
for the Delaware Public Archives...
your window to the past!

May 2005
written by
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project managed by
Marcia Scott

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College of Human Services, Education & Public Policy
University of Delaware

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Report on the
Design of a Customer Service Model
for the Delaware Public Archives

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent years, the Delaware Public Archives (DPA) has made great progress in carrying out its core mission to preserve and provide access to public records. The new state-of-the-art archives building enhances records preservation and storage capabilities, improves public access to records, and showcases Delaware’s historical resources. Website technology and expanded research room hours have provided greater online and on-site public access to DPA. With growing demand for its research-based services, DPA faces both customer service opportunities and challenges. The purpose of this study is to design a new customer service model to continue to move DPA forward in the 21st century. Strong leadership of DPA, under the direction of former State Archivist and Director Timothy A. Slavin and current Director Russell McCabe, and exceptional customer service-oriented employees will enable the agency to successfully meet these challenges (Note: Mr. Slavin was promoted to Director of Historic and Cultural Affairs subsequent to final report submission, and Mr. McCabe was promoted from Outreach Services Manager to DPA Director).

Key components of this study included a literature review, study of best practice organizations, process assessment, customer service delivery study, interviews with staff and customers as well as insights from archival consultants. As a result of this study, several observations were made about the customer service-oriented organizations. Both management and employee support are essential for sustaining a customer service initiative. Studies show a link between employee and customer satisfaction. Therefore, listening to both employees and customers is important. Successful customer service programs empower employee leadership, encourage teamwork, and measure and celebrate performance successes.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and other state archives with model customer service practices utilize strategic planning, customer service standards, and performance targets to reinforce their customer service philosophy and goals. These entities have developed customer-driven policies, practices, and services in response to needs of their patrons. Archives with best customer service practices have also invested in employee professional development and technology.

The recommendations of this study have been categorized by descriptive area of study and are listed in table format. The process assessment recommendations focus on instituting a researcher identification card system, automating record keeping, assessing policies, establishing a systematic customer feedback program, and researching scheduling software. Organizational enhancement recommendations call for the enhanced integration of the Public Service and Records Services units, cross training staff, and cultivating an in-house IT specialist. Re-evaluating the employee selection process, instituting an employee orientation program, expanding professional development and leadership opportunities, team building and mentoring are strategies suggested for organizational development. Customer service recommendations include enhancing customer orientation, expanding public program offerings with partnership support, instituting self-service copying, and providing equipment and technology use guides.

A recurrent theme of the study is expanding opportunities for access through technology. A technology plan is needed to identify and prioritize needs as well as plan for the allocation of resources and acquisition of new or upgraded technology. Feedback mechanisms will help determine customers’ needs and priorities for new technology and website development. Specific technology including self-service reproduction equipment, digital scanning technology, scanner/copiers, and microfilm reader-scanners should be considered. A cost-benefit analysis will help to assess the feasibility and economics of acquiring specialized equipment such as a
face-up book scanner and an oversized copier. It is recommended that organizational units and voluntary employee teams consider recommendations of this study, engage in strategic planning, and focus on the development of organizational activities, programs, or services.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

According to a state archives and records management report, “accurate, complete, and accessible government records are essential tools of democracy” (Council of State Historical Records Coordinators, p.1). Archival institutions have a key role in the preservation, protection, management, and procurement of public records. Citizens rely on archive facilities to obtain access to essential personal, legal, ancestral, and historical documents as well as to ensure government accountability. Good customer service by archival institutions ensures that delivery of services meets the needs and expectations of its constituents.

In an effort to become more responsive to the needs of its customers, the Delaware Public Archives (DPA) contracted with the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration (IPA) to design a new customer service model. Tim Slavin, former Delaware Public Archives Director and State Archivist conceived of and initiated the study to ensure the agency’s optimal response to customer needs. The impetus for the study came after a period involving organizational disruption during the construction of a new facility and staff transition following construction. The new state-of-the-art archives building was completed and dedicated on December 7, 2000, and opened to the public on January 8, 2001. While the modern facility allows for better service delivery and staff accommodation, a review of operational procedures and the internal infrastructure was warranted and the next logical step to ensure customer service excellence.

Since the opening of the new archives building, DPA has witnessed an impressive increase in visitor usage of its research-based services. DPA has experienced both steady annual percentage increases of on-site patron usage and dramatic annual percentage increases of archives services delivered remotely via the Internet. From Fiscal Year (FY) 1999 to FY 2004, researchers served in the research room increased from 3,825 to 4,741 or 24 percent. In addition, DPA experienced a substantial percentage increase of all public interactions by online reference services, from 28 percent in FY 1999 to 81 percent in FY 2004 (DPA YTD “Performance Measures,” FY 2004). On average, approximately 400 on-site visitors per month utilize DPA research room and approximately 17,000 unique users visit DPA website per month, among the highest number of “hits” of all State of Delaware websites (DPA “Researcher Daily Visitation Statistics”, June 2004 and Webtrends Report, May 10, 2004). A recent expansion of hours provides greater public access and visitation opportunities. The demand for services brings both customer service challenges and opportunities to DPA.

With the completion of construction activities, challenges of increased demand for services, and desire to provide optimal research-based services to the public, the goal is to design a customer service model to continue to move the archives forward in the 21st century. According to former DPA Director and State Archivist Tim Slavin, the vision for the archives is to “re-build the archives from within, and in doing so, ...maintain (its) status as one of the finest archives programs in the world.” The purpose of this project is to recommend customer service strategies that enable DPA to establish a customer-focused vision that is responsive to the evolving needs of its patrons. The focus of this study is the delivery of research-based services provided to the public by the Public Services unit.
Background and Mission

DPA is one of the oldest public archives in the United States. It was created by an act of the Delaware General Assembly in 1905. In 1934, DPA moved into the Hall of Records across the street from Legislative Hall on the Legislative Green in Dover.

Until 2001, the 1934 facility, along with an adjoining underground storage area, remained the home of DPA. In the early 1990s, support began to develop behind an effort to build a new archive facility. Governor Thomas R. Carper embraced the project and made it a priority in his administration. On December 7, 2000, Governor Carper cut the ribbon on the new Delaware Public Archives. The total project cost was $18.5 million and included both public and private funding. Accommodations of the new archives building include a research room that accommodates over 75 researchers, 90,000 cubic feet of record storage space, a conservation lab, a preservation microfilming area, an interactive exhibition hall, a training and education area, and administrative spaces. The new archives building has enabled DPA to better fulfill its responsibilities of preserving Delaware’s historical records, providing records storage, offering access to governmental records, and promoting the use of Delaware’s historical resources.

The mission of DPA, as outlined in its annual budget submission is threefold:
- To identify, collect, and preserve public records of enduring historical and evidential value
- To ensure access to public records for present and future generations of Delawareans
- To advise and educate in the creation, management, use and preservation of public records

Among its objectives, DPA lists a number that are directly or indirectly related to customer service including:
- Deliver more traditional public service via the Internet, including online requests, guide to the holdings, online exhibits, and a digital archives collection
- Maintain exemplary customer service and have customer satisfaction metrics in place for all archives teams and employees
- Strengthen internal communication among staff and between teams
- Strengthen professional development of staff through regular access to relevant workshops on a wide variety of topics

Organizational Structure

DPA is one of eight divisions in the Delaware Department of State. The State Archivist, the Director of DPA, reports to the Secretary of State. As a result of previous reorganizations, DPA has been a unit within the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs. In 1998, at the request of the Secretary of State, the General Assembly passed legislation giving DPA full division status.

DPA has one administrative unit and four functional units. Each of the functional units is headed by a manager who reports directly to the State Archivist. The four units are Government Services, Outreach Services, Public Services, and Records Services. Over the years, there has been growth in DPA’s organizational structure. This growth has resulted in greater job specialization and a division of one of its functional units. In the past, the Records Services unit and Public Services unit functioned as one team. Institutional knowledge was gained as the individuals who processed archival records were also responsible for document search and retrieval in response to customers’ requests. Organizational growth and change resulted in the formation of separate Records Services and Public Services units. As a result of
this split, some jobs were reclassified and some individuals were reassigned to the Public Services unit while positions in the Records Services unit became more specialized and with less public interaction. The separation of these organizational units has helped DPA enhance archival expertise and attain a top-notch system for collecting, cataloging, archiving, and preserving historical records. The reorganization and creation of the Public Services team created a new set of challenges, one of which is fostering depth of knowledge of the archival collection. Like other specialists in the library and information field, the Public Services team would greatly benefit from archival continuing education and training opportunities designed to build skills and create a diverse and well-educated next generation of archival leadership.

At the start of the study in August 2004, the Public Services team consisted of a manager, three Information Research Specialist (IRS) II positions, and four casual/seasonal (part-time) employees. During the course of the study, several personnel changes occurred. The Public Services manager and a casual/seasonal employee resigned their respective positions to pursue other professional opportunities. The Government Services Manager began to concurrently oversee both his operational unit and the Public Services team. In addition to the Manager, the Public Services team now consists of three IRS II positions, one IRS I position, four casual/seasonal employees, and one Record Management Specialist I position. The Public Services team is the core group that interacts with the public on a regular basis and provides front-line, research-based service assistance to DPA patrons. The entire Public Services team is responsible for providing research and reference assistance to patrons in the research room of the archives building. There are two primary modes of customer service – either person-to-person contact via the phone or direct interaction, or remote contact through incoming mail or e-mail via the Internet. The primary duties of the Public Services team are to respond to requests for records or archival material, orient new patrons to the research room, address questions from researchers, make copies and conduct financial transactions for services, and provide assistance with the use of equipment or resources within the research room. In addition, team members serve as intermediaries for off-site patrons' research needs. Public Service unit employees will provide a couple of minutes of research assistance to an off-site patron, but may need to refer individuals to a consulting genealogist for more in-depth research needs.

A casual/seasonal employee within the Administrative Services unit also provides customer service related to research-based services. The Administrative Services casual/seasonal employee is stationed at the front desk of the archives’ reception area and is the first point of contact for patrons who wish to use research room resources. Other casual/seasonal employees have also assisted with front desk duties on an as-needed basis. The front desk employee is responsible for greeting and recording all visitors to DPA, registering new research room patrons, explaining regulations for the use of archival holdings to new patrons, maintaining and updating research registration forms, monitoring the use of reception-area computers, addressing questions, and showing patrons the locker room area. As a front-line customer service employee, a pleasant and courteous demeanor is essential to conveying a positive public image to DPA visitors and researchers.

STUDY COMPONENTS

The service study consisted of three primary components. First, a process assessment review of DPA’s customer service practices, policies, and program activities was conducted. Second, a comprehensive review of best practice organizations was investigated through (1) a literature review, (2) one-on-one interviews with state of Delaware agency officials and local companies cited as leaders in customer service, and (3) a study of the customer service model of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) as a “best practice” organization, and (4)
research on state archives’ customer service programs and concepts. Third, a customer service delivery study was conducted to help identify and understand customer expectations for the delivery of services as well as insights from staff and management regarding how well DPA meets the customer service needs of its on-site and online patrons. Comments and additional insights were provided by University of Delaware Library Head of Special Collections Tim Murray and Associate Librarian/Manuscripts Coordinator Rebecca Johnson Melvin.

**Process Assessment** (See Appendix A for sample documents.)

**Review of Delaware Public Archives Customer Service Practices/Policies**

To gain a more in-depth understanding of customer services policies and practices, the project team was oriented to DPA research room by a staff member. In addition, a series of documents were studied including the organizational chart, names of managers and service teams, list of key personnel to be interviewed for the project, and list of possible “best practice” organizations and state archives. Existing statistical reports were also reviewed such as a sample monthly research room statistical report, sample of the monthly researcher daily visitation statistical chart, sample of the existing customer satisfaction survey and results, and monthly Webtrends report. Additional information that was assessed included a copy of the strategic plan submitted for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 budget process, FY 2004 performance measures, and research room staff schedule. Written policies/procedures were studied including those pertaining to reproduction services, researcher registration, regulations for use of archival holdings, off-site researcher requests, and on-site research room record requests (See Appendix A).

**Research Room Orientation**

To familiarize the project team with research room procedures, the group underwent the same orientation process as other new research customers. As a first step, the project team members were introduced to the receptionist at the front desk and completed a researcher registration form. Each individual must complete the form, specify the purpose of their research, and provide a description of the research project. A researcher must also read, sign, and date a regulation for use of archival holdings form to indicate their understanding of rules. In subsequent visits, the researcher would check in at the front desk, where the registration form would be pulled and updated. After registration, a researcher is advised to place personal items in a locker.

Upon entry to the research room, a new customer is oriented by a research room staff member. All customers report to and hand in their researcher registration form to the research room desk. A new researcher is informally interviewed to determine research goals and provided a tour of the main research room, microfilm room, and microfilm reader area. Researchers are shown catalogue cards that contain collection-level descriptions of archival collections and record groups, the card file cabinets, microfilm role cabinets, and procedures/forms to complete when requesting record retrieval and ordering of copies. All copying of original records are made by research room staff. Microfilm retrieval and copying are self service. Payment for copies ($0.50 per page) is done at the research room desk prior to exiting the room.

**Policies/Procedures**

New research room staff members are oriented to DPA policies and procedures through on-the-job training and shadowing a seasoned employee. To understand rules governing DPA’s research room, employees must become familiar with “Delaware State Archives Regulations
and Procedures,” which is posted online and reviewed with new patrons. To assist new staff members in orienting and servicing customers, a “DPA Guide to the Research Room” has been developed as a helpful reference tool. The guide provides an overview on essential information on how to direct researchers to information on vital records and probates indices, how to complete DPA forms, how to pull and return records, how to access finding aids and guides for search requests, procedures for the microfilm room, reproduction procedures and costs, and DPA rules and regulations. While the guide provides basic information to research room staff, an in-depth policy manual may be warranted to convey customer service goals, describe operational procedures, and provide service standards and targets.

