SPRING 1992 MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE
SUMMARY REPORT

We encourage you to use this report to provide information to other individuals in your organization or institution and to prepare articles for local newsletters or entries in local reports.

Introduction

The Spring 1992 Meeting of the Coalition Task Force took place on March 24-25 in Washington, DC. Over 350 individuals from over 200 institutions and organizations attended the Meeting. A total of 159 institutions and organizations now belong to the Coalition Task Force, and 87% of them were represented at this Meeting. Ten institutions and organizations attended this meeting as new members of the Task Force. In addition, seven individuals travelled from outside of North America to attend the Meeting.

Network Navigating and Navigators

The Meeting theme, "Network Navigating and Navigators," was introduced by Coalition Director Paul Evan Peters in the opening plenary session. He noted that interest in this theme has been growing in proportion to the growth in the user population of and in the complexity of the information environment represented by the Internet. He commented that effective responses to the challenge of navigating the Internet are appearing in growing numbers, and tools that now exist or are under development promise to improve the usability of the Network to make life easier for network navigators. He then introduced four individuals who are "true pathfinders and pioneers whose work is breaking new ground in this area of vital importance to realizing the full promise of networks to advance scholarship and intellectual productivity." Peters also noted that the theme for this meeting grew out of an invitational meeting held by the Working Group on Directories and Resource Information Services at Stanford University in June, 1991.

Vinton Cerf, Vice President, Corporation for National Research Initiatives, described his vision of the digital library system and the role of "knowbots" in locating "nuggets" of information on networks. Knowbots are dynamic programs that move around in networks and carry out algorithms or searches. While the knowbot is carrying out a search, it can modify it, for example, by searching another database. The Corporation for National Research Initiatives has developed a prototype knowbot for white pages services and is developing the Abide project which uses knowbots to query multiple databases produced by the National Library of Medicine.

Brewster Kahle, Project Leader, Thinking Machines Corporation, sees a fundamental shift in the way that information services are being delivered in contemporary society. In commenting on the pervasiveness and power of technology and information services to the individual, Kahle noted that he announced the Wide Area Information System (WAIS) project via an Internet e-mail message, and ten months later has 10,000 users of the product. The goals of WAIS, an electronic publishing system, are: to make personal information accessible; to have published information find the user; to be usable anywhere; and, to allow others to use what an individual has learned, if appropriate. WAIS, which is based on the Z39.50 protocol, employs English language query and relevance feedback as its navigational techniques. At present, 100 databases are being served via WAIS in nine countries, and three new databases are being registered per week.

Next, Joyce Reynolds, Information Sciences Institute, University of Southern California, described user services planning being carried out via the nine User Services Working Groups (USWG) of the Internet Engineering Task

Force (IETF). The USWG provides a regular forum for those interested in all user services to identify and initiate projects designed to improve the quality of information available to end-users of the Internet. They have seven types of objectives: user information; network information services infrastructure; network operational management; education; documentation and distribution; interaction with other IETF areas; interaction with other international user services entities; and, user information. Reynolds highlighted some of the products of User Services, including fourteen "For Your Information" (FYI) publications available on the Network.

The final panelist, George Strawn, Program Officer, National Science Foundation, discussed the current state of the NSF network information centers and the recently issued NSF "Network Information Services Manager(s) for NSFNET and NREN" project solicitation. He stated that the purposes of the solicitation were the regulation of non-military Internet networks; the provision of directory and database services; and, development of an expanded array of information services. He noted that "considerable latitude exists for creative responses" and stressed the NSF's interest in an open and fair selection process.

Project Briefings

Following the plenary panel, attendees had the opportunity to talk in small group sessions with the four panelists and, in addition, to attend project briefings by others involved in implementing directory and resource information services: Chris Weider, Advanced Network and Services, Inc. discussing the X.500 protocol; Mark McCahill, University of Minnesota describing Gopher; Peter Deutsch, McGill University, describing Archie; Martin Dillon, OCLC, Inc., and Sally McCallum, Library of Congress, discussing bibiliographic description and control for the Internet; Michael Schwartz, University of Colorado, Boulder, describing Netfind; and Howard Curtis, Cornell University, discussing the Mann Library "Gateway."

Synergy Sessions

These informal sessions provide an opportunity for Coalition members to convene a small group discussion on topics of their choice. Synergy sessions held at this meeting were: John Waiblinger, University of Southern California, and Judith Turner, Chronicle Information Services, discussing USC Info and the *Online Chronicle of Higher Education;* John Garrett, Corporation for National Research Initiatives and Joseph Alen, Copyright Clearance Center, discussing their recently issued report *Toward a Copyright Management System for Digital Libraries;* Brian Kahin, Harvard University, reviewing the joint Harvard/Coalition project on Scholarly Communications; Laura Isenstein, Baltimore County Public Library, and Charles McClure, Syracuse University, discussing partnerships for navigating the NREN, including public libraries, state libraries, school libraries, and colleges and universities; George Brett, University of North Carolina General Administration, and Steven Cisler, Apple Computer, Inc., describing two examples illustrating the gift economy and the market economy on the network; Stephen Hall, Harvard University, and M. Stuart Lynn, Cornell University, discussing the CUPID project; and John Haak, University of Hawaii at Manoa, discussing regional accreditation standards in a networked environment.

