access. Journal finders (also known as A-to-Z lists) have become more successful in supporting known-item discovery. Meta-search, OpenURL and next-generation discovery systems better facilitate access to e-journals from within abstracting and indexing databases.
In addition, it became painfully clear that integrating records into the Millennium system, either on a set-by-set, library-by-library basis or by loading records provided by MARC record service requires extraordinary efforts and/or cost.

For these reasons and thinking back to our initial, general recommendation to focus on “efficient and effective systems”, we recommend discontinuing the practice of loading e-journal records into the OPAL Millennium system.

Because providing access to e-journals is critical for libraries and because of the recommendation to cease loading e-journal records, we suggest that OPAL consider implementing a consortium-wide journal finder program.

To facilitate this, the Task Force identified several potential journal finder providers and contacted them, requesting a group subscription rate for OPAL libraries. Based on the response we received, we suggest that OPAL give strong consideration to Serials Solutions proposal for approximately $54,000.00 per year for a subscription the 360 Core journal finder product for all twenty-four OPAL libraries; their proposal and an analysis of it is included in Appendix I. In addition, if OPAL supports this specific suggestion, as a consortium mandate, every effort should be made to incorporate funding into the OHIONET-OPAL contract.

Web sites

Quite clearly, commercial search engines better support discovery and facilitate access to web sites when searching on a broad level. Other information curation and guidance services, like LibGuides and other web-based pathfinders, better facilitate for focused, guided discovery. In addition, integrating records for web sites using traditional library systems and description practices is labor-intensive, requiring more effort to maintain than what seems appropriate given the ever-changing nature of these materials.

For these reasons, we recommend discontinuing the practice loading records describing web sites into the OPAL Millennium system.

As an alternate means of support OPAL libraries need for providing access to or highlighting academically-relevant web sites, we also suggest that OPAL give strong consideration to continuing the OPAL-wide funding of the LibGuides subscription whether through the OHIONET-OPAL contract or some other means. This is further explained in Appendix II.

Abstracting and indexing or full-text databases (records describing the database themselves, not the content within, e.g., Academic Search Premier, Lexis Nexis)

As with other classes of materials, we determined that other systems better facilitate discovery and access. These include web-based subject or class guides like LibGuides, ERM systems to manage subscriptions details and, to a lesser extent, journal finder or A-to-Z lists.

Again, for these reasons, we recommend OPAL discontinue the practice of integrating into the OPAL database records describing abstracting and indexing or full-text databases.
That being said, it’s important to note that OPAL’s practice of integrating these records into the catalog was driven by a desire to create awareness between libraries and their staff about one another’s electronic resource subscriptions. If OPAL still sees benefit in sharing this information, we suggest doing so through alternate, more appropriate methods, whether that takes the form of a simple spreadsheet or a more robust ERM system.

**Digital images and objects**

In considering the nature of digital images and objects within this discovery-centric context, again, other systems better facilitate discovery and access than the traditional ILS-based catalog. These systems include those that support online institutional repositories, like DSpace and Fedora, as well as other online digital object management systems like CONTENTdm, Greenstone and Omeka.

Because the catalog is ill-suited for discovery of these materials, we recommend that **OPAL also discontinue the practice of loading records for digital images and objects into the catalog.**

Instead, we suggest that strong consideration be given to a consortium-wide or consortium-supported digitization program. While we recognize the importance and value of impending and existing initiatives in this area, we suggest the consortium support the proposed digitization pilot project, included herein as **Appendix III**, as means of complementing the other digitization activities.

2. **Continue, as much as possible, to support integration of records describing electronic monographic works, e.g., books, videos, sound recordings, into the OPAL Millennium system.**

In our analysis, we determined that, despite the widely-held complaints about the catalog and its ability to support resource discovery, the catalog works well for most categories of physical materials. In addition, we found that no other discovery system facilitates access to these resources as well and as fully as the traditional catalog. We also felt that it makes sense to include links to (or records for) the electronic versions of monographic works, i.e., books, videos and the like, alongside the records for (or within the same systems for discovering) the physical counterparts. Ultimately, the systems and description practices are better suited to supporting access to these materials through the catalog.

