

Wayne State University Libraries

Memorandum

Loader  
1. 302,000 1976 - 85 (max)  
2. '85 -  
3. Serial loaders

TO: Peter Spyers-Duran.  
FROM: Louise Bugg *Louise*  
SUBJECT: NOTIS database load options  
DATE: June 18, 1986

As you requested, I have investigated our options to enable a database load and the start-up of circulation on NOTIS by August 20.

Option 1: Use the loader as customized by NOTIS. The programmer at NOTIS, Allen McKiel, is giving our loader high priority with delivery targeted for early August. As he de-bugs the program he has already written, I can work with him to streamline problem areas as much as possible.

This gives us only two weeks to test his loader, load the database, and begin database cleanup projects. The more the specifications are streamlined, the database cleanup will be required after loading. There is some risk that he will not deliver in this time frame.

Option 2: De-bug the customized NOTIS loader ourselves. We could attempt to de-bug Allen's programming ourselves. Dody Fox and Denise Taylor would be assigned the job, since the CSC has indicated they could not help with it. Again, we could streamline problem areas as much as possible.

Programmers tell me it is very difficult to work with another's code. Both Dody and Denise are currently taking classes in Assembler, the language used in the loader, but there is perhaps even more risk that they will not complete the de-bugging than there is with Option I. In addition, their time is already accounted for in tasks that must be done to bring up NOTIS circulation by August 20.

Option 3: Write our own loader. We could streamline the specifications to a bare minimum and attempt to customize the loader locally. I would function as the analyst in this project, and Dody and, or Denise would be the programmer(s). As with Option 2, there are still no guarantees the loader could be completed in time. Other programming tasks would have to be left undone, and more database cleanup after would result from streamlining the specifications.

Option 4: Circulate all books on-the-fly, and load the database later using the NOTIS loader. This option would enable circulation to begin before the database was loaded. It would result in a cleanup project of all items circled on-the-fly once the database was loaded.

To circulate books on-the-fly, we would have to use unlinked barcodes, applying them to all books as they circulate. The minimum data required for a book to circ on-the-fly is a call number and a barcode, which would have to be input while the patron waited. All that is needed to activate this option is a supply of unlinked barcodes, which we will have anyway.

I recommend that we prefer Option I, i.e. wait for the NOTIS loader, until the last possible moment. As a fallback, if it is not delivered, we should circulate books on-the-fly.

I think Georgia Clark's idea that we could register patrons and use their barcode numbers on McBee cards as a first step toward fully automated circulation also merits further consideration.

LB/smf

cc: N. Allen  
J. Williams  
C. Wecker

86-216