

Libraries Australia Document Delivery: A System for a Variety of Users

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ABSTRACT

Libraries Australia Document Delivery (LADD) is a web-based system for interlibrary lending and document delivery between Australian libraries, managed by the National Library of Australia. The LADD system has a broad user base with library members representing government departments, academic libraries, private companies and public libraries.

Interlibrary loan (ILL) staff at these member libraries range from volunteers and part-time workers to full-time professional staff working in a dedicated document supply section. Membership drawn from such diverse library sectors and working with such a range of staff resources shows that the LADD system has developed into a service that is used with success by a variety of members.

The LADD system contains opt in options for users which can be used to manage both request and staff workflows, such as email alerts. The LADD system also has options which users are able to control themselves, opting in or out as they please, such as DocStore and reciprocal arrangements. Another feature of the LADD system is the LADD Payments Service which significantly reduces the administrative burden for libraries.

LADD users have access to items from the collections of over 730 member libraries. They also have the option to request to the commercial supplier Infotrieve Australia as well as to over 300 National Library of New Zealand Te Puna member libraries. The LADD system is also a gateway environment with 86 locations currently using the VDX, Relais or Aleph ISO ILL compliant systems to interoperate with LADD. The LADD system is the only gateway environment in Australia.

The LADD system has seen an increase in both requesting activity and in the member base. This steady increase over the years demonstrates that ILL is an essential activity in Australia and also that LADD is a unique utility offering benefits for all users.

As the member base has grown and diverse groups have emerged, the LADD system has adapted to provide a service which meets the needs of the broad user community.

1. BRIEF BACKGROUND OF LADD

The National Library of Australia (NLA) has supported interlibrary lending (ILL) via an automated ILL module since 1989, using the module Washington/Western Library Network (WLN) (Ong & Panagiotidis, 2007). Due to a number of factors, such as having an outmoded interface, application upgrades having fallen behind schedule and most importantly the module not being Y2K compliant, in 1999 the NLA implemented OCLC's Virtual Document eXchange (VDX) software, based on the ISO ILL Protocol, to replace WLN (Hanington & Reid, 2009). This is the Libraries Australia Document Delivery (LADD) – previously Kinetica Document Delivery – service.

LADD is a web-based system for ILL and document delivery. While the end users utilise the web interface, the LADD administrator utilises a Windows Client system to manage the configuration of the service and query the VDX system.

The LADD system has seen an increase in both the member base and in requesting activity in recent years. This is represented in the tables below:

2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
230,000	277,700	307,000	318,000

Table 1: Requesting Activity

2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
677	716	730	730	733

Table 2: LADD Member base

This steady increase in both the user base as well as requesting activity over the years demonstrates that ILL is an essential activity in Australia and also that LADD is a unique utility offering benefits to all users.

The LADD system has library members representing;

- Libraries that belong to a State or Federal government department including Statutory Authorities and State Libraries,
- Libraries that belong to a private company such as private law or accounting firms,
- Academic libraries including universities, school, TAFE and research libraries, and
- Public libraries

A breakdown of the library types in LADD, as of June 2010, is represented in the table below:

Academic	Commercial	Government	Public	University
118	90	274	168	83

Table 3: Library types in LADD

ILL staff at these member libraries range from volunteers and part time workers to full time staff working as part of a dedicated document supply section.

1.1. ISO ILL Interoperability

In 2003 two consortia, both using VDX, WAGUL (Archibald, 2003) and CLIC (CLIC, n.d.) began successfully interoperating with the LADD system. This marks the commencement of the LADD gateway environment. As of June 2010 there were 86 locations interoperating with the LADD gateway. These consist of individual sites, five consortia, the commercial supplier Infotrieve and the National Library of New Zealand's Te Puna Interloan. Currently there are three different ISO ILL systems interoperating with the LADD gateway: VDX, Relais International: Relais and ExLibris: Aleph (Integrated ILL).

This gateway environment is enabled by LADD supporting the ISO ILL Protocol. This allows one ILL system to send an ILL transaction to another via the LADD gateway. For example the University of New South Wales can use their Aleph ILL system to request from a standard LADD library, or to request from another ISO ILL library such as Flinders University that uses the Relais ILL system, again via the LADD gateway (Hanington & Reid, 2009).

Just as we are seeing an increase in the LADD member base, so too are we seeing an increase in libraries implementing ISO ILL compliant systems to interoperate via the LADD gateway:

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	June 2010
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12	13	23	30	51	66	74	86
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Table 4: ISO ILL locations

The LADD system is the only gateway environment in Australia.

