Objectives:

• Know the Pros and Cons of three different methods of accessing ILLiad request information: in client search, ILLiad reports, Access Connection

• Learn ways to use reports to monitor your system and service: routing rules, email routing, OpenURL

• Learn ways to help other departments with your ILLiad numbers: cataloging, stacks, collection development
Interlibrary loan reports and statistics can be used to learn about your patrons, collections and services. They can be used to market, defend, clarify, encourage, monitor and improve. They can be the starting point for intra library connections and help you plan for ever-changing demands and improvements.

Reports and statistics don’t stand on their own. They need an interpreter. Reports need explanation and interpretation and statistics need to be grouped, compared and contrasted. Similarly, I group that cloud of possible uses into four main categories. With numbers you can:

**REPRESENT:** advertise, support, defend, supply
**PLAN:** meet the demand for constant improvement
**MANAGE:** dispel myths, encourage your staff, monitor your output
**SUPPORT:** connect and help other departments
Representing ILL services and painting a complete picture with reports and statistics is probably the most common use of our numbers. We report how many requests we receive contrasted with how many requests we’ve filled. We might expand on that by looking at what our cancellation reasons have been in the hopes of identifying problems in workflow or the spread of misinformation. We use our quick turn-around time to estimate delivery and market our services.
Interlibrary loan is all about faster. Our patrons want things delivered to them as if we have a replicator; and though we know how ridiculous that is we just can’t stop ourselves from trying to make things as fast as possible. The faster we can get, the more reason there is to talk about it.

Maybe part of that speed is due to your routing rules, or maybe you just want to double check that your routing rules are doing all that they should be. New services are created based on the idea of unmediated borrowing and automated service. Why wouldn’t you talk about how streamlined ILL can actually be?

Knowing who uses the service can point you in the direction of better marketing and in library collaboration.

Knowing why your fill rate is falling can provide you with answers when your service is questioned and indicate far reaching problems.
How fast? Turn around vs. Delivery Time Distribution

You can use both the ILLiad turn around time report and the Delivery Time distribution to get an idea of how fast you are providing your service. ILLiad Turn-around pros: easy to access, breaks out steps/ cons: average can be thrown off by manual processing and difficult requests. Delivery Time Distribution pros: easy to access, easy to see how many requests were completed over what amount of time/ cons: no break out of steps.

Routing rules? Report on your unmediated sending

An in client custom search can show you how many requests were sent by ‘system’ based on your Direct Request rules; pros: simple to access, can save and share the query, can copy and paste into an excel/ cons: you may need to filter excess data. An Access report can also show you how many requests were automatically sent; pros: easy to export into excel, can query across tables not available in the in-client custom search, save the query for next time/ cons: difficult to set up.

Who uses the service? Department and status reports

ILLiad requests by department and requests by status are a great start for getting to know your patron base. Pros: easy to access, can give CD librarians logins/ cons: doesn’t show what is requested. Both a custom search and an Access report are labor intensive to setup when all you want is a tally, but perhaps can come in handy when you want a title list (more on that later)

Why is fill rate falling? Cancellation reason reports

You can use the cancellation reasons report to track why your fill rate is where it is; pros: easy to access, always there for you / cons: no title list. A Custom Search or report in Access can fill in this gap; pros: can narrow to specific cancellation, list of titles/ cons: a lot of data (slightly less from Access).
Here we can see Turnaround Time vs. Delivery Time Distribution. Because turnaround time is an average, that request you sent to Puerto Rico 12 days ago, after which your patron had to come in to sign the research request forms and acknowledgement of copyright 5 days ago, is throwing the whole number off. 2.71 days does not represent what most patrons are getting. The Delivery Time Distribution report helps to clear this up and shows a high # of article deliveries happening before 2 days.