DPA uses several forms for security, financial, or statistical purposes. Two forms are used primarily to ensure the security of the facility and archival records. Each customer entering the research room must complete a researcher registration form which is used to track customers entering and leaving the facility daily. The researcher registration form is used to document which records have been pulled and returned to their controlled environment. The copy order form is the financial form that is most used on a daily basis to document the number of copies made from a book or folder and the fees that will be assessed upon a patron’s exit from the research room. Microfilm copies do not require the completion of the copy order form and fees are assessed on an “honor system” basis. No policies have been established for document scanning services. It should be noted that the copy order form may be eliminated entirely if self-service copying is considered and adopted by DPA. A discussion of the benefits of self-serve copying and a recommendation is provided within this report.

Statistical forms include a daily logbook, research statistical form, researcher hourly form, and new researcher log. The research room record request form is sufficient to fulfill a customer’s request for an archival record, document the pull location of the record, and record which record has been pulled. The tracking system also ensures against theft of archives documents and records. To assist the researcher, it may be helpful to provide a sample of a completed form in orientation handout material. The DPA mail response form is sufficient for responses to successful document searches. However, the form should be adapted for use as an online document to speed response times in instances where a request for a document search or information cannot be fulfilled. The online form can also be amended to include quotes for copying and service fees. E-mail correspondence to and from customers should be encouraged. The website should direct all customers to provide their e-mail address, if available, in correspondence with research room staff to speed inquiries and requests for service. This will not only speed response time, but also reduce the expense of a mail response and staff time involved in mail correspondence to the customer. Online reference forms can be designed with mandatory data requirements that prompt the correspondent to provide their name, e-mail address, and other contact information. Customized online reference forms may be designed for standard queries such as vital statistic information requests.

The existing statistical reports provide an impressive snapshot of the volume of visitors and extent of services provided by DPA. To produce monthly reports, however, front desk and research room staff must manually log in the number of researchers daily, track researcher activities, record the type and number of record requests as well as the number of copies ordered. As a result of these processes, several monthly statistical reports are generated manually. The research room monthly statistical report provides information on the monthly, year-to-date, and projected volume of visitors, broken down by visitor classification for a given fiscal year. The report also provides information on the type and volume of service requests by on-site and remote customers. The number of researcher hours, film use hours, records pulled by type, and copies made is also recorded on the report. The researcher daily visitation
statistical chart records the total number of daily visitors for each month, daily average for the month, and daily average breakdown.

DPA has excelled at generating statistical reports. The statistical reports are used to develop input, output, and efficiency measures for an annual performance measures chart. A separate report tracks four of the performance measures and compares year-to-date statistics versus projected fiscal year statistics. These reports are essential to ensure the efficient and effective use of resources as well as to document productivity measures of the agency. To promote ease of record keeping, an automated reporting system, which is tied to a researcher identification card system, should be considered. The researcher identification card system is discussed further in this report.

**Survey Instrument**

An “extra mile” survey has been developed by the Public Services team to gauge customer satisfaction. The surveys are provided to on-site customers in the research room who return them before exiting the room or by mail. Customers complete a form to rate five performance indicators as excellent, good, average, fair, or poor that correlate to a rating numerical scoring system from 5 (excellent) to 1 (poor). Customer survey cards summarize results with an average score per survey as well as customer comments. The customer satisfaction rating is utilized as an outcome performance measure in an annual report. An “extra mile” employee recognition program has been established to acknowledge exemplary service to customers by DPA employees.

The extra mile survey is an excellent survey instrument for on-site customers. The survey should be issued annually on a systematic basis to all individuals who have visited and utilized services of the research room within a specific 12-month period. A specific response rate should be targeted and recorded upon completion of the finite survey period. Incentives to respondents, such as a credit toward reproduction services, should be considered to maximize the response rate. Prepaid postage would also impact the rate of response. The card stock should be upgraded to enlarge the text font size, allow additional room for comments, provide separate and longer response lines for name and agency, explain the purpose of the survey and its use, and thank respondents for their participation. Because on-site customers utilize online resources such as DPA’s, a question or questions related to the website usage and online informational needs should be added to guide future website development. Additional recommendations for a systematic online survey will be discussed within later sections of this report.

**Webtrends Report**

The Webtrends report is an excellent statewide report that provides detailed information on state agency website visitors. Reports are generated monthly for each state agency with monthly and daily average statistical information on website hits, page views, visitor sessions, length of visits, and a breakdown of unique (first-time) versus one-time and multiple session visitors. The general stats table provides a general overview of each agency’s website performance and visitors’ usage pattern. Information is also provided on the most and least requested pages in a website to provide the agency with insights on which website pages generate the most traffic and which website pages need attention. Additional information on successful hits versus failed hits provides insights as to the reliability of a website.
The Webtrends report documents that demand levels for DPA’s website are among the highest of all state agencies. Statistics on website usage underscore the importance of the Internet as a critical mode of access for DPA customers. DPA’s website should continue to evolve to meet the needs of online customers. Webtrends reports can be generated to conduct additional user analysis that may reveal how researchers utilize the website and how the website should be further developed or refined to meet user needs.

Survey instruments may also be used to obtain customer feedback on the need for additional website information, adequacy of the “Guide to the Collections,” adequacy of the electronic finding aid, need for online finding aids, quality of the online guide and tools, and the overall usefulness of the website. Survey results will enable DPA to understand which features of its website are most important to customers and how it may be enhanced to better satisfy customers’ research needs.

**Strategic Plan**

A copy of DPA’s strategic plan, which was submitted for the FY 2004 budget request, was reviewed. Strategic planning is a management tool that involves goal setting and developing an approach to achieve those goals. While there are many strategic planning models, DPA’s strategic plan conforms to the classic goals-based model where a mission (and/or vision) is established and goals are set forth to accomplish the mission. In addition, DPA’s strategic plan provides background information, accomplishments, strategic initiatives, activities, and performance measures. DPA’s goal-based strategic plan could be enhanced by developing objectives to achieve the specific objectives and an action plan that assigns responsibility and a timeline for goal attainment.

Most strategic planning specialists note that the strategic plan document is secondary to the strategic planning process itself. The key benefits of the strategic planning process are to define the purpose of the organization, convey the organization’s mission to its constituents, develop an internal consensus on the organization’s goals and priorities, and provide a basis for performance measurement.

Strategic planning is a continual process that considers changes impacting the organization and its environment such as the impact of new technology, resources, constituent needs, new legislation, and/or the economy. The frequency of a full strategic planning process depends on the needs of the organization. However, for most established organizations, it is advisable to undertake a full strategic planning process at least once every three years. Action plans, which identify how goals will be reached through objectives, responsibilities, and timelines, should be updated annually.

Several state archives have strategic plans with elements that may serve as models for the archival community. Successful strategic planning initiatives by archival institutions include those with stakeholder involvement, an emphasis on customer service goals and standards/targets for customer service, and linkages between strategic goals and measurable outcomes. Many state archives supplement their strategic plans with planning documents such as customer service plans, performance plans, evaluation plans, and/or annual reports.

**Performance Measures**

DPA performance measures, included with the strategic plan for the budget submission, provide historical and statistical information on activities. Productivity measures are more outcome
based (numbers of individuals served) rather than process based (how well customer needs are met). By developing customer service standards and targets for research-based activities and obtaining customer feedback through survey mechanisms, DPA can further develop and track useful performance measures for customer satisfaction with research-based services.

**Scheduling**

One challenge to the organization has been a recent extension of hours of operation. DPA has extended their hours to 5:00 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesday, and Fridays to conform to public hours for other attractions in the Historic Downtown Dover area. In addition, DPA offers evening hours to 8:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays and Saturday hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. These new hours of operation responsibly reflect an administrative response to customer access needs.

A National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health study indicates that nonstandard work schedules are becoming more prevalent in America’s consumer-oriented economy ([www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics)). Like other customer-oriented businesses, DPA has responded to research-based service needs by instituting a nonstandard work schedule for its front-line employees of the Public Services team. Public Services staff works a variable schedule and rotates working occasional evening and Saturday hours. Scheduling of staff must take into account staff breaks, vacation time for full-time employees, and coverage of breaks for front desk personnel. The front desk personnel are not trained to reciprocate and provide break coverage for Public Services staff.

Studies show that employees, who work nonstandard schedules, in any business or organization, are prone to a higher rate of absenteeism, burnout, turnover, morale issues, and family challenges. DPA may wish to optimize scheduling needs by involving management and employees in a positive, participatory process to consider scheduling alternatives that meet both DPA and employee needs. One example of a schedule alternative is a “continuous schedule” option that provides a predictable, regular, yet rotating schedule for employees. An example of a continuous schedule scenario is the “4/10” schedule that has been adopted by many police departments where personnel work four ten-hour days and receive three days off. Incentives for staff who work nonstandard hours should be considered.

**Literature Review**

Both private sector and public organizations have increasingly recognized the importance of providing good customer service. The customer service literature clearly indicates that private companies and public entities that implement effective customer service strategies reap rewards such as improved profitability or cost-savings, more knowledgeable customers, improved employee retention and work satisfaction, enhanced information exchange, and more efficient service delivery. Much of the literature asserts that there is no cookie-cutter approach to customer service, rather it is organization specific. An organization’s customer service practices should be customer driven, in response to the needs of its clients, and employee driven, designed with respect to the front-line employees delivering the services.

The goal of providing good customer service is to achieve customers’ expectations of service delivery, which leads to customer satisfaction. Interestingly, studies have shown a correlation between satisfied customers and satisfied employees. Where customer service delivery is valued in an organization and employees are empowered and valued for providing customer service excellence, there is a greater sense of job satisfaction and loyalty by the employee to
Successful customer service organizations develop a culture that values quality service delivery. The organizational culture must reinforce and support the customer service program and strive for continuous quality improvement. Customer service cannot simply focus on training front-line employees. Instead, customer service should be used as a tool for the organization to institute long-term cultural change and continuous quality improvement initiatives. According to former City Manager and Customer Service Consultant Doug Clark, in order for the culture to change in an organization, employees must realize that the customer service initiative is not an organizational fad, but a philosophy embraced and supported by all levels of the organization. In addition, employees must acknowledge that they will be held accountable for good customer service and job recognition/rewards will be based on accountability standards (Clark, p. 9).

Organizations with customer service excellence assimilate the customer service culture to all levels of the organization. Clark’s recommended customer service model advocates a process that is employee oriented and focuses on providing good internal service to employees. Clark contends that, “employees cannot and will not give good external customer service unless they are receiving excellent internal customer service.” To sustain a customer service improvement effort, systems need to be established that empower front-line employees and promote management support. He recommends developing a core of employees who can exemplify and disseminate the customer service philosophy throughout the organization. Clark suggests appointing a rotating committee, made up of multi-level “stars” of the company, to focus on customer service initiatives. Ad hoc groups may be formed to focus on specific recommendations of the committee (p. 8).

Four federal agency customer service improvement studies were reviewed which are relevant to this investigation. Studies reviewed include:

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)**

The Department of Health and Human Services’ (DHHS) Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) was concerned about a need to be more “results oriented and responsive to customers” (Horowitz, p. 2). The agency contracted with Circle Solutions, Inc. to conduct a study of public and private sector practices and outcomes in customer service. The resulting report concluded that public and private sector entities need to develop agency specific customer service programs to meet the needs of their customers. This finding generated a set of target goals for agency administrators to establish when improving customer service delivery and satisfaction. These goals are to appropriately identify and target the ideal customer, establish a customer-focused vision that is consistent with the prioritized desires of the target customers, develop procedures and an organizational culture that support customer service, continuously measure customer and employee satisfaction, embrace change, and strive persistently to improve. The five goals suggested by DHHS suggest a need for organizations to reevaluate their customer base in order to obtain optimum satisfaction from patrons.
U.S. Department of Interior

Customer surveys by the Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Land Management (BLM) revealed that customers, stakeholder groups, and employees were dissatisfied and frustrated with work processes. A commitment was made to address concerns of external customers through BLM’s strategic planning process. Redesign teams, representing a cross section of bureau employees, were formed to address customer concerns and simplify the way the organization does business. The bureau identified three main initiatives for making improvements. The report focused on one initiative; the redesign of use authorization (UA) processes to improve efficiency and customer service. It was determined that “certainty, consistency, clarity, and timeliness” are the criteria that customers use to measure service (Bureau of Land Management, p. 14). The redesign team adopted these criteria as a comprehensive framework for redesigning UA processes. The integration of customer criteria for satisfaction with BLM’s mission, strategic goals, objectives, and performance measures was identified as the key factor to the success of the redesign process.

National Partnership for Reinventing Government

A study conducted by the National Partnership for Reinventing Government highlights five important administrative criteria that agencies should adopt to effectively improve customer service. The suggested criteria are to establish a results-oriented set of measures that balance business, customer, and employee needs; establish accountability at all levels of the organization; collect, use, and analyze data; connect the dots; and share the leadership role.

The National Partnership suggests a strategy for agencies to establish a results-oriented set of measures that balance business, customer, and employee needs. Agencies are encouraged to define what measures mean the most, commit to initial change, and maintain flexibility. Accountability needs to be established at all levels of the organization. For the evolution of a customer-oriented agency, organizations must lead by example, employees and customers must be kept informed, and organization-wide accountability must be ensured. To further understanding of stakeholder needs, agencies must collect feedback data, collect performance data, and analyze data to develop a plan for customer service improvement (National Partnership for Reinventing Government, p. 4).

Federal Benchmarking Consortium

The consortium conducted a study that found a number of distinct components that agencies should employ to improve their customer service standards. The findings suggest that:

• A tradition of strategic planning ensures that customer service is provided within a coherent and cohesive system of vision, mission, and goals
• A strong focus on employees and their satisfaction leads to pride in work and enhanced customer service
• A customer service program should be designed and delivered seamlessly from the customer’s point of view
• A customer-driven operation leads to success

These findings are consistent with other studies, which suggest that strategic planning initiatives should include a strong focus on customer service goals and objectives. In addition, there is a strong correlation between satisfaction levels of both internal (employees) and external customers (Federal Benchmarking Consortium, p. 20).
Observation

Management and cultural support is essential to sustain a successful and enduring customer service initiative. Top management needs to support a long-term commitment to the initiative in order for customer service to become ingrained in the culture of the organization. Management should actively seek feedback from customers on the organization’s performance and regard negative feedback as an opportunity for change. Management should also seek employee input in establishing customer service standards and practices. Organizations should not overlook the connection between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction. Customer service successes should be recognized and rewarded to reinforce winning attitudes.

