

**Office of Learning Technologies
Human Resources Development Canada
Remote Distance/ Continuing Education
Information Support Project**

Project #21021

**Prepared by:
Project Manager: Bonnie Waddell
Novanet Inc.**

**Nova Scotia Agricultural College
Truro, Nova Scotia
February 2004**

2. PROJECT INFORMATION

- Project start date: January 2002
 - Project end date: January 2004
 - Total amount of funding received from OLT: \$76,400
 - Other funding: \$85,900
 - In kind contributions: \$172,200
 - Total project costs: \$334,500
- **This project was made possible with funding from the Office of Learning Technologies, Human Resources Development Canada.**

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of this project was to develop a new service model in the context of innovative developments in information technology, with participation of students, faculty, and library staff who work with distance/ continuing education clientele.

Anecdotal evidence revealed that distance education students were experiencing difficulties in obtaining quality information and reading material to support their studies at the university and community college level. These difficulties were particularly true of students in rural areas, in remote locations, with disabilities of any kind, with special life situations such as single parenthood or shift work, or a lack of experience with information technology. This project aimed to eliminate barriers for these people and to improve their ability to successfully access information to support their course work.

The action plan proposed to:

- Survey distance students of Novanet
- Survey distance faculty and instructors of Novanet
- Survey distance services offered by Novanet libraries
- Complete literature review of consortium services for DE
- Prepare discussion paper and recommend a new service model
- Select technologies to be evaluated at a stakeholders forum
- Develop pilot projects to evaluate issues
- Hire social scientist to assist with pilot project evaluations
- Develop evaluation trials for each pilot project
- Recommend improved services to Novanet Policy Board

Activities were based on a comprehensive needs assessment; a Stakeholders Forum at which participants discussed the information technologies most desired by students. Four were selected for evaluation: *Discipline-Specific Electronic Book Collections*, *Online Tutorials*, *Live Help - Chat Reference*, *Electronic Reserves*.

Pilot Teams included librarians, staff and faculty in all four projects. Each faced different technical issues.

Discipline-specific electronic book collections: This pilot encountered fewest difficulties. As questions arose solutions or explanations were added to FAQs on the Novanet web page. This project allows access to 366 electronic books on business, education, and nursing.

Online Tutorials: This pilot chose to create online tutorials on the Novanet catalogue. Coordination with one Novanet standing committee was important to this pilot. This project provides detailed animated instruction on using the online catalogue effectively.

Live Help / Chat Reference: This pilot had a bumpy start, but eventually attracted the interest of four volunteer librarians as information providers, as well as media attention. This project allows distance students to get professional reference assistance weekdays and weekends.

Electronic Reserves: This pilot encountered the most difficult technical issues, the solution to which will require coordination with three standing committees and additional investment. Copyright fees make this technology useful primarily for print items for which institutions hold copyright.

The thirty-five Novanet library staff and ten faculty from eight universities directly involved in evaluating these technologies, now have a shared knowledge and understanding they would not otherwise have achieved. Over 1,000 distance education students have used these services. It is becoming clear that these technologies will provide benefits to all remote users.

3. SOMMAIRE EXÉCUTIF

Le but de ce projet est de développer un nouveau modèle fonctionnel dans le domaine des innovations en technologie de l'information avec la participation des étudiants, de la faculté, et du personnel de la bibliothèque qui travaillent avec la clientèle étudiante en éducation à distance et continue.

Certaines données démontrent que les étudiants qui suivent des cours à distance ont de la difficulté à obtenir de l'information et du matériel de lecture de qualité qui les aideraient dans leurs études universitaires ou collégiales. Ces difficultés seraient plus grandes pour les étudiants de régions rurales ou éloignées, pour les étudiants ayant des handicaps quelconques ou une situation de vie spéciale telle qu'être parent unique ou être travailleur posté, ou pour les étudiants ayant un manque d'expérience avec la technologie de l'information. Ce projet voulait aider ces personnes en éliminant ce genre d'obstacles et améliorer leur possibilité d'accéder l'information pouvant les aider dans leurs études.

Le plan se voulait comme suit :

- Sondage auprès des étudiants à distance de Novanet

- Sondage auprès des facultés et des professeurs à distance de Novanet
- Sondage auprès des services à distance offerts par les bibliothèques Novanet
- Revue complète de la littérature touchant le consortium des services de l'éducation à distance
- Production d'une recherche et recommandation d'un nouveau modèle fonctionnel
- Sélection des technologies à évaluer devant une tribune de personnes concernées
- Développement de projets pilotes pour évaluer les questions
- Recrutement de scientifiques sociaux qui aideront dans l'évaluation des projets pilotes
- Développement de mesures d'évaluation pour chaque projet pilote
- Recommandation d'amélioration des services au comité des politiques de Novanet

Le déroulement des projets a été déterminé par une évaluation compréhensive des besoins. Une tribune de personnes concernées a discuté des technologies que les étudiants désiraient. Quatre d'entre elles ont été choisies : *Live Help-Chat Reference*, *Electronic Reserves*, *Online Tutorials*, *Discipline-Specific Electronic Book Collections*.