But maybe you want more. There are often options on ILLiad Reports to show details for some part of the data. I wanted an even clearer picture of what percentage of articles were delivered within 12 hours, a day, or two days. The ILLiad Turnaround Time report can get you this information as well. If you show details for the articles you will get a list of times for each request tracked. A little sorting and counting in excel gave me exactly what I wanted to know.
Which was that nearly 40% of all requested articles are delivered to patrons within 1 day.
Every individual can get caught up in what-ifs. Every committee is doomed to get caught up in what-ifs. We often spend too much time planning for the exception when we shouldn’t. The reports and statistics you can get from your request database can tell you how often the exception really happens and give you the confidence to make a decision on whether or not you need to plan for it.
We know that library collections affect interlibrary loan. With electronic content the affects are even more severe, especially if past content is not guaranteed. And because of the way electronic content is bundled and licensed, a collection cut won’t necessarily be for unused material. Estimates on workload increase are crucial to handling these effects while maintaining departmental health.

Reports can be used for process improvement.

And they can help you tweak your workflows, routing rules and direct request sending so you can, at least partially, answer the question: how exactly am I going to do more with less?
The first step is knowing your ILL clientele

- ILLiad reports:
  - Registered users by department
  - Requests by department and User Status
- Custom Search and Access:
  - Users with active requests per time period
  - Title lists

Create report processes that eliminate inefficiencies

- Custom Search and Access

The invisible employee

- Custom Search and Access

Collection change? The first step to figuring out the affect of a collection change is to know your ILL clientele. There are plenty of ways to get this information in ILLiad. Estimating the cost and workflow impact of a collection change requires a lot of information and only some of it comes from your ILLiad database (so we’ll come back to the idea later), however, your ILLiad database will provide you with the most important information. It will give you a full description of the people who already use your service.

ILLiad reports for users by department, and requests by user status and department will give you counts and an overall picture of what is going on in any given time period, but like we saw before they don’t tell you what is being requested. Your criminology students might only be requesting psychology materials. Your anthropology department might be requesting history. Custom searches in the client and Access reports will get you title lists so you can figure out the subject matter of the materials your patrons are requesting, just be prepared for excess information.

How can I do this better? My interlibrary loan department used to quick catalog incoming materials into the circulation system so they could be checked out at the desk, tracked like a regular loan, and assessed overdue fines just like any other checkout. When we switched our LMS, we took the opportunity to get rid of a clunky and time consuming process, but we didn’t want to lose ability to track or assess overdue fines. Webcirc was available to take care of the tracking, but we needed a way to pull the information on overdue returns. An Access report, referencing the amount of days overdue and the circulation desk user name for Webcirc solved the problem. The report can be pulled and double checked quickly once a week. Time was saved from quick cataloging an increasing amount of incoming materials and junk records were kept out of our LMS.

Additionally, when we began reporting our issues retrieving things from our subscription
databases, we filled out our library’s online form for each issue. This meant typing in the full citation and staff contact information just as if we were a regular user having problems with the materials. Changing how we cancelled these requests was all that was needed to turn a tedious process into a quick report. Instead of cancelling a request for an inaccessible electronic item as ‘not owned’ we cancelled with a more accurate ILLiad note that indicated our subscribed content was not available. This also helped us highlight databases that were frequently down so reference staff could be better prepared for patron questions.

The ILLiad custom search is extremely flexible, but I prefer Access for these custom reports. Access reports can be made only include the information that billing staff need to bill, so I don’t have to clean up the spreadsheet after I export it each week. Similarly the report that shows cancelled title/article requests based on electronic access includes only the citation information and the date stamp.

Finally, how are you going to do more with less? When I was first promoted to supervisor in my interlibrary loan department, I was given a host of new duties and no replacement me to do the daily tasks I was already responsible for. I was very specifically asked, how I was going to handle the increase in work when I already had a day job. My answer was routing rules, process improvement, and Direct Request. Moderate success cutting out tedious tasks in our workflow with routing rules showed me that our system could do a lot more for us. Custom searches and Access reports based on the ‘system’ moving a request helped me track routing rule success. Applying and reporting on rules one at a time helped me make sure I wasn’t inadvertently undoing something else. Now, what I’ve begun calling the invisible employee, is taking care of 30% of our borrowing requests per month.
I wanted to show this specific example because I think it’s easy to develop the misconception that the report is doing something more than it says it is doing. Statistics and graphs can be misleading, even when they are not deliberately massaged to be that way.