Study of Best Practices

The review of best practice organizations for this project included a set of three specific information-gathering activities. These activities included (1) one-on-one interviews with “best practice” organizations including two Delaware state agencies, one local business, and one state archive; (2) a comprehensive study of the customer service model of NARA as a “best practice” organization; and (3) Web-based research of state archives programs to identify best practices in strategic planning and service delivery.

One-on-One Interviews with “Best Practice” Organizations

Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV)

An interview was conducted on August 19, 2004, with DMV Customer Service Specialist/Training Administrator, Ken Shock. Shock indicated that, since implemented in 1996, DMV’s customer service orientation has made a dramatic, positive impact on the increase in the percentage of DMV satisfied customers. Elements of DMV’s customer service program include the addition of the customer service specialist/training administrator position; the implementation of its strategic plan, which was developed from a one-year re-engineering process; the dissemination of service ideology based on the book, The Leadership Secrets of Santa Claus; and a customer service survey including qualitative and quantitative feedback questions with results reviewed, reported, and analyzed quarterly.

The customer service specialist/training administrator position has enabled the organization to address specific customer service needs and initiatives. The position has enabled DMV to focus on developing institutional commitment to its customer service ideology. The goal has to develop a high-performance workplace with highly motivated employees. The agency’s strategic plan, operational goals, employee performance targets, and productivity standards all relate to DMV’s customer service vision.

DMV’s strategic plan was re-engineered in 1996 to establish a blueprint for institutionalizing the customer service philosophy. Goals, objectives, action steps, and performance measures are defined within the document to ensure uniform understanding. Sections of the strategic plan highlight the agency’s customer service mission. One section of the document describes the agency’s business activities, which is divided into four main categories: driver-related services, vehicle-related services, miscellaneous service, and DMV customers. Customers are categorized as either external or internal. The agency’s vision, goals, and objectives are described in another section. Goals that support the agency’s vision are to deliver services more cost-effectively, improve the quality of products and service, decrease the time needed to perform services, and continuously improve the productivity of DMV employees. Goals are
supported by a set of four objectives, described in detail, that focus on developing and maintaining a well-trained, knowledgeable, and highly motivated staff; modernizing and improving DMV facilities; educating and informing the public; and making optimal use of technology in delivery of services. For each object, a list of action steps and performance measures is provided to facilitate attainability.

Customer service has become part of DMV’s organizational culture. A book, *The Leadership Secrets of Santa Claus*, helped to inspire a new customer service philosophy that has been embraced and supported throughout the organization. The book’s ideology is that “effective leaders accomplish big things by giving employees clear goals, solid accountabilities, and ongoing feedback, coaching and recognition.” Within this ideology, there is a set of eight specific secrets of Santa Claus: build a wonderful workshop, choose your reindeer wisely, make a list and check it twice, listen to the elves, get beyond the red wagons, share the milk and cookies, find out who’s naughty and nice, and be good for goodness sake. Within each of the eight secrets there are three specific goals that agencies should accomplish in order to build high performance workplaces with motivated employees (Harvey, Cottrell, Lucia, Hourigan, pp. 78 - 79). DMV’s employee training manual and orientation are used to introduce new employees to the agency’s customer service philosophy.

DMV utilizes a customer satisfaction survey to obtain feedback from its external customers. A four-point scale response system (excellent, good, fair, poor) is used in the survey to enable patrons to rate staff courtesy, helpfulness, efficiency and speed of service, and their overall experience with DMV. The survey provides space for customers to write comments concerning their satisfaction with services. The survey is also used to generate quarterly productivity reports and gather data on information such as type of service received and transaction completed. Results of customer service surveys are posted in the lobby of the company’s main building, and provide employee accountability for agency productivity.

**The Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families (DSCYF)**

An interview was conducted with the Director of DSCYF’s KIDS Department, Trish Hearn on August 25, 2004. According to Hearn, the agency bases its customer service philosophy around its mission of serving the best interests of children. Good internal communication, an atmosphere of support, and employee recognition are central to the agency’s customer service orientation.

The mission of DSCYF is “to provide leadership and advocacy for Delaware’s children. Our primary responsibility is to provide and manage a range of services for children who have experienced abandonment, abuse, adjudication, mental illness, neglect, or substance abuse; and we endorse a holistic approach to enable children to reach their fullest potential.” The mission of the organization is posted in the lobby of the agency to communicate its value and basis for providing service to its external customers. Hearn believes that posting the mission so prominently in a public area is also important to provide a sense of unity and foster a sense of obligation among staff, who in turn work for a common agency goal.

**Info Systems, Inc.** (See Appendix B for ISI’s customer service documents.)

On August 13, 2004, an interview was conducted with administrative specialist Lorraine Serva of Info Systems, Inc., an IT management and consulting company located in Wilmington, Delaware. Info Systems, Inc. has a developed a strong customer service culture that is strongly supported by its chief executive officer. The need to develop a common organizational goal
was realized when the physical movement of its staffing unit caused a lack of cohesiveness and employees to feel disconnected from other teammates. To address this problem, goal setting and team building were facilitated by an external consultant. The company adopted the FISH philosophy, a method used worldwide to transform workplace cultures to promote teamwork in customer service excellence. The FISH philosophy, marketed by Charthouse Learning, advocates a change in organizational behavior to boost morale as a way to improve workplace productivity. This unique approach to service delivery is based on the company culture of the Pike Place Fish Market of Seattle, Washington, where each employee is empowered to be creative and an organizational leader. The Pike Place Fish Market’s Essential Creative Principles or E.C.P.’s have made the company’s culture a worldwide model. The customer service principles promoted by the FISH philosophy are “choose your attitude, be present, make their day, and have fun” (Lundin, S., Paul, H., and Christensen, J., p. 70).

Info Systems, Inc. has incorporated the FISH philosophy into its corporate culture. New hire selection criteria includes an assessment of how well the prospective employee will meet the customer service ethic of the company. Once selected, an employee handbook and orientation for new employees stress the company’s vision to “be the IT market leader...with a focused strategy that delivers superior value to our clients, our people, and our company.” Employee orientation on customer service is conducted directly by the CEO to reinforce its vision. The handbook describes principles of teamwork (the FISH principles) expectations of customer service excellence, and lists characteristics of teammates as:

- Willing to give 110% effort at all times
- Completely customer focused “Internal and External”
- Morally and ethically sound
- Always committed to the best interest of the Company

Ideas and suggestions from employees are encouraged to improve operations, the work environment, or employee work experience. Events, such as a “FISH!” indoor miniature golf tournament, promote teambuilding and a sense of unity. Info System, Inc.’s “3 Star Customer Service” communiqué provides specific customer service standards for each employee. Communication guidelines are provided for the preparation, execution, and follow-up stages of contact with customers.

Info Systems, Inc. has also established a comprehensive customer service program that addresses the needs of its internal and external customers. An in-house customer service training program was launched last year to ensure that customer service excellence is paramount and that actions of each “teammate” directly impact the organization’s success. Employees are empowered to make decisions and an incentive program was created to encourage self-initiated solutions that address customers’ needs. In addition, employees and teams are recognized for positive interactions with external customers. Each employee receives a financial reward of $50 for each letter from a satisfied customer that is posted on a display board in the lobby.

Info Systems, Inc. has formed a four-person customer service team, which includes its CEO, as part of the comprehensive program to monitor customer satisfaction levels and immediately address problems. The team is responsible for addressing customer service issues identified primarily through survey responses. Each business unit is responsible for issuing customer service surveys regularly to external customers. Reports on customer satisfaction levels are generated and tracked through an automated system. A call-back program is used to automatically call clients who neglect to respond promptly to a survey. On a 1 – 5 scale survey, any rating below a 3.5 will generate an automatic e-mail to Info Systems, Inc.’s customer
service team. An administrative assistant, who has been charged with this duty, will then send an e-mail to the corresponding business manager and account manager, who must inform the CEO how the issue was resolved.

Customer satisfaction teams have been formed within each of Info Systems Inc.'s ten business units. These teams are responsible for meeting monthly to review all complaints or substandard survey ratings. The role of the teams is to obtain input from other units and determine the need for improvements, policy changes, or the adoption of new business practices. The comprehensive customer service program has enabled the company to be regarded as a model for others in the industry. Customer satisfaction is deemed as significant as business profits, and thus data on satisfaction levels is included in the company's annual reports.

**Maryland State Archives (MSA)**

An on-site interview was conducted with MSA Reference Service Director Michael McCormick on December 10, 2004. MSA was selected as a “best practice” state archive because of its integrated use of technology in operations and delivery of services to customers. This overview will highlight their customer orientation procedures and use of technology.

**Intake Processing**

The first point of contact for customers at MSA is a uniformed officer at the entranceway who checks photo identification cards. The front desk receptionist is the next point of contact prior to entering the research room. The full-time receptionist is charged with registering patrons, generating usage reports, and receiving payments for copying or research services. When a patron registers, the individual manually signs in and is issued a permanent identification number by the receptionist. The research interest of the individual is noted at the initial registration and the identification number and information is assigned to the database. MSA registration is online in real time. The system interfaces with a web-based SQL (widespread database language server) that was written from the ground up by MSA's in-house technology department. Reports on MSA visitation and usage can be generated for a specific time period or by report topic. The information is critical for budget preparation and planning for resource allocation decisions.

New patrons sign a rules and regulation agreement on their first visit to MSA. Thereafter, they simply need to sign in. Registered patrons are given a badge with an assigned seat desk number and locker number with corresponding key. Patrons are then provided a “Hecon Quick Key” copier key that has a chip coded for use with all microfilm and computer printers. Fees are paid at the front desk upon check out. Patrons are also provided a microfilm placeholder for self-service retrieval. Numbered yellow blocks are inserted as placeholders where microfilm roles have been removed and should be returned.

**Customer Orientation**

Once the patron is registered, the primary point of contact in the research room is the circulation desk. A reference archivist conducts the orientation and demonstrates the use of research room resources via a computer screen that swivels for visibility. During reference hours, two reference archivists are stationed at the circulation desk at all times. MSA’s online guide is used as an orientation tool to help patrons become proficient at using the guide to research independently.
The research room and microfilm room encourage self-initiated services. Patrons use the Hecon Quick Key to make computer and microfilm copies ($.50/copy). For copies from books, maps, oversized material, or fragile material, patrons write an order for copies at the circulation desk. The cost for archivist-assisted copies is $10 for in-house copies up to 20 pages and $1 per page thereafter. For requests of paper-based records, customers need to submit a written order to the circulation desk. If material is off-site, the order may take several days to process. Patrons can also save information from a computer to a floppy disk; no CD-ROM copies are available and patrons cannot e-mail files to themselves. The microfilm room is run on a self-service basis. Volunteers and an instructional guide are available to assist first-time visitors.

Due to prior budgetary cutbacks, the research room no longer takes phone requests and responds only to e-mail, mail, and fax requests for service. Additional research service costs include mail references ($10 per copy if exact citation); archivist-assisted research ($25 up to 20 pages including mailing fee); and $10 legal cost fee.

**Human Resources**

The majority of staff is classified as “archivists.” Assistant archivists essentially have the same job duties of archivists, but fewer responsibilities. Training for new assistant archivists includes one week of shadowing an archivist, required reading on Maryland government and its court system, becoming familiar with collections, and finding aids. McCormick believes that institutional memory is being strengthened with the transfer of paper-based records to online systems. The same new employee orientation and on-going professional training opportunities are provided to both full- and part-time research room staff.

**Technology**

Because MSA has an in-house technology department of 10-15 employees, an extensive internal network has been developed. The custom-coded system has 60 terabytes of capacity and was written from the ground up to respond to the specific needs of archival operations. Specialized on-site equipment that serves both internal and external customers include:

- **Oversized color map printer** – High resolution Epson Stylus Pro9600
- **Dual purpose black/white printer/plotter** – Oce TDS 400, which accesses a Plats net database and scans cartographic records in a collection to a digital version of the document
- **Face-up scanner** – A Zeutschel OS 5000, which directs output through the server network, provides face-up copies from books and records

**Observation**

Regardless of whether the best practice organization is public or private, important lessons were learned about customer service. First, each best practice organization has a strong customer service culture. Long-term leadership commitment to a customer service philosophy is essential for widespread acceptance. New employee orientation programs and continual training can be developed to help to reinforce the initiative. Comprehensive customer service programs focus on both internal (staff) and external customers. Employees should be empowered to develop leadership throughout the organization. Teamwork should be promoted to address problems and devise new solutions to customer service issues. Accountability should be established at all levels of the organization and employees/teams should be recognized for customer service successes.
Measuring customer service satisfaction is important in developing customer-driven programs. Surveys are used by “best practice” organizations to systematically collect feedback data. Use of technology is also important in carrying out the customer service mission of an organization. Computerized registration systems can help to provide a profile of patrons and identify their facility visitation patterns. Visitations and usage reports are critical to ensuring that an organization is responsive to patrons' needs. An in-house technology capability can better enable an organization to develop customer-driven plans for the acquisition of new equipment/technology, resource allocation decisions, and website development.

**Customer Service Model of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)**
(See Appendix C for sample documents.)

**Strategic Plan**

NARA first embarked on a strategic planning initiative in 1995 and issued “Ready Access to Essential Evidence: The Strategic Plan of the National Archives and Records Administration 1997 – 2007” on August 7, 1996. The latest update of the strategic plan, prepared with substantial staff and stakeholders' input, was released on September 30, 2003. Since the plan was first issued, NARA has developed strategic initiatives for inclusion in the annual budget process and the annual performance plan. The strategic plan is regarded as an evolving document that has been subsequently updated twice to meet legislative mandates and reflect constituent service needs. NARA's strategic plan provides strategies to address the impact of technology on operations, the need for quality archival storage space, and customer demands for immediate electronic access to information. In addition, the strategic plan recognizes the importance of human resources development and the need to hire, develop, sustain, and retain qualified staff. NARA's FY 2004 “Performance and Accountability Report” states “We must ensure that we have the right people in the right positions at the right time to move the agency forward at this extraordinary time in our history” (NARA, p. 11).