This will require staying abreast of developments affecting discovery of these types of materials and reassessing as dictated by those developments.

**ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**Government documents**

Because online government publications fall into one or more of the aforementioned categories, some of which are being excluded from the OPAL Millennium catalog, consortium approval to the “recommendations” would necessitate that OPAL discontinue loading online-only government document files from Marcive except for those government document records describing monographic works. While most libraries find great value in government documents,
using the catalog as the primary vehicle for access creates other problems. Moreover, access to these resources (the ones being excluded) is better supported through other mechanisms.

Next-generation discovery systems

Finally, and perhaps most critically, because all of these recommendations are predicated upon the eventual implementation of an improved resource discovery interface that facilitates access to the full suite of library resources, both physical and electronic, we strongly recommend that OPAL:

1. **Identify a subgroup, i.e., a committee, IG, TF or otherwise, to monitor closely the discovery-related environment, including not only OhioLINK’s Discovery Layer initiatives but discovery initiatives in other OL libraries and report to the Executive Committee and Directors Council at each of their quarterly meetings for the next year**

2. **Position itself to move forward quickly with its own discovery-related initiatives, independent of OhioLINK or in concert, using the unique needs of OPAL libraries and library users as the guiding force in that decision-making.**

We feel these steps appropriate given recent developments of the OhioLINK initiative and other changes in the discovery landscape.

IMPLEMENTATION

Assuming the Executive Committee and Directors Council approve the recommendations within the main report, OHIONET staff, in close association with appropriate OPAL groups and individuals, will work on implementing the recommendations related to record loading. The OPAL Executive Committee will oversee the specific tasks related to the next-generation discovery systems.

The following table outlines the broad tasks associated with these recommendations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Responsible party</th>
<th>Estimated Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changes to record loading</td>
<td>Communicate changes to OPAL library staff via email and at committee meetings.</td>
<td>OHIONET, with assistance from EC/DC and TF</td>
<td>October 2010-Spring 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to record loading</td>
<td>Review Marcive record loading process</td>
<td>OHIONET</td>
<td>October 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to record loading</td>
<td>Establish process for loading only monographic records for online resources from Marcive</td>
<td>OHIONET, perhaps with assistance from Marcive</td>
<td>October 2010-December 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery systems</td>
<td>Establish discovery systems group (whether a task force, interest group or committee, existing or newly formed) and formulate associated charge and present to Directors Council for approval</td>
<td>OPAL EC and DC</td>
<td>November 2010-December 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery systems</td>
<td>Discovery systems group convenes and presents updates and final reports at appropriate EC and DC meetings</td>
<td>OPAL Discovery Systems group</td>
<td>January 2011-December 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to record loading</td>
<td>Implement new process for loading only monographic records for online government documents from Marcive</td>
<td>OHIONET</td>
<td>Starting no sooner than January 2011, one month *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to record loading</td>
<td>Cease loading new or updated files from e-journal record providers</td>
<td>OHIONET</td>
<td>Starting no sooner than January 2011, one month *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to record loading</td>
<td>Identify and remove records (all material types) from the system</td>
<td>OHIONET, with assistance from individual libraries as needed</td>
<td>Starting no sooner than February 2011, three months *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The exact timeframe for the beginning of certain aspects of the implementation will be influenced by the outcomes of other events, including the suggested discovery and access alternatives. For example, if OPAL moves forward with a consortium-wide journal finder project, we will not stop loading e-journal records into the catalog, nor will we begin removing records from it, until the journal finders are in place. Once all the discovery and access alternatives are in place, then we will proceed with removing the records from the catalog. Depending on which of the specific alternatives are implemented, it might take between six and nine months to begin the process.
OVERVIEW

Because the task force is recommending ceasing loading records for electronic journals, which has been the mechanism upon which some libraries rely to provide title-level access to electronic journals, we felt it important to provide a recommendation for alternate means of supporting that access. Ultimately, we determined that journal finders, sometimes referred to as A-to-Z lists, have become the most effective and efficient means of providing that access. Therefore we concluded that OPAL should undertake an effort to provide access to a journal finder for all of its members.

