



alberta public library electronic network

2008 annual report

To Public Library Services Branch
Alberta Municipal Affairs



Building a progressive and dynamic library network

The Alberta Public Library Electronic Network (APLEN) was created in 1997 in partnership with the Government of Alberta. An integral part of The Alberta Library (TAL), APLEN's mandate is the development of the public library network and provision of services to public libraries.

APLEN provides:

- Opportunities for cooperation, collaboration and innovation
- Coordination of the development and growth of an electronic network in Alberta
- Opportunities for libraries to increase their capacity for electronic services to the public
- Technology-based training and professional development
- Promotion of electronic library services to the public
- Funding for pilot projects and research into emerging technologies

This report covers the 2008 activities of the Alberta Public Library Electronic Network. Highlights include a Language Learning Software project that was quickly embraced by the public library community, and a Digitization Readiness Project established to determine the level of Alberta public library participation in digitization initiatives.

I would like to thank the members of the APLEN Standing Committee, who are committed to the principles of cooperation, collaboration and innovation, and to using existing resources in the most responsible way. I would also like to thank our members throughout the province, collectively known as the Nodes, for being an effective voice for their regions, and the entire public library community.

On behalf of all of our members, I thank Alberta Municipal Affairs, Public Library Services Branch, for its vision, leadership and financial support of the Alberta Public Library Electronic Network. Working together, we are helping to build one of the most progressive and dynamic library networks in North America.



Linda Duplessis
Chair, Alberta Public Library Electronic Network Standing Committee

Introduction

The Alberta Library (TAL) is the recipient of funding from Alberta Municipal Affairs on behalf of the Alberta Public Library Electronic Network (APLEN). The intent of the agreement between Alberta Municipal Affairs and TAL is to:

- Support networking of all public libraries
- To extend and enhance access to public library resources to all Albertans through APLEN, and
- To recognize the role of TAL as a partner in facilitating access to resources across all types of libraries.

The intent of this report is to present the activities of APLEN in 2008, structured into four broad categories:

Ensuring APLEN is Governed Effectively and Efficiently.

TAL, through APLEN, works closely with the seven regional library systems and nine largest public libraries in order to offer programs and services effectively and efficiently to the 289 public libraries currently participating in networked services. TAL received \$1.5 million in 2008 – 2009 from Alberta Municipal Affairs for these activities.

Enhancing Programs and Services Offered by Public Libraries.

These initiatives directly contribute to the library services offered by the individual public libraries. It is in this area that TAL impacts directly on the library experience of the local user by offering access to resources that otherwise would not be available. The initiatives in this area are licensing and resource sharing.

Developing Library Staff Effectiveness.

These initiatives contribute to the ability of library staff to effectively perform their duties and therefore meet the needs of their users. These are contributions to staff skills and knowledge that assists with job responsibilities. The initiatives in this area are training and community development.

Improving Access to Library Services.

These initiatives enhance the ability of libraries to connect to each other, thereby supporting the areas noted above. The initiatives in this area are technology, grants and communications.

Services are included in the category that is the most appropriate. However, it should be noted that the majority of activities that APLEN is engaged in bridges more than one, and sometimes all, of the broad categories above.

Ensuring APLEN is Governed Effectively and Efficiently

APLEN Standing Committee

The APLEN Standing Committee provides leadership, setting vision and direction for the program, including budget and planning. The Committee works within the guidelines and policies established by The Alberta Library.

The APLEN Standing Committee reflects the public library community. The Committee consists of representation from the large urban libraries (Edmonton and Calgary), regional library systems (2), a mid-sized library (1), and a small rural library (1). The Terms of Reference provides for two library trustees, one nominated by the community, the other appointed by the Alberta Library Trustees Association. The Committee members are nominated by the sectors they represent, and are appointed by the TAL Executive Committee and TAL Board for a two-year term. The APLEN Standing Committee met six times, including one teleconference, in 2008.

The APLEN Standing Committee members are:

Linda Duplessis, *Chair, Peace Library System*

Bonnie Gray, *Alberta Municipal Affairs*

Joanne Griener, *Edmonton Public Library*

Ellen Humphrey, *Calgary Public Library*

Kelly Huxley, *Onoway Public Library*

Sharon Siga, *Strathcona County Library*

Ron Sheppard, *Parkland Regional Library System*

Martin Shields, *Alberta Library Trustees Association (from September, 2008)*

Larry Tiedemann, *Chair, Northern Lights Library System*

Ex Officio: Lucy Pana, *CEO, The Alberta Library*

Staff Liaison: Karla Palichuk, *The Alberta Library*

Nodes

The two large urban libraries, seven mid-sized libraries and seven regional library systems are collectively known as the 'Nodes'. These are the libraries through which services are delivered, and from which information and input is gathered.

The Node libraries' staff participate on APLEN and TAL Committees. The APLEN Standing Committee called three Nodes meetings through 2008.

Strategic Plan

The APLEN Standing Committee works within the parameters outlined by the goals and key initiatives from the TAL Strategic Plan. This Plan is the cumulation of over a year's worth of consultation with the library community, and was introduced in 2007. It allows each of the TAL program areas to identify initiatives they wish to develop and identify areas where partnerships are possible.

Enhancing Programs and Services Offered by Public Libraries

Licensing

People are looking for information electronically — through Google or through another search engine of choice. However, the resources available publically through the Internet represent only a portion of what is actually available — the rest, and often the most useful resources may only be accessed if annual licenses are obtained. This includes proprietary information such as magazines, newspapers, encyclopedias, etc. These online resources are expensive and beyond the budgetary scope of most individual libraries.

