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To: Members of the DALNET Board
From: Margaret E. Auer^{NO} Chairperson
Date: February 13, 1997
RE: Update

It has been like living in Heller's Catch-22, or maybe it has been like being caught between a rock and a hard place. The DALNET Partnership Team has been struggling to find a balance between what the Board members need to make a decision on a future automation system, what the home institutions may need to authorize for any change, and what is not so specific that it implies an automatic commitment to Ameritech Library Services. After much of a struggle (we scrapped the original proposal), the balancing act may be behind us.

For the DALNET/Ameritech aspect of the Task Force's work, the Partnership Team has agreed that four steps are necessary to propose a partnership between Ameritech Library Services and DALNET:

1. Document that Horizon and other Ameritech products are/will be functionally adequate for DALNET with a statement from Ameritech to address the items identified which are not currently adequate.
2. Statement of principles of a partnership between Ameritech and DALNET.
3. Development of a detailed overall project plan, with timeline, to move DALNET from a SNA environment running NOTIS to a TCP/IP network with Horizon and other Ameritech products installed.
4. Joint creation of proposal which is to be presented to the DALNET Board and to Ameritech Management.

Further, the DALNET Team has requested and ALS has agreed to an in-depth demonstration of the Horizon features on the DALNET list of required enhancements that are in development or ALS believes Horizon is capable of performing now. The demonstrations will involve the DALNET Team plus a small group from DALNET libraries.

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This will take place after ALA Midwinter.

The DALNET Team has drafted the principles of a partnership for Ameritech's review. These principles will be discussed and agreed upon by the entire Partnership Team after the demonstration is held. Following this agreement, a member of the DALNET team will sit down with an ALS representative to create a project plan for the migration from NOTIS to Horizon. This will include products, implementation, conversion of data, networking and hardware installation with a timeline. Subsequent to the development of the project plan, two representatives from the DALNET team will go to Chicago to work with ALS on the proposal for presentation to the DALNET Board and Ameritech Management.

Simultaneously, the DALNET team will finalize, for presentation to the DALNET Board, the information gathered from the vendor demonstrations, including positive aspects and gaps noted. In all of the DALNET Team's meetings, discussions and demonstrations (and disagreements), there has been an awareness of what the vendors (SIRSI, DRA, Innovative and Horizon) can bring to the table but also what DALNET brings to the table.

Besides the documents being worked on, there has been the learning aspect of this process. Just in summary, let me share with you some of these:

- Education Sessions (Vendor Demos)
 - Understanding of the capabilities and restrictions of new generation systems
 - Knowledge of importance of new generation library system features to library personnel who attended the sessions
 - Identification of specific gaps in the new generation systems and what development work is occurring
- Meetings with Ameritech Library Services (ALS)
 - Understanding on the part of ALS about what will need to be involved in a partnership for DALNET to be interested, including specific areas for development, not just implementation
 - Knowledge of the strengths and restrictions of what ALS can bring to the table to assist DALNET, e.g., links with IBM and Ameritech telecommunications
 - Knowledge of development projects at ALS that will address gaps in Horizon for DALNET's requirements
 - "Operationalizing" the DALNET vision in the "DALNET Community Information Hub" diagram, i.e., looking at the specific components that will be necessary to realize the DALNET vision
 - ALS has gained a better understanding of what it will mean for them to work with the management and organizational structure of a large multi-type consortium
- DALNET Partnership Meetings
 - Clear understanding of current new generation system

options: partner with ALS to develop a new generation system to address DALNET's needs and migrate now or take a chance that other systems will develop to address DALNET's needs and wait to migrate

- Understanding of the unique challenges faced by each library within DALNET, e.g., unique patron needs, unique financial and organization constraints
- Understanding of DALNET personnel resources required for a partnership with ALS
- An appreciation of the unique resources of DALNET as a consortium and an understanding how DALNET can use technology to enrich the lives of residents in the metro area

So, this is where the Partnership Team is now and the action plan to enable the Partnership Team's work to be brought to closure. I would be negligent if I did not take a moment more of your time to include the following. This short letter cannot adequately communicate the amount of work, thought, and conscientious deliberations which have taken place with this DALNET team. The people on the team (L. Bugg, A. Fidler, J. Houser, M. Klein, M. Sheble, F. White) have represented both their own institutions and DALNET very well. They are to be commended for the work they have done thus far.