After identifying several journal finder providers and their products, we contacted the respective sales representatives to request quotations for their products. The vendors we contacted and received quotations from included Innovative Interfaces (for their CASE product), EBSCO (for their A-to-Z product) and Serials Solutions (for their 360 Core product).

When we contact these providers, we requested not only quotations for scenarios under which all OPAL libraries would participate but also for quotations for participation by only a subset of the group. We did this based on the assumption that, depending on the amount saved through a group deal, some libraries might not find the savings sufficient to warrant switching.

After reviewing the products and the vendor responses, we determined the proposals received from EBSCO and from Serials Solutions to be the only viable ones. Moreover, we found the proposal from Serials Solutions, outlined below, to be the most advantageous for the group. In addition, we also determined, based on our analysis of all the proposals, that a less-than-complete participation offered little financial benefit to current subscribers or to OPAL libraries that currently do not have a subscription. Therefore we recommend:

*OPAL pursue a consortium-wide purchase of Serials Solutions’ 360 Core product and that consideration be given to incorporating the costs of the service into the OHIONET-OPAL contract and to using a subsidy from previous contract years’ carryover funds.*

The rationale for that decision is also outlined below.

SERIALS SOLUTIONS 360 CORE ASSESSMENT

At a three-year fixed rate of $54,768 for all twenty-four OPAL libraries, the proposal received from Serials Solutions for their 360 Core product presents the best balance of cost and functionality and the most practical of all options.

In comparison to the other vendors and their products, the 360 Core offer was better financially speaking. First, Serials Solutions was clearly the vendor most open to negotiation and demonstrated the most flexibility in working with the group to make an attractive and viable offer. In addition, between the two viable products (EBSCO’s and Serials Solutions’), Serials
Solutions’ 360 Core quotation was cheaper than EBSCO’s, wherein discounts were only provided to current libraries that use EBSCO as their print serials provider.

Beyond the financial incentives, we felt that the Serials Solutions product the more practical of the two. We also felt the 360 Core feature set to be fuller than EBSCO’s, if only slightly. In addition, nine of the fifteen OPAL libraries with journal finder subscriptions use Serials Solutions already and therefore, the libraries are already familiar with the product and a group subscription would involve little change beyond the financial aspects. Finally, two libraries that opted for a journal finder other than Serials Solutions explained that they chose those other solutions based on price.

**FUNDING THE PROPOSAL**

While the deal being offered by Serials Solutions presents a significant savings overall, we recognize that, in the end, the OPAL libraries must be able to pay for the service and that any increased costs for the service will be passed back to the participants in one form or another. It might be appropriate to consider using OPAL funds remaining from previous years’ contracts to partially subsidize the added cost. This could be done as a one-year subsidy or over multiple years or with the subsidy decreasing over time.

In addition, based on conversations with a few OPAL library directors, the task force recommends that consideration be given to incorporating the subscription into the OHIONET-OPAL contract. That being said, it makes most sense to incorporate the subscription into the contract only if the total cost of the subscription is divided evenly among all participants, given that the contract is based solely upon the equal sharing of expenses and benefits.

In terms of actual dollars and cents, dividing the cost of the subscription evenly, at approximately $2,300 per library, will result in 1) significant savings for most of the current Serials Solutions subscribers, paying an average of approximately $4,100 per year, 2) some increase for those using cheaper services and 3) an increase of costs for those not current subscribing to any service. Ultimately, with the financial situations of some OPAL institutions, finding the right balance of savings for existing subscribers and making affordable for those that currently do not subscribe will be challenging and will require great thought and care.
APPENDIX II

LIBGUIDES
PROPOSAL AND ANALYSIS

OVERVIEW

Perhaps to a lesser extent than with electronic journals, some libraries have become accustomed to providing access to web sites by cataloging the sites using traditional cataloging methods and incorporating records for these resources into the catalog. In recommending that records for web sites not be incorporated into the catalog, we felt it important to provide a recommendation for alternate means of supporting that access.