One of the core services of TAL is the negotiation of consortia pricing for online resources, such as magazines, journals and newspapers. As TAL has significant negotiating power, the package of electronic resources known as Subscriptions Alberta is reduced to less than 60 per cent of the vendors' list price prior to any other subsidy being applied.

Subscriptions Alberta is a basic list of online resources that covers a wide variety of informational and research needs, including newspapers, general interest magazines, consumer health and wellness information, specialized health and business tools. Please refer to Appendix 1 for specific information on the public library resources within Subscriptions Alberta.

The APLEN Standing Committee provided a 70 per cent subsidy towards the cost of the Core online resources for each Node. The total cost to APLEN for 2008 was \$172,449.00. The Node library pays the difference for themselves, or on behalf of their member libraries, as appropriate. This is their contribution to the acquisition of these tools, and illustrates their commitment to using them.

In 2008, the APLEN Standing Committee continued to extend the subsidy to additional resources of interest to the public library community. In 2008, this subsidy included:

- Novelist, a tool for use by libraries and by the public that enhances access to fiction reading for adult and young adult material.
- HeritageQuest, a resource for use by libraries and the public that supports genealogical searches.
- World Book, an electronic version of the venerable print resource found in most libraries. This resource is the first tool that TAL licensed that has been paid for by APLEN, the Online Reference Center (K – 12 program supported by Alberta Learning) and the Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library.

The cost to APLEN for these resources was an additional \$151,601.00.

TAL supports a Licensing Committee, which includes four representatives from the Node libraries, in order to provide input and feedback to products and services, and most of their work is done through email discussion. Please refer to Appendix 2 for the list of Licensing Committee members.

Training for the individual libraries on the products within the Core is supported by the individual vendors, the TAL Licensing Librarian and by the APLEN Training Librarian.

Resource Sharing

VisuNet Canada Partners Program

VisuNet Canada Partners Program is offered through the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB). This program provides local libraries with access into Canada's largest collection of alternative format books and magazines for people who have difficulty reading or managing traditional print formats due to a visual, physical or learning disability. Access to this program allows print-disabled persons in the community to have access to informational, educational and recreational sources of material, and not be "left out" due to restrictions of local collections or budgets. The CNIB is using an internationally-recognized standard (DAISY) for the digitization of material.

An inclusive pricing model paid by APLEN (\$15,000) ensures that this service is available across the province, and not restricted to those public libraries capable of paying the licensing costs. The oversight and training responsibilities are part of the portfolio of the APLEN Training Librarian.

Usage data has been received from the CNIB and does not reflect the numbers of patrons using the service directly from home, only those who use the library as a mediation point. The reporting period from the CNIB is January 2008 – April 2009. At this time, they are unable to separate the 2008 and 2009 statistics.

Between January 2008 and April 2009, 48 Alberta libraries are actively using the service on behalf of their clients, an increase of two from 2007.

- Borrowing statistics include:
 - 9588 Daisy books
 - 121 Braille books and other print Braille materials
 - 19 descriptive VHS videos
 - 30 descriptive DVDs
- 40 Alberta libraries are receiving free monthly DAISY magazine bundles (Canadian Geographic, Chatelaine, Macleans, Reader's Digest, Good Times) an increase of seven libraries from 2007.

According to the CNIB, even though the borrowing numbers have dropped slightly, particularly within the VHS videos and DVDs, Alberta still has one of the highest use numbers in the country. A partial reason for the decline in borrowing is the effort the libraries have made to purchase this type of material for their collections.

Ask A Question

Ask A Question (AAQ) brings together the skills and knowledge of over 250 library staff throughout the province and the collections and resources of 31 public and post-secondary sites to help provide Albertans with the best answer to any question they may ask. This is the first collaborative, cross-sectoral virtual reference service in Canada.

Ask A Question is operated by TAL with a 1.0 FTE position which is cost shared between APLEN and the eight participating colleges. The fees paid by the colleges offset approximately 17 per cent of the operating costs for the service, with APLEN supporting the balance.

Sixty students from the library programs at the University of Alberta and MacEwan College participated in answering questions through AAQ, which not only provided needed backup for the volume of questions entering the service, but provided the students with valuable experience in managing online reference questions in an Alberta context. Significant time was spent by TAL's Virtual Reference Librarian in working with the instructors to make this a valuable real-life experience for the students, and to provide feedback to both students and their instructors. Discussions with SAIT began in 2008 and their students will be included in this project starting in 2009.

TAL supports an AAQ Committee, which provides input into the development of the service. Please refer to Appendix 2 for the 2008 Committee members.

In 2008, Alberta questions totaled over 10,679 questions to AAQ. This is a 15 per cent decrease from 2007. The decrease is attributed to:

- website redesigns resulting in lost links to the service
- reduction in the number of customer service questions
- a new policy allowing questions that originated from outside Alberta, and not related to Alberta, to be redirected to a more appropriate virtual reference service.

A social advertising pilot project was run for this service in the first half of 2008. The goal of this project was to reach Albertans through Google ads as well as Facebook. Both pilots were capped at \$1000.

- The Google campaign ads were shown almost 680,000 times and received 2,036 clicks. This gave us a click through rate of 0.29 per cent, which is considered to be exceptionally high for this method of advertising. The average cost per click was \$0.49 or cost an average of \$1.46 per 1000 impressions.
- The Facebook campaign ads were shown 11,819,763 times and received 2,116 clicks. This gave us a click through rate of 0.02 per cent. The average cost per click was \$0.47 or cost an average of \$0.08 per 1000 impressions.
- The public library questions increased six per cent over the course of this campaign.