Networked Information Professionals

In a dinner address, Pat Molholt, Associate Director of Libraries, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and, starting July 1, Assistant Vice President and Associate Dean for Scholarly Resources, Columbia University Medical School, decried that while we invest in system and network research and development, we are lagging behind in human resources research and development. She exhorted the audience to make investments in the human capital of our organizations. In analyzing parallels between issues routinely faced with systems and applying them to the human counterpart issues, she noted that "it is easier to master a new task than a new technology; adopting a new technology is easier than altering an organization's structure; and, accepting a new organizational structure is easier than making changes in the cultural fabric of an organization, or a

profession." She continued, "at present, we have changed the tasks, we have put in new technologies, we have altered the organizational structures, and we're now facing the most exciting challenge of all - changing the cultural fabric, the norms, the expectations, the definition of our profession." As a start, Molholt suggested that we begin to make the kinds of investments in our human resources, e.g. our staffs, as we do in our technologies. She noted "we need both the technology and the people. We've become very adept with the former and now need to turn to the latter with equal excitement and zeal."

NREN Public Policy Framework

In a plenary session panel on the policy implications and directions of the current and future networking environment, moderator Richard West, Associate Vice President of the University of California and Chair of the Coalition Steering Committee, noted that this is the first meeting of the Task Force after the passage and signing into law of the High Performance Computing Act of 1991 (HPCA 1991) with its NREN provisions. The panel presented perspectives on the next steps that the research and education community should consider formulating and taking together. The panelists and the issues they identified were:

- Michael Roberts, Vice President, EDUCOM, led off with a description of the international networking scene. He noted that the Internet will not be replaced by the NREN, which will be one component of global networking. He called for the creation of a U.S. national information infrastructure and noted that HPCA 1991 represents a national consensus on the policy goal of the gigabit NREN, the vehicle for stimulating the creation of this infrastructure.

- John Clement, Director, K-12 Networking, EDUCOM, then gave his perspectives on the needs of the K-12 community. The primary needs of that community are access, appropriate content, and participation in the policy process. He described various ways that people and institutions are getting connected to networks: through state education networks, via "affinity" networks, and by means of regional networks. However, much more needs to be achieved for this audience to ensure ubiquitous access and to allow access to the entire range of resources available on the Internet.

- Representing the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), Susan Brynteson, Director of Libraries, University of Delaware, commented that the professional community needs to identify existing principles that should be applied to guide the development of network policies. Networks will create new tensions in areas in which libraries have been traditionally involved, e.g. privacy and security of information and protection of freedom of speech. She named as goals the development of standards for the network and electronic access to public information via the federal depository program.

- Representing the Public Library Association (PLA), Laura Isenstein, Coordinator, Information Services, Baltimore County Public Library, noted the service roles of public libraries and commented on how the NREN will affect those roles. She said that the PLA must educate their members, who need to be actively involved in network planning issues. She stated that public libraries would provide an avenue that would guarantee all citizens access to networked information resources, and she also called attention to the types of information products that public libraries could provide to the networks. Connectivity, costs, and equitable access are key issues for this constituency.

- Representing the Association of College and Research Libraries, Noreen Alldredge, Dean of Libraries, Montana State University, put forth as a goal of NREN an information infrastructure which enhances the intellectual, cultural, and geographic diversities of our world. To do this we have to encourage network access and support at both the state/regional level and the federal/international level to avoid dividing into "haves and have nots". She emphasized the need for training and education and for investing in the information infrastructure.

- Representing the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies, Howard McGinn, State Librarian of North Carolina, presented four "realities" and their implications for the NREN infrastructure: (1) the information needs of everyday corporate and private citizens and local governments can be extremely complex and sophisticated and therefore even rural areas need access to the Internet; (2) the concept that systems of information delivery constructed and supported with tax dollars are public information assets and must be made accessible to everyone, and state and public libraries can perform that role; (3) access to previously little used, massive amounts of state government data is now being made accessible and many state library agencies already have the mandate to make it available; and (4) local politics can have the power to change national policy and politics and therefore state and public librarians can assist in influencing the future of networking legislation.