NARA's strategic plan, consisting of statements of vision, mission, goals, and values, serves as a guide for strategic directions of the organization. The strategic plan focuses on five goals – improving records management, meeting electronic records challenges, expanding opportunities for access, meeting storage and preservation needs of growing quantities of records, and strategically managing resources to achieve the agency's mission (NARA, p. 12).

For each of the five agency goals, specific strategies are provided which detail how each goal will be actualized through more precise, action-oriented initiatives. Specific strategies for each goal incorporate a set of goal-specific performance indicators. These indicators are based on the federal Performance Reference Model (PRM) that links agency accountability standards to the budget process and performance outcomes.

**Customer Service Standards**

In conjunction with development and refinement of the strategic plan, NARA has developed a customer service plan which is posted publicly on its website. The customer service plan consists of:

- A mission statement and posting of strategic goals
- A broad list of constituents that it serves
- An explanation of priority areas for improving services
- A description of customer service values
- A list of customer service standards
A guide to communicate problems or suggestions

The eleven customer service standards provide a description of the level of service that customers may expect to receive for:

1. Information about NARA
2. Calling or visiting facilities
3. Conducting research at a facility
4. Submitting a written request for information
5. Responding to a federal agency request for records
6. Responding to a request for records that fall under the Freedom of Information Act
7. Visiting the Exhibition Hall in Washington, D.C.
8. Visiting a Presidential Library Museum
9. Attending a workshop
10. Attending a public program event
11. Requesting information about government rules and announcements

Evaluation Process

An evaluation process enables NARA to assess the results of its strategic plan. Three assessment mechanisms are used: performance measurement, a customer satisfaction assessment program, and program evaluation. NARA recognizes that “periodic assessment of the results we achieve and the extent to which our organization caused these results is necessary for successful strategic management” (NARA, p. 33). NARA is taking advantage of Web infrastructure to collect performance data, using newer databases to store the data and generate reports, which in turn minimizes maintenance burdens. The performance measurement system is constantly being refined to track quality, productivity, cost, and customer satisfaction with products and services.

NARA has a comprehensive customer satisfaction assessment program. Customers are surveyed at frequent, systematic intervals to determine customer response and satisfaction levels. NARA has contracted with Foresee Results, a market leader in online customer satisfaction measurement on the Web, to develop an online customer satisfaction survey (See Appendix D for sample surveys). Constituents who log onto the NARA website, www.archives.gov, are randomly selected to complete the online survey to provide feedback on the usefulness of services provided on the website. Survey results provide objective performance measurement data on citizen satisfaction with e-government services provided by NARA. According to the Foresee Results “E-Government Satisfaction Index,” the NARA Presidential Library website is the second leading website in the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) category “citizen satisfaction with government portals/department main sites,” with a score of 79. For the ACSI category, “information/news,” the NARA main public website received a solid public agency score of 70. Foresee Results analyzes customer service feedback and converts the satisfaction data into user-driven web development for NARA and other public agencies (Freed, pp. 6-8). NARA can use this data to make website improvements within the context of the agency’s overall customer service objectives.

Program evaluation is used by NARA to “verify and validate measured values of actual performance and customer satisfaction” by using three mechanisms of periodic management reviews, formal audits of operations, and systematic sampling of measurement system effectiveness. NARA specifically states in its strategic plan that “combining these performance measurement and evaluation methods and integrating them into every level of day-to-day
management of our operations provide powerful tools to assess the success of our programs” (NARA, p. 33). Strong focus on agency development and enhancement has enabled NARA to maintain a high level of quality customer service.

**Reporting**

NARA ensures public accountability on its achievement of strategic initiatives through an open reporting process. The ten-year “Ready Access to Essential Evidence: The Strategic Plan of the National Archives and Records Administration,” which provides strategic directions for NARA, is updated every three years. The NARA strategic plan is a “living plan (that)... serves as (a) guidepost in documenting progress... achieved in meeting the goals of the original Strategic Plan” (NARA, p.34). Long-range performance targets that have been achieved are reported within each strategic plan update. An “Annual Performance and Accountability Report” documents accomplishments in a single fiscal year. NARA’s performance plans provide a link between long-term strategic goals/plans and measurable outcomes that are accomplished in a single fiscal year (www.archives.gov/about_us/reports/reports.html).

**Services**

**On-Site Research**

- **Orientation Services** – Patrons who visit and utilize a NARA facility for specific research purposes will receive a one-year researcher photographic identification card. To obtain the researcher identification card, the customer must show an official photo identification card, proof of address, and complete a form. In addition, patrons visiting a Washington, D.C.-area facility also view a 20-minute PowerPoint orientation. The PowerPoint orientation emphasizes safe handling of records, basic research procedure, and responsibilities and rules for patrons. Individuals who come to a NARA facility but are not conducting research receive a disposable badge that identifies them as a visitor of the facility.

- **Policies** – Policies regarding research-based services are detailed on NARA’s website. Policies govern in-house self-service copying services, in-house NARA reproduction services, use of researchers’ own equipment, fees for copying/reproduction services and copyright restrictions.

**Website and E-Services**

NARA has a comprehensive and user-friendly website that easily directs its external customers to its services. The website is, in fact, set up to help customers determine whether they should visit a facility or use online tools to conduct archival research. To help online customers learn more about NARA’s mission, facilities, and services and related links, the website’s main categories include:

- Welcome
- About Us
- Research Room
- Records Management
- Federal Register
- Grant Information
- Exhibit Hall
- Digital Classroom
- Records of Congress
Customers who plan to visit a facility’s research room to conduct on-site archival research will click on the category “Research Room.” Subheadings under “Research Room” include: What’s New, Getting Started, Genealogy, Veterans’ Service Records, Archival Research, Archival Research Catalog (ARC), Research Topics, Research Path and Media Topics, and Resources including Access to Archival Databases (AAD).

For customers who decide to conduct archival research remotely, via the NARA website, the “AAD” resource offers a complete “how to” guide for inexperienced researchers. Subtopics under the “AAD” website prompt include: What is AAD, Getting Started, Understanding Archival Electronic Records, Understanding a Data File’s Content, AAD Terminology, Frequently Asked Questions, and What’s New. ARC enables online researchers to access electronic records by entering a keyword or phrase, conduct a locational search, or search with the use of digital images.

E-services developed by NARA cater to the needs of patrons conducting remote, online research who need copies of documents or photographs. Requests for online ordering of documents may be made through the NARA website. Fees for various documents/images are posted, and most major credit cards are accepted for payment. NARA has automated ordering of reproductions, initial reference services, and documents through an “Order Online!” system. Registered website users can place an order for a particular document or service, add the item ordered to their “shopping cart,” use online prompts to add purchases to their shopping cart, and pay online using most major credit cards (https://eservices.archives.gov/orderonline/start.swe).

Electronic Records Archives (ERA)

As a planned service, the goal of ERA is to preserve and provide access to any type of electronic record through the NARA website. The three elements of this proposed service include the extensive use of research partnerships, the management and preservation of a lifecycle of electronic records, and transformation of business and management activities to support and ensure the use of ERA. In 2004 two companies, Lockheed Martin and Harris Corporation, were selected to compete in a one-year design competition to build ERA.

Observation

The basis for NARA’s program and financial management system is it’s strategic and program planning process. NARA recognizes that strategic planning is not a one-time exercise, but rather a continual process for refining its vision, carrying out its mission, establishing strategic goals, and updating objectives to reflect agency achievements, new challenges, and changing environmental conditions. The strategic plan provides justification for resource allocation requests for budget development and establishes aggressive outcome-oriented performance targets. NARA issued a 2004 performance and accountability report, “Ready Access to Essential Evidence,” to describe the agency’s performance measures, results, and accountability processes for FY 2004 (NARA, p. 4).

NARA’s mission is to ensure “…for the Citizen and Public Servant, for the President and the Congress and the Courts, ready access to essential evidence” (NARA, p. 5). To effectively carry out this mission, NARA identifies the needs of its customers and determines what
evidence is deemed essential through survey feedback. Policies and procedures have been developed to support convenient access to records by both on-site and online customers. Demands for online access to public records through the Internet have posed challenges and opportunities for the agency. In response to this challenge, NARA has added online services and is developing a “reliable, expandable, high-capacity, cost-efficient information technology and communications infrastructure” (NARA, p. 10). The agency recognizes that if the Internet-based applications for online access perform poorly, their ability to provide high quality service will be jeopardized. The use of ARC, AAD, and the planned service of ERA are key tools that enable customers to have ready access to electronic records and archival databases.

Research on State Archives’ Customer Service Programs, Practices, and Concepts

Research Process

To obtain information on customer service programs, practices, and concepts of state archives/libraries, both Web-oriented research and phone interviews as needed were conducted. During the course of research, topics of study related to customer service programs, practices, and concepts were identified. For insight into other state archives’ customer service practices, a thorough review was conducted on how these institutions approach strategic planning, organizational development, services, accessibility, public programming, use of technology, and website development. Results of this investigation are summarized under those topical categories.

Strategic Planning (See Appendix E for sample plans.)

During the course of research, it was determined that state archives/libraries with models for strategic planning include Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives, Minnesota Historical Society, Library of Virginia, Alaska State Records Advisory Board, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Ohio Historical Society, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, and New York State Archives.

Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives (KDLA)

KDLA has a comprehensive strategic planning model. Strategic planning efforts have been renewed “in order to focus limited staff and funds on services to support individual patrons and public libraries throughout Kentucky” (KDLA, p.25). The strategic plan serves as a plan of action for achieving the agency’s mission. Accomplishments of strategic planning initiatives are documented in the agency’s annual report. In addition, a five-year plan for technology evolved from the strategic planning process and resulted in a “needs assessment” of statewide library needs.

The “KDLA Strategic Plan 2000” document is posted online to communicate its plan to effectively operate the agency and achieve its mission to provide quality library and information resources and services. The plan was developed with assistance from a consultant as a participatory process with agency staff. The resulting “notebook” builds upon the agency’s mission statement that describes how the agency “Serves Kentucky’s Need to Know,” and vision statement that sets forth a future direction for the agency. The six core values/guiding principles of teamwork, professionalism, lifelong learning, equitable access and privacy, quality service, and partnerships convey to customers the environment in which activities of the agency will be conducted. The three main goals (KDLA, p. 4) for the agency are:
• “To provide effective services that meet the needs of library and public records customers”
• “To build effective and productive partnerships with other organizations and public agencies for enhanced management of and access to information and services”
• “To improve employee job satisfaction and agency operations”

Each goal is addressed more explicitly through developed objectives, which are subsequently articulated through performance measures. To provide accountability, the plan also determines which division within the agency (e.g., Field Services, Public Records) is responsible for carrying out the objectives listed for each of the three goals.

The “KDLA Annual Report” documents how services are provided to meet strategic plan directives. The agency views itself as “a dynamic evolving organization and as a leader in providing quality management and delivery of information resources” (KDLA, p. 2). The report summarizes specific activities accomplished through customer service, innovation and technology, and financial support/grants programs. The report provides positive public awareness of how KDLA strives to serve its patrons and “fast facts” that provides statistical measures of productivity.

In accordance with the Library Services and Technology Act, as administered by the state of Kentucky, KDLA in 2000 embarked on a public awareness program that included community-action public awareness forums, a needs assessment, and an action plan. As a result, a “Library Services and Technology Act Five-Year Plan: Kentucky 2003 – 2007” was developed. Through the needs assessment process, the plan identified four categories of needs: access/technology, awareness/outreach, children and youth services, and programming/training. To address each of the needs categories, goals and objectives have been developed. For each objective, a list of key output and outcome targets, proposed projects, and an evaluation plan is provided to ensure successful implementation. A five-year evaluation plan utilizes an evaluation team, surveys, focus groups, forums, and an evaluation consultant to assess the overall progress in achieving key outputs and key outcomes of each objective. The plan also provides a stakeholder involvement chart. The chart identifies each stakeholder, their roles and responsibilities in the planning process, and the timeframe for their involvement in the process. Other plan highlights include a communication procedures chart and a monitoring procedures chart as guidelines for obtaining regular stakeholder feedback and tracking how elements of the plan are monitored.

Minneapolis Historical Society Library (MHSL)

MHSL issues an annual report that serves as both a marketing/public relations document and account of how programs and projects that engage the public meet the agency’s overall performance goals. The annual report includes highlights of programs, projects, and new services; major programming milestones; statistical information on programs; budget expenditures by program area; sources of support and revenue; governing board and management staff acknowledgement; and donor recognition.

Library of Virginia (LVA)

LVA’s strategic plan is a joint effort between LVA and the State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB). The strategic plan states five agency objectives: leadership, public/private records, electronic records, access/privacy, and preservation/disaster planning. All objectives
are viewed as being of equal importance. For each objective, level one and level two priorities are articulated.

Alaska State Historical Records Advisory Board (ASHRAB)

While the staff of the Alaska Historical Society assists the board administratively, ASHRAB is responsible for producing a five-year strategic plan. The plan culminates an ongoing planning process which incorporates surveys of the organization’s historical records, historical records needs, education and training needs, and published recommendations for improvement. The plan’s main elements are goals, objectives, and an action agenda. The agenda items provide time tables for completion and establish measurable standards by which ASHRAB’s activities can be evaluated.

Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH)

ADAH’s strategic plan is updated annually to set forth yearly goals and objectives. Unlike other strategic plans, the ADAH distinguishes between new or “special” objectives for the fiscal year and on-going tasks that are conducted annually by the agency.

The Ohio Historical Society (OHS)

OHS’ “Vision 2000” strategic plan is based on the philosophy that an organization should articulate its core ideology and then evolve to meet external environmental changes. The agency’s values, principles, and ideology are listed in a series of statements to provide “both the foundation and the guidance for our efforts in the future.” (Ohio Historical Society, p. 2). To achieve its mission in accordance with its ideology and meet the needs of its external customers, the “Vision 2000” plan provides strategic directives for each program area including education initiatives, site initiatives, marketing and advancement initiatives, and organizational development initiatives. Budget recommendations, implementation strategies, and work plan recommendations are provided to execute the plan.