1.2 Aspects of the LADD System

With a diverse range of library members, the LADD service provides a number of features that meets the workflows of all users, regardless of staff levels and requesting activity. These features are also utilised by ISO ILL compliant systems interoperating with the LADD gateway.

- The LADD Payments Service manages the financial transactions between supplying and requesting libraries. From June 2004 membership of the LADD Payments Service has been obligatory for all LADD members. The LADD Payments Service significantly reduces the administrative burden for libraries, as it eliminates the need for invoicing each library which has been supplied and the need for paying multiple invoices for those requests shipped. All libraries, both LADD and ISO ILL compliant locations, participate in the LADD Payments Service. This also handles transactions from Te Puna as well as the commercial supplier Infotrieve Australia.
- LADD is part of the core subscription to Libraries Australia at no extra charge. Libraries pay a subscription fee to access Libraries Australia, which includes use of the LADD service. Charges for the supply of copy non returnable and loan requests are not included in the subscription fee but are managed by the LADD Payments Service. The LADD service being available at no extra charge provides the opportunity to participate in automated ILL and document delivery for those libraries that cannot afford or manage the implementation and management of an ISO ILL compliant system of their own.
- LADD provides access to the National Bibliographic Database as well as other databases, such as Te Puna, enabling users to locate and request items from libraries and commercial document suppliers.
- LADD uses the Australian Service Levels of Core, Express and Rush as defined in the Australian Interlibrary Resource Sharing Code, with these being mapped within the LADD system to Interlibrary Loan Protocol Implementors Group (IPIG) service level codes when transacting with Te Puna.

2. OPT IN OPTIONS

The LADD system contains opt in options which can be used to manage both ILL request and staff workflows. For these opt in options a representative from the library is required to contact the Libraries Australia Helpdesk for the particular functionality to be applied to their location.

2.1. Email Alerts

One functionality that users are able to request to join are email alerts, of which there are currently 11 available in a combination of Requester and Responder. Users are able to select to be signed up for any combination of alerts, be that only one or all 11. Email alerts were first introduced as a trial between 1 February and 31 March 2007. Feedback from this trial was positive resulting in email alerts becoming an ongoing feature.

Email alerts involve the sending of an automated email to a nominated contact email address when a particular action is sent for a new or existing request. This improves workflows where for example libraries which have a small volume of requests by reducing the need to login and check for new requests, or for larger libraries which may choose to only utilise particular email alerts such as the Renew-Indication.

Since the introduction of email alerts library participation in the functionality has been high. To manage the registration of new and existing libraries for this functionality a dedicated online email alert form was developed. An indication of the user acceptance of the email alerts and of the benefits to user workflows is evidenced in the fact that two email alerts, Renew-Answer-Yes and Renew-Answer-No were suggested by a user.

2.3. Enhanced Requesting

Another of the options that libraries are able to request is Enhanced Requesting. Since December 2004 the Libraries Australia Search service has offered an Enhanced Requesting option. This provides users with the ability to submit loan or copy non returnable requests directly from search results in Libraries Australia Search. There are two different Enhanced Request forms available on the Libraries Australia Search interface – one for library clients and one for ILL staff.

Enhanced Requesting involves data from Libraries Australia Search being mapped to a formatted email and then processed into that library's LADD account. Enhanced Requesting requests require manual intervention by ILL staff within LADD before being authorised and moving onto locations on the rota, or rejected without being processed further. Libraries which use the VDX ISO ILL system to interoperate with LADD are also able to utilise the Enhanced Requesting functionality.

Uptake to Enhanced Requesting has been steady and is currently used in all library sectors:

Academic	Commercial	Government	Public	University
24	7	64	35	29

Table 5: Enhanced Requesting library sectors

3. CHANGEABLE OPTIONS

LADD offers users the ability to configure certain areas of the system to suit their work practices. This is applied directly by the user in their LADD account, with no requirement to contact Libraries Australia for the change to become effective.

3.1. DocStore

An option that users are able to control themselves via their LADD account is the receiving of electronic documents via the DocStore. DocStore refers to the functionality to attach, send and receive an electronic document to a request through LADD. As a Requester, if a Responder has supplied a request via the DocStore this document is viewable from within LADD as the document is attached to the request.