Topics vary widely, but, after library related topics, the public consistently asked questions related to:

- Alberta government and politics
- Alberta history
- Alberta housing and building codes
- Career development, including upgrading
- Economic development/small business development
- English as a second language
- First Nations
- Health and wellness
- Travel and tourism
- Vital statistics

A link to a user survey is provided in the email answer provided to patrons. In 2008, TAL received approximately a two per cent rate of return (278 surveys). The survey data has been collated and details of the benefits the Ask A Question service is providing are becoming apparent:

- 84 per cent of Alberta respondents are satisfied with the response they received
- 91 per cent of Alberta respondents will use the service again
- 69 per cent of Alberta respondents are new to the Ask A Question service
- 82 per cent of Alberta respondents rate the service as very fast or fast
- 35 per cent of Alberta respondents have never asked a librarian for assistance before.

Selected survey comments are provided in Appendix 3.

TAL Card

The Alberta Library (TAL) Card provides borrowing privileges at all TAL Card participating public, post-secondary and special libraries throughout Alberta. Subject to certain restrictions, members in good standing at a participating library are eligible for a TAL Card. There are over 300 participating libraries in the TAL Card program, and participation in the TAL Card program is mandatory for all TAL members.

The TAL Card provides on-site access to the physical collections of other TAL-member libraries, eliminates the non-resident or community borrower fees, is free to members of the participating libraries, and allows for materials borrowed to be returned to other TAL-member libraries.

TAL card supplies are provided at no additional expense to members. Program administration is an operational expense for TAL and is part of the portfolio of one staff person.

This program is the first of its kind in Canada, and is one of the most visible signs of 'barrier-free access'.

APLEN Training Document Repository

The APLEN Training Document Repository, based on a similar product for the Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library LILAC Committee, was completed and launched in 2008. This provides a place where documentation created either by APLEN or by the Node libraries, may be shared with others. The site also allows for the inclusion of websites and other digital content.

Language Learning Software

The APLEN Training Committee identified a need for resources that could be used to assist new Canadians, temporary foreign workers and others in learning English. Adult Learning Councils exist in a number of communities, and part of their mandate is to provide language classes. However, the libraries reported that the need for language support is growing everywhere across the province, including communities where Adult Learning Councils are not operational.

TAL was successful in a Public Library Development Initiative (PLDI) grant request, and received funding for the full cost of software, promotion and a staff position for a pilot project. The project included one-year licensing for Alberta's public libraries of the language learning software, Tell Me More by Auralog. A full report has been provided to Municipal Affairs on this project. In 2008, the APLEN Standing Committee agreed to continue a 100 per cent subsidy for the program, including staffing and promotions, for 2009.

Digitization

TAL was successful in a Public Library Development Initiative (PLDI) grant request, and received funding to begin a public library digitization project. The initial goal of this project was to create an inventory of digitization projects supported by public libraries, to gauge interest and to begin the consulting and education process. A full report on this activity has been provided to Municipal Affairs under separate cover. In 2008, the APLEN Standing Committee agreed to support the project through 2009.

Developing Library Staff Effectiveness

Training

The provision of training opportunities to Node and other library staff is a key area for APLEN. At the Node level, the training focuses on higher-end needs, or in areas where skills are needed provincially. At the local level, training is done through workshops or as part of conferences and meetings.

The training program is overseen by the APLEN Training Librarian, working in conjunction with the APLEN Training Committee. The Training Committee consists of one representative from each Node library. For a list of Committee members, please refer to Appendix 2.

The Committee provided direction to the APLEN Training Librarian for the '23 Things you need to know in 15 minutes a day' program. Based on their input, this program has now moved from a structured series of training modules, to something which can be more flexible. The first module was completed in late 2008 and tested well with the Committee and others. The remaining modules will be developed in 2009.

Becoming A Master Instructor

The 'Becoming a Master Instructor' course is an internationally recognized program offered by NAIT. This is an intensive instructor training program designed to assist instructors to be more effective in the classroom, specifically focusing on adult learners.

This program was identified for the training librarians at the Node libraries. These are the staff people often charged with the development and delivery of training sessions for other staff or for the public, yet may not necessarily have the skills to do this work in the most effective manner. Offering this course increases the competencies of the public services librarians and increases their capacity to design and deliver effective training programs.

Eight public services librarians participated in Level 1 training and another eight participated in Level 2 training in 2008. The program has been extremely well-received by the community, all of whom have indicated in emails or letters that this has made a difference in the quality of the training delivered to the staff at the local libraries and to the general public. This type of training is not available remotely, nor is it available in rural or remote communities.

APLEN coordinated the training, provided the space and provided funding support to ensure attendance in the course. The cost to APLEN was \$12,920.56. Interest in continuing this program is high, with Level 1, 2 and 3 training scheduled for 2009.

Local Training

Training for libraries at the local level is done in conjunction with the Regional Library System or Node library. APLEN's Training Librarian works with the requesting library to design and deliver training on topics that meet the needs of the participants. The Training Librarian position was vacant from January to March, 2008, and again from August 2008 to the end of the year. This repeated vacancy speaks to the difficulty experienced by most library institutions in recruiting qualified staff. The major training thrust through 2008 was the language learning software and digitization; however, other training sessions were delivered, including:

- **Searching Beyond Google**

Participants were provided with a refresher session exploring where information exists in reputable databases — reminding them there are more tools available to them besides Google.

- **Introduction to Web 2.0 Technologies**

Participants explored Web 2.0 technologies, including tagging, wikis, RSS/Newsreaders, blogs and Flickr. They explored how these new tools can add a new dimension of services to the public.