Les équipes pilotes étaient composées de bibliothécaires, du personnel et des facultés pour chacun des quatre projets. Chacun était confronté par différentes questions technologiques.

Discipline-Specific Electronic Book Collections: Ce projet a eu le moins de difficultés. Des solutions et des explications étaient affichées dans une section FAQs sur le site Internet de Novanet à mesure que des difficultés étaient présentées. Grâce à ce projet, les étudiants de cours à distance ont accès à 350 livres en ligne sur l'administration, l'éducation et les soins infirmiers.

Online Tutorials: Ce projet a permis de créer des travaux dirigés en ligne pour le catalogue de Novanet. Pour mener ce projet à bien, il était important de coordonner avec un comité désigné de Novanet. Ce projet offre aux étudiants de cours à distance des directives dans la façon d'utiliser efficacement le catalogue en ligne.

Live Help / Chat Reference: Malgré un début houleux, ce projet a éventuellement attiré l'intérêt de quatre bibliothécaires volontaires et l'attention des médias. Grâce à ce projet, les étudiants qui suivent des cours à distance ont accès à de l'aide professionnelle tout au long de la semaine.

Electronic Reserves: Plusieurs problèmes techniques étaient présents dans ce projet. Pour trouver une solution, il sera nécessaire d'avoir une coordination accrue avec trois comités désignés et un financement additionnel. Des frais de droits d'auteurs rendent cette technologie utile surtout dans l'utilisation de matériel imprimé protégé par des droits d'auteurs.

Les trente-cinq bibliothécaires Novanet, et les dix facultés des huit universités qui ont pris part à l'évaluation de ces technologies partagent maintenant une connaissance et une compréhension qu'ils n'avaient pas auparavant. Plus de 1000 étudiants de cours à distance ont utilisé ces services. Il devient donc de plus en plus apparent que les utilisateurs à distance vont bénéficier de ces technologies.

4. REACH OF THE PROJECT

Which of the following best describes the learners reached by your project (check all that apply):

- Aboriginal community members X
- Persons with disabilities X
- Visible minority members X
- Persons with lower education levels
- Women X
- Unemployed persons X
- Disadvantaged workers (part-time, seasonal) X
- Other: Single parents, Working adults X
- Size of target group (number and percentage) compared to overall community:

Reach of Project (Learners)	Number	Percentage
Total population of registered users of Novanet – overall community	40,000	100%
Total (staff, faculty and students) with increased awareness of learning assets available to Novanet users.	4,000	10%
Total DE students who participated in e-learning activities	1,111	29.4%
Total DE students who received the needs assessment survey about distance learning	1761	46.6%
Total DE students who responded to the needs assessment survey about distance learning (optimum number was 846 or 48%)	816	46.3%
Total addresses on the Novanet listserv	247	100%
Total staff who participated in e-learning activities	35	17.5%

5. ACTIVITIES

OLT ACTION PLAN: JANUARY 2002 – JANUARY 2004

Objectives and Time Table – Updated January 2004

Objectives and Time Table - Updated January 2004

Activities / Objectives	Method/ Strategy	Contributors	Time Line	Comments
Year One				
I. Literature Review	Online databases; final bibliography selected by WG	Working Group	Completed by January 31, 2002	COMPLETED
II. Three Surveys	<u>Student Survey:</u> demographics, needs assessment (to be mailed) <u>Faculty Survey:</u> Faculty, instructors, DE Coordinators <u>Library Survey:</u> participating Novanet libraries; existing & planned services & policies; by interview using survey previously mailed		January – March 2002	Surveys distributed but returns still coming in throughout February, Data entry more time-consuming than expected. – COMPLETED
III. Develop tentative service model in form of Discussion Paper	Based on responses to the surveys	Input from the DE Working Group and DE Liaisons at 8 universities and the community college	April – May 2002	Data entry for library survey continues. Discussion Paper to integrate findings of all three surveys (5 surveys if you count the comments as separate) COMPLETED
IV. Stake Holders Forum	By invitation. Based on responses to surveys	Representatives of DE students, faculty, instructors, coordinators of programs and library staff	May 2002	Date of Forum changed to allow more careful planning for 40 participants – COMPLETED

