

# Web Services: Spinning the Good-Enough Connection

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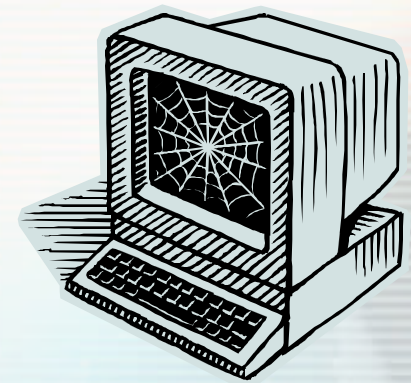
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**Managing Electronic Collections: A NISO Workshop**

**POLARIS**  
LIBRARY SYSTEMS

# What will we cover today?

- **A very little background**
- **How can web services be used in a library context?**
- **What are the problems around web services that might call for standards work?**



# Who works on web services?

- **The following groups have been active and have produced helpful work**
  - **VIEWS (started by Carl Grant, VTLS), active 2004-2005**
    - **Metasearch, web services, authentication**
  - **NISO Web Services and Practices Working Group, active 2005-2006**
    - **NISO RP 2006-01**
  - **World Wide Web Consortium working groups, ongoing activity**
    - **Architecture, infrastructure, syntax**



# Are there any web services standards?

- **Yes**
  - **W3C standards work**
  - **SUSHI**
  - **OpenURL**
  - **SRU**
- **And No**
  - **NISO standards work specific to web services**
- **And Sort of**
  - **Some current solutions can be seen as web service-like, including NCIP**



# Why?

- **Web services tend to be**
  - **Specific to a context between two applications**
  - **Relatively light-weight**
  - **Relatively dynamic**
- **When there is a common problem and a web service might carry an answer, then a standard makes sense**
  - **SUSHI**



# What can library web services do?

- **Potential anywhere different applications need to exchange information to:**
  - **Discover**
  - **Locate**
  - **Request**
  - **Deliver**
  - **Perform common services**



- **Discover metadata, a full text resource, or a service**
  - **Create and maintain a directory of services, policies, etc.**
    - **Talis: directory of collections**
    - **OCLC: directory of ILL policies**
  - **Search and retrieve results from a data repository**
    - **SRW and any application that uses it**



- **Resolve an object to its location**
  - **Communication of inventory information between locations**
    - **Remote storage**
    - **Polaris: Inventory Manager**
  - **Communication of circulation transactions**
    - **Bookmobile**
    - **NCIP as web service**
      - **OverDrive E-book vendor transactions**
  - **Communication with e-learning applications**
    - **Library holdings from e-courseware application**



- **Communication of holdings and availability information between acquisitions systems and resource vendors**
  - **Ability to query a vendor's holdings from a library app or vice versa**
    - **Various materials vendors**
- **Communication of holdings from e-journal aggregators to library applications**
  - **Talis: RSS table of contents experiment with Emerald – part of this was SRN, part web service**



- **Request information or an object**
  - **Communicate orders between suppliers and library applications**
  - **Communicate holds to third-party suppliers**
    - **E-book vendors**
    - **Document suppliers**
  - **End-user alert services**
  - **Status updates**
    - **Current fund status, current patron status, current item status, etc.**



- **Facilitate the delivery of information, objects, etc.**
  - **Communicate between self-check stations or payment stations and circ systems**
  - **Communicate with external content delivery services**
  - **Distribute software updates**



# Perform common services

- **Administrative, back office, systems integration services**
  - **Communicate with financial entities**
    - **Send specific information to governing agency's accounting system**
  - **Communicate between ID management systems and transactional systems**
    - **Authentication queries**



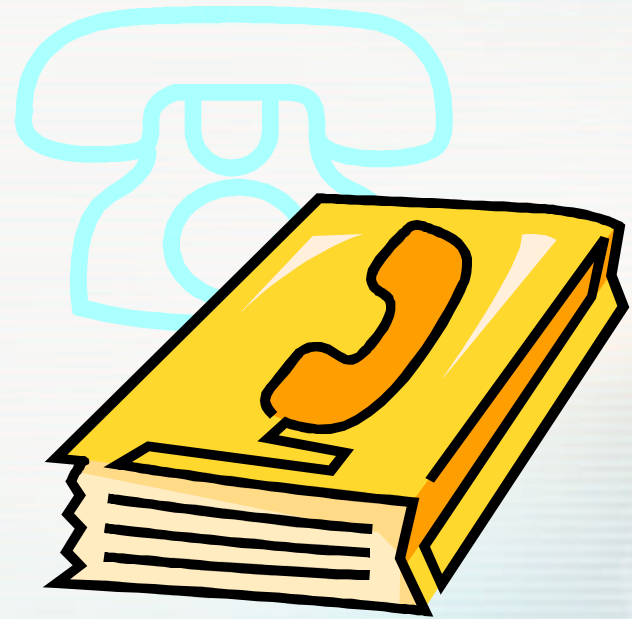
# Hurdles Abound

And Standards Might Help



# Who's Out There?

- **How do I find someone to talk to?**
  - **Why services tend to be developed and redeveloped by pairs of interested parties**
- **Might there be a standard way to “register” one’s capabilities and interests? IESR is one.**



# What's Out There?

- **Is there already a service existing that I could use?**
  - **Why we all tend to re-invent the wheel**
- **Might there be a standard way to list or search for existing services?**



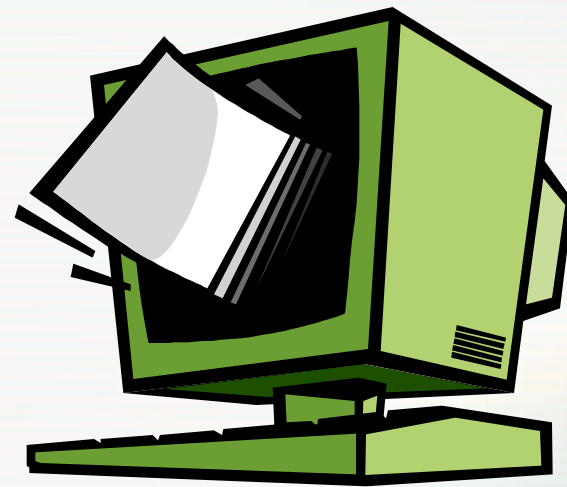
# Why Won't It Work Here?

- **How do I connect to servers?**
  - Why the “plug-in” doesn't easily “play”
- **Might there be a standard infrastructure or set of best practices that could be assumed?**



# Why Don't You Understand Me?

- **How do I describe unambiguously what my service does?**
  - **Why we don't pick up a catalog of services and just know what we can do with them**
- **What are the standard requirements for describing my service?**



# How do I learn more?

- **NISO Recommended Practice: Best Practices in Designing Web Services in the Library Context**

<http://www.niso.org/standards/resources/rp-2006-01.pdf>

- **NISO Web Services group**

[http://www.niso.org/committees/Services/Services\\_comm.html](http://www.niso.org/committees/Services/Services_comm.html)

- **W3C site: web services activity groups**

[www.w3.org/2002/ws/](http://www.w3.org/2002/ws/)

**Thank you.**

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