- **Visual Course Builder Training**

Visual Course Builder software has been licensed by APLEN, and is a tool for training staff to create online tutorials. Library staff may access training resources remotely and work through the sessions at times which are convenient to them.

- **Visunet: A Tour of the CNIB**

Participants were familiarized with the Visunet Canada Partners Program and the services available to patrons with print disabilities.

- **Web Awareness: Fact or Folly, Kids for Sale, Cyberbullying**

Safe Passage Participants learned how children and youth are using the web and other technologies, and techniques that can be employed to keep children safe.

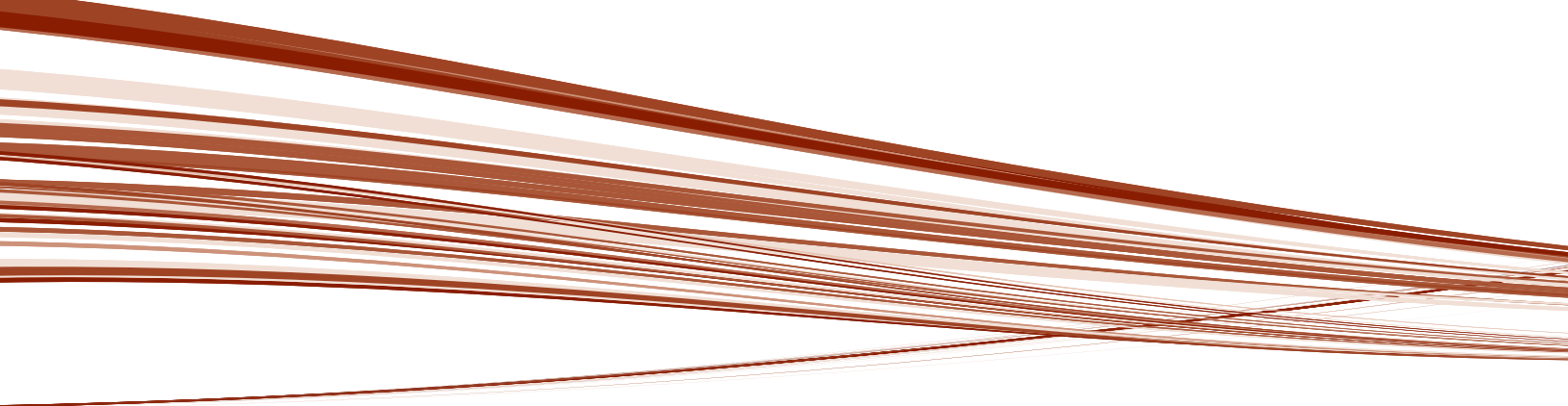
Community Development

It is important that APLEN programs and services are relevant, timely and valued by the community. APLEN engages in a significant amount of community development with the public library community and works with them in the spirit of inclusiveness, openness and respect.

APLEN values the contribution the committee members bring to the program. Committee members donated close to 2000 hours to the program in 2008; APLEN offsets the costs of the meetings.

The impact of the hours spent participating in meetings is not limited to APLEN's activities. The meetings are valued by the participants because they:

- Provide networking and learning opportunities for people doing similar jobs to share information and expertise
- Provide opportunities for participants to develop communities of practice
- Provide opportunities for participants to identify needs and look for solutions
- Take ideas and concepts back to their home institutions to share with staff and shape direction at the Node level
- Take ideas and concept back to the libraries they support



APLEN staff also made presentations about APLEN and TAL services at various meetings and venues. In 2008:

- K. Palichuk presented updates to the Alberta Public Library Administrators Council.
- K. Palichuk and S. Bissell attended the Resource Sharing meetings hosted by Alberta Municipal Affairs.
- C. Wilson presented a session about emerging technologies at the Small Communities Conference.
- K. Palichuk spoke to the first-year students in the Library Technicians program about TAL and public library services in Alberta.
- APLEN sessions were delivered at Netspeed and at the Alberta Library Conference, as well at most regional library system meetings.
- K. Palichuk presented the language software project to MLA Doug Griffiths, and to the Capital Region Caucus.
- A small delegation from TAL, including K. Palichuk and B. Rice, met with the Hon. Hector Goudreau.
- A small delegation from TAL, including L. Pana and K. Palichuk, met with the Hon. Ray Danyluk at the 2008 Alberta Library Conference.
- L. Pana, M. Law, B. Rice and K. Palichuk represented TAL and APLEN as part of the MLA review of public library services.

Improving Access to Library Services

Technology

The role APLEN has played with technology in libraries has included consulting, provision of hardware and grant management.

Mobile Training Labs

APLEN continued to support two mobile training labs, for use by libraries. Each lab consists of 12 laptops, one data projector and a wireless router to facilitate Internet access. The labs have been used by public libraries that do not have either the space or the budget to support the equipment on their own, or by Node libraries that may require additional equipment for conferences or workshops. The labs were fully booked through most of 2008.

The use of the labs is at minimal cost to the libraries as they are only asked to pay the shipping charges back to the TAL offices.

SuperNet

The fibre provided by the SuperNet initiative has provided public libraries with the physical connectivity that was required to share resources and information effectively. Node libraries have been able to consolidate some services such as Internet access, web design and file sharing over the network. As the use of the network for core library business applications has consolidated, the public library community started focusing on other applications requiring the strengths the SuperNet provides. Currently, the community is working to roll-out videoconferencing equipment into Node libraries and other designated library sites.

APLEN works closely with the IT staff of the Node libraries in order to coordinate network development and network services. Please refer to Appendix 2 for the Technology Infrastructure Committee members.

