

**Minnesota Association of Law Libraries
Strategic Plan
2006/2007-2009/2010**

Introduction:

The Minnesota Association of Law Libraries (MALL), a chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL), is a nonprofit, member-driven association with a fifty-year history of supporting law librarianship in Minnesota. MALL is governed by a member-elected Executive Board consisting of a President, Past President, Vice President/President Elect, Secretary/Treasurer, and Member-at-Large. MALL members work in a variety of settings, including law schools, law firms, state and county governments, and private companies. Of our nearly two hundred members, approximately 25% serve MALL by volunteering for committee work or assuming a leadership role. Our business meetings and education programs are well attended, with an average of 30% of our membership present at each meeting.

As impressive as MALL is, we do not rest on our laurels. To bring positive changes to our already excellent association we present this new strategic plan.

MALL Mission Statement:

The Minnesota Association of Law Libraries (MALL) supports and serves its members in their professional pursuits. MALL provides opportunities for educational growth, service to the community, and a platform for advocacy on issues and social concerns in the law library community. MALL cultivates a spirit of cooperation among its members and other entities by supporting interests in legal information, information policy, and access to legal information for all Minnesotans.

Performance Objectives:

- I. Advance the understanding and appreciation of law librarianship.
- II. Provide opportunities for educational growth and professional development for MALL members.
- III. Encourage engagement of more MALL members in MALL leadership, committees, and events.
- IV. Provide a platform for advocacy by supporting interests in legal information, information policy and access to legal information for all Minnesotans.

Charge to the Board:

The MALL Executive Board is charged with implementing this strategic plan. The President will lead the implementation and will assign members and/or appoint task forces to carry out these objectives. MALL's resources and committee structure will be aligned to meet the objectives of this strategic plan effectively.

Performance Objectives and Strategies:

I. Advance the understanding and appreciation of law librarianship.

Strategies:

- Identify opportunities to increase visibility of MALL members in the work place, within the profession, and to the greater community.
- Develop a recruitment strategy for MALL, including but not limited to a liaison program with law and library schools.
- Partner with *Minnesota Lawyer* to provide a column along the lines of "Ask a Librarian."
- "Branding": Ensure that MALL's name is prominent in all that we do.

II. Provide opportunities for educational growth and professional development for MALL members.

Strategies:

- Create mentoring and job shadowing programs.
- Refresh the Legal Research Institute.
- Revise approach to education programming by providing more frequent, cost-effective programs of a greater variety at locations and times convenient to members.
- Bring in speakers from outside MALL.
- Collaborate with other organizations.

III. Encourage engagement of more MALL members in MALL leadership, committees, and events.

Strategies:

- Auto populate the listserv and use it as the official communication vehicle for MALL between issues of the *MALL Newsletter*.
- Create short-term projects and one-shot volunteer opportunities that don't require committee membership.
- Use technology to facilitate committee meetings.
- Develop new methods for inviting involvement in committees.
- Focus more on interests of new members.

IV. Provide a platform for advocacy by supporting interests in legal information, information policy, and access to legal information for all Minnesotans.

Strategies:

- Develop a structure to quickly mobilize members when a need arises.
- Inform and educate MALL members about issues that impact law libraries.
- Improve communications in the legal community regarding the value of access to legal information.
- Create opportunities for MALL members to learn more about advocacy strategies (e.g., an advocacy workshop).

Appendix I: The Story of our Plan

MALL created its previous strategic plan, *MALL in Action* in 2000 (available at: <http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/mall/miaction.htm>). Early in 2005, the MALL Executive Board discussed the possible need to modify MALL's committee structure. After some initial suggestions for changes, the board decided that five years was long enough to warrant a new strategic plan and that any changes in the structure of the association should wait until after the completion of the new plan.

Therefore, in the spring of 2005 the President formed a Strategic Planning Task Force (SPTF), consisting of the President, Vice President/President Elect, and two other MALL members. Because MALL attempts to have representation from firm, academic, and state or county libraries in all of its committees and task forces, a member from each of these groups served on SPTF. Their charge was to "plan the planning," or determine the best way to conduct the strategic planning process, and then to "make it happen."

In November of 2005, SPTF recommended a strategic planning retreat to the Executive Board. The board unanimously agreed and approved a budget for the event. SPTF invited Gail Warren, State Law Librarian of Virginia, to facilitate the process. The Oak Ridge Convention Center in Chaska, Minnesota was selected as the venue. SPTF invited committee chairs and Executive Board members, and then sent a call for participation to the general membership. A complete list of participants is included in Appendix V.

On January 20 and 21, eighteen MALL members gathered to begin the strategic planning process. During those two days members performed a SWOT analysis, identifying the organizations strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and learned much about the process they would continue well after the retreat.