V. Business Plan	Business Plan for the Pilot Projects, based on outcomes of the Forum	Recruit student and faculty representatives for the Pilot Project	June – July 2002	Prepare proceedings or summary document; consultations in preparation of business plan; required by August 2002 - COMPLETED
VI. Select Suite of Innovative Information and Learning Technologies for testing	Working Group to attend one technology conference; Update literature review	Working Group	June – July 2002	Research specs and possibly prepare tender documents for RFP for a number of products – COMPLETED
VII. Recruit Assistant Project Manager for Pilot	Identify skills needed – benefits to be derived & publicity on project goals, objectives; examples of complementary skills: teaching, reference, DE, info technology, communications, Web page design, etc.	Contact all library staff of Novanet institutions Working Group Dalhousie School of Library and Information Studies and professional contacts	November 2002 – January 2003	Prepare recruitment papers for proper personnel management – COMPLETED Lobbying and publicity for the project among library staff throughout Novanet COMPLETED
Year Two				
VIII. Lease Equipment & set up office and meeting space	Find and/or establish standards; compare prices and availability	Consultant Project Manager Systems Librarian NSAC	November 2002 – January 2004	Upgrade environment for Asst Project Manager and Pilot Teams COMPLETED
IX. Implement E-Reserves	Requires technical accommodation by Novanet; includes scanning evaluation for comparison; combination of scanned & licensed e-material w/ links on e-reserve	Pilot Team Novanet technical staff NSOC Committees Participating library staff Consultations with Faculty	March 2003 – November 2003	The formal trial for e-reserves could NOT be COMPLETED for technical reasons.
X. Implement Chat Reference DE Information Support Service	Training & practice for service providers; Market to DE students and faculty as trial for fall term. Pre-trial test	Pilot Team Assistant Project Manager Consultants	Summer to practice with limited hours Provide trial service	Trial to be scheduled between September 2003 and November 2003 – COMPLETED

	run	Participating Library staff DE students and faculty		
XI. Implement Point-of-Need O-Tutorials	Using Viewlet Builder software. Access from Novanet opac (Geopac & telnet) will be tested but main access will be from Novanet DE web site. Help button will go to the DE students web page on Novanet.	Pilot Team Assistant Project Manager Novanet technical staff Programming by consultant	Develop Viewlet o-tutorial content April – May; Programming July - August; implement & test September – November 2003	Trial to be scheduled between September 2003 and November 2003 – COMPLETED
XII. Implement Discipline Specific E-Collections	Work with designated faculty to develop customized collections; enter MARC records & links on catalogue and as a list on DE web page.	Pilot Team Assistant Project Manager DE faculty Subject Specialist librarians & staff Cataloguing staff Novanet technical staff	March – August 2003	Trial to be scheduled between September 2003 and November 2003 – COMPLETED
XIII. Evaluation of Project	Use methodologies customized by Pilot Team for each trial	Pilot Team Assistant Project Manager Project Manager Consultant from the Social Sciences	August 2003 – December 2003	Data evaluation & final progress report for OLT & the Novanet Policy Board – COMPLETED
Year Three				
XIV. Wrap Up Session & Presentation of Results	Publicize successful completion of project and present results and recommendations;	Project Manager Assistant Project Manager Pilot Team Chairs Novanet Policy Board Others	January 2004 and thereafter as required	If time permits, prepare also an article for submission to a peer-reviewed library professional journal – NOT YET COMPLETED

6. OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

Increased awareness of learning assets available in our community.

Two new sections were added to the Novanet web site. One section is within the About Novanet button – Novanet Distance Education, which was prepared for Novanet staff to follow progress of the OLT Distance Education project (minutes of meetings, membership of pilot teams, Discussion Paper, Proceedings of the Stakeholders Forum, Business Plan, technical reports, hiring documents, OLT progress reports). The second was designed for distance education students and provided a write-up on each technology being evaluated, how it could be accessed, FAQs, etc.

Brochures were designed and published with 4,000 copies printed. These were distributed to the Distance Education Coordinators (non-library staff) at each institution for distribution in course packs. They were distributed in July. E-mails were sent by DE faculty participating in the trials or trial evaluations to the students in their courses. We estimate that approximately 150 students were invited to participate in the evaluation in this way.

Increased use of learning assets available in our community.

Considering that we started at zero, a participation rate of 1,111 in the trial period between September and November is considered positive. During the evaluation trials, 433 e-books were checked out, 595 hits were recorded for the online tutorials, and 83 sessions took place with information providers for Live Help / Chat Reference.

Enhanced capacity of our organization to build partnerships.

The project strengthened the ability of Novanet institutions to work together. In actual fact members of Novanet Inc. are experienced and expert at developing consensus, which is the normal way that decisions are made within the consortium. However, the governance structure limits somewhat the ability of many library staff and professional librarians to contribute. The distance education project provided an opportunity for more library staff to contribute to the development of Novanet services. Also, it was the first time that faculty and library staff had worked together in planning service improvements, and it was the first time that Novanet sponsored a statistically reliable needs assessment across the consortium. In addition, working relationships were developed between library staff and Distance Education Coordinators as well as between library staff and distance education faculty, in some instances where these relationships had not existed before.

Enhanced capacity of our organization to offer targeted e-learning activities.

Since Novanet was established as a shared “integrated library management system”, the development of the system and the configuration and operation of each of its modules (Cataloguing, Online Public Access Catalogue, Circulation and Reserves and Acquisitions) understandably has been the focus of most attention. This project was undertaken to improve public services for the distance education clientele of Novanet. It is the first shared R & D undertaken by Novanet libraries with outside funding.