APLEN continued to act as a liaison between the public library community and AXIA through 2008, with the goal of turning this role back to Municipal Affairs in 2009. In 2008, \$2000 was provided to Shortgrass Library System, in order to connect Gem Jubilee Library to the SuperNet.

SuperNet Services Team

The APLEN Standing Committee struck an Emerging Technologies Project Team. The mandate of this team was to identify the emerging areas that should be considered for public library development. This team met once in 2008 and conducted the majority of its work by e-mail.

This project team was a cross-sectoral committee, with representation from the post-secondary library sector. The outcome of their work was a ranked list of 15 emerging technologies which addressed not only the patron's experience with public library resources, but also the technical infrastructure necessary to support applications. This list will be further developed through 2009. The team members are listed in Appendix 2, and a chart of the emerging technologies in Appendix 4.

Technology Infrastructure Committee

The Technology Infrastructure Committee met three times in 2008. The focus of their work was to develop a business case that could be used by Municipal Affairs to justify the ongoing support for SuperNet connectivity in public libraries, including support for additional bandwidth. The members of the Technology Infrastructure Committee are listed in Appendix 2.

Grants

Special Project Grants

The APLEN Standing Committee carried forward funding from 2006 to support two projects (RISE and Bibliocommons). Both projects had been approved in principle, but the Committee requested additional information for the RISE application. For Bibliocommons, the delay was due to development of the user agreement and some technical challenges faced by the developer. Both projects received funding in 2008, and updates have been provided at regular intervals to the APLEN Standing Committee.

Local Library Participation Grants

The “Local Library Participation Grant” had been structured by the APLEN Standing Committee to provide financial support to those libraries ready to connect into the resource-sharing network in Alberta. These are libraries that had not received any prior funding from APLEN. The amount is capped at \$5000 per site.

In 2008, five libraries received funding under this program, for a total expenditure of \$25,000. The funds were used to purchase high-end technical communications equipment, additional workstations and associated software, networking equipment and licenses for the Integrated Library System (ILS). Libraries that received the grant in 2008 were:

- Calling Lake Public Library
- Bibliotheque St. Isidore Library
- Edmonton Public Library – Lois Hole Branch
- Irma Municipal Library
- Wembley Public Library

Community Access Program

The Community Access Program (CAP) is a national initiative through Industry Canada. The goal of the program is to provide affordable access to the Internet and electronic resources, and to encourage Canadians to become Internet literate. CAP funds help Canadians seek employment, conduct research, stay in touch with friends and family, develop their computer skills and more through their public library by providing Internet access along with the computer support and training to use it effectively.

CAP computers are available to all members of the public — many computers are equipped with accessibility software or adaptive hardware to allow people with different needs to access electronic resources. For example, in different sites the public might find computers equipped with screen reader software, touch screen monitors, or mice and joysticks that help people with mobility issues.

The Alberta Library is in the process of completing the final reports for the 2008-09 Community Access Program grant from Industry Canada. On behalf of 289 public libraries in the province, we received a grant in the amount of \$478,697. TAL works in collaboration with the Nodes to deliver these funds to the libraries who participate in the program.

Capacity Grants

The APLEN Standing Committee budgeted to provide capacity grants to Node libraries in 2008. Capacity grants are to support the high-end technical infrastructure and training needs of the Node libraries. In 2008, the grant criteria were reviewed, including the funding formula. In 2008, grant applications needed to include a statement about how the proposed activities would meet the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan.

Projects identified by the Node libraries include: ILS migration, training; disaster recovery, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) and network hardware. The breakdown of grants awarded is below:

- Calgary Public Library: \$293,643.98
- Edmonton Public Library: \$210,276.02
- Chinook Arch Regional Library System: \$ 43,193.14
- Marigold Library System: \$ 43,193.14
- Northern Lights Library System: \$ 43,193.14
- Parkland Regional Library System: \$ 43,193.14
- Peace Library System: \$ 43,193.14
- Shortgrass Library System: \$ 43,193.14
- Yellowhead Regional Library System: \$ 43,193.14
- Fort McMurray Public Library: \$ 28,795.43
- Grande Prairie Public Library: \$ 28,795.43
- Red Deer Public Library: \$ 28,795.43
- Lethbridge Public Library: \$ 28,795.43
- Medicine Hat Public Library: \$ 28,795.43
- St. Albert Public Library: \$ 28,795.43
- Strathcona County Library: \$ 28,795.43

Communications

The “Books and Beyond” Campaign

In 2008, TAL Communications, working with the APLEN Marketing and Promotions Committee, took the opportunity to review and revisit the goals and direction of the marketing campaign for 2008.

TAL Communications led the launch of Books and beyond, a campaign designed to break stereotypes and show how Albertans use libraries in their everyday lives.

Funded by the Alberta Public Library Electronic Network and aimed primarily at 18 – 35 year-olds, the campaign featured TV, radio, online and print ads and posters.

Each ad presented a scenario that showed people using not only books, but CDs, DVDs, the Internet and library programs (see the campaign at www.booksandbeyond.ca). The campaign received international recognition and a strong online presence. The campaign will continue to be developed in 2009.

Future Projects

- The recommendations from the Public Library Review process target TAL and APLEN; activities in 2009 will allow for further exploration on how the public libraries will develop over the next three years, as well as clarify the role for APLEN in this process.
- The SuperNet Services Team will work towards pilot and implementation of some of the services that require the flexibility of the SuperNet network.
- The Technology Infrastructure Committee is working towards the development of recommended standards for technology for public libraries, of all sizes.
- Training initiatives will move forward, particularly in the area of emerging technology, and new ways to deliver training opportunities.
- Digitization will move beyond the creation of an inventory for public libraries, to the creation of digitization projects for small public libraries, leveraging the work that TAL's post-secondary sector has done in this area.
- Training initiatives are expanding to include modules on emerging technologies and Web 2.0 features. This training initiative will model the use of Web 2.0 technologies (blog, wiki) and encourage library staff to start exploring the use of these tools in the provision of services to their communities.
- Work with Alberta Health Services — Edmonton region on a provincial project focusing on consumer health needs.