I already know that graduates are our largest user group, followed by faculty, and then undergraduates. I have not seen this change very much, and the ILLiad report Requests by Department and User Status bears that out. However, the Registered Users by Department seemed, at first, to paint a different story. Really, this report isn’t telling me anything about activity. It’s telling me which librarian instructor is most likely to have their classes create an ILLiad profile as part of her library orientation class.
Example of custom search added as requested during presentation.

If you have not accessed the custom search before you can get there by the small box in the bottom right hand corner of the 'Search Requests' box on the home ribbon in your ILLiad client. Once there you can add parameters for your search by clicking the plus button.

This example shows some the basic parameters you might need to track your unmediated sending.
Reports and statistics are valuable to managers.

- They let you know a average staff output
- They can verify that everyone is towing the line (regardless of whether the manager knows the process)
- They help you monitor your special processes
- They help you align your service output with your policies
- They can be used to establish obtainable and track-able department goals
- They give you a powerful way to congratulate your staff
I had to get used to scrutinizing staff actions when I first became a supervisor. It sometimes felt like snooping, but it’s necessary when, as the manager in a department, you are responsible and held accountable for everything done in that department. I needed to be able to answer the questions about why something was done differently, or more slowly. When I finally got used to looking I saw as much or more in the reports that I could congratulate my staff on and use as a motivator. Reports on staff actions can be especially useful to the manager who is put in charge of a process that they don’t already know. I stepped in as an interim manager of our reserves department for a time when we were launching a new system. I supplied training materials and walked everyone through the process, but I wasn’t in the office every day doing the requests and so I didn’t have as much of a grasp on that process as the ILL process that I was used to. I filled the gaps in my knowledge with reports.

Reports can also be used to reveal patron behavior and, perhaps, areas where service needs to be improved.

And, ‘what is the system doing?’ takes us back again to checking on the reliability of your routing rules and database connections (OpenURL). An invisible employee still needs to be managed.
What is my staff doing? ILLiad Staff Activity by Username gives a good count of what tasks each staff member does the most during a day. It can show you how balanced the workload is among your employees, and when paired with your average turn-around, it can indicate just how successful your department is as a team. However, I find Staff Activity by Username to be the most misleading and less useful when tracking a problem because it doesn’t show how many of those actions are redundant. Mostly I find it a good way to see what username should be searched in ILLiad custom search to get a real handle on what they are doing. ILLiad Custom Search of the tracking table by username will return duplicates that show you how many times a staff member picked up a request and put it down again without really acting on it. I see this a lot when training new people.

What are my patrons doing? The ILLiad custom search is all you really need to get an idea of how many of your patrons keep books overdue and how many never pick up materials. Once you know this you can determine whether or not you should have a reminder email (or two) before the book is overdue, or perhaps your contact information isn’t as clear on the books as it could be. And, are your patrons not picking up materials because they are not getting notifications?

What is system doing? We’ve already talked a bit about tracking the success of your routing rules and direct sending. It’s as important to check up on this regularly as it is to check on it as you set it up. Additionally, ILLiad Borrowing Invoices Received, Lending IFM charges can help you make sure your custom holdings and addresses are up to date, especially when paired with OCLC borrowing IFM report.

The Answers

- Staff actions and turn-around
  - ILLiad Staff Activity by Username and Turnaround
  - Custom Searching
- Overdue and not picked up
  - Custom Searching
- Successful routing
  - Custom Searching and Access
To illustrate what I mentioned about redundancy. I know for sure that the sixteen actions I took in extensive searching were on the same requests my staff took fourteen actions on. Similarly, the nineteen actions I took on the items in Awaiting Response from lender were on only five requests...
Libraries today are struggling to emerge from organizations where each library department keeps to itself, and the only communication happens at the administration level. We’ve finally realized that our old system of doing things meant we were duplicating work and that is just not acceptable in an economic downturn. Interlibrary loan is perfectly placed to be a great benefit to departments all over the library.

ILL requests can create a list of titles for special collections digitization, they can create a wish list for collections, inventory lists for stacks maintenance, and point liaison librarians to the colleges that most use the library...
The questions look banal, but they have far reaching effects. Interlibrary loan is like the secret shopper for your stacks and holdings. It is a super user, looking for things all day everyday, in a range of subjects and locations. Whether or not your interlibrary loan staff can find what they are looking for could reflect on their training, but more likely, it reflects on the state of your shelves and databases. It is in the best interests of the library to make use of this and set up processes that capture this activity.