As mentioned within the core proposal, a number of other systems better facilitate access to web-based resources. For guided or curated access to academically-relevant resources, class-oriented or subject-specific guides and other tools that facilitate the creation of these guides have long been used and been shown to be intuitive for end users. OPAL has demonstrated its recognition of the benefit and value of providing access through these tools by its group subscription to LibGuides, a web content management system that facilitates the creation and sharing of web resource guides.

Given that the majority of libraries we spoke to look favorably upon LibGuides and the impact it has had for their users, we concluded that continuing the group-funded OPAL LibGuides program would be an appropriate way to support libraries’ ability to support discovery of these resources without using the OPAL catalog. Therefore, we recommend:

OPAL continue its consortium-wide subscription to Springshare’s LibGuides product and that consideration be given to incorporating the costs of the service into the OHIONET-OPAL contract and/or to using a subsidy from previous contract years’ carryover funds.

Please note that, due to the time constraints and the other charges to the task force, we did not explore other similar services in making this recommendation. However, LibGuides is the most popular service of its kind within the library community. Also, as mentioned previously, many OPAL libraries’ reaction to and experience with the product has been positive. Because some OPAL libraries have more than two years of experience with the product, continuing with the service would eliminate any need for transition, had we identified and selected another service. Further, the experience staff has gained with the product will continue to support its wider adoption and ultimately its success, should the group subscription continue.

FUNDING THE PROPOSAL

While the group subscription to LibGuides presents a savings overall, we recognize that, in the end, the OPAL libraries must be able to pay for the service and that the costs for the service will be passed back to the participants in one form or another. As with the Serials Solutions proposal, it might be appropriate to consider using OPAL funds remaining from previous years’ contracts to partially subsidize the added cost. This could be done as a one-year subsidy or over multiple years or with the subsidy decreasing over time.
Again, the task force recommends that consideration be given to incorporating the subscription into the OHIONET-OPAL contract. In contrast to the Serials Solutions proposal (wherein incorporating into the contract necessitated dividing the costs evenly, which presented significant financial hurdles for libraries not currently subscribing), incorporating the LibGuides subscription into the contract might be more feasible, given that the costs are already equal.

At the same time, the subscription for all 24 libraries to use LibGuides (including all of the optional features) is approximately $25,700.00 per year, or approximately $1,070.00 per library. This represents a savings of roughly $90.00 per library per year. Because the savings are relatively small (in comparison), it makes a less compelling case for the group subscription and centralized funding or subsidy. That being said, the group might be able to negotiate a better deal than the current one through a multiple-year subscription or by committing all 24 participants, rather than the current 19.
APPENDIX III

DIGITIZATION PILOT PROJECT PROPOSAL

SUMMARY

Despite significant progress in creating awareness of the need for and benefits of digitizing library archival and special collections and other unique materials, many libraries still struggle with finding resources to bring these projects to fruition. Some lack the financial resources; others lack basic knowledge and planning guidance even to know where to start.

For those libraries for which financial resources are a major concern, there are options for digitizing on a minimal budget. Using a sub-$100 scanner and free software, an institution can easily scan papers, photographs or other two-dimensional objects, describe the objects in basic terms using a spreadsheet, and send the files to OhioLINK for inclusion in its DSpace-based Digital Resource Commons.

However, the equipment needed for scanning large-form materials, such as newspapers, and fragile materials, such as books that cannot be opened beyond a 90-degree angle, are quite costly and beyond the reach of small institutions. In addition, some libraries have found that, while DSpace is well-suited for use as an institutional document repository, it fails to sufficiently support the discovery and use of other digital objects like photographs, newspapers and other archival materials.