Attendees volunteered to carry out the remaining steps (see Appendix VI for details). In the months following, members created a new mission statement, prepared a forecast, conducted a survey, drafted performance objectives, and compiled the pieces into this strategic plan.

While putting the plan into writing is an important step, SPTF understands that a strategic plan is about putting words into action. We look forward to implementing it step by step and realizing our mission as we reach our goals. Much work is left to be done. Our organization is fortunate to have members who will see to it that this document is not merely pages in our archives, but rather a living, breathing process that guides MALL through the next three years.

This strategic plan addresses our objectives for the next three years (2006/2007 - 2009/2010). Each year during this plan, the Executive Board and those working on objectives will gather at the MALL annual meeting to address the objectives and make any necessary revisions the plan. In 2010, MALL will be ready to begin the strategic planning process again.

Appendix II: SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis:

<p>Strengths:</p> <p>Communicating “what’s in it for me?” Developing programs re: above Easier to meet</p> <p>Strong leaders Expertise – talent pool Experience Variety – strong demographic diversity Enthusiasm Large membership – (185) Financially strong Established chapter Collegiality Willingness to volunteer Depth of knowledge Good national participation National reputation Public relations and newsletter Geographic concentration of membership Vendor support</p> <p>How to take advantage of the above: Better advertisement of events – calendar of events Strategic planning</p>	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <p>Complacency Fragmentation Lack of institutional infrastructure – continuity Member criticism (without willingness to do anything about it) No paid association staff Cliques Burnout of long-time members Baby boomer bulge Under used executive board Not transparent enough Metro-centric? Perceived lack of opportunity (“old girls’ network”) Lack of needs assessment Spread too thin? Not clear enough about who we are and what we do Commitment to mentoring Better calendar of events Same group of volunteers</p> <p>How to minimize impact? Better communication of opportunities for members Recognize cultural shift Nurture leadership skills of those new to the group, new to law librarianship Oral tradition – orientation for new committee chairs – sharing corporate history</p>
<p>Opportunities:</p> <p>Programming for new members – “If I Ran the Zoo” Redo Tech. Institute for members Revamp Bib. Institute: where, who, what Recruitment Market why law librarians are “useful” – Marketing the value of law librarians to the legal community Training the trainers List of blogs Untapped talent Facilitate “I have an idea” communication Mentoring: publishing and programs (How to write an article, how to present a program) = apprenticeship Lots of members to draw from Tap new members to be involved Look at other organizations and how they do things More involvement in CLE programming “Branding” Partner w/ <i>Minnesota Lawyer</i> to write regular columns “Ask a Librarian” on websites Joint programming w/ other organizations MALL Speakers Bureau – internal programming and external programs Skills roster</p>	<p>Threats:</p> <p>Tradition – we’ve always done it this way Philosophical differences – who are we here for? Loss of institutional memory Higher number of members retiring (loss of members) Competition from other organizations (SLA) Member burnout Cost of legal materials Globalization Employers who don’t support professional development Cultural reluctance to speak up Misperception of what law librarians do Apathy, inertia Constant ever-changing technology Technology offers alternative avenues for members/potential members to network outside the association</p> <p>Minimize by: Being flexible</p>

Appendix III: Trends and Predictions

Strategic planning is about making choices. **Decisions about the strategic direction for libraries should answer the following questions:**

- Who: Whom do we think we serve, whom do we actually serve?
- What: What information resources and services do we provide?
- How: What is our organizational structure--the combination of people, facilities, collections, and other resources?

Trends external to law libraries that are shaping the face and future of libraries:

- Commercial legal publishing.
- Access to legal information.
- Preservation and permanence.
- Authentication.
- Intellectual property law and licensing.
- User expectations.
- Technology, including hardware, software, formats, intranets, extranets, and portals.

Trends in legal information services:

- Downsizing of physical libraries.
- Increase in percentage of budget allocated to e-content.
- Declining average attorney vs. staff ratio.
- Increase in professional staff vs. nonprofessional staff ratio (2:1).
- Decrease in delivery of training to customer base.
- Increase in budgets.
- Increase in professional staff.
- A convergence of IT and library science.

- Expanded role of the information professional, particularly in the area of knowledge management involving client facing activities.
- Trend toward delivery of information to the desktop.
- Human resources crisis in law library profession as a whole.
- Lack of reasonable choices in technology platforms supporting the management infrastructure of firm libraries of all sizes.

Trends in library technology:

- Integrated library system (ILLS) will be reintegrated.
- The business landscape will change.
- Players in broader industries will become involved.
- Libraries will consolidate automation efforts.
- Commercial systems will continue to dominate.
- Intelligent use of technology considerations:
 - Seeking answers, rather than seeking applications.
 - Weighing cost-effectiveness, cost-benefits, and impact on services.
 - Rethinking programs, services, or workflows being automated or affected by automation, rather than automating what one already has or does.