Dissemination of information on successful e-learning practices or innovative tools.

Participation in the Distance / Continuing Education Information Support project was entirely voluntary. Over the two years of the project all eight Novanet institutions offering programming through distance education methods participated in the project. Those who participated in the pilot projects showed an impressive level of commitment. The steering committee (Distance Education Working Group) has a representative from each of the university libraries which offer distance education programming. Each member of the Distance Education Working Group also participated in one of the pilot projects and served as project contact within their institutions.

Were there any unexpected outcomes? If so, please describe them.

We did not anticipate the amount of time it would take to work through technical problems encountered in implementing new technologies in a consortium environment. We did not anticipate the growth in the amount of material available in digital formats. We did not anticipate the rapid growth and availability of full-text databases. We did not imagine the huge popularity of the Information Commons that has been established at Dalhousie University, or similar planning efforts being undertaken at other universities. The distance education population is quite small (10%), but it appears that the technologies explored to support the distance education population also will support the role of academic libraries in relation to a rapidly expanding population of remote users. Remote users include students in rural areas, in remote locations, with disabilities of any kind, with special life situations such as single parenthood or shift work, or a lack of experience with information technology. Remote users also may include users of the Information Commons. The advent of wireless technologies will accelerate this trend.

What do you feel were the most significant results of your project and why?

The goal of this project was to develop a new service model in the context of innovative developments in information technology. This goal was accomplished, although differently than expected. The "new service model" clearly will not supplant the enormous expertise of traditional reference and user instruction services. Rather, the new service model will help to build relationships with a new type of user.

This project has provided a risk-free opportunity for public services staff of Novanet libraries to think about and experiment with new technologies. These technologies support an adaptation to evolving realities in student use of information and libraries, resulting from the evolution of scholarly communication, the digitization of scholarly materials, and improved telecommunications.

The most significant result is the increased knowledge and understanding of issues surrounding a number of innovative information technologies, that is now shared by both professional librarians and staff in Novanet libraries.

7. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

- **What methodology was used to conduct the evaluation? Please explain.**

The Evaluation methodology was designed to assess 4 pilot projects provided to distance education students from Novanet Inc. Distance education students received a \$15 incentive for participating in a two-part study. During phase 1, participants were invited to participate in a program simulation, which took place directly on campus. Following the simulations, the participants then evaluated the programs. In phase 2, participants were asked to complete a very short exercise from an off-campus location to verify if the participants were satisfied with the programs from an off-campus location. Forty-three distance education students participated in the study. Their overall rating for the Electronic Books, Live-Help, and Online Tutorials was positive. The Electronic Reserves program was not up and running during the testing period and consequently could not be evaluated. Out of 43 distance education students, 25 completed phase 2. Overall, participants perceived all 3 programs positively.

- **What were the key results of the project evaluation?**

The purpose of the evaluation study was to develop an empirically sound survey that would be able to support a decision on whether or not the 4 trial programs should be implemented by Novanet inc. The results presented could not significantly support any decision solely due to the fact that the sample size was too small. Considering there are over 3,000 Distance Education students, a sample size of 43 participants represents 1.43% of the Distance Education student population.

Although the results taken from this study could not be used to scientifically support decisions, the information was used for directive purposes. Information taken from the result section is the equivalent to and can be compared to information that might be taken from a focus group. Thus, results were used to make improvements and to correct flaws before these programs are marketed more widely to remote users.

Six components were used in the evaluation: 1) Familiarity or Experience with the program, 2) User Friendliness, 3) Accessibility, 4) Usefulness, 5) Personal preference, 6) Identification of Problems/ Suggestions for Improvement.

E-Books	Phase I (lab setting) Mean score / Max. Score Attainable	Phase II (off campus)
1) Familiarity or Experience with the program	<u>4</u> 43 (9.3% had previous experience)	<u>21</u> 43 (84% had never used NetLibrary)
2) User Friendliness	<u>20.00</u> 25.00 [quite high]	
3) Accessibility	<u>11.57</u> 15.00 [quite high]	Everyone was able to access from off campus. 1 couldn't check out a book.
4) Usefulness	<u>12.85</u> 15.00 [exceptionally high]	
5) Personal Preference	<u>23</u> 43 (53.5% would prefer e-books to print)	
6) Identification of Problems / Suggestions for Improvement	28.6% ran into difficulties (lack of information and technical problems) -longer loan periods -more books -multiple users -addit. Instructions -technical improvements -better publicity	