Similarly, interlibrary loan traffic is the first way you will find out that your library’s holdings in OCLC are all wrong. This can point to problems in automated holding services that should be addressed by the vendors selling us those services.

...and of course we know that interlibrary loan is the primary way to capture what your patrons want that you do not have.
The Answers

• Cancellation lists for inventories
  — Custom Search and Access
• Cancellation lists for holdings maintenance
  — Custom Search and Access
• Requests by department
  — ILLiad Reports:
    • Requests by Department
    • Requests by Department and User Status
    • Most Requested Loans and Journals
  — Custom Search and Access: Title lists

We’ve already discussed how the ILLiad reports don’t always give you title lists when you might want title lists. This is why I turn straight to Access for cancellation lists. You can get these in a custom search as well, but will need to clean up a lot of excess data before it can be useful to those outside your department.

My library has completed LIBQual a few times now and something that we see every now and again are patron complaints about not being able to find material that is supposed to be available. Our Circulation department has tried a number of projects from shelf reading to random sample inventories to combat this over the years. The way I thought ILL could help was by providing a list of all the items we cancelled as not on shelf. These were basically book searches, requested by patrons at other libraries. And like all our book searches, they were thoroughly looked for by staff, in this case, by ILL staff. Unlike our books searches, the catalog was not updated with a missing status and the titles were not retained to search again later. This was wasted energy and the problem was solved simply by handing over a list every few months.

Our Not Owned cancellation on electronic material was also wasted energy. Some cancellations represented records in OCLC that were incorrectly updated, but a handful of them were due to databases being down or specific articles not being available, as they should be, in our subscriptions. Originally we tried to combat this by reporting each article with the ‘Report a problem with electronic access form available to our patrons, but this was cumbersome and didn’t alter our cancellation report to reflect the real reason for the cancellation. As I mentioned before, we created a new cancellation reason to track this specific problem and can now share this report with acquisitions on a regular basis.

Now that our not owned cancellation list shows things that we honestly do not own (we
also have a separate not owned for specific volume/issue) we can, hopefully, work with acquisitions and cataloging to get this fixed in OCLC. ILL staff is wasting a lot of time on requests that cannot be filled. This drives up our overall cost of service because staff time is money.

We’ve seen how the ILLiad Requests by Department and User Status (ILLiad Reports) give you a picture of your clientele but do not give you an idea of what they are asking for. The Most Requested Loans and Journals gives you a list but does not link it to college and user status. While the collection development librarians at my library enjoy being able to login to ILLiad Reports with their own password and view timely reports any time they need, most of them want a combination of these reports. I go straight to Access for this because it’s easy to create a list that does not include patron identifying information outside of status and department without needing to edit it as with the in client custom search.

I also want to note another overall pro for Access reports. The initial set up is difficult, but once the reports or queries are created and saved it is easy to return to them.
Access never looks pretty to me, but I wanted to show this as an example of how you can save several different queries that you can return to anytime you need.
**Pro and Cons review**

**ILLiad Reports**
Pros: Ready and Waiting, Graphs Included, Many Logins, Whole Database, Easy to Access (CD librarians)
Cons: Not Always Clear, Can’t Choose Extra Data, No Reports on Custom Processes

In Client Search
Pros: Share-able (client users only), On the Go, Can Manipulate Requests, saves the format and sorting for next time
Cons: A lot of information to sort, No Complex Reports (i.e. turnover calculations), One Site Only

**Microsoft Access**
Pros: Whatever Information You Want, Queries across all tables in the database, Whole Database, Your Custom Processes
Cons: Complicated Set Up, One Person, A lot of information

**Tip:** always compare apples with apples (i.e. don’t use the fill rate numbers from your ILLiad reports in 2012 in comparison with the fill rates in your Microsoft Access report for 2013)
I was part of a statewide group working to develop an unmediated resource sharing service through a shared catalog. We debated heavily during planning about whether this new service would simply displace our existing ILL traffic or add to it. And, if the new service would increase resource sharing overall, we wondered how we would be able to absorb this with no additional funds set aside for increased staffing.