APPENDIX 1: Subscriptions Alberta

The table below provides the names and describes the resources found in the Subscriptions Alberta Core database package.

Product	Description
Academic Search Elite	This is a good starting place for general research questions, and covers a wide range of academic areas including business, humanities, the arts, social sciences, education. Over 2000 academic and scholarly journals (magazines) may be read in their entirety, with summaries of articles available for another 3500 journals. Some information dates back to 1985.
Agricola	A resource for all things agricultural, this tool contains information from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Library. Agricola offers more than 4.1 million "links" to journal (magazine) articles, book chapters, books, theses, patents, software, audiovisual materials, and technical reports related to agriculture. Not limited to only agriculture, this tool also includes information on related fields including animal and veterinary sciences, entomology, plant sciences, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries, farming and farming systems, agricultural economics, extension and education, food and human nutrition, agricultural engineering and technology and earth and environmental sciences. Please note, this is a US-centric tool.
Alt Health Watch	This tool provides information on the full range of complementary, holistic and integrated approaches to health care and wellness. It offers complete articles for more than 180 international journals and reports. In addition, there are hundreds of pamphlets, booklets, special reports, original research and book excerpts. Information provided in this tool should not be used as a means for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.
Business Source Elite	If you are looking for "business" information, including management and 'trade' topics, this tool provides access to over 1000 general business and management magazines as well as trade journals.
Regional Business News	Provides full text articles for over 50 regional business publications.

Product	Description
Canadian Literary Centre	If you are looking for information on Canadian authors or anything related to the Canadian literary scene, this resource is the one to use. This tool includes literary criticisms, book reviews, essays, biographies, and books and is built on the information held by many key Canadian literary sources, including Quill and Quire (book reviews, essays, author interviews, prepublication information), Canadian Fiction Studies, Books in Canada and much more.
Canadian Reference Centre	A great tool to use for Canadian content. This tool provides access to Canadian magazines (for example Alberta Sweetgrass, Beaver, Benefits Canada, Canadian Business, Canadian Economic Observer, Chatelaine, Harrowsmith, Macleans), newspapers, newswires and reference books (Canadian Global Almanac, Gage Canadian Dictionary, Gage Canadian Thesaurus) to create the largest collection of regional full text content available. Additionally, this tool includes international magazines in full text; 84,774 full text biographies and an Image Collection of 293,480 photos, maps and flags.
Computers and Applied Sciences Complete	This tool specializes in engineering, computer theory, computer systems, new technologies, and a social and professional context for computing and applied sciences. This tool provides access to summaries for more than 1,800 academic journals, professional publications, and other reference sources from a diverse collection. Full text is also available for more than 730 magazines.
Education Research Complete	This tool covers scholarly research and information relating to all areas of education. Topics include all levels of education from early childhood to higher education. Educational specialties, such as health education, testing, multilingual education are also included. Additionally, information is available on administrative topics such as curriculum instruction, administration, policy, and related social issues .

Product	Description
Environment Complete	A resource for all things environmental. This tool offers access into the content of 470 journals, including many of the most used journals in the discipline, such as <i>Environment</i> (back to 1975), <i>Ecologist</i> , <i>Conservation Biology</i> , and more. <i>Environment Complete</i> also provides full text for 80 monographs, such as <i>Encyclopedia of World Environmental History</i> (three volumes), <i>Advances in Water Treatment & Environmental Management</i> . Further, the database offers full text for the conference papers of the North American Association of Environmental Education.
Educational Resource Information Centre (ERIC)	ERIC is another great tool to use when looking for resources and literature relating to education and educational theory. This tool contains more than 1,243,000 records and links to more than 224,000 full-text documents.
Film and Television Index with Full Text (FTLI)	FTLI contains information that covers the entire spectrum of television and film writing. It has been designed for use by a diverse audience that includes film scholars, college students, and general viewers. Publications include <i>Film Journal International</i> , <i>Journal of British Cinema & Television</i> , <i>Film Criticism</i> , <i>Post Script</i> , <i>Variety</i> , and more. Subject coverage includes film & television theory, preservation & restoration, writing, production, cinematography, technical aspects, and reviews.
Health Source Consumer Edition	This tool contains consumer health information, offering access to nearly 80 full text, consumer health magazines, including <i>American Fitness</i> , <i>Better Nutrition</i> , <i>Fit Pregnancy</i> , <i>HealthFacts</i> , <i>Men's Health</i> , <i>Muscle & Fitness</i> , <i>Prevention</i> , <i>Vegetarian Times</i> , and many others. This database also includes current, health-related pamphlets and more than 130 health reference books, including books published by the People's Medical Society. Additionally, <i>Health Source: Consumer Edition</i> contains more than 5,100 Clinical Reference Systems reports (in English and Spanish); <i>Lexi-PAL Drug Guide</i> , which covers 1,300 generic drug patient education sheets with more than 4,700 brand names; and <i>Merriam-Webster's Medical Desk Dictionary</i> . Information provided in this database should not be viewed as a means for self-diagnosis or a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