Live Help	Phase I (lab setting) Mean score / Max. Score Attainable	Phase II (off campus)
1) Familiarity or Experience with the program	Only one (2.6%) had previously used Live Help	
2) User Friendliness	<u>14.42</u> 20.00 [quite positive]	
3) Accessibility	Download link was working properly mean score of 4.17 on scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) 56.4% reported the present working hours were convenient.	<u>15</u> 43 (60% were able to download the program with no problems) <u>13</u> 43 (54.2% found the service functioning during hours of service. 9 didn't try. 2 tried during the holidays.)
4) Usefulness	<u>13.18</u> 15.0 [exceptionally high]	
5) Personal Preference	<u>27</u> 43 (69.2% preferred Live Help to e-mail or telephone)	
6) Identification of Problems / Suggestions for Improvement	<u>12</u> 43 (30.8% ran into difficulties –logging off, browser problems, screen problems)	

Online Tutorials	Phase I (lab setting) Mean score / Max. Score Attainable	Phase 2 (off campus)
1) Familiarity or Experience with the program	1 had previously used (2.4%)	
2) User Friendliness	<u>09.14</u> 10.00 [exceptionally high] Pacing: 11.9% too fast 85.7% just right 31.0% too slow Length: 0.0% tooshort 85.7% just right 14.3% too long	
3) Accessibility	<u>10.92</u> 15.00 [high level of accessibility]	<u>24</u> 43 (96.0% were able to access from off campus) Those that had problems reported time to download and screen problems.
4) Usefulness	<u>13.45</u> 15.00 [highly useful]	
5) Personal Preference	<u>35</u> 43 (85.4% prefer to learn about Novanet via online tutorials) <u>5</u> 43 (12.2% would prefer in-class presentations) <u>1</u> 43 (2.4% would prefer pamphlets) Online Tutorials are more convenient than contacting a librarian for info on Novanet On scale 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) mean score was 4.38	
6) Identification of Problems / Suggestions for Improvement	<u>3</u> 43 (7.1% encountered difficulties, all related to speed.)	

Overall, the services were ranked:

	Phase1 (In-Class)		
Electronic Books	61.9%	Most Important	(26 of 42)
	21.4%	Important	(9 of 42)
Live Help	23.7%	Most Important	(9 of 38)
	47.4%	Important	(18 of 38)
Online Tutorials	31.0%	Important	(13 of 42)
	45.2%	Not That Important	(19 of 42)
Electronic Reserves	26.7%	Not That Important	(4 of 15)
	46.7%	Least Important	(7 of 15)

• **How were those key results used?**

The key results have been used to decrease the speed of animation for the Online Tutorials. The Online Tutorials require Internet Explorer 5 or higher as well as Flash 5 or higher. This information has been placed on the web page along with a link to the free download site for Flash 5. Additional FAQs were prepared for the Electronic Books, explaining the need to register an account (username and password) the first time only, in order to access books via NetLibrary. A plan has been developed for improved and additional training and practice using the chat software for the Live Help service. More information was placed on the Live Help web site with respect to logging off and the need to use Internet Explorer rather than Netscape. Thus, the results of the evaluation have been used, not as a scientific basis for decisions, but rather as a focus group. Information taken from the result section has been used to make improvements to the services.

• **What has changed as a result of this evaluation?**

The recommendations to the Novanet Policy Board were influenced by the findings in the evaluation. All pilot teams recommended a coordinated publicity or marketing program, because the registrations for the evaluation were so low, despite a generous incentive. They also recommended that the Needs Assessment Survey be repeated after a coordinated publicity campaign has been put in place and after the various services have been offered for a full academic year.

• **Recognizing that not every project is completely successful, would you say your project was partially or completely successful? Please explain.**

This project was completely successful. All of the technologies were evaluated thoroughly and technical problems were fully analyzed so that the Novanet Policy Board understood precisely what investment is required to support the technologies tested.

8. SUSTAINABILITY

- **Have you taken steps (financial or non-financial) to ensure the activities of this project will be sustained after the OLT funding period is completed? Please explain.**

Yes. The final report and recommendations of the Pilot Projects was presented to the Novanet Policy Board on February 12, 2004. The Novanet Policy Board accepted the recommendations and approve an investment of \$13,000, such that the technologies evaluated by this project will be supported at least through June 2005.

Analysis of Costs for Novanet Policy Board to Accept the Recommendations of the Distance Education Working Group and to sustain the activities of the DE Project after OLT funding period is completed.