We also debated over whether opening up this new service would deplete the shelves of smaller libraries and leave local patrons with no materials to use.

Very little analysis of the current environment entered into the debate, but if it had, we would probably have found that our interlibrary lending of books had been falling over the years, just like our local circulation of books. We’d have found that our collection use was dwindling to the point where a rush on materials would be a blessing. And also, that our traffic had dwindled enough that we could safely absorb some increases in the future years.
When using reports to represent, manage, plan and support you should never take them at face value. Remember, statistics and reports need people to interpret them. For example...

If you are delivering on requests that staff find in library databases, your overall article turn-around may be much faster than the ILLiad Turn Around report captures. Likewise, if your routing rule to move lending electronic article deliveries out of the ‘request shipped’ queue isn’t working and staff clean up the queue at the end of the month, your turn around will look much higher than it really is.

What is the report really saying about unmediated sending? Sent doesn’t equal filled but it doesn’t need to. To get the most out of my direct request routing rules I have requests sent to a small minimum of libraries. I did this, because during planning I found that most of our requests to our custom holdings libraries were filled at the first library. There are a few requests sent by system that still need to be touched by staff when they come back unfilled. I would never count this as a failed direct request because unfilled requests happen naturally no matter how they are initially processed.

And we’ve seen how the Staff Activity by Username report can inflate numbers by counting an action even if a staff member didn’t move the request along in the process.
What do you really want to know?

- Using ILLiad data in conjunction with other numbers:
  - Impact of new services on ILL
  - Impact of collection changes on ILL
  - Cost of an interlibrary loan

\[ F = \frac{C}{u + 55v} \]

- \( F \) = Cost per filled lending request
- \( C \) = Total cost of interlibrary borrowing or lending
- \( F \) = Number of filled requests
- \( u \) = Number of unfilled requests

Stephen Dickson and Virginia Boucher in "A methodology for Determining Costs of Interlibrary Lending"

How new consortium borrowing agreements and systems are affecting your ILL traffic:
ILLiad numbers needed: requests received and filled over years, maybe requests per user status, requests per subject (call number report to see most impacted collection)

Other numbers needed: request traffic from other libraries and/or other resource sharing systems, user data on those requests

How removing an entire collection is going to affect your ILL traffic:
ILLiad numbers needed: requests received and filled, active users (e.g. users with recent requests), user departments

Other numbers needed: use statistics for database or collection, library population estimates, subject matter of collection and statistics on size of corresponding college/department as well as those students’ use of the library

What does your service cost? How much per transaction?
ILLiad numbers needed: requests received and filled, invoices received, lending IFM charges, invoices sent and paid

Other numbers needed: OCLC IFM charges, other material acquisition costs (pay per view), utilities, staff salaries, student salaries and hours, OCLC bill, supplies, equipment, other subscriptions

You’ve noticed that the key to custom searches and access reports is what is entered into the ILLiad request form by both patrons and staff. Perhaps you’ve used the ILLiad fill rate report to sort by user status and had to include 5 different ways distanced learner has been spelled over the years. ILLiad Reports can be shared to collection developers to help them make selections based on requests, but if you have 15 colleges and 15 librarian liaisons to each, your 56 departments in ILLiad are only going to get in the way.

This is especially true in an old database, more so if you have a multi site installation where each ILL unit is independently operated in accordance with each library’s policies, like ours. The options in our database had become unwieldy and had not be updated to reflect any college consolidation over the years. After some work, we went from 146 to 44 options.

I mentioned before about pulling title lists so you can find out what the subject area of your requests are (primarily in lending). I do this by call number and this only possible if the call number and location are filled out by staff in a standardized manner.

ILLiad reports only become more useful when you use more ILLiad features. If you are part of a consortium and need to keep track of your services for the group, address groups can give you a handy way to quickly access that information. Likewise, if you are often asked for how much international interlibrary lending you do, creating an address group of international libraries would make this easy. I say would, because I’m not done updating my database for this yet. But I’m hopeful.
Questions?

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