Public Information

In a luncheon address, Wayne P. Kelley, Assistant Public Printer and Superintendent of Documents, presented the Government Printing Office's (GPO) vision for access to government information in the electronic era. He stated "GPO is now embarked on one of the most important projects of its 130-year life. It is trying to transform itself from a printer to a multi-media disseminator of information products and services." He added that while GPO now thinks of database capabilities as an offshoot of its printing processes, they will soon have to see it the other way around. The policy set into place in the 19th century for a single, central point for bibliographic information about, and access to, federal publications, has now come apart with the advent of electronic publishing. Since electronic information products and services were not considered publications under government publishing statutes, we came to the current discordant state. While Kelley does not foresee a "quick fix", he is anticipating a mandate from the revised Circular A-130 for the dissemination of electronic products through the depository program. In developing directions, he stated that GPO's foundation principle is that the public has paid for the creation of, and owns, federal information. Therefore, the public deserves some mechanism for free access, and if an individual wishes to own a copy of a federal information product, it should be available at roughly the cost of supplying it. In pursuing "the practical policy of the possible," Kelley is calling on basic tenets that have guaranteed the public access to the documents of its government. He expects that GPO will be offering agencies the full spectrum of electronic publishing services and offering the public convenient access to government information in all formats. He closed his presentation with the admonition that we cannot squander the national treasure of information in the face of global competition. We must cooperate and collaborate to keep that from happening.

Working Groups

Meetings of the Working Groups focused on issues and activities identified in the *Report on Program Priorities*, distributed to Meeting attendees and available from the Coalition office. Among the projects noted for attention at the closing "town meeting" session were reports on the status of the following initiatives:

- The *Rights for Electronic Access to and Delivery of Information (READI) Program* - The services of Robert Ubell Associates have been retained to design and conduct three expert panels and to undertake a variety of other efforts leading to a report about and recommendations concerning the feasibility of promulgating a common set of terms and conditions for managing relationships and property in the market for networked information.

- The *TopNode for Networked Information Resources, Services, and Tools* - Indiana University has been selected to play the lead role in this project with Merit Network, Inc., playing an important supporting role. Two meetings have been held to begin drafting the details of the project plan. The TopNode project will establish a directory of directories, catalogs, and other lists of networked information resources, services, and tools.

- The *Development of a Packet of Information for Use in Formulating and Addressing Institutional and Organizational Issues Arising from the Emergence of a National Networked Information Infrastructure and Environment* - An editor will be chosen to compile and write sections for this collection of materials.

- The *Z39.50 Interoperability Testbed Project* - A group of institutions and organizations has been formed under the auspices of the Working Group on Architectures and Standards to promote and obtain the full promise of the Z39.50 computer-to-computer information retrieval protocol for the construction of information servers. They recently held their second meeting. All specifications developed by this project will be public documents.

- The *Development of Cost/Benefit Analyses of Alternative Models for the GPO WINDO Legislative Proposal* - Initial responses to this *Call* have just been received and are being reviewed.

Coalition Internet Server

Attendees received an update on the availability of FTP files on the Coalition server, representing items such as papers from the Fall 1991 Task Force Meeting and the text of documents contained in the *Information Policies: A Compilation of Position Statements, Principles, Statutes, and Other Pertinent Statements* publication. Access to the server is available through usual anonymous FTP procedures, including numerous "readme" files, directed toward the Coalition's server, which is named "ftp.cni.org". In addition, sign-up sheets were distributed soliciting interest in network discussion lists on the areas represented by the Working Groups and on other topics.

Future Task Force Meetings

It was announced that the Fall 1992 Meeting of the Coalition Task Force will be held on November 19-20 at the Lansdowne Conference Center near the Dulles Airport in the Washington, DC area and that the theme for this Meeting will be "Innovative Networked Communication and Publication." It was also announced that the Spring 1992 Meeting of the Coalition Task Force will be held outside of the Washington area, likely in the San Francisco Bay area, on March 23-24, 1993.

Further Information

Additional information about the Spring 1992 Meeting of the Coalition Task Force, and the various talks presented and documents distributed at this meeting, can be obtained from Joan Lippincott, Coalition Assistant Director, by sending electronic mail to joan@cni.org (Internet) or joancni@umdc.bitnet or by phoning the Coalition office (202) 232-2466. Information will also be made available through the Coalition's Internet server as it is received, edited, and converted.

Director's Postscript

The Spring 1992 Meeting of the Coalition Task Force was in every respect an exhilarating and gratifying event. Meeting attendees contributed considerable insight and energy to the proceedings by: interacting with a very stimulating group of inventors of network navigational tools, systems, and services; deliberating upon the need for human resource research and development, the evolution of the NREN public policy framework and process, and the realities, issues, and priorities that define access to and delivery of public, particularly Federal, information; and, immersing themselves in countless discussions and debates about how to realize the promise of networking for advancing scholarship and intellectual productivity. The Coalition exists to assist its member institutions and organizations in their efforts to participate in and to influence a historic transformation of how information is created, accessed, and used, a transformation that is taking place in times

of extreme economic hardship and demographic change. The Coalition encourages individuals in the broader networking community, as well as in its member institutions and organizations, to bring needs and issues to its attention and to contribute to its program of work. Indeed, the Coalition depends on it!