<p><u>Recommendation #1.1</u> That Novanet maintain the Online Tutorials by hiring a student once annually in the summer to learn the software and update the Viewlets, until such time as a new integrated library management system is implemented; and that Novanet produce an Online Tutorial for each of the services offered by Novanet to support distance and remote users of Novanet.</p>	\$500 / year	\$500
<p><u>Recommendation #1.2</u> That Novanet maintain a license code for Viewlet Builder software to facilitate the annual updating of the Novanet Online Tutorials. Cost: \$0</p>		
<p><u>Recommendation #1.3</u> That Novanet develop a marketing plan that includes a brochure similar to the project brochure, in sufficient quantities to be distributed twice annually to distance students and faculty at all Novanet institutions. Cost: \$450 (4,000 brochures) \$400 (posters)</p>		\$900
<p><u>Recommendation #2.1</u> That Novanet invest in changes necessary to allow entry of URL links in the Reserve Module (RBR) so that they display and are active in both OPAC and RBR, in order to provide Novanet Institutions with the option of offering an electronic reserve service. Cost: \$3600 (PSR #2988 January 29, 2004)</p>		\$3600
<p><u>Recommendation #2.2</u> That Novanet technical staff prepare a step-by-step guide for saving e-material to the Dalhousie server and for authenticating users on the Novanet Proxy Server. Cost: \$0</p>		
<p><u>Recommendation #2.3</u> That Novanet request the CATALOGUING and LENDING Functional Groups to enter full bibliographic information for all items being placed on reserve. Cost: \$0</p>		
<p><u>Recommendation #3.1</u> That Novanet continue support of the Live Help/ Chat Reference service as a pilot program until September 30, 2005. Cost: \$0</p>		
<p><u>Recommendation #3.2</u> That Novanet extend the Live Help/ Chat Reference Pilot Program to all remote users, effective immediately. Cost: \$0</p>		

<p><u>Recommendation #3.3</u></p> <p>That Novanet establish a Live Help/ Chat Reference Working Group to oversee a Live Help/ Chat Reference Pilot Program whose terms of reference would include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Coordinate a marketing campaign to increase awareness of support services available for remote and distance education users of Novanet. 2) Develop procedures enabling remote or distance users to set up an appointment outside of regular service hours. 3) Develop a formal training and online practice program for new volunteer information providers. 4) Participate in Knowledge Base (shared distributed international reference service) as part of the training program. 5) Develop a help page as well as an online tutorial (Viewlet) for students and information providers. 6) Examine how the Live Help / Chat Reference service can be integrated into other services offered by Novanet. 7) Hire consultant to provide service coverage on weekends and as back-up. (library school student) <p>Cost: \$648 per month (54 hours) / \$7776 per year</p>	<p>\$8000 / year</p>	<p>\$8000</p>
<p><u>Recommendation #4.1</u></p> <p>That Novanet continue support of the e-collection purchased for Novanet (15% annual access fee) subject to a re-evaluation of usage in June 2005 (360 titles).</p> <p>Cost:</p> <p>\$4500 per year for 360 titles @ 15% per year July 5, 2003 – July 5, 2005 paid by project</p> <p>\$525 per year for 35 titles @ 15% per year January 30, 2004 – January 29, 2005 paid by project</p> <p>\$5025 CAD after April 1, 2005</p>		
<p><u>Recommendation #4.2</u></p> <p>Based on what the Pilot Team considers to be a very positive response to the discipline specific e-collections (433 items checked out over 4 months from a collection 360 titles), that Novanet pursue the consortium licensing of a core collection in the three disciplines of business, education and nursing.</p> <p>Cost: @ \$100 per title plus 15% per year access fee 35 titles per year beginning July 2005 = \$4,500</p>		
<p><u>Recommendation #4.3</u></p> <p>That Novanet develop an information package to promote the concept of e-books within the Novanet community.</p> <p>Cost: \$0 (Cost: web based material on Novanet web site.)</p>		
<p>TOTAL</p>		<p>\$13,000</p>

9. CONCLUSIONS

The documents published during this project have created a lasting record of the project.

The Discussion Paper summarized the research segment of the project conducted during the first six months. This well designed survey, based on work previously done by Sue Adams at Saint Francis Xavier University, provided us with improved knowledge of the distance / continuing education client group and their needs. For the first time demographic information about the distance education population at each institution was available to Novanet. Some of our assumptions about the distance education student group were incorrect. It was helpful to be able to correct the many stereotypes that had been guiding practice in delivering services to this group.

The Stakeholders Forum was a reality check. Participants took a realistic look at the feasibility of trying to implement the many technologies that were put forward in the Needs Assessment. The four chosen were those most desired by students and those for which, realistically, there was a hope of a successful implementation in our consortium environment.

The Business Plan provided an action plan and proposal for the consideration of the Novanet Policy Board. Its approval and support during the pilot phase of the project was essential, since the in-kind costs of the project were quite high, namely in time off for staff to attend meetings, and for doing additional consultations.

The Evaluation Report was an independent analysis of the three technologies (electronic books, live help and online tutorials) from a student perspective.

The Pilot Project Final Report summarized the activities and issues raised within each of the pilot projects. Technical Reports, minutes of meetings, and formal evaluation were studied in order to arrive at recommendations from each of the Pilot team to the Novanet Policy Board. It is a summary of the experience of each team in working out solutions to technical problems as well as training, policy and procedural issues.

As Project Manager, it would have been helpful to have a two year sabbatical rather than one, to allow adequate time to keep the wider Novanet community more up-to-date on our progress. Although recent information was available on the web site, and the OLT Quarterly Progress Report was circulated widely, a more frequent schedule of press releases to the Novanet Listserv would have kept even the least attentive aware of our progress.