Product	Description
Health Source Nursing — Academic Edition	<p>This tool contains nearly 550 scholarly full text journals focusing on many medical disciplines, including nursing and allied health, including full text from <i>Creative Nursing</i>, <i>Issues in Comprehensive Pediatric Nursing</i>, <i>Issues in Mental Health Nursing</i>, <i>Journal of Advanced Nursing</i>, <i>Journal of Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing</i>, <i>Journal of Clinical Nursing</i>, <i>Journal of Community Health Nursing</i>, <i>Journal of Nursing Management</i>, <i>Nursing Ethics</i>, <i>Nursing Forum</i>, <i>Nursing Inquiry</i>, and many more. In addition, this database includes the <i>Lexi-PAL Drug Guide</i> which covers 1,300 generic drug patient education sheets with more than 4,700 brand names.</p>
International Bibliography of Theatre and Dance	<p>Includes articles, essays, book chapters from internationally selected publications in drama, dance, media, mime, mixed entertainment, storytelling, music-drama, and puppetry. A great research tool for university theatre and language departments, theatre organizations, primary schools, social scientists and professionals within the field.</p>
Masterfile Premier	<p>A great starting place for any question, this tool contains full text for nearly 1,750 periodicals covering general reference, business, health, education, general science, multicultural issues and much more. This database also contains full text for nearly 500 reference books, 86,017 biographies, 105,786 primary source documents, and an Image Collection of 341,655 photos, maps & flags. Some articles go back to 1975.</p>
MEDLINE	<p>This tool was created by the National Library of Medicine, making it an authoritative tool for questions relating to medicine, nursing, dentistry, veterinary medicine, the health care system, pre-clinical sciences, and much more.</p>
Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection	<p>This tool covers topics relating to emotional and behavioral characteristics, psychiatry, psychology, anthropology.</p>

Product	Description
Novelist (Not Core but APLEN subsidizes)	If you have a favourite author or novel; or if you like books set in specific countries, times or with specific character types (vampires, anyone?) than this tool will help you find new-to-you authors and titles within categories you describe. Includes suggested reading lists and other tools. Contains 'old' material and emerging authors.
Associations Unlimited	A great tool to use if you are looking for information about, or for, national (US), international and local (US) not-for profit organizations; monitoring trends impacting associations, identifying related associations, marketing, members and their markets. Includes information on more than 456,000 organizations, including association material (brochures, logos, membership applications).
Contemporary Authors	Offers biographies and bibliographic information on more than 120,000 modern authors including JK Rowling, Isaac Asimov, Michael Crichton.
CPI Q (Canadian Periodical Index Quarterly) Online	Another key resource for anyone looking for a Canadian perspective on a topic, or for Canadian news information. This tool contains Canadian and international magazines and newspapers (Globe and Mail, Macleans) and Canadian reference materials (Canadian Parliamentary Guide). A great general research tool, it pulls together magazine articles, biographies, company profiles, historical documents, science information, essays and much more. There are over 1200 Canadian magazines included in both English and French, coverage of a broad range of subjects related to Canada, and some material goes back to 1980.
General Reference Center Gold	A good starting place for a question, this tool combines key business and general interest news and specialty magazines, business journals, and other reference works.
Expanded Academic ASAP	A good starting place for a question of a more scholarly, or academic, nature, this resource, provides access to information in scholarly journals, social sciences, humanities, business, technology, newspapers, and general interest magazines.
Gale Virtual Reference Library	This is an electronic book edition of some of Gale's most popular reference titles, including Beacham's Guide to Endangered Species of North America, World of Earth Sciences, Gale Encyclopedia of Multicultural America.

APPENDIX 2: List of Committees and Committee Members

Licensing Committee:

Joye Hardman, Chair, Calgary Public Library
Teresa Bendall, Alberta Government Library
Thea de Vos, Edmonton Public Library
Karen Labuik, Marigold Library System
Kristine Plastow, Red Deer College
Julia Rinehart, APLEN representative
Christine Sammon, Alberta College of Art and Design
Karen Schlegl, NAIT
Staff Liaison: **Christa Foley**
Ex Officio: **Lucy Pana**

AAQ Committee

Harriet Arnold, NAIT
Sue Colp, Strathcona County Library
Karen Goodwillie, Parkland Regional Library System
Jodi Holden, Edmonton Public Library
Karen Labuik, Marigold Library System
Nora Robinson, SAIT
Staff Liaison: **Dyan Perley**
Ex Officio: **Karla Palichuk**

Training Committee

Rob Zylstra, Chair, Yellowhead Regional Library System
Mary Jane Bilsland, Edmonton Public Library
Sue Colp, Strathcona County Library
Heather Dolman, St. Albert Public Library
Susan Grieshaber-Otto, Parkland Regional Library System
James Macdonald, Northern Lights Library System
Patricia McNamee, Alberta Municipal Affairs
James Parsons, Medicine Hat Public Library
Terra Plato, Chinook Arch Regional Library System
Jack Ryback, Calgary Public Library
Craig Shufelt, Fort McMurray Public Library
Cory Stier, Red Deer Public Library
Shannon Vossepoel, Shortgrass Library System
Katherine Wiebe, Peace Library System
Linda Williams, Marigold Library System
Staff Liaison: **Karla Palichuk**

SuperNet Services Team

Kerry Anderson, Alberta Municipal Affairs
Lachlan Bickley, Edmonton Public Library
Robin Thiessen Hepher, Chinook Arch Regional Library System
James Parsons, Medicine Hat Public Library
Scott Stanley, Calgary Public Library
Marc Truitt, University of Alberta
Staff Liaison: **Christina Wilson**
Ex Officio: **Steven Thornton, Karla Palichuk**