To address these issues in a manner complementary to the digitization initiatives already underway both within OPAL and OhioLINK, this pilot proposal calls for the OPAL consortium to support an 18-month digitization pilot project involving three OPAL institutions, Bluffton University, Defiance College and Muskingum University, and a $25,000.00 budget. These funds will be used to support the training of appropriate staff and, through a partnership with OHIONET, the purchase of shared scanning equipment, software and workstation to be included in a centralized Digitization Center. Funds will also be used to support the servers, software and storage to manage and provide access to the digital collections.

PROJECT DETAILS

1. PROJECT SCOPE

Intended as a means to get libraries started that have not already undertaken digitization projects or with little exposure to broader digital initiatives, this proposed pilot project is exploratory and evaluative in nature. Participants will digitize, maintain and provide access to digital replications of real-world objects (as opposed to born-digital objects), in both small and large form objects, will evaluate their decisions and experiences and will share their findings with the larger consortium.

It is anticipated that the efforts of the project will be successful and will serve as a model and foundation for other consortium digitization activities. However it is important to realize that, as an exploratory project, there are no guarantees of successful outcomes and that work begun under auspices of the pilot may not continue beyond the 18-month time period. As such, the pilot was conceived using best practices and industry standards so that the products, e.g., the
digital images and metadata, can be incorporated into another digital repository if the project or the work of the project stops at the end of the pilot period.

2. INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The institutions participating in the pilot have identified several collections of materials at their institutions, including both large- and small-form materials, for potential inclusion in the pilot. As part of the project, they will select the specific collections within their libraries for digitization based on a number of factors including local priorities and relevance and benefit to the larger consortium. They will digitize the identified materials using the most appropriate scanning equipment for their collections, whether a separately-acquired local scanner or the shared large-format scanner. Finally, they will integrate the digitized materials into the digital object management system and use appropriate metadata and description techniques to support access to the materials.

Participating institutions will supply the scanning equipment, software and storage for use in their facilities. These locally-supplied resources will be funded completely by the libraries (not using project budget), with each library to select its own equipment, software and storage as dictated by the collections and the types of materials to be included.

A. SCANNERS

Sites who wish to participate in the OPAL digital resource repository should obtain a basic flatbed scanner for the purposes of scanning letter- or legal-sized or smaller documents and photographs. Many flatbed scanners on the market today also have attachments to facilitate scanning slides and negatives. Book-edge scanners are designed so that the scanning bar can reach into a bound book’s gutter without image distortion and without undue stress on the scanned book’s binding.

B. STORAGE

Participating sites should make arrangements for local backup storage of the files produced from the digitization project. This may entail one or more external hard drives or other types of backup media, or the site could consult with their local campus technology staff to determine if there is a network storage option (with backup). Care should be taken to examine the stored files from time to time to keep an eye on data integrity. Other data preservation strategies may need to be employed.

C. SOFTWARE

Participating sites will need software to generate and manipulate files of various kinds which will be produced by the digitization process. Software which is bundled with scanning equipment may be adequate for this, or additional software may need to be utilized. For text-based materials, software will need to facilitate creation and manipulation of a PDF file. Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software may be of interest to participating sites that wish to index the PDF files produced by the digitization project. Participating sites planning
To digitize images will need software to manipulate image files for the purposes of applying digital watermarks or other needs.

3. GROUP INITIATIVES

To achieve the overall goal of assisting these OPAL libraries to get started with digitization, the proposed project includes several group-level objectives, including:

A. Establishing a schedule of training covering a wide array of digitization-related topics for the staff of the three participating OPAL institutions and an OHIONET staff representative.