As Project Manager, my one recommendation to OLT would be, in the future, to establish a fund (perhaps 7% of the award) to allow Project Managers to apply for additional funds for follow-up evaluation after an appropriate period of time, if a project lends itself to such a study. In our case, it would cost \$1300 to re-do the Needs Assessment Survey, and to repeat the evaluation survey with “geographically distant” students as the target population. A combination of these two studies would yield valuable information and would measure the actual benefits and impact of these technologies.

10. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Ms. Bonnie Waddell **Project Manager** bwaddell@nsac.ns.ca

B. Waddell is Chairperson of the Distance Education Working Group, which reports to the Novanet Policy Board. She is the author of the Project Proposal and ex-officio member of Pilot Teams. As Chief Librarian of the MacRae Library, she provided administrative support for the project as well as leadership and co-ordination over the 2 years and one month of the project. She was the author of documents produced by the project in consultation with the Working Group and Pilot Teams, and with the assistance of Todie Winter prepared the Pilot Projects Final Report.

Ms. Laurie Tattrie **Administrative Assistant**

L. Tattrie worked in the first two quarters of the project. She set up the bookkeeping (ledger) software, assisted with data entry for the Needs Assessment Survey, and had a big hand in organizing the Stakeholders Forum. 42 people attended this consultation. Many came from out of town and needed transportation, housing and meals.

Ms. Todie Winter **Assistant Project Manager** twinter@nsac.ns.ca

T. Winter was hired November 2002 – January 2004, the second year of the project. Her responsibilities were to coordinate the work of the Pilot Teams by being a technical resource, coordinating meetings, preparing minutes of meetings and reports, organizing training, being the liaison with vendors of software or other products, creating and updating Web pages, etc. She also did the bookkeeping for the project and prepared the financial statements for the OLT Quarterly Progress Reports.

Thumeka Mgwigwi **Live Help Consultant**

T. Mgwigwi was hired as a consultant to the Live Help pilot. She brought to the project seven years of experience as a reference librarian in an academic library. As a Master's degree student in the School of Library and Information Services at Dalhousie University with a strong interest in new technologies, she learned the software quickly and shared this experience with the pilot team and newer volunteers who came on stream during the fall semester. She also prepared and regularly updated a Reference Manual for Information Providers, which summarized policies, staffing, hours and e-collection strengths for Novanet libraries.

Kelli Wooshue **Online Tutorials Consultant**

K. Wooshue was hired as a consultant to the Online Tutorials pilot. She mastered the Viewlet Builder software and did the actual programming for the 12 online tutorials. She was able to recommend the software as user friendly, so that updating the tutorials will not require onerous overhead. She also has a background in graphic art and helped the Live Help pilot team with the logo for the Live Help service.

Mike Teed **Evaluation Consultant**

Mike Teed is a Masters degree graduate of the Industrial and Organizational Psychology Program at Saint Mary's University. As a recent graduate, he was able to consult with his thesis supervising committee in recommending an evaluation strategy for the pilot projects. His report, published as part 2 of the Pilot Projects Final report, suggested ways to improve services. He has indicated that he would be willing to coordinate a follow-up evaluation at some time in the future.

Distance Education Working Group

The Distance Education Working Group has been in place for several years and was instrumental in developing the OLT Project Proposal. The working group was charged by the Novanet Management Committee (now the Novanet Policy Board) with finding ways to improve library support for the distance education clientele of Novanet. They reviewed and approved the Action Plan and schedule of activities for the project. The Working Group was the official steering committee for the project. Each member agreed to serve on one pilot team as a liaison for the Working Group and to facilitate communication. People who served on the Working Group included:

Davena Davis (Atlantic School of Theology) – (retired);
 Gwyn Pace (Dalhousie University) – chaired the E-Reserves pilot;
 Marnie MacGillivray (Mount Saint Vincent University) – moved to Calgary;
 Terry Paris (Mount Saint Vincent University) – served on Online Tutorials pilot;
 Bonnie Waddell, Chairperson (Nova Scotia Agricultural College) - served on Live Help pilot;
 Ann Roman (Nova Scotia Community College) – chaired the Online Tutorials pilot;
 Bill Birdsall (Novanet Executive Director) – (retired);
 Pam Maclean (Saint Francis Xavier University)- served on the E-Book Collections pilot;
 Cindy Harrigan (Saint Mary’s University) – served on the Online Tutorials pilot;
 James Watson (University College of Cape Breton) – moved. Served on the Live Help pilot.

4 Pilot Teams were made up of one or more members of the Working Group and volunteers from the Novanet Community. The Assistant Project Manager attended all meetings as secretary. The Project Manager was an ex-officio member of each pilot team and attended meetings as needed, particularly when resource issues were being discussed. Each pilot team wrote an action plan with time line, for their pilot project.