Technology Infrastructure Committee

Kerry Anderson, Alberta Municipal Affairs
Marc Anthony, Ft. McMurray Public Library
Bob Batchelder, Shortgrass Library System
Lachlan Bickley, Edmonton Public Library
Bonita Burchat, Calgary Public Library
Marianne Graff, Yellowhead Regional Library System
James MacDonald, Northern Lights Library System
Troy Maddaford, Chinook Arch Regional Library System
Sharon Nuttycombe, Strathcona County Library
Steven Pattison, Marigold Library System
Michael Silver, Parkland Regional Library System
Cory Stier, Red Deer Public Library
Padmini Ramaswamy, Peace Library System
Peter Verhagen, St. Albert Public Library
Dustin Walker, Grande Prairie Public Library
Staff Liaison: **Christina Wilson**
Ex Officio: **Karla Palichuk**

Marketing and Communications Committee

Jennifer Cameron, Yellowhead Regional Library System
Bernice Duguay, Lethbridge Public Library and Chinook Arch Regional Library System
Susan Grieshaber-Otto, Parkland Regional Library System
Grant Kaiser, Calgary Public Library
Carmen Lefebvre, Northern Lights Library System
Christine Nelson, Alberta Municipal Affairs
Sherryl Petterson, Edmonton Public Library
Carlee Pilikowski, Marigold Library System
Julia Reinhart, Shortgrass Library System
Michelle Rempel, Grande Prairie Public Library
Cory Stier, Red Deer Public Library
Shelley Sweet, St. Albert Public Library
Mary-Ann Thurber, Peace Library System
Joan Urschel, Strathcona County Library
Staff Liaison: **Bill Rice** and **Janis Galloway**
Ex Officio: **Karla Palichuk**

Appendix 3: AAQ Survey Comments

- I think this is great. A lot better than using Yahoo questions, and I will try this again.
- Thank you, thank you. I am thrilled that there is such a service as this, who knew? In this world of easy access to information through the Internet, I have been able to reconstruct, from an amazing amount of material on the internet, what was happening in the world in 1985 when we took our teenagers to the Soviet Union on a bus tour. It has been so much fun poking back into that period of time and that is what started me thinking about the air raid sirens from my own teenage years. Thanks again for your input and expertise.
- Amazingly fast and very specific on the information they use to reply... Thanks a lot... great help on the issue...
- I love, love, love Ask A Question. I have used it about a dozen times in the past 5 years. My questions are always answered to my satisfaction unless I am not clear in what I am looking for (which is my own fault for not clarifying what information I am seeking). Thank you for this awesome service!
- Excellent. I was struggling for several hours to find the information I requested, then with just a quick email, received a very fast response with the exact statistics I needed for the work I am doing.
- Priceless
- I think it is a great service and I will be using it for years to come, and I will recommend it to my family and friends.

Appendix 4: Emerging Technologies

Emerging Technology Idea	Description
Gaming	Develop a province wide gaming initiative that is inclusive of all ages and interests, models best practices, encourages community interaction and image of the public library as exciting, fulfilling and fun (see "Play Wii for FWii at the Library" on Oakville Public Library's site: http://www.opl.on.ca/)
Database Services/storage	New applications that maximize efficient data storage and retrieval including such operational efficiencies related to power consumption and physical space. Ideal to leverage from the SuperNet.
Social Networking Tools	Lots of choice and lots of hype, but what will the public really use? Identify the examples of s.n. tools that deliver public library service implement these in a public library setting. Include use assessment..
VoIP	Develop Voice over Internet Protocol as a public service to connect people who may never become proficient in using email, chat or instant messaging utilizing tools such as Skype, IChat and others. In addition, library telephone systems are aging and there could be value in a single platform with future-forward features such as instant messaging and videoconferencing integration.
Back-end Virtualization	New technology that mirrors (or "virtualize") data for purposes of efficient retrieval. Allows for redundant data sources as part of a complete disaster recovery program.
Metadata Management	As library systems become more complex and more data from a variety of sources is being archived metadata standards become important for effective retrieval for all users (staff and public). Dovetails with "Search appliance", which will work better with applied metadata standards.
Data warehousing	Investigate options for a province-wide, disaster recovery best practice to preserve the libraries' valuable data which is currently housed on a variety of servers. Consider LOCKSS models (Lots of Copies, Keep Stuff Safe)

Emerging Technology Idea	Description
Central Server Farm	This technology would host content created by libraries (e.g.: presentations, programs of interest, author talks, etc.) to share with other libraries, and potentially delivered via communications means such as websites and videoconferences. The Virtual Private Network structure that is unique to the SuperNet is ideal for sharing content with community partners.
Library Program Event Aggregator	One place to look for ALL public library programs. Consider using an Open Source application that can be modelled to gather together other sources of information to increase public accessibility.
Electronic signage	Best practices for libraries; distributed (for example, located stack ends), potential to network with EMS and essential services in a community to deliver public safety (e.g. Amber), weather (tornado or blizzard warnings) and public health (e.g. pandemic, SARS) alerts within a community
Videoconferencing	Build expertise, capacity, content and models of public service. Good opportunities for cross sector partnership.
Corporate IM	Instant Messaging (IM) rolled out in a cost effective, and broader way. This could enable smaller libraries in a regional network, a large public library serving an urban community or even, across the province.
Search appliance	Still seeking the best federated search tool that includes natural language and “remembers” previous searches. Examples include: Google Customized Search, Thunderstone, EZSeer.
Kiosk/Jukebox stations	Kiosks and vending machines that deliver “on demand” library content for users in malls, corner stores, gas stations, etc. “Insta-libraries”.
Mobile device support	Develop models or best practices to position public libraries to better serve patrons accessing library services via their mobile devices such as cellular telephones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), wireless laptops and even Ebook readers.





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