B. Partnering with OHIONET to establish a physical and online Digitization Center that will incorporate shared equipment, software and server storage to support the digitization program. Components of the Digitization Center include:

   i. A large-format, dual-DSLR scanner to be housed at OHIONET offices, along with optical character recognition software installed on an appropriate workstation, to be used by OPAL libraries to digitize sensitive or large-form materials that cannot be scanned using commodity flatbed, or even book-edge, scanners.

   ii. A user-focused digital object management system, using the Omeka open-source digital collection management software, installed in a virtual server environment.

C. Assessing how successfully the project has achieved its goals of assisting the participating libraries in beginning and maintaining a digital collection, specifically in scanning, describing and providing users with access to these collections.

D. Reporting project status and project outcomes to groups within OPAL and beyond, as appropriate.

A. TRAINING

Funded through the pilot budget, individuals from the participating institutions, along with one OHIONET staff representative, will identify and attend instructional sessions from established digital project authorities. These sessions may take the form of in-person workshops, webinars or online classes. Given the myriad issues related to digitization, potential topics for training include digital project management and planning, copyright, digital imaging and scanning, metadata management and preservation.

In addition to instructional sessions, participants will also utilize websites and books for providing background. The participants will also draw upon local expertise, including OPAL members with substantial digitization experience, to assist them throughout the process. Participants will also consider levels of existing knowledge, knowledge gained through the pilot as it progresses, and timing and availability of appropriate opportunities.

B. DIGITIZATION CENTER

One of the advantages of a consortium-supported digitization project is the purchasing potential for larger equipment to be shared by the consortium and reserved for use by members for scanning projects for large or unusual objects. This large-scale scanning
equipment must be installed in a fixed location and cannot be moved without needing to be recalibrated, which must be done by scanner professionals. Therefore, keeping the large-format scanner centrally in available office space at OHIONET is a practical option. As with the physical equipment, the establishment of a shared, centralized digital object management system would build upon OPAL’s success in centralizing the technology that allows it to meet its member’s needs. Taken together, the equipment, shared scanning space and servers will form a solid foundation for a shared “Digitization Center.”

i. CENTRALIZED, SHARED EQUIPMENT

At the core of the physical “Digitization Center” is the proposed shared scanning equipment. Capturing digital images of books or other fragile materials with minimal distortion or physical harm to the materials requires a dual-DSLR based scanner. This kind of scanner employs two digital SLR cameras on adjustable armatures, typically aimed at opposite sides of an adjustable bed. This bed can serve as a book cradle, allowing for scanning of two pages of an open book, or as a flatbed, as might be appropriate for scanning a newspaper.

It is proposed that OHIONET purchase an Atiz BookDrive Pro scanner and, in exchange for priority usage of the scanner, funds from this project will be used to pay OHIONET for one half of the costs of the scanner. Under this arrangement, OPAL and OHIONET are essentially funding the acquisition of the large-format scanner equally. The scanner will be maintained by OHIONET staff and will be covered for the duration of the project by an extended warranty, the costs of which will be equally split between OPAL and OHIONET. Participants will complete proper training on the scanning equipment as part of the project before starting their scanning project.

The dual-DSLR scanner will be connected to a dedicated workstation. This workstation will use the ImageMagick software to manage the files as they’re being scanned. The software can perform optical character recognition for books and other printed materials to facilitate full-text searching. It can also create high-resolution images as well as lower-resolution derivative images appropriate for incorporation into the digital repository described below.

ii. OMEKA-BASED DIGITAL OBJECT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

In addition to the equipment to support this project, this proposal calls for the implementation of a digital object repository built on virtual hardware and the Omeka software, both of which will be implemented and maintained by OHIONET staff. As part of this system, each institution will have its own distinct repository, will load the digital objects into the repository and will use the system’s metadata creation and management capabilities to describe the resources. The system will serve as the public interface to the collection, supporting discovery through searching and browsing.

This system will be built using the Omeka software, an open source application developed by the Center for History and New Media at George Mason University. Omeka was developed with a particularly strong end-user focus and therefore supports
the discovery process more effectively than other similar systems. Also, because of the technologies upon which it’s built (including PHP and MySQL), implementing and maintaining an Omeka is easier than similar systems.

