Circulation Staff Survey
Results Summary

- Why is your library part of the shared system?
  88% selected the shared catalog and 79% chose the shared patron database. Cost savings was selected by 61% of the respondents and about 50% chose sophistication of shared system and technical expertise at TLN. 8% answered "I don't know".

- Which is more important, ease of use for staff or ease of use for patrons?
  60% patrons, 40% staff

- Rank the importance of the following general features:
  Performance was the most important feature for the circulation staff with over 75% choosing it as most important. Easy to link new materials was a distant second, followed by easy to access and create reports, ability for patrons to pay fines in the online catalog, and quality training and documentation, all rated about equally. Windows interface was last.

- Rank the importance of the following circulation features:
  Consistent displays between functions was most important, receiving 41% of the first place rankings and 26% of the second place rankings. Multiple access points for patron and item records, holds functionality, and multiple patron search options were the next most important features, followed by multiple bibliographic search options, and seamless integration with MelCat was at the bottom.

- Rank the importance of the following catalog features:
  Easy to use topped the list with 80% of the first place rankings, followed by ability to limit search by library, ability to limit search by format, patron initiated holds, and ability to pay fines. Spell check,

enhanced content, and bestseller and award lists were ranked noticeably lower.

- If you could keep one thing about our current system, what would it be? (76 responses)
  There were multiple comments in several areas, especially ease of use with 15 general "easy to use" comments, 6 comments about the ease of navigating the patron database, 3 mentions of "easy to link", and 4 "easy to access last patron or item" comments. Many people also liked the Windows functionality, including right click (4), ability to open multiple windows (3), and dropdown menus. Reliability and speed of the system were also mentioned six times. Several people also commented on the patron functions in the online catalog including patron initiated holds, and ability to renew and pay fines. The ability to search by library was mentioned three times. There were also three positive comments about holds functionality and individual mentions of the Enterprise catalog, pop up alerts in workflows, the variety of notice formats, and directors station.

- If you could change one thing about our current system, what would it be? (88 responses)
  15 people requested more seamless integration with MelCat and another would like Mel requests to be blocked if the item is available in the shared system. There were multiple comments about searching in "Item Search and Display," with three requests for a spell check feature, two general comments that searching is difficult, four requests for searching by item type or format, and two requests to display "my library" items first on the holdings list. Suggested changes for holds included two requests to make it easier to see where the patron is in the local library hold queue, the ability to place a hold in item search, and two requests for an easier way to place holds on specific volumes in sets. There were a few requests for specific features including two requests to make reports part of the circulation module, a damage icon, the ability to see a list of overdue titles in the checkout screen, the ability to check the record of a

patron with an expired card without renewing the card, displaying the user's name in renew item, and the ability to use split screens. There were two comments that the fine payment module is difficult to use and one request to be able to create a note in "bill user". Suggestions for the online catalog included highlighting the due date in red so the patron might be more likely to notice, the ability to identify the order of a series, and the ability to search by genre.

Surveys were completed by 123 people representing 34 libraries of all sizes. Ease of use for both staff and patrons is the most important feature for the circulation staff, and reliability is also critical. It's interesting to note that seamless integration with MelCat ranked last among the circulation features but 15 people mentioned it as the one item they'd most like to change. Even though Mel requests are a small part of their daily activity, there is significant frustration with the amount of time they must spend processing those requests. Generally, circulation staff seem satisfied with the current system, especially its reliability and ease of use.