Trends affecting librarian retirement and recruitment:

- During the decade between 1990 and 2000 the number of working librarians with master's degrees increased by nearly 22%.

Facts and observations:

- Much of this increase came from librarians who made a late entry or re-entry into librarianship.
- The number of female librarians grew by 30% in the 1990s; the largest increase occurred among women in their late 30s and early 40s.
- The number of male librarians dropped between 1990 and 2000. (1990 - 23% of librarians were men; 2000 - 18% of all librarians were men.)

- Multiple generations of librarians in the workforce.

Facts and observations:

- The different generations bring various attitudes, expectations and work styles. For example, those born between 1922 and 1945, known as "the Veterans" are known for loyalty and dedication, tend to stay with one employer throughout their career, and are reluctant to use technology. The Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, work hard, demand recognition and often equate success with material things. The group born between 1965-1980, often called "Generation X," want more of work/life balance. The generation born between 1981 and 2000, sometimes known as "Generation Y" or "Millennials," tend to be very technology savvy but need direction in the workplace.

- Delay in retirement for the Baby Boomer generation.

Facts and observations:

- There will be more librarians working at age 65 or older, and the greatest retirement wave will occur between 2010 and 2020.
- The decade beginning in 2010 will see 45% of today's librarians reach age 65.
- Both men and women plan to work later into their lives (according to a 1999 AARP study, eight out of ten Boomers plan to work beyond the traditional retirement age of 65.)
- Many plan to supplement continued work involvement with "personally satisfying activities" such as volunteering, taking classes, travel, and leisure.
- As they age, they will shift the median age of the workforce from 38.7 in 1998 to 40.7 in 2008.

- Potential deficit of library and information science graduates between 2015 and 2019.

Facts and observations:

- Until the Baby Boomer generation retires, there may be no job shortage, and as a consequence, no up and coming pool of library science students.

Business trends affecting law librarians' role in utilizing information management:

- Competitive intelligence.
- Current awareness.
- Knowledge management.
- Getting organizations on board, via interdepartmental cooperation.

Possible measures and benchmarks (to tell us where we've been, where we are, and in what direction we are heading) and for guiding our decisions to help us make meaningful comparisons:

- Customer/external perspective.
- Internal perspective.
- Innovation and learning perspective.
- Financial perspective.

Sources:

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Beyond the Boundaries, Report of the Special Committee on the Future of Law Libraries in the Digital Age, American Association of Law Libraries, July 2002.

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Crawford, Walt and Michael Gorman. *Future Libraries*, American Library Association, 1995.

Davis, Denise. "Library Retirements: What We Can Expect," *American Libraries*, September 1, 2005.

Ellis, Anne. "Tracking the Business Trends," *Legal Times*, July 11, 2005, p. 1.

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Lynch, Mary Jo. "Retirement and Recruitment: a Deeper Look," *American Libraries*, January 1, 2005.

Matthews, Joseph R. "Determining and Communicating the Value of the Special Library," *Information Outlook*, March 2003, p. 27.

McCollam, Douglas. "Evolution: Mixed Bag," *Legal Times*, July 7,2003, p. 27.

Strouse, Roger. "Demonstrating Value and Return on Investment," *Information Outlook*, March 2003, p. 15.

Stultz, Priscilla. "Generations in the Library: Eliminating the Gap," *MALL Newsletter*, January/February 2005, p. 4.

Appendix IV: Summary of MALL survey results (77 responses)

Question 1: What do you consider to be the purpose of MALL?

Professional development (96%) and networking (90%) were ranked as the most important purposes of MALL. Advocacy for (69%) and betterment of law libraries (69%) were also considered important by a majority of our members.

Question 2: Please indicate the importance to you of the following MALL activities.

The activities that MALL engages in today are still important to the membership, with the top activities being educational meetings, listserv/website, and the newsletter. The least interest is in social activities, membership recognition, and the VIP program.

Question 3: Please rank the following strategies, which are geared toward implementing MALL Objective #1: "Provide a platform for advocacy to further the understanding and appreciation of law librarianship as a career."

1. Liaison with law/library schools (87%)
2. Pursue joint programming with other organizations (82%)
3. Partner with MN Lawyer to provide a column such as Ask a Librarian (81%)
4. Get ideas from other chapters (76%)

Question 4: Please rank the following strategies, which are geared toward implementing MALL Objective #2: "Encourage engagement of more MALL members in MALL leadership, committees, and events."

1. Create short term projects that don't require committee membership (80%)
2. Use technology to facilitate committee meetings (79%)
3. New/improved methods for inviting involvement in committees (76%)
4. Focus more on interests of new members (75%)

Question 5: Please rank the following strategies, which are geared toward implementing MALL Objective #3: "Provide opportunities for educational growth and professional development for MALL members."

