



Collaborative Surveys

Using Feedback from
Stakeholders to Build New
Services



FLICC/FEDLINK

- 41-year-old division of Library of Congress
- Federal Library and Information Center (FLICC)
- Federal Library and Information Network (FEDLINK)
- 36 employees
- <http://www.loc.gov/flicc>



FLICC/FEDLINK: PAAT

- P: Prourement
- A: Advocacy
- A: Advice
- T: Training/education



Key Stakeholders

- 1,800 FEDLINK members/participants
- FLICC Executive Board (FEB)
- FEDLINK Advisory Committee (FAC)
- 130 FEDLINK Vendors
- 34 staff members



Current Environment

- Downsizing/outourcing
- Google/desktop services
- Shrinking budgets (esp. military)
- Change/promote image
- New mission/role within agencies
- High contracting agency turnover
- Less need for clerical/paraprofessional staff



Current Environment (Cont'd)

- Federal gov't push to telework
- Information sharing
- E-government infrastructure
- Potential role in democratization, economic development and health services



Business Plan FY07-11

- Five-year, mandated business plan
- Identify trends impacting FLICC/FEDLINK's role
- Describe new services and initiatives
- Predict and stabilize future revenue streams



Business Plan (cont'd)

- Evidence-based: to provide facts and data behind outcomes and predictions
- Collaborative: to incorporate needs of stakeholders into future plans, initiatives and services
- Flexible: to accommodate changing information environment



Fact-finding/Collaborative Efforts

- Environmental Scan (Fall '05)
(<http://environmentalscan.pbwiki.com>)
- Discussions at two Vendor Forums (Nov. '05/Feb. '06)
- Discussions with both FEB and FAC (Dec. '05)
- Discussion at FLICC Quarterly Meeting (Dec. '05)
- Member, Vendor and Staff Surveys (Mar. '06)
- Staff Retreat (April '06)



Business Plan Surveys

- Four online surveys using SurveyMonkey
- Survey designed and conducted by contractor, FLICC/FEDLINK/LOC staff, and graduate students
- Conducted Feb. '06; Analyzed March '06
- Sent to 2,163 potential respondents; received 484 responses or 22 percent response rate.
- “FLICC/FEDLINK: Member, Vendor and Staff Surveys” Report: <http://fedlinksurvey.pbwiki.com>



Survey Goals

To determine:

- perceptions of and satisfaction with FLICC/FEDLINK;
- current and future use of FLICC/FEDLINK's products and services; and
- suggestions for future FLICC/FEDLINK products and services.



Survey Questions

- Ratings of FLICC/FEDLINK
- Suggestions for improvement and new service ideas
- Future purchasing plans (members) and sales predictions (vendors)
- Reasons why members buy outside of FEDLINK
- New communications media/preferences
- Survey instruments:
<http://fedlinksurvey.pbwiki.com>



Four Surveys

- FLICC/FEDLINK Survey
- FLICC/FEDLINK Interview Survey
- FEDLINK Vendor Survey
- FLICC/FEDLINK Staff Survey



FLICC/FEDLINK Survey

- 26-questions
- E-mailed to 1,804 FEDLINK members/participants
- Received 326 responses
- 18 percent response rate
- View Results:
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/Report.asp?U=178082591068>



FLICC/FEDLINK Interview Survey

- 55-questions sent to 62 federal library leaders and/or large purchasers of FEDLINK materials
- Received 37 responses
- 60 percent response rate
- View Results:
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/Report.asp?U=178110118655>



FEDLINK Vendor Survey

- 48-questions
- E-mailed to 263 FEDLINK vendors reps
- Received 87 responses
- 33 percent response rate
- View Results:
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/Report.asp?U=178082346976>



FLICC/FEDLINK Staff Survey

- 31-questions
- E-mailed to 34 staff members
- Received 34 responses
- 100 percent response rate