South Carolina State Historical Records Advisory Board (SCSHRAB)

In cooperation with the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, SCSHRAB prepared a strategic plan, “Into the 21st Century: A Plan for South Carolina’s Historical Records, 2000 – 2005,” to provide a “roadmap” to establish the department’s priorities and goals (SCSHRAB, p. 3). Consultants developed a process for strategic planning that integrated participation from stakeholders through task forces, focus groups, and on-site and mail surveys. The board identified six themes of the strategic planning initiative including funding/resources, access, preservation, education and training, information technology/electronic records, and visibility. Six equally important priorities to improve historical records management, preservation, and access were identified by SCSHRAB. For each priority area, goals, objectives, and possible activities were delineated. Performance indicators were also established to evaluate the success of each goal.

Organizational Development

Several agencies have developed initiatives to enhance agency operations, governance, and administrative practices. Below, are descriptions of types of organizational development tools that guide and promote effective leadership of agency staff (See Appendix F for sample documents).
Policy Manual

MHSL has prepared and continually updates an extensive policy manual for its archives’ staff. The policy manual is used to succinctly convey and communicate to staff members the agency’s customer service goals. For each department and operational unit within a department, the policy manual provides service targets and standards through a statement of policy. The document describes policies related to the provision of customer services, details expectations of staff for carrying out policies, as well as management procedures for monitoring and tracking policy execution. In-depth descriptions of service area staffing levels, operational procedures, service fees, and secondary responsibilities of departmental staff are also described. The policy manual also provides names of internal staff with specific subject area expertise should a novice staff member need assistance in addressing a customer request or question.

Performance Plan

LVA has established a performance plan that is linked to the agency’s and SHRAB’s strategic plan. As part of their core job responsibilities, each employee is expected to demonstrate support of the agency’s Customer Service Program and commitment to the agency’s vision, mission, operating values and goals as set forth in the strategic plan. A performance plan, which is developed for each employee, evaluates via performance measures how well the staff member is meeting the department/agency’s customer service objectives and other core responsibilities. In addition, an employee development plan is devised to provide individual learning goals for each employee as well as learning steps/resource needs. A regular performance plan review is required between the supervisor and employee to discuss performance improvement needs.

Customer Service Guidelines

The library system at Virginia Tech University has developed employee guidelines for good customer service. Customer service guidelines are to be visible at all times; always acknowledge the customer, even when you are on the phone or helping another customer; make the customer the center of your attention; use good listening skills when helping a customer; communicate in a positive, friendly, and courteous manner; make accurate referrals; and use your best judgment in a particular situation and be flexible. These guidelines enable all employees to understand what is expected of them when dealing with customers.

Team Building

OHS has adopted several organizational development initiatives to help establish an internal culture that supports customer service excellence. A customer service program has been initiated to invite and facilitate customer feedback and a systematic practice for addressing customer complaints and inquiries is planned. A planned team building program will provide a fund for teamwork training programs, initiatives for improved internal communications, and an employee rewards and recognition policy. A thorough review of the agency’s compensation system is also planned to attract and retain qualified and committed employees (Ohio Historical Society, pp. 26-27).

Human Resource Development

- **KDLA** – According to Barbara Teague of KDLA, “All staff and interns are trained by the archives’ research room supervisor, an individual who has been in charge of our
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research area for over fifteen years. Most regular staff members also attend the Kentucky Office of Government Training’s Customer Service workshop, as well as other customer-focused continuing education. The Archival Services staff and the State Library reference staff meet regularly for informal training and discussions on customer service issues.

• **OHS** – Plans are underway for the development of a Staff, Education, Training, and Development Policy to provide continuing education opportunities for all employees. Staff development efforts will focus on a comprehensive new employee orientation program, ongoing customer service training, a succession plan to facilitate leadership growth, and an evaluation system (Ohio Historical Society, p. 25).

• **“Basics Archival Continuing Education Curriculum”** – Kathleen Roe, Chief of New York State archives’ Archival Services reports that a “project team consisting of archivists and educators from the New York State archives, the Michigan Historical Center, the Ohio Historical Society, and the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) has been working to develop a ‘basics of archives’ online course and on-site workshop for archives personnel who do not have formal academic archival education. The online course is complete and was piloted in fall 2004 via AASLH’s continuing education program. Plans are to offer it again in late winter 2005. The on-site workshop was piloted in fall in three participating states. Plans are to distribute to each state and territorial archives the following: an instructor’s manual for the on-site course, student workbook for the on-site course, and CD-ROM version of the online course (full content of the online course without the interactivity component). Each state will receive 100 copies of the CD-ROM for distribution for those who can attend the on-site workshop” (e-mail communication with Kathleen Roe, 1-11-05). The lessons or sections within the course/workshop are as follows:
  1. What are archives and archivists
  2. Getting your collections (collection policies, appraisal, accessioning)
  3. Managing your collections (arrangement and description, phased preservation)
  4. Housing your collections (conservation and preservation, physical facilities issues)
  5. Using your collections (reference, outreach, public programs)

**Services** (See Appendix G for sample services documents.)

**Patron Code of Conduct**

LVA has a patron code of conduct that provides a list of thirteen expectations for patrons to follow when using the archives facilities and services. The code is important because it enables the patrons to become aware of their responsibilities when doing research. MHSL’s Policy Manual also provides procedures for “maintaining an appropriate environment” in its reference service area. Suggestions for in-house or security-assisted handling of inappropriate or disruptive behavior are provided.

**Customer Service Surveys** (See Appendix D for sample survey documents.)

Several state archival institutions obtain regular, systematic customer service feedback from survey mechanisms. Both on-site and online surveys are utilized to help agencies evaluate services provided, obtain suggestions for service improvements, recognize individual staff members’ efforts in providing service excellence, generate mail rosters, and even solicit donations. LVA uses a mail response survey to gauge customer satisfaction with services. Both MSA and the Alabama Department of History and Archives obtain feedback on website
content and services through a “Tell Us What You Think” online survey. These online surveys also solicit comments/suggestions regarding the website from online patrons.

While not an archival institute, the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) Office of Public Relations conducts a customer satisfaction survey each year to learn how well the agency is meeting Delaware’s transportation needs and reports on the outcome annually. The survey results enable the department to understand which services are most important to customers, which services provided the most customer satisfaction, and a basis for annual performance standards for the organization. Respondents rate Delaware’s transportation system as a whole, as well as individual transportation system elements such as roadways, the transit system, bicycle mobility, and pedestrian access. The report is posted on DelDOT’s website for public review (www.deldot.net/static/pubs_forms/cust_sat_report.2003.pdf).

The Pennsylvania State University (PSU) Special Collections Library has developed a manuscripts researcher survey to determine how patrons library resources both online and on-site within the reading room. Researchers are asked specifically about how they locate manuscripts, use access tools, utilize the Web page for research, and perceive the usefulness of Internet/online resources when researching manuscript collections outside of PSU’s. The survey results will be analyzed to improve cataloging procedures of PSU’s Special Collections Library.

Patron Orientation

While the archival community norm is to provide an on-site orientation to new customers, two “best practice” online patron orientation programs have been developed. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s Manuscript Research Tutorial is a self-paced online tutorial designed to provide inexperienced researchers with methods of using primary source materials and strategies for identifying records holdings in the Manuscripts Department. The online tutorial includes six sections consisting of a tutorial overview, fundamentals of manuscripts research concepts, strategies for locating sources, guidelines for incorporating manuscript resources into research, summary of the collections, and an orientation to policies and procedures. Throughout the tutorial, quiz questions provide a quick review of material learned. Following completion of the tutorial, a comprehensive quiz provides the researcher with actual, hands-on experience searching the UNC website. Researchers who score over 70 points are awarded a printable certificate online (www.lib.unc.edu/instruct/manuscripts/).

The Yale University Manuscripts and Archives tutorial is an online instructional tool designed for patrons who wish to locate primary source manuscript and archival materials at Yale or other archival institutions. The tutorial can be viewed in any order, but it is recommended that the researchers review each section sequentially starting with the introduction, getting started, finding sources, and using archival materials. Upon completion of the tutorial, the patron may conduct a sample search to utilize the knowledge learned from the tutorial (library.yale.edu/mssa/tutorial/tutorial.htm).

Other state archives have developed orientation materials to provide a point of reference for the physical layout of the research room and its resources. Maps or guides are used by some archives to show the physical or intellectual arrangement of catalog records. The Pennsylvania State Archives provides guides and handouts for finding aids in the microfilm area and manuscript reading room.
Access

The challenge for the archival community is to meet the needs of all users, whether they are visiting the archival facility or gaining access to records through the Internet. Many archives have, in fact, focused strategic planning goals on providing access to its constituents. NARA’s Strategic Goal 3, for example, states “Essential evidence is easy to access regardless of where it is or where users are for as long as needed” (NARA, p. 16). NARA believes that while they are better at meeting the challenges of electronic records, it is also important to inform and educate customers about its services and provide ready access to essential evidence. Although online access is the choice for many archival customers, convenient on-site access is still important to provide effective customer service. Many novice researchers need to visit an archival facility to obtain assistance, learn how to research resources, and locate governmental and manuscript records. While Internet research is utilized by genealogists, historians, and academicians, they also frequent the archives to reference original and primary source documents.

IPA conducted a comparison of facility accessibility among DPA, MHS, MDAH, LVA, New Jersey Division of Public Archives and Records Management (NJDARM), Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC), and New York State Archives (NYSA). The analysis compared hours per week open to the public, days of operation, holiday closings, and hours of operation. From this information, calculations were made of the total number of days open per calendar year and total number of hours open per calendar year. DPA is open 313 days per year for a total of 3075 hours per year (Table 1). It was concluded that DPA is top-ranked in facility accessibility among those compared. DPA is ranked first among the eight institutions compared for hours of accessibility (Figure 1). DPA is also ranked first among the eight archives compared for weekly hours of operation (Figure 2).

With more people utilizing services and obtaining access to archival records through the Internet, online accessibility has become a priority for the archival community. The goal for archival agencies is to expand electronic services and enhance online access to archival records. Covered extensively within a section of this report is the use of technology including information on reproduction services, digital equipment, as well as Website technology with a focus on digital technology and e-commerce.

Public Programming

Public programming by the archival community serves several purposes. It provides an opportunity to showcase archival resources, facilities, programs, and staff expertise. First-time visitors of an archival facility, who participate in a public program, are likely to investigate other archival services. New audiences may also be attracted to the archival facility based on their public program experience. Public programming expands the awareness of archival issues and benefits of archives among both the general public and stakeholders, whose support is essential to archival programs. Public programs can serve as public relations opportunities and a chance for archival representatives to share knowledge with their constituents. When public programs are developed in conjunction or cooperation with other historical organizations, genealogical groups, museums, libraries, or academic institutions, it develops and strengthens partnerships between these communities. State archives gauge customer interest to develop workshop topics. The Minnesota Historical Society Library, for example, developed an introductory class for new archives patrons based on customer feedback on programming interests.
A comparison of public programming by several state archives was conducted in the course of this study. Among the archival institutions studied were Mississippi, Virginia, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky (Table 2). Many of these archives annually offer regular events, archival workshops, lecture series, special events, tours, exhibits, and open house celebrations. These events are advertised through various media including the agency’s website, direct mail flyers, or newsletters. Several key factors impact the ability for an archival institution to offer regular public programming. First, many state archives are under a larger organizational structure that encompasses state museums or other historical societies; therefore funding may be greater to offer more programs. Second, state archives that have developed formal programming partnerships with other institutions, libraries, and museums are also able to maximize resources to broaden the scope of annual program offerings.

Several states celebrate National Archives Week and devote resources and public programming efforts to a series of events throughout the state, as well as hosted at their facility during that week. The New York State Archives, regarded as the founder of the event, offers during National Archives Week an annual Family Heritage Day for individuals interested in genealogical research. Archival partners such as public libraries, school and higher-institution education libraries, museums, and heritage sites assist with developing the schedule of events and obtaining corporate sponsors for programs.

Outreach initiatives of DPA includes speaking engagements, on-site tours, preparation and dissemination of education kits for public education, the series of 100th Anniversary events in 2005, the state’s public history and highly-acclaimed Delaware Historic Markers Program. DPA’s website highlights the Historic Markers Program with an extensive listing of each marker by county as well as a brief description of the historical significance of each marker. New technology may enable the location of each historic marker to be mapped online and be further utilized as a resource for both educators and historians. The University of Delaware Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research (CADSR) has the capability to utilize ArcIMS (Internet Map Services) technology to provide Internet mapping of DPA’s Historic Markers Program. ArcIMS technology can provide mapping services and geographic information system (GIS) data via the Web. If the technology is desired, DPA may wish to contract with CADSR to develop the online mapping program that would be accessed via a website link.

**Use of Technology**

A common strategic planning theme for many state archives is the need to address the challenges posed by a proliferation of information technology and electronic records. Archivists must contend with the growing volume of records that need to be preserved and stored, keep up with rapid technological changes, utilize technology to expand public access to archival holdings, enhance access tools, develop plans to increase online electronic holdings, and fund technological improvements. The following topical categories provide details on the use of technology by state archives with respect to researcher identification cards, reproduction services, digital technology, and digital equipment. In addition, a comparison of archives’ fees for services is presented in Table 3. A Technology and Patron Service Summary, with a detailed of technology and reproduction services by archival institution, is also provided (See Appendix H).

**Researcher Identification Cards**

Because sensitive documents and vital government records are preserved and maintained for public use in archival facilities, security is paramount. A priority in securing the safety of the
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building is registering all visitors and patrons who enter an archival facility. DPA has excellent procedures in place for intake processing of all visitors and patrons. At the present time, patrons of DPA must register the first time that they come to do research. After the initial registration, patrons must sign in every time they visit the archives. This successful registration system can be further enhanced with the use of automated researcher identification card systems.