1. Refresh the Legal Research Institute (87%)
1. Provide continuing law librarian education that is convenient & cost effective (87%)
2. Bring in speakers from outside of MALL (86%)
3. Collaborate with other organizations (76%)
4. Provide more frequent programming and greater variety in meetings (76%)

Question 6: Please rank the following strategies, which are geared toward implementing MALL Objective #4: "Facilitate connections and cooperation among MALL members."

1. Create a mentoring program (79%)
2. Improve listserv usage (64%)
3. Facilitate job shadowing (61%)
4. Develop a skills roster (54%)

Question 9: Please list the TOP THREE strategies that you would like to see MALL pursue in the coming year.

This was a tough one to compile because the answers didn't necessarily correspond to the strategies listed.

However, our members told us overwhelmingly that they want more frequent meetings, with a greater variety in the topics covered. These meetings should be focused on education and be offered in person and online (36). They want MALL to collaborate with other organizations (16) and to bring in expert speakers (16). MALL should focus on new members (13). Related to this is the creation of a mentoring program (15). Finally, members would like meetings to be offered at a variety of times (12).

Question 10: How many years have you been a member of MALL?

We got a broad range of experience in our respondents. 37 have been with the organization more than 10 years and 37 have been less than 10 years.

Question 11: Why are you a member of MALL?

Although some of us are participating in MALL for passive reasons, most of us are engaged in the organization as part of our participation in law librarianship and our seeking professional growth.

Question 12: Which of the following best describes your participation in MALL

A quarter of the respondents are active and involved members. A majority stated that they are somewhat involved, only attending meetings (32%) or volunteering occasionally (31%). If you assume that people who respond to surveys are more likely to be participants in the organization, then it is good that we had responses from 7 nonparticipants. We need their input as well.

Question 13: If you are not active in MALL, what could be changed in the organization to give you more of an incentive to participate?

This section brings out issues of how we do things, not what we do. It highlights cost and time issues members have. And we already have suggestions for how we could remedy some of that. It also shows that there is interest in having more worthwhile programming.

Question 14: If you have been active in MALL in the past, but have faded away, what changes could take place to renew your commitment?

There is a message here that we need to be more involved with new members (pass the torch, spread out the work, get new ideas).

Question 15: What type of library/organization are you affiliated with?

Our responses were from a good mix of types of organizations. It would be interesting to see how this compares to the whole membership.

Appendix V: Strategic Planning Task Force

Original "Planning Planners:"

<p>Elvira Embser-Herbert Circulation Librarian University of Minnesota Law Library MALL President, 2005-2006</p>	<p>Hope Porter Head Librarian Merchant & Gould MALL President, 2006-2007</p>
<p>Sara Galligan Manager Dakota County Law Library</p>	<p>Anne Poulter Acquisitions/Government Documents Librarian William Mitchell College of Law</p>

Expanded Task Force:

<p>Pauline Afuso Legal Taxonomist Thomson-West</p>	<p>Nancy Evans Manager of Research Service Winthrop & Weinstine</p>	<p>Connie Lenz Associate Director, Collection Development University of Minnesota Law Library</p>
<p>Rebekah Anderson Director of Information Resources Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.</p>	<p>Rick Goheen Associate Director for Public Services University of St. Thomas Schoenecker Law Library</p>	<p>Liz Robb Washington County Law Library Washington County Government Center</p>
<p>Susan Catterall Research Librarian Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.</p>	<p>Barb Golden State Law Librarian Minnesota State Law Library</p>	<p>Donna Trimble Law Librarian Bowman and Brooke LLP</p>
<p>Kelly Danburg Librarian Lindquist & Vennum PLLP</p>	<p>Lindsay Hutchins Matts Circulation Librarian William Mitchell College of Law Warren E. Burger Library</p>	<p>Mary Wells Research Librarian University of St. Thomas Schoenecker Law Library</p>
	<p>Janice Leichter Managing Librarian Maslon Edelman Borman & Brand</p>	

Appendix VI: Assignment Matrix

What	Who	When	To Whom
Central Coordinator:	Connie		
Review/Revise Mission Statement	Barb Lindsay	February 3	
Draft Performance Objectives	Kelly Rebecca	February 17	
Prepare Forecast	Theresa Susan	February 21	
Develop, Conduct and Analyze Environmental Scan	Liz Anne	Meeting/survey February 28 MALL-wide survey March 10 Final analysis: March 24	
Revise Performance Objectives	Sara Rick	April 1	
Draft Strategic Plan	Donna Elvira	Initial draft shared by April 14 Final draft to Connie, etc. by April 28	
Distribute Strategic Plan	Connie Pauline Nancy	E-Distribution- May 12 Meeting: May 17	
Create Timeline for Implementation	Jan Mary		
Implement Plan/ Assign Specific Initiatives to Appropriate Committees	Hope Incoming VP/PE		