For DocStore to be enabled a valid DocStore address must be transmitted within the delivery address of the request. By default all new locations joining LADD are setup with the LADD DocStore address, with users being able to remove this address from within their location record. By the same means they are also able to opt back into DocStore by entering this address into their location record at anytime.

DocStore is a functionality that is heavily used by the smaller libraries, particularly those libraries that do not have access to other delivery mechanisms such as Ariel. Documents can also be transmitted and received via DocStore between LADD and VDX ISO ILL locations, while LADD locations are also able to receive documents from Relais ISO ILL locations via the DocStore.

3.2. Reciprocal Arrangements

Within LADD users are able to determine the amount that they charge for each item they ship. While the cost can be manually changed when shipping an item, users also have the option to configure a default shipping cost for particular locations. This functionality is known as Own Services and once configured this default amount, be that a cost of zero or \$2, will always appear in LADD when supplying to that location. As well as configuring the cost, users also have the ability to define the service type, be that copy non returnable, loan or both as well as the service level, be that Core,

Express, Rush or all three, for each Own Service configured. Own Services can be added or deleted at anytime as well as being edited as work practices change.

4. LADD ADMINISTRATION

4.1. Maintaining LADD

As part of ensuring successful interaction for users of LADD, certain aspects are configured by the LADD administrator on a global basis. One such global configuration is the automatic completion of requests once the ILL lifecycle has been finished. The automatic completion of requests is applied by the system to both the Requesting and Responding request transactions. For example once a copy non returnable request has been manually actioned received by the Requesting location, the automatic completion is applied both to the Requesting (Received) and Responding (Received-Indication) transactions.

Once automatic completion has been applied to a request they are still findable within the LADD system. However they are removed from all active work queues to indicate to ILL staff that the ILL lifecycle has been completed. Every 12 months, after the end of financial year, requests are removed from the LADD system and archived. This ensures that only those requests still requiring attention remain on the system, both reducing the workload of ILL staff in viewing requests that do not require attention and also in ensuring the load on the system is kept to a minimum. Archived requests are those that have completed the ILL lifecycle or those that have not been actioned in the previous 12 months.

4.2. Improving LADD

Feedback from users on their experiences in using LADD as well as suggestions for areas requiring improvement is encouraged, with a suggestion form available on the Libraries Australia website for just this purpose. User suggestions on LADD are investigated and if found to benefit all LADD users and able to be implemented by the LADD administrator, then this is configured on the system. As such changes are generally applied globally consideration is given to all LADD library sectors and ILL staff. Examples of changes applied to LADD from user suggestions are the email alerts of Renew-Answer-Yes and Renew-Answer-No as previously mentioned, as well as changing the default logout time from 30 minutes to one hour.

If however a user suggestion is investigated and found to benefit all LADD users but is not able to be configured by the LADD administrator, then this is logged as part of the annual VDX enhancements process. This VDX enhancements process is managed by the VDX Users Group of Australia and New Zealand (VUGANZ) and involves the Australasian VDX sites logging enhancement suggestions which are then voted upon. Based on the results of the voting the vendor, OCLC, accepts a certain number which are then incorporated into a future release of VDX. LADD administration acts as the representative for all standard LADD users in the VDX enhancements process.

4.3. Communication and Support

Libraries Australia offers a number of forums for disseminating information on and providing support for the LADD service. One such method is through dedicated email discussion lists, of which there is one for LADD members and one for sites interoperating using an ISO ILL compliant system. Both of these email distribution lists are moderated email discussion lists managed by the NLA. These email distribution lists provide up-to-date information and news about the LADD service such as suspensions, tips and tricks and system upgrades. These lists are also used by LADD members to send queries to other users, one recent example being asking users if they scan documents in colour or black and white. As well as providing a helpdesk which is manned on week days during business hours there is also a dedicated LADD webpage available on the NLA website, providing information on ISO ILL interoperability and an online LADD manual and user guides. Information is also disseminated to users through state Libraries Australia User Groups as well as the annual Libraries Australia Forum. These meetings are also opportunities for users to provide feedback to LADD administration.

5. FINAL THOUGHTS

The NLA has provided an automated ILL module for Libraries Australia members for 21 years. During this time the LADD service has evolved and changed to meet the needs of its user base. To continue to meet the needs of all users feedback is sought from and encouraged by users, configuration changes are made to the system or enhancements are logged with the vendor. With the increasing member base more divergent groups are emerging, and while the LADD system has in the past adapted to meet the needs of all member types, the system must continue adapting to ensure that the service continues to meet the needs of the user community.

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