Automated researcher identification systems serve several functions. First, the systems ensure facility security and access control of individuals utilizing the research room. By documenting who is entering a research room and utilizing the facility’s records, an institution can improve its accountability in the event of theft. Second, photo identification cards provide an added measure of security to ensure positive identification of each patron entering an archival facility. Third, automated researcher identification systems can allow archival institutions to generate better statistics on patron usage patterns and can offer opportunities to analyze research trends. Used in conjunction with a compatible computer software system, the bar-coded research/photo identification cards can also enable statistical reports to be generated on patron use. For example, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History uses researcher identification cards with microfilm as a means of documenting and analyzing visitation statistics.

Similarly, the Ohio Historical Society uses bar-coded “library patron cards” along with an Access Database to track the number of patrons utilizing the research room, the volume of patron use on certain days or times, and the generation of statistical reports. In the future, additional fields will be added to provide specific reports such as types of patron research being conducted. The vendor for Ohio Historical Society’s library patron cards is Graphics Technology, Inc. This company provides an option to order two-sided researcher identification cards that are attached to an index card that lists the rules of facility use. Upon registration, new patrons must sign the registration card to signify their agreement to follow the usage rules. A peel-off bar code is then attached to the registration card, which is kept permanently on file. The new patron will then receive and sign the attached card, which has a matching encoded number and abbreviated version of the rules. The Ohio Historical Society has received legal advice that an individual cannot be prosecuted for stealing library materials unless the patron’s signature agreement on the rules is retained by the institution.

NARA is another example of an archival institution that currently uses this technology. NARA uses an integrated solution developed by IDenticard (www.identicard.com), a vendor of identification and access control systems. IDenticard’s IVIS Plus 2000 digital imaging system interfaces with IDenticard access control system and provides comprehensive reporting capabilities. IDentiPASS is IDenticard’s badging service that provides cards (badges) printing, production, and collation options. The magnetic-encoded badges can be imprinted with a photograph of the patron. IDenticard has digital cameras that interface with the IVIS Plus imaging software and badge production system. A patron, who has completed an initial registration and has been issued a researcher identification card, will have the encoded card “swiped” upon entry to the building. Access and utilization reports can be generated regularly to track patron usage habits and research interests.

Reproduction Services

- **Debit Cards/Copier Keys** – Customers in archival institutions expect fast, convenient and cost-effective reproduction services. In addition, as use of electronic media grows, more customers are demanding a way to scan and copy Internet material. Debit
cards/keys can provide a viable solution to reproduction service needs of customers and institute self-serve copying.

Currently, DPA customers must submit a written request to research room staff for copying needs and pay for copies at the research room desk upon their exit. Debit cards can be utilized to institute self-serve copying and relieve staff of the burdensome duties of making routine copies. Most archival institutions request that patrons pay a nominal fee for the card to cover system costs. After purchasing the card, a patron can purchase card value or add value as needed for reproduction services, whether self-serve or staff-produced copies. Existing copier equipment may be retrofitted to accept debit card payments. Once the system is functional, maintenance and staff intervention for debit cards is minimal. MSA, however, utilizes a copier key that is loaned to the patron for the duration of their visit. The patron pays for reproduction services at the front desk upon exit from the facility. The benefit of both the debit card and copier key systems is that payment is centralized at the front desk/registration area, cash transaction duties are eliminated from the research room, and patrons can secure their money in the locker area within the entrance hallway.

A vendor, Integrated Transaction Control Systems (www.itcsystems.com), provides a technology solution that integrates a smart or magnetic card system with an access control system. ITC Systems’ multi-card library solution provides either an encoded card or smart card system that is linked to the patron’s identification card. The card provides the patron with access to the facility as well as a means to record charges for copies made, printing charges, and/or PC time usage. The Kentucky Department for Libraries and archives plans to implement an integrated card system for use in its facilities.

OHS, however, maintains two separate card systems because they have experienced some problems with magnetically encoded “Vendacard” debit cards “zeroing out,” where the dollar value is eliminated and the card needs to be replaced. OHS also requires each patron to carry their identification card at all times. If a patron has a “special need” copy service that requires staff assistance, the debit card can be used to purchase the staff-assisted reproduction service without the use of the patron’s identification card.

**Specialized Reproduction Services** – Customers frequently require the reproduction of oversized documents, such as maps. DPA currently refers these requests to the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) for processing. The patron is required to pay transport costs in addition to reproduction fees.

As previously mentioned, MSA provides in-house oversized copying through two printers. The Epson Stylus Pro 9600 oversized color map printer has the capabilities to produce high-resolution copies in color. The Oce TDS 400 dual purpose printer/plotter operates through a networked system and can reproduce black and white aerial imaging and photographs. A Zeutschel OS 5000 face-up scanner provides reproduction of rare/fragile documents and books. Customers must submit a request for the specialized reproduction services at the circulation desk and all copies are produced by staff. Patrons utilize copier keys to pay for this service upon exit.

*Digital Equipment*

The University of Delaware’s (UD) Morris Library utilizes digital scanning technology in its Digital User Services Department. In the Microforms and Copy Services area of the lower level of the
library, there are four self-service digital black and white copiers and one digital color photocopier. These scanners enable patrons to scan microfilm or microfiche images into desktop imaging software. UD’s Canon MS400 microfilm reader-scanners give patrons the ability to easily enlarge, brighten, and change the contrast of documents. This will enhance the readability of microforms of early printed and handwritten documents. A patron can "markup" the image with notes, stamps, a highlighter, or arrows. The system converts microfilm images to .pdf or .tif files which can then be e-mailed or saved to a flash (or keychain) drive, CD-R/CD-RW, 100MB zip disk, or floppy disk, which can be purchased at the service desk. UD’s new Lanier 232c color scanner/copier allows customers to scan documents from a photocopier to a PC, then save it to CD or disk, or print the documents in either black and white or color. Purchasing transactions of the reader-scanner and scanner/copier are handled through a debit card system.

The New Jersey State Archives offers in-house scanning of items up to 11” x 17” on an Epson Expression 1640XL (resolution 1600 x 3200 dpi). This produces a JPEG file on 1.4 MB 3.5” diskette, CD-ROM, or zip disk. New Jersey also has the technology available to produce any of these forms of files for patrons for an additional cost. Since the images can be transferred to the patron through e-mail and other computer technology, there is less demand for on-site printing services.

Reproduction Service Comparison

A comparison between state archives’ reproduction services and fees was conducted (Table 3). This information was obtained from website postings on service fees and/or policies pertaining to reproduction services. The basis for fees, at the archival institutions compared, may be determined by whether the reproduction of documents is self service or staff assisted, the type of reproduction service requested (e.g., documents, microfilm, photograph or scanned digital images), the size of the copy requested, whether the reproduced document will be used for commercial purposes, and whether reproduction requests exceed a pre-established limit. Customer service standards for the response time for reproductions services are posted online, or in policy form, by several of the state archives. A Technology and Patron Service Summary, and website printouts of archives’ fees and services are provided (See Appendix H).

Website Technology

Digital Technology

Electronic technology is changing the way the archival community is conducting business and providing services to its customers. In its report on state archives and records management programs, the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators has identified a range of issues confronting archivists including the need to “harness the power of technology to improve and broaden access to records” (Council of State Historical Records Coordinators, p. 2). The goal for state archivists and records administrators is to first develop electronic access tools, utilizing catalog descriptions and indexes, to provide access to archival holdings and then develop electronic delivery of archival documents through the Internet. The Council notes that “users must be informed about what records are available and how to access them...Electronic access tools will enable much broader access to state archival holdings, initially through catalog descriptions and indexes and eventually through electronic delivery of documents themselves” (p. 3). Electronic access tools, such as finding aids, databases, or inventories, enable the user to more easily find and link to records. Many archives are, in fact, in the process of digitizing collections to provide greater access to archival records.
Several state archives including MSA, MHS, and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History have internal departments to plan for website development and improvements. This enables the archival institution to determine a technology plan of action that meets the agency’s technology goals, which should be aligned to the needs of customers. KDLA has placed technology access at the forefront of its strategic planning. With a goal to improve access to resources, a key output target is to add “at least 1,000 catalog records of archival material and manuscript collections around the state…to the KDLA Endeavor/Voyager (online) Catalog during the five-year period.” The outcome target for this endeavor is to show at least a 60 percent satisfaction rate with researchers accessing the integrated catalogue system (KDLA, p. 3).

Archival websites, in addition to providing information on services and programs, must be planned to provide convenient access to archival research materials and holdings. The Pennsylvania State Archives provides a very user-friendly website format to access archival holdings. A guide to the “Holdings of the State Archives of Pennsylvania” is provided and clearly explains the two broad categories of holdings that may be accessed online. First, a researcher may access a “Record Group” online to obtain governmental records. Second, a researcher may access a “Manuscript Group” to research information on personal papers, manuscripts, and non-governmental records. Once a researcher selects one of the two categories of holdings, they are directed to detailed collection inventories, electronic finding aids, or non-electronic finding aids using descriptive .pdf files.

MSA’s “Archives of Maryland Online” provides excellent reference and research resources. Originally funded from a state appropriation, the online archives receive additional funding through an annual state appropriation and private contributions. The online archives provide access to over 471,000 historical documents related to Maryland government. The online search engine provides several research options. Researchers may search all volumes of records, search records by topic area, search by inputting a phrase, or search by keyword (www.md.archives.state.md.us).

Within the NARA website, online researchers can conduct a search of NARA’s nationwide holdings through the Archival Research Catalog (ARC). ARC allows online researchers to perform a keyword, digitized image, and/or location search. Quick links to search by selected topic are provided alphabetically. Searches can also be conducted by organization, person, or topic keywords. In addition, some electronic holdings can be searched via the Access to Archival Databases (AAD) system. AAD provides online access to nearly 50 million electronic federal government records on a variety of topics. An online guide to ADD tools, terminology, and functions is provided (www.archives.gov).

DPA’s website provides a posting of databases, such as probate case files, the “Online Guide to Collections,” as well as original records images. The website has enhanced electronic access to archival holdings. Web access to more images and databases is desirable, although it is also costly and time consuming. The development of online access tools and providing access to digital images of online records, however, is worth the investment. Online, detailed collection descriptions will enhance the research capabilities of both remote online users and on-site researchers. To minimize costs of digitizing records, a strategy that is currently employed by MSA is a “matching fund partnership program” between the archives and its customers. MSA no longer offers microfilm duplication services to its customers. Instead, MSA will digitize a microfilm reel for a patron at a nominal cost, then place the digitized record online where it will be preserved for future generations and available for other online customers to access. Special
collections microfilms are posted directly to MSA’s “Guide to Special Collections” as part of this sponsorship program (www.md.archives.state.md.us).

**E-Commerce**

The Internet has enabled on-site customers to utilize the services of archival institutions from remote locations. To cater to the needs of these customers, many archives have added the convenience of e-commerce to purchase research services and copy orders online. Examples of common e-commerce services include research fees related to obtaining a vital statistics record or general research involving legal documents. In addition to fees for searching for the document, patrons are charged an additional fee for the reproduction of either a plain or certified copy of the document. Photographs or scanned documents may also be purchased online. Some agencies include mailing costs in their fees; other institutions require additional shipping charges. To speed response time, most archival institutions expect advance payment for services and encourage credit card payments. In order for e-commerce services to be effective, online policies or guidelines regarding the scope/limits of services, cost for services, copyright stipulations, response time, and method of payment should be clearly delineated on the website.

In addition to the general online services, many archives have online stores. These stores allow consumers to purchase merchandise online. Items such as t-shirts, mugs, hats, books, manuscripts, publications, print or image products, and audio/visual materials are available for purchase by patrons. Online purchases of logo-imprinted items help promote visibility of state archive services and programs. Some institutions with “Friends of the Archives” affiliations offer discounted online purchases or program admission to members. To boost membership of “Friends” organizations, DPA may wish to provide online membership registration and payment. Registration and payment for other public programming events may also be offered online.

**Observations**

Strategic plans are used by state archives to establish customer-driven planning processes. Customer service feedback guides the development of an archives' mission, vision, goals, and operational objectives. Strategic plans, for most archives, function as both a management directive and a public relations tool. The plans set forth an operational blueprint to direct operational activities and convey the mission and customer service philosophy to the general public. Strategic plans that are posted online enhance communication and an understanding of operations to the public. A model strategic plan involves a participatory process, establishes performance targets, and reinforces the organization’s customer service philosophy. Comprehensive plans provide follow-up information through annual reports, performance and accountability reports, or evaluation plans.

Organizational development is a key to overcoming management challenges, implementing strategic initiatives, and improving organizational performance. To manage for success, organizations have developed and make available public policies and guidelines that convey performance targets of the organization. Tools and techniques of organizational development used by best customer service practice archives include performance planning, team building, and human resource development. The Society of American Archivists recognizes the value of continuing education for archivists and records professionals. A Report to Council of the Society of American Archivists Task Force on Continuing Education recommends a shift from a workshop to an online format for continuing education courses (www.archivists.org/governance/taskforces).
Best practice state archives have developed services, policies on access, public programming, and technology plans in response to customer needs. The ideal archival institution is one where continual improvements are made to effect change rather than a drastic overhaul of operations. Where there is a supportive atmosphere for change, services, programs, and activities of the agency will adapt and evolve to maximize customer service delivery. Expanded opportunities for access, the purchase of new technology, electronic services, and e-commerce are examples of how state archives have adapted to improve customer service.

**KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS/WORKSHOPS**

**Methodology**

Stakeholder participation was an essential element in helping to ensure that the Customer Service Study is responsive to the needs and service expectations of its external and internal customers. Substantial input was obtained from both on-site customers who utilized DPA’s research room and DPA staff who support or carry out research-based archival activities.

**Customer Focus Groups**

A critical part of the study was obtaining input on customer service expectations, satisfaction with services, and suggestions for improvement directly from the customers that are served by the Delaware Public Archives. To solicit customer feedback, the University of Delaware’s IPA invited voluntary participation in one of two focus groups on customer service delivery at the Delaware Public Archives. The focus groups were held on Wednesday, September 29, and Thursday, September 30, 2004. Patrons who elected to participate in the two-hour focus group sessions were served a meal and received coupon vouchers for Delaware Public Archives copying services. Five patrons participated in the customer focus group session on September 29, and eight participated on September 30. The participants in both focus groups were very astute, regular patrons of DPA. Participants included the president of a genealogical society, Delaware museum professional, expert researchers/genealogists, a university professor, and other well-informed regulars. The customer focus group participants were highly complimentary of DPA operations and pleased to be provided the opportunity to comment on research-based customer service.