Perceptions of FLICC/FEDLINK

- FLICC/FEDLINK closely associated with Library of Congress; also with OCLC, federal government and “bureaucracy”
- High marks on “Report Card” questions, but also significant number of “Don’t know” responses
- Vendors had the most “Don’t know” answers; staff gave the lowest marks
- Open-ended questions revealed more criticism



Buying Outside of FEDLINK

- GSA is FEDLINK's largest government competitor
- Vendors are selling directly on a large scale
- Members buy outside of FEDLINK to:
 - Avoid FEDLINK fees
 - Reach vendors outside of FEDLINK
 - Use credit cards
 - Get better pricing



Future Purchase Plans

- Education/training #1
- OCLC #2
- FEDLINK procurement #3
- Decrease book and print serial purchase
- Maintain or increase online services

Overall, FEDLINK purchase will remain flat
or decrease



New Service Ideas

- more distance learning
- consortium/group purchasing
- temporary staffing via FEDLINK
- institutional repository development
- data/information sharing
- new vendors and services added to FEDLINK



FEDLINK Improvement

- Automate FEDLINK's outdated financial system
- Allow electronic invoicing and account access
- Permit credit cards
- Decrease paperwork
- Better customer service
- Negotiate consortium pricing
- Lower FEDLINK fees
- Market vendor products more proactively
- Provide distance learning/training outside of DC



Consulting Opportunities

- Coordinate subject matter expertise across government using LOC as key resource
- Substantial interest in web design, digital library development, preservation, cataloging, content/knowledge management, and more.



Stronger Advocacy

- Promote interests of federal libraries
- Prevent closings/outourcing
- Strengthen librarian GS series (1410)
- Participate in federal information policy-making



Communications

- Strong ratings for communications
- Redesign web site
- Create e-letter with richer, more timely information



Vendor Feedback

- Only a fraction of gov't sales through FEDLINK
- Unaware of FEDLINK marketing opportunities
- Want FEDLINK to be more proactive and help sell/promote products



Recommendations

- Associate FLICC/FEDLINK more closely with Library of Congress
- Work with LOC experts to provide training and consulting via FLICC/FEDLINK
- Rebuild FLICC/FEDLINK as an innovator
- Create fee-based consulting services in preservation, digital library development, web design, space planning, content management selection, cataloging and other areas



Recommendations (Cont'd)

- Negotiate with vendors for consortium pricing
- Add new vendors to FEDLINK and promote products aggressively
- Purchase state-of-the-art financial accounting/e-commerce system that allows credit card purchasing and electronic access to account information.
- Provide better customer service
- Hire more staff for customer inquiries



Recommendations (Cont'd)

- Develop distance learning and offer training outside DC
- Offer member training on how to use FEDLINK
- Redesign web site as prototype of web design consulting services
- Create portal/digital library as model for digital library consulting services



Recommendations (Cont'd)

- Create e-letter and other venues to provide more timely and pertinent information
- Establish data sharing network of librarians
- Create a federal library directory
- Develop institutional repository in collaboration with federal libraries
- Support advocacy expert or group at FLICC



Strategic Goals 2007-2011

- Provide the federal workforce with goods and services that draw upon the strengths, resources and expertise of our parent organization, the Library of Congress, and other leading libraries and information centers, professional associations, and information-based organizations.



Strategic Goals (Cont'd)

- Offer new and competitively priced information-based goods and services that will expand our clientele within the federal government and better balance our sources of revenue.
- Serve as an active advisor and advocate for the provision of information services and access to information for the federal government and workforce.



Strategic Goals (Cont'd)

- Develop expertise to facilitate research, reference, resource sharing, organization of knowledge, and management of information services within the federal government.
- Design a flexible infrastructure that can take advantage of changing needs for information and changing information environments within the federal government.



Conclusions

- Online surveys are excellent vehicles to obtain member feedback
- Technologically easy to conduct
- Feedback will allow FLICC/FEDLINK to reposition itself based on articulated needs, verifiable statistics and concrete evidence