The system will be installed in a leased virtual server environment. This will eliminate the need to purchase servers until it’s determined to be an effective use of group resources.

C. EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

In the final months of the project, the participants will evaluate the success of the project by considering how well the project met the intended goals. In a written evaluation, the participants will also make recommendations to the OPAL Executive Committee and Directors Council for continuing or ending the work started under the project. If the project is recommended to continue, the group will detail these recommendations in the written evaluation. This evaluation will also be presented to other groups within OPAL consortium and beyond as outlined below.

D. REPORTING AND PRESENTING

Throughout the project, the participants will provide written status updates to the OPAL Executive Committee at each of its meetings held during the pilot. These updates will outline major project activities since the last update and will detail project expenditures during the period. The participants will also submit their final evaluation to the Executive Committee at its first meeting following the project end. The participants will also work with OHIONET as needed to report budgetary expenditures. Finally, the participants will share details with the broader consortium membership through presentations at OPAL Conference and other venues, blog posts and other channels as they, in consultation with the OPAL Executive Committee, see appropriate.

4. TIMELINE

The total time for pilot will be 18 months:

October – December 2010

- Establish meeting schedules, procedures, assign roles
- Select collections for local digitization
- Acquire/identify local equipment and software
- Identify training opportunities/site visits and develop training schedule
- Begin training as possible
- Report to OPAL Executive Committee in November

January – March 2011

- Training/site visits
• Begin local scanning as feasible
• Order dual-DSLR scanner and make arrangements with Ohionet for any additional technology needs
• Report to OPAL Executive Committee in February

April-June 2011
• Finalize items needed for Digitization Center and install/set up
• Training for dual-DSLR scanner
• Establish schedule of projects for Digitization Center
• Report to OPAL Executive Committee in May

July-November 2011
• Continue local scanning, do large format scanning at Ohionet
• Give project report at OPAL Conference in August (?)
• Report to OPAL Executive Committee in September and November

December 2011-April 2012
• Evaluate and assess
• Prepare report of lessons learned and recommendations for OPAL-wide digitization program
• Report to OPAL Executive Committee in May

August 2012
• Present at OPAL Conference

5. BUDGET

The following table outlines the budget for the proposed pilot:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total budget</th>
<th>Local institutional contribution</th>
<th>OPAL contribution</th>
<th>OHIONET contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small scanner, disk-based storage and software</td>
<td>$900.00</td>
<td>$900</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Server, virtualized</td>
<td>$4,500.00</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Server support and maintenance</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software for Digitization Center</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scanner for Digitization Center</td>
<td>$25,000.00</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$12,500</td>
<td>$12,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scanner installation and training</td>
<td>$3,500.00</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,750</td>
<td>$1,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scanner extended warranty</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and space for Digitization Center</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workstation for Digitization Center</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incidental expenses</td>
<td>$1,750.00</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,750</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>$49,150.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$900.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$25,000.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$24,250.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that the costs for the small scanner, storage and software to be provided by the participants may be significantly lower, depending if the institution already has access to these resources.

For the duration of the pilot, the costs for the virtual server and associated storage for the shared repository will be assumed by OHIONET. OHIONET’s contribution reflects the six months costs beyond the initial twelve months being funded by OPAL’s contribution.

If OPAL elects to continue the project beyond the 18-month period, it will be necessary to reassess the costs and the share each group (OPAL and OHIONET) contributes for each of these categories.

**CONCLUSION**

It is anticipated that the proposed pilot will serve as a complementary layer in the foundation of digitization-related activities within the consortium. It will build on the group's success in providing vastly improved services to its users through effective system and purchasing collaboration. Finally, the work of the pilot will serve as input for impending digitization-related activities outlined in the proposed strategic plan, allowing the group to step closer toward a fully-realized consortium-supported digitization program.