**Questions Asked**

1. How often do you visit DPA?
2. Generally what days and times do you visit DPA?
3. Are DPA’s hours of operation convenient to users?
4. Generally, what is the purpose of your visit to DPA?
5. How can DPA better take advantage of its state-of-the art building and facilities?
6. How well does DPA staff cater to the needs of its on-site customers?
7. How would you characterize the on-site customer service?
8. Tell me what you believe are the three greatest strengths of DPA staff with regard to providing customer service?
9. If you had to make three changes to the way DPA provides customer service to on-site patrons, what would they be?
10. What additional services/programs (if any) would you like to see provided by DPA?
11. What additional accommodations (if any) should be made to DPA on-site customers?
12. What should remain the same, what should change regarding DPA customer service?
13. Do you ever use DPA’s website?
14. How much value do you get from website use?
15. What are the positives of the website?
16. What changes would you make to the website?
17. Ideas/suggestions for improvements/other discussion points.

Summary of Responses

A summary of responses to the questions, categorized by strengths, issues/interests, and suggestions is listed below. Summary notes of customer focus group sessions are also provided (See Appendix I).

DPA Customer Service Strengths

- Convenient and accessible hours of operation
- Expanded hours of service
- Evening and weekend hours
- Consistent hours
- Courteous and helpful staff
- Staff members sensitive to the needs of new researchers
- Professional and outstanding staff
- Important "human element" of research room staff
- Personable research room orientation
- Website as an introduction to research-based services at the facility
- Amount of information contained on the website
- Staff’s willingness to hold information for following day of research
- Staff’s preparation of requests for information in advance of visit
- Personal service
- Quick response time
- Successful and visible Historical Markers Program, which brings attention to DPA
- Ancestry.Com service on the website
- On-line catalog on the website
- Lay-out of the building and research room
- Nice exhibits
- Good location of restrooms and lockers
- Remote customer service via phone

DPA Customer Service Issues/Interests

- Need to upgrade technology
- Need for digital imagery technology
- Difficulty using reader-printer equipment
- On-site educational programs for children/adults in history/genealogy
- Archives promotional programs
- Staff training
- Education of new staff members
- Staff turnover
- More frequent and consistent maintenance of equipment
- Quality of microfilm
- Need to consolidate cataloging system
- Difficulty with microfilming procedures
Design of a Customer Service Model for the Delaware Public Archives

- Copying services
- High copy costs
- Lack of systematic organization of documents
- Review of policies concerning handling of certain documents
- Access to digital images through the Web

Suggestions

- Purchase new reader-printers that are easier to use
- Adopt new technologies such as equipment with CD burners and options for patrons to e-mail documents to themselves
- Provide three copies of request forms, with the third copy provided to patrons
- Written instructional guides on use of equipment and policies for patrons
- More in-depth patron orientation
- Self-service copiers
- Snack machines
- E-services such as birth and death certificates
- Address personnel issues which impact research room operations
- Chart or information detailing research room services
- Use of volunteers in research room (for enhanced new patron orientation)

Observations

Participants concluded that strengths of DPA were its courteous staff, personal nature of service, quick service response time, nice facilities and exhibits, and Ancestry.com service. Issues/concerns of participants focused on the need for new technology, equipment upgrade/maintenance, public educational programs/self promotion, education and training of research room staff, policies updates. The suggestions for improvements by participants also underscored an interest in having new technologies adopted, written policies and enhanced orientation developed, and any staffing issues addressed expeditiously.

Staff Interviews

Managers and selected staff members from the Government Services, Outreach Services, Public Services, and Records Services units were invited to voluntarily participate in interviews. Individual interviews of managers and group interviews for staff members of the four service units were conducted. Distinct standardized questions for both managers and service unit staff were developed by the Project Team (Appendix I). Interviews of managers were held on August 17, 2004. Interviews of staff were conducted on August 24, August 25, and August 31, 2004. The purpose of these interviews was to obtain a better understanding of research-based customer service operations, roles of service units and personnel in providing research-based customer service, and strengths/issues concerning the agency’s customer service mission.

Summary of Responses

Summary notes were developed for each interview session, but are not included in the report appendix due to the confidential nature of each session. However, a summary of responses to the questions, categorized by strengths, issues/interests, and suggestions is listed below.
DPA Customer Service Strengths

• Hours of operation
• Accessibility of facility
• New patron orientation
• Personalized service
• DPA “Guide to the Research Room” manual to assist new research room employees
• Database improvements – improved access to records; efficiency of searches
• Utilization of electronic resources
• Internet access for customers
• Website usage
• Website content
• Search engines on the Web
• Outreach programs (education kits, tours, speaking engagements, Historical Markers)
• On-site exhibits
• Community relations

DPA Customer Service Issues/Interests

• Core policies/procedures of staff are primarily verbal
• Casual/seasonal employees’ impact on assignment of staffing resources
• Staff turnover, particularly casual/seasonal
• Research room staff scheduling
• Coordination of staff coverage between Front Desk and research room
• Inefficiencies in technology
• Need for more support from Records unit staff
• Self-service copying
• Consolidation of auxiliary databases
• Staff training/institutional knowledge of research room staff
• Communications between research room staff and other organizational units
• Enhance online website guide/finding aids
• Rules/paperwork for new clients
• Hiring process
• Use of volunteers
• Patron difficulties using technology
• Lack of input in changes to databases/technology
• Staff communication between units

Suggestions

• Establish training unit or team to develop training plan
• Develop in-house training where managers/supervisors rotate training
• Develop formal orientation program
• Institute structured professional development program
• Involve all IRS II’s from both the Records Services and Public Services units in developing finding aids when processing records
• Improve online guide
• Update guide in research room
• Establish internship program
• Team building (share/integrate employees in multi-unit activities)
• “Resource Person of the Day” in research room
• Create customer orientation packet
• Employee suggestion box
• Programming for special population/interests (i.e., children/genealogy)
• Mini section of research room geared towards children
• Special workshops on use of equipment/technology
• Better accessibility for disabled persons (chairs with wheels, automated door to research room, height of reader-printers)
• Self-service copying

Observations

Interviews of managers and staff revealed that the accessibility of the facility, hours of operation, personalized nature of service, database improvements, website content and usage, and outreach programs are customer service strengths of DPA. Issues/interests of managers and staff focused on the need for technology upgrades, staff resource planning, staff training and development, website guide enhancement, and better intra-agency communications. Suggestions were creative and introspective. The thought-provoking interview sessions demonstrate that the employees have a genuine interest in helping the agency achieve its customer service mission. Suggestions emphasized interest in pursuing initiatives such as technology, policy development, professional development, team building, and programming for special populations.

Facilitated Workshops

Feedback from the employee interview sessions and customer focus groups provided a more in-depth understanding of customer service needs and issues by the project team. As a result, the common issues of concern and significant findings were refined into workshop topics. With the assistance of a trained IPA facilitator, two workshops were held for employees on Tuesday, November 23, 2004. Employees, who were previously interviewed, were invited to voluntarily participate in one of two workshops. The workshop sessions purposely blended a diverse mixture of employees from each of the four organizational units. Seven employees voluntarily attended the morning focus group on Customer Service and seven employees voluntarily participated in the afternoon focus group on Program Development.

Customer Service Focus Group

Topics for the morning focus group on Customer Service included:
• Project/strategic plan overview
• Presentation on technology best practice
• Customer programs/special events
• Outcomes of previous interview/workshop sessions
• NARA Customer Service Standards

Synopsis

Summary notes for the Customer Service Focus Group session are provided in Appendix I. In addition, the following is a synopsis of participant responses to the various topics:

• Project/Strategic Plan Overview – The project team provided a project update and conveyed that customers were very complimentary of DPA staff and the “human element” of service provision. The outcome and recommendations of the customer
focus groups were shared with the participants. The interests shared by staff and customers were the basis for the topics of discussion at the Customer Service and Program Development Focus Groups.

- **Technology** – The participants agreed that technology enhancements should be explored. The consensus of the group seemed to be to explore the use of the following technology advancements:

  1. **Digital Imagery** – Adapt two existing machines to provide digital scanning capabilities
  2. **Researcher ID/Debit Cards** – The possibility of obtaining a researcher ID card that also serves as a debit card, to purchase copying services, should be explored. Debit cards will enable patrons to make self-service copies and reduce research room staff involvement in reproduction services.
  3. **Printing/Copying Services** – Self-service copy machines and reader-printers were recommended. Other reproduction equipment would be advantageous to staff. The acquisition of a book copier, to make copies of fragile documents and books, was suggested. An oversized copier was also suggested since currently there is a response time delay when requests for oversized copies must be sent off-site. A scanner/copier would give patrons the option to either print out or scan a document. Once a document is downloaded to a PC, it can be saved to a CD or disk or e-mailed. Copier costs should be re-evaluated relative to other archival institutions and based on true costs of reproduction services. Currently, patrons who make poor-quality microfilm copies do not need to pay for unacceptable copies.
  4. **E-Commerce** – The benefit would be to mail and e-mail requests for service. Payment prior to transaction, via a credit card, would speed the response time.
  5. **Technology Solutions** – The technology team should incorporate staff requests. The state IT Department must understand growing technology needs of DPA in order to develop a feasible plan for technology. The need for a full-time webmaster was identified.

- **Strategic Planning** – The participants acknowledged that the strategic plan that exists should be revisited. To encourage buy-in, the strategic plan update should promote organization-wide participation. The strategic plan linkages to more comprehensive performance measures and an annual review process should be assessed.

- **Customer Programming** – Currently, successful public programs include the exhibits, Historical Markers Program, expanded digital archives, tours, school programs and other Outreach Services programs. Suggestions for expanded activities include:

  1. **Workshops** – For first-time users of DPA, beginning genealogy, children’s programs
  2. **Public Programs** – Such as those being offered in conjunction with DPA’s 100th anniversary
  3. **Online Services** – More content online to draw new visitors into the facilities.
  4. **Staff Self Education** – Continual opportunities are needed for staff to upgrade skills and receive skills-based training. Automated, online training should be explored. It was noted that the Public Services unit has been receiving self-paced quizzes on records/finding aids and this has been extremely useful.
• **Customer Recommendations** – There was a consensus on the need to upgrade technology, provide professional development opportunities to staff, and expand programming to attract new visitors to the facility. Staff acknowledged that some customer concerns regarding cataloging and document organization are being addressed. The group felt that the food policy should be enforced and lunch/snack facilities requested by customers may be problematic.

• **NARA Customer Service Standards** – The participants believed that similar performance standards could be adopted for DPA. It was suggested that performance standards for responding to reference requests (mail, in-person, and e-mail) be developed and posted within the research room and on the website. An “If Things Go Wrong” series of statements on the website or a research room suggestion box may help improve communication and ensure customer satisfaction.

**Program Development Focus Group**

Topics for the afternoon focus group included:
- Project/strategic plan overview
- DPA’s current employee orientation program
- DPA’s current professional development program
- “Best practices” – team building/communication
- Mentorship program

**Synopsis**

Summary notes for the Program Development Focus Group session are provided in Appendix I. In addition, the following is a synopsis of participant responses to the various topics:

- **Project/Strategic Plan Overview** – Again, the project team provided a project update and conveyed that customers were very complimentary of DPA staff and the “human element” of service provision. The outcome and recommendations of the customer focus groups were shared with the participants. The interests shared by staff and customers were the basis for the topics of discussion at the Customer Service and Program Development Focus Groups.

- **Employee Orientation** – It was confirmed that on-the-job training is the primary orientation mode for new employees. For the Public Services unit, the DPA “Guide to the Research Room” used to orient research room employees on basic procedures, rules, and regulations was recently updated in May 2004. The group believed that all staff should have a baseline orientation including a tour of the facility, introduction to all staff, government information, customer service practices, and a reference packet/orientation manual.

- **Professional Development** – An overview of the current professional development program was discussed. On-site agency training is preferred and has been provided by consultants on agency-wide topics such as first aid, archival classes, etc. In-house training on specific archival topics has also been provided by DPA staff. In addition, the State Personnel Office offers several job-specific professional development and training opportunities. Training programs include a career enrichment program, computer training, customized agency training programs, and a management development institute for those in supervisory positions. Depending on an employee’s job
classification within a job series, specialized programs are offered such as the organizational development services, management development certificate program, and supervisory development certificate program.

The issue discussed was the need to provide training that is both agency and job specific. The challenge for DPA is to develop professional development opportunities that will transfer institutional knowledge from experienced to inexperienced staff, focus on customer service needs, develop leadership capabilities of staff, and promote technological proficiency.

Suggestions for instituting a comprehensive professional development program included the following:

• Cross train staff to promote a better understanding of agency-wide functions, services, and job responsibilities.
• Specifically, cross train casual/seasonal front desk employees and casual/seasonal Public Service unit employees
• Continue in-house, self-paced, skills-based training of Public Services unit staff that has been instituted (quizzes on records/finding aids)
• Develop new “virtual training” in-house professional development opportunities
• Offer the same training opportunities to casual/seasonal staff as merit employees
• Provide periodic tours of the facility, with supplementary information sheets, to staff to provide updates on unit activities/accomplishments
• Investigate online professional development courses for staff
• Explore other distance learning opportunities
• Provide all Public Services staff the opportunity to participate in the off-site, two-week training course by NARA

• Team Building/Communication – An overview of research on “best practices” on team building efforts by other organizations was provided. The ideologies of DMV and Info Systems, Inc. were highlighted to explain how a unified vision for customer service can promote team building and communication within a workforce of employees. Key components of these organizations that effectively promote team building/communication include employee teams that focus on a specific organizational goal, ongoing internal feedback, and communication.