Discipline Specific Electronic Collections Pilot Team:

C. Chisholm (University College of Cape Breton)
 K. MacKinnon (Nova Scotia Community College)
 P. MacLean (Saint Francis Xavier University)
 T. Winter (Secretary)

Sue Adams (Saint Francis Xavier University) was a resource for this pilot during the planning stage. She also provide the core of the questionnaire used in the Needs Assessment. Elaine MacLean and Grace MacPherson (Saint Francis Xavier University) provided advice and catalogued the NetLibrary Collection for the Novanet catalogue. Dylan Boudreau, Novanet systems staff, assisted with web pages for both the pilot team and student access to the collections.

Live Help / Chat Reference Pilot Team:

J. Makani (Dalhousie University) – Chair, Librarian and faculty
 S. MacKibbon (Dalhousie University)
 A. Barrett (Dalhousie University)
 M. Paon (Dalhousie University)
 E. MacLean (Saint Francis Xavier University)
 G. Bertrand (Saint Francis Xavier University)
 A. Sehatzadeh (Dalhousie School of Social Work) - faculty
 T. Mgwigwi (Dalhousie School of Library and Information Studies) - Consultant
 T. Winter (Secretary)
 B. Waddell (Nova Scotia Agricultural College)
 J. Watson (University College of Cape Breton)

This pilot team was assisted by Andy Silioe, NetLibrary representative, who provide on-site training and assisted us in finding answers to many technical questions.

Electronic Reserves Pilot Team:

G. Pace (Dalhousie University) – Chair
 S. Dwyer (Dalhousie University)
 J. Riggs (Dalhousie University) – Copyright specialist
 K. Clare (Saint Mary’s University)
 T. Winter (Secretary)

This pilot team also was assisted by D. Boudreau and R. Lamer (Novanet Systems Staff); at Dalhousie University, Killam Library (Jim Kennedy, Ashwin Kutty, Joyline Makani, Terry Nikkel, Shane Noseworthy, Fran Nowakowski, Janice Slauenwhite, Ella-Fay Zalezsak); at Dalhousie University School of Social Work (Prof. Marion Brown, Prof. Adrienne Schatzzadeh); at Acadia University (Ann Hennigar, Steve MacNeil, Karen Padovani); at University of Calgary (Wendy Stephens); staff at Sage Publishers (copyright clearance office) and Elsevier Publishers (copyright clearance office).

Online Tutorials Pilot Team:

A. Roman (Nova Scotia Community College)-Chair
 T. Paris (Mount Saint Vincent University)
 C. Harrigan (Saint Mary’s University)
 F. Nowakowski (Dalhousie University)
 S. Cameron (Saint Francis Xavier University)
 S. Boutilier (University College of Cape Breton) – faculty
 J. Landry (Saint Francis Xavier University) - faculty
 T. Winter (Secretary)

This Pilot Team also was assisted with training by Tamsin Bolton (Acadia University) and Qarbon (ViewletBuilder) Client Representative: Richard Bateh. The Novanet OPAC Functional Group met with a representative of the pilot team and approved the integration of the Tutorials with the Novanet Help Screens. P. Ellis, Chairperson, reviewed the Online Tutorials as part of the Help Screen updating effort, and made helpful suggestions.

Presenters at the Stakeholders Forum:

Prof. Judith Scrimger (Mount Saint Vincent University) facilitated the Forum
 Pam MacLean (Saint Francis Xavier University) provided a philosophical framework
 Steve MacNeil (Acadia University) made a presentation on Electronic Reserves
 Peter Webster (Saint Mary's University) made a presentation on Electronic Books
 Karen Hunt (University of Winnipeg) made a presentation on Virtual Reference Services
 Colleen Adl (Instructional Designer) made a presentation on the Online Learning Center (Georgia State Library Services)

Participants at the Stakeholders Forum (42): included library staff, professional librarians, distance education coordinators, students, and faculty from 10 universities.

Novanet Standing Committees: (10 members on each)

OPAC Functional Group – advised the Online Tutorials Pilot

LENDING Functional Group – advised the DE Working Group

CATALOGUING Functional Group – advised the E-books and E-Reserves Pilots

NSOC Novanet System Operations Committee – advised on system matters, web pages

Novanet Executive Committee (3 members)

Novanet Policy Board (10 members)

Novanet Office Staff - Cynthia Martin-Magdy (accountant); Gayle Esbaugh (Office)

MacRae Library, Nova Scotia Agricultural College staff

Verna Mingo (bookkeeper / MacRae Library)

Sherree Miller (office support / MacRae Library)

John Flemming (IT assistance)

Lorena Fortune (IT assistance)

Fred Manley (Continuing and Distance Education IT support)

Pam Grace (Continuing and Distance Education)

Linda Jack (Distance Education Manager)

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Discussion Paper

11.2 Proceedings Novanet Distance Education Stakeholder's Forum

11.3 Business Plan

11.4 Pilot Projects Final Report

(Part 1 - Summary and Recommendations)

(Part 2 – Final Evaluation Report)

Name: William Maes, University Librarian, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS
 CHAIR OF THE NOVANET POLICY BOARD 2003-2004

Signature:

Date: