VALE

Summary of Members Council Workshop on October 30, 2014 to Assess Capabilities and Operating Structure

V2: 11-6-14
New Commons

Agenda

- Given progress to date with strategic priorities, what have we learned?
- The current VALE operating structure is effective for getting work done to achieve current strategic priorities – 1st thoughts about capabilities needed going forward…
- Conducting an external scan of the environment…Current conditions faced by VALE; Emerging conditions; Collective impacts
- VALID should be spun off…VALID is an opportunity – keep it to change thinking / doing
- Emerging business model: lessons learned from networks most like VALE?
- The diverse membership – highly to less technically sophisticated…going forward what will members value the most? What would a multi-tier membership structure look like? How do we make it work?
- In summary…

Given progress to date with strategic priorities, what we have learned

The 6 priorities are still relevant and applicable, but we have made little progress in 8 years. These priorities don't permeate the structure. Committee work bedevils us. It's like there's two VALE's: VALE 1, Executive Committee; VALE 2, everybody else. These don't connect. We've created a liaison between each committee and the executive committee, which has made a difference, but perhaps not enough.

As a purchasing hub, maybe we're not big enough to leverage deals. Fiscally, given our challenges, being a purchasing club is less important. Counterpoint: the less money we have in budgets, the more important group purchasing is. Another counterpoint: the more we leverage savings, the more the university says we don't need as much from it. Collective purchasing is still one of the most important things we can do (in the eyes of the university).

The current VALE operating structure is effective for getting work done to achieve the current strategic priorities

In relationship to the operating structure effectiveness, participants were asked to place a sticky dot on the following scale [++, +, -, --] wherein "++" is Strongly Agree and "- -"is Strongly Disagree.

18 dots…Agree
Members have to see their priorities reflected. Is the operating structure effective? Not sure. There is no over-arching vision…an end that's articulated; we need to get the focus on support for research and learning. A lot of organizations have put a lot of effort into making VALE work. A lot of progress has been made in the virtual library. Can't lose sight that a lot of effort has

been made by librarians, but not necessarily with the strategic priorities. The model of vendor negotiation is working.

11 dots…On the line
There's a difference between being a library organization versus a librarian organization. Committee structure is functionally based, but not sure they're effective enough to get us where we need to go. Business and assessment have emerged as more important than the 6. Is the assessment internal or external? Once priorities are clarified, the assessment committee can gauge progress.

If the operating structure was effective, we would have seen a dashboard measuring progress against the priorities at this workshop. If I try to engage my academic provost on these 6 priorities, they wouldn't be seen as strategic. How do we get our priorities to match those of the university?

11 dots…Disagree
There's a limited life to volunteerism. What about a succession plan for the Executive Committee? I don't see people ready to step up. We have committees that don't support the 6 goals – to what extent should they?

2 dots between disagree and strongly disagree
The 2 VALE's. We have made some progress against the 6 priorities, but not significant progress. I feel there's unequal involvement with institutions. As an Executive Committee member, volunteer time is damn near unsustainable.

External scan: How has the world changed since VALE's inception?
In effect: we don't know what we don't know

What are the current conditions VALE is facing?
Current conditions are full present with impact experienced.
- More on-line students
- Library collections have changed – we rent not own
- The changing value of what is a library? What is education?
- Extra focus on data mining, assessments and analysis
- Tension / accountability for retention and graduation of students
- Facing a crisis of "granulation"…vendors want to sell pieces; students want pieces of pieces
- Lots of organizational change with technology more centrally driving it
- Publishers are making it harder and more expensive to access content

Emerging conditions
Emerging conditions are on the horizon with impact perceived.
- Big Data…everyone's pushing for it, but no one knows what it is or what to do with it. I have to give it, but don't know how to collect it.
- Consortiums used to be geographically regional; now consortiums accept members outside the region
- Even new LMS technology isn't keeping up with what we need to do
- Fierce presence of for-profit/proprietary education
- More emphasis on competency based learning

- Rise in MOOC's and badges instead of degrees
- Use of discovery tools by students to find resources
- Demographic for students is going down: less 18-22 year olds
- There's a huge population that can't be held back forever – the undocumented.
- Higher education will be 12 months, 24/7 even for the elites
- Library trends like RDA and linked open data

Collective impacts of external conditions on VALE business model
- Our challenge is making sure we have a seat at the table and we are communicating our value. There is a need for greater advocacy for what we need; what the library is all about.
- The rising cost of higher education, hence the rise of MOOC's and badges and we have to figure out how to make it work
- Faculty are collaborating on establishing common outcomes across courses – need to insert ourselves into these conversations to be helpful integrators
- Increased competition for information with multiple providers, not just libraries
- Need to look at what's going on with public libraries and librarians; when the public school librarian retires there is no replacement. Is this our fate in college universities?
- With trends, it is challenging to figure out what will pass, what will persist? What's transitory? What's a real challenge?
- If we cease to become content repositories and if we continue to lease content, how does that impact budget?
- Speed of changes have made strategic plans very compressed in terms of time frame – no more 10 year plans
- Change in accreditation from quantitative to qualitative

The future of VALID – an integrated library system to help us think and do differently

Participants were asked to place a sticky dot on the following scale [++, +, +, ++] wherein "++" is Strongly Agree and "+"is Agree for the Most Part on the forced choice: keep VALID because it is an opportunity or spin it off?

VALID is an opportunity so keep it to help change the way VALE thinks, acts and gets things done

1 dot…Strongly Agree
Since the one dot is an outlier, what role does it play in this workshop conversation? VALID is a huge opportunity – the vision is what is important, then figure out how to get the supporting technology and make it economical and efficient. Get other institutions outside the region to support it. This is the only project not about purchasing. Most systems will need to be changed; if not VALID, what else? It's an enterprise system that can be taken to any IT department. Yet, as a community college we're tied to county and state systems and see a lot of VALE time spent on it. If New Jersey had statewide systems this would be a no-brainer, but it doesn't. We started out as collaborators – if spun off, what are we?

12 dots…Agree
I like it but will never be a full participant. Once it is done, how is it maintained? It depends…the future of KUALICO, will it be proprietary? It has tremendous potential but a drain on volunteers.

11 dots…On the line
We don't know. If you split it off, that means it has value. Does it have value? Ideologically, I support open source but I am disappointed with implementation.

VALID should be spun off

12 dots…Agree
There should be an option for institutions to participate, yet there are some that will never do so because of politics. Implementation might be faster if it is spun-off.

9 dots…Strongly Agree
We don't have the resources to pull this off. There are vendors that can deliver this at a lower cost. We don't have a track record of collaboration for implementation to make this work. We need a state-wide vehicle for borrowing so we can spread our collective development dollars more broadly.

The ongoing business model: lessons learned from other networks most like VALE?
After a presentation of three consortiums on their services, business model, organizational structure and future plans, participants answered three questions:

What most interests you about what the other consortiums are doing?
- Operations – they're actually running stuff.
- A lot of services that come out of shared ILS are all running the same software, which makes the sharing possible.
- Speculating on the cost of membership. Is there a higher state allocation there? Don't think the state is putting in more.
- Multi-state consortiums.
- Documenting the ongoing evolution of the collaborative is intriguing.
- They all have paid staff doing stuff.
- We're all over the map compared to the other three.

What service do you most want? Don't be limited by current resources and capabilities – make a short list and prioritize.
This is a preliminary list with no promises to deliver. Participants proposed services and then used 3 sticky dots to determine their priorities.

22	Shared e-content
21	A shared ILS
18	Greater transparency of what VALE is doing / Communications plan
17	Strategic partnerships, e.g., LYRASIS "to take care of a few things"
15	Reciprocal borrowing with a card
15	Shared repository
11	VALE needs to collectively address the political issues

9   Digitalization of special services collections
1   Go through exercise on why these services aren't provided – is home-rule the barrier?

What should VALE stop doing?

- Thinking volunteers can carry this. Staying with volunteers is not sustainable; current complexity will crush VALE without added capability.
- What does VALE do (I have to know the answer to this question before I know what to stop doing)?
- Change nature of the user conference; shift to peer review? For our librarians this is very valuable as currently designed.
- If you wrap up VALE – ended it, what are we losing?
- Committees exist to share learning but they're not a VALE service – should we keep them under the VALE umbrella?
- Letting committees exist in perpetuity - reassess based on need and function.
- Thinking we can do everything – reach out to partners who can do it better.
- We need to make clear we're supporting institutions and not individual librarians.
- Stop being a silent representative. Speak up.

The membership is diverse, ranging from highly to less technically sophisticated, so…

Diversity can also refer to politics, etc., and also what you know or don't know about VALE.

What will members value most going forward?

- Working together to accomplish what we can't do alone

What would a multi-tier membership structure look like? How would we make it work?

- Implicit is an organization based on different needs, for example a community college tier.
- Requisite to establishing tiers, you need to first do a "needs analysis".
- Transfer professional development to another organization, thus allowing us to focus on the needs of institutions.
- Develop a menu of current and future services: Develop a Chinese menu – if you give my institution a menu of prices and services they'll pick the lowest.
- Might be a place for proprietary colleges.
- Is there a place for public school libraries within VALE? The new PARC assessment and curriculum aims to connect K-12 with post-secondary.
- There is a clear community of interest within the community colleges – focus there.
- If structure changes, how will this affect committee make-up?

In Summary

Stop Doing?	*Keep Doing?*	*Do Differently?*	*Start Doing?*
Relying on a finite number of individuals to carry the load.	This isn't about cost benefit but about spirit of collaboration. And we need to keep the conversation about collaboration going as it is the spirit of what we are up to.	Tie in what we do more to a strategic plan, and also the activities of the committees.	Ask the question: If VALE stopped, what would be the impact/ What would we lose?
Trying to do too much – are we a professional development focused organization or not?		Look at each committee in terms of the time utilized by members. Make committees interest groups – self organized and without budgets (nice to be able to say we're backed by VALE). Make sure committees are addressing strategic needs.	Collectively address advocacy in politics.
Being an organization of librarians. Instead focus on the library as an organization.			Figure out an array of partners – who does what we need done, and does it better than VALE?
.			Identify what motivates people to do collaborative projects and what's the tipping point that creates effective collaboration?
		VALID	