It was noted that previous employee focus groups indicated that there seemed to be a need for improved communication among organizational units, few opportunities for intra-agency staff interaction, a sense of disconnect by the Public Services unit with other service units, and need for improved internal and external communications.

Suggestions to promote team building and improve communications included the following:

• Use the Intranet to share weekly reports from service units
• Develop purposeful and time-conscious teams to work on specific tasks, goals, or issues
• Provide on going support to teams; ensure top leadership support
• Recognize accomplishments of teams
• Ensure that team members are recruited on a voluntary basis
• Develop teams membership on a rotating basis
• Ensure that goals are expressed by the organization as a whole
• Comprise teams of employees from various organizational units
• Improve communication between service units to promote a supportive environment
• Institute agency-wide staff meeting to communicate successes, issues, or problems; communicate results of staff meetings with all employees
• Provide regular team reports to the director and agency-wide

• Mentoring – The possibilities of developing a mentoring program was discussed to build institutional knowledge between novice and seasoned employees. In previous focus groups, there was a concern with losing valuable institutional knowledge as seasoned employees approach retirement. Other state archives, such as the Wisconsin Historical Society, have developed interagency mentoring projects to connect volunteer professional archivists with institutions that need assistance. Archivists who volunteer to be mentors assist novice archivists by answering questions, providing referrals, suggesting information sources, giving advice, or making on-site visits (www.wisconsinhistory.org). The American Association for State and Local History has also established a mentor program to give newcomers the opportunity to establish a one-on-one relationship with a seasoned professional archivist (www.aaslh.org/mentor.htm).

The group acknowledged that the potential of losing institutional knowledge is a valid concern. Comments/suggestions included:
• Develop a structured internal mentoring program through which experienced employees can pass down knowledge to inexperienced employees
• Allowing mentors to participate from all organizational units, not just mentor individuals within their service team
• The mentoring philosophy is already in place within the Public Services unit
• Staff who retire could continue to provide service as volunteer mentors
• All mentoring should be done on a voluntary basis
• Casual/seasonal employees, who work off hours, could specifically benefit from mentoring

STUDY ASSESSMENT – UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE LIBRARY

During the course of the study, the project team consulted with University of Delaware Library Head of Special Collections Tim Murray and Associate Librarian and Special Collections Coordinator Rebecca Johnson Melvin. The consultants were provided background information on DPA, the interim report, summary information on study components, and other background document and materials related to this study. As a result, the consultants have produced a report that provides additional insights into DPA customer service needs (See Appendix J).

Consultant recommendations have been considered and incorporated into this report. Specific suggestions include customer service initiatives such as DPA taking the lead in planning a statewide National Archives Week event and the use of a patron tutorial designed to orient customers to archives research methods. Paul Conway was identified as the architect of NARA’s customer service standards. Several references on Paul Conway’s work with user studies were cited that should provide useful if DPA opts to develop customer standards modeled after NARA’s. Tim Murray and Rebecca Johnson Melvin also note “If DPA opts to develop customer standards, they may also want to contact Helen Tibbo at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, to check on the progress and direction of her work with ‘User Metrics’” (www.ils.unc.edu/metrics/home.html). Both experts concur with the recommendation to utilize surveys to obtain customer feedback on DPA performance and services. Because the
Q: “Should survey instruments be used to ask customers about the quality of access tools/suggested areas of improvement for the website?”

A: “Yes, it would be good to include questions related to the access tools. The questions could be carefully designed to prompt useful information, such as whether the user found the name of a collection of use to them or whether they were able to form a specific request based on information they found from collection guides. Also suggested was additional analysis of Webtrends Reports to determine user profiles. Webtrends Reports can be generated and studied to determine point of entry to DPA Web pages, path of pages consulted, and length of time spent on a website. For example, it may be useful to consider how many web users enter DPA by going directly to the homepage — representing researchers who have an initial awareness of DPA as an institution that will provide them service or information. Or how many researchers conduct a random Internet search via a search engine such as Google, which directs them to a collections described in the “Guide to the Collections.” Where do they go from here? Do they ‘leave’ or do they use e-mail to contact DPA?”

Q: “DPA’s website has an “Online Guide to the Collections” with 3,600 separate word processing files that represent portions of groups within a collection. The former printed guide has evolved into an electronic finding aid. By comparison, the Pennsylvania State Archives’ website provides a comprehensive list of record groups and manuscript groups. When the customer clicks on a specific listing within one of these two groups, a subgroup listing appears. Is one system better than another? Does DPA need more online holdings available relative to the size of its agency?”

A: “The issue is more related to the level of information than volume. DPA has uploaded its old “Guide to the Collections,” which provides collection summaries. The Pennsylvania State Archives has found a way to list all of its record groups and link to detailed collection inventories (or finding aids), sometimes by using .pdf files or non-electronic finding aids. What they provide is more detailed collection descriptions – to the folder or sometimes item level. It is definitely useful to provide full collection descriptions, with complete finding aids, that are the primary access tools to archival collections. Collection guides are derivative summaries, providing useful overviews. By providing access to more detailed collection descriptions, you will support the user’s need to find specific information. Experience shows that users send very specific copy requests, or name requests, etc. for reference assistance in response to information they find in online finding aids.”

“The current DPA homepage could also raise the profile of the “Guide to the Collections” might be a better one-line header, or a different design might give greater visibility to the menu option pointing the user to ‘Information about the collections’.”

Q: “The project team’s perception is that the state’s IT Department has been developing DPA’s website and content. There seems to be limited input by DPA archivists who work with customers and understand their research needs and interests directly. Many state archives have in-house technology departments or webmasters that work directly with staff on website development. Please comment as to whether this is a critical need to move DPA forward in technology and in meeting customer service needs.”
A: “…The online public access catalog and systems to increase access to electronic finding aids are all part of effective information technology in libraries and archives. DPA isn’t the only archive that needs higher-level, specialized professionals from within the library/archives profession to do this work for them. It’s gotten increasingly difficult to provide this service. Libraries are ahead of archives because they have a history of automation developed by library cataloguers. Information creators (the archivists who provide the collection descriptions and those who provide access to the collections) need to be involved with the systems designers (the Web page designers and systems integrators) who are planning delivery of collection holdings information via the Internet. There are information professionals from within the archives and library communities who could be recruited to fill positions at DPA if they were offered.”

CONCLUSION

Archival institutions, such as DPA, play an indispensable role to citizens in preserving, storing, and providing access to government records and archival manuscripts. The challenge for most archives has been twofold: providing secure facilities and environmental storage conditions to safeguard records and providing effective and efficient access to archival documents for both on-site and online customers. With the opening of its new archives building on January 8, 2001, DPA has succeeded in providing a state-of-the-art facility for records preservation, records storage, public outreach programs, administrative operations, employee workspace, and public research. The challenge remains for DPA to improve procedures and adapt technology to make records more accessible to the public. Both remote online users and on-site researchers can benefit from technologies that increase access to detailed descriptions of collection holdings as well as digitized records. Processes that support customer service need to be refined and updated. In addition, existing technology needs to be assessed and updated to streamline operations, respond to customer service needs, provide public access through Internet-based applications, and develop and promote direct online access to electronic records. The addition of an in-house DPA technology specialist position would move DPA forward in the use of technology, benefitting the development of online public access and increasing access to electronic finding aids. Strong leadership and enthusiastic, committed employees are organizational strengths that will enable DPA to rebuild from within and to maximize customer service delivery.

A multitude of lessons were learned during the course of this study through the literature review, study of best practice organizations, DPA process assessment, and key person interviews, workshops, and focus groups. It is evident that both public and private entities share similar concerns and issues with respect to customer service. Best customer service practice organizations are characterized by several key attributes. First, strong leadership systems are essential to instill a customer service philosophy and motivate employees. Leadership systems must focus on both internal and external customers. Studies draw a parallel between committed, happy employees and satisfied employees. Managers should regard performance data as a guide for leadership and measure of organization-wide performance. Performance successes should be lauded while performance setbacks should be regarded as opportunities for improvement.

Second, strategic planning is the mechanism most used by best practice organizations to establish a unified vision of customer-driven operations. The customer service orientation of the entity must be conveyed through a statement of mission. Management must communicate the importance of strategic goals and guide activities for successful achievement of these goals. Strategic planning needs to be a participatory, ongoing process where action plans are updated
annually. Strategic plans are most successful when established objectives correspond to resource allocation decisions, performance plans or targets, and accountability systems. Linking the strategic plan to a customer service plan, which focuses on operational procedures, customer service targets, and performance standards, will place customer service in the forefront of DPA’s mission and vision to remain a leader within the archival community.

Third, organizational development is paramount for best customer service practice organizations. With respect to human resource development, organizations must selectively hire customer service-oriented employees who have good communication skills and meet the basic job requirements. Once hired, new employees should participate in an orientation to the customer service culture as well as the duties of their position and use of technology. Successful organizations invest in ongoing human resource development. Continual training reinforces the customer service culture, keeps the workforce highly skilled, and ensures knowledge of technology upgrades. Team building, cross training, mentoring, and leadership development are strategies used to empower and motivate employees. Policies, procedures, and performance plans should be developed to communicate customer service practices and ensure accountability.

An efficient and effective organizational structure is also critical to ensure that the optimal level of customer service is being provided. When the two distinct Records Services and Public Services units were formed, balance of institutional knowledge tipped towards the Records Services unit. This has lead to a sense of disconnect between the two service units and the Public Service unit’s continued reliance on Records Services’ seasoned employees to address questions and provide research assistance. Options to reestablish the equilibrium between the two service units will need to be considered and assessed.

Fourth, the process assessment determined that DPA relies heavily on manual record-keeping processes to generate statistical reports. It is essential to track and record productivity measures and customer satisfaction levels. However, many of these reports could be automated through the use of database systems, particularly if a researcher identification card system with compatible software is acquired to track the number of researchers, profile researchers, hours of facility use, and research interests. A researcher identification card system also provides an added measure of security to document individuals who are on-site utilizing resources within the research room. In addition, it was noted that there is a lack of written, formalized policies and procedures governing research room activities. Developing and posting these policies both within the research room and online promotes a greater understanding of procedures by customers, which ultimately makes the jobs of research room staff easier.

Fifth, customer-driven operations help to ensure that services, accessibility, programs, and a technological infrastructure are developed to meet and satisfy customer needs. Many of the best customer service practice organizations studied utilize systematic feedback mechanisms, such as online surveys to obtain input from patrons. This feedback is essential to guide budget development and resource allocation decisions on what services should be provided, hours of operation and development of online access, extent of public programming, and a plan for technology upgrades or acquisition. Feedback mechanisms can provide invaluable information on operational performance and indicate where improvements are needed.

Finally, it was determined that DPA’s employees are its greatest asset to advancing its threefold mission and safeguarding Delawearans’ “Right to Know.” In our interviews with DPA managers, staff, and in particular the customer focus groups, the project team noted that DPA’s employees
Design of a Customer Service Model for the Delaware Public Archives

have an excellent customer service orientation, are personable, and go out of their way to cater to the needs of both on-site and off-site patrons. During the customer interviews, participants were asked, “How well does DPA staff cater to the needs of its on-site customers?” Responses were overwhelmingly favorable and included responses such as “the staff here is very good; they are polite and courteous; they are fantastic and professional; and I come in and my request is ready for me.”

Both DPA employees and customers appreciated the opportunity to communicate and share their experiences with the project team and fellow participants. The project team was impressed that an employee participated in a facilitated workshop session on his scheduled day off. Input from front-line employees was particularly helpful as they are the most familiar with customers and understand their service needs best. Customers also provided a unique perspective. Many of the customer focus group participants were experienced researchers who favorably compared their experience at DPA with that of other archival institutions. Since both employees and customers committed time to the process, the outcome of this process should be shared with both groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following charts summarize recommendations to design a new DPA customer service model by descriptive area of study. For each area, a recommendation is provided followed by a more detailed description of the recommended task and timeframe for implementation. Under the heading “responsibility” is an organizational unit or voluntary team that is suggested to consider the recommended task. As part of the recommendations of this study, it is recommended that voluntary employee teams, comprised of individuals from various organizational units, be established to consider recommendations of this study; work on a specific, project such as a new exhibit; and/or focus on the development of organizational activities, programs, or services.
### Process Assessment

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| 1              | Institute additional facility security measures | • Institute automated registration system -- researcher identification cards/debit cards and database system  
• Utilize clip-on photo identification cards for researchers  
• Provide clip-on badges or pins for visitors  
• Consider other additional facility security measures such as use of metal detectors at entranceway/security cameras in public areas  
• Consider development of disaster preparedness plan | Phase 1 | Administration |
| 2              | Institute automated record keeping | • Establish reporting system via automated registration system  
• Utilize automated record keeping system to generate patron visitation, resource, and facility use reports | Phase 1 | Administration |
| 3              | Establish comprehensive, systematic program for customer feedback | • Develop online customer survey instrument and timeframe for implementation. Determine cost, feasibility, capabilities of development via either state IT Department or private contractor  
• Include online survey questions related to usefulness of name of a collection and ability to request information based on collection guide information  
• Use "extra mile" survey as a systematic, mail-generated instrument that is sent to a sample of patrons annually. Extra mile survey should be upgraded as per suggestions on page 7.  
• Utilize Webtrends report for further user analysis of website use and functionality | Phase 1 | Technology Team |
| 4              | Assess written policies/procedures | • Develop in-depth policy/procedures manual for research-based employees  
• Develop and post on-site and online policies regarding reproduction services and fees, equipment use and maintenance schedule  
• Develop new employee orientation manual  
• Re-evaluate policies regarding use of digital photography by patrons | Phase 1 | Policy team |
| 5              | Consider automated phone system | • Menu options enable patron to directly connect to service unit  
• Option to dial zero to connect to receptionist | Phase 1 | Technology Team |
<p>| 6              | Research feasibility of scheduling software | • Recommended software includes: Visual Staff Scheduler, an ABS | Phase 1 | Technology Team |</p>
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<td>software solution (<a href="http://www.abs-usa.com">www.abs-usa.com</a>); Delegator software, a Madrigal software solution (<a href="http://www.madrigalsoft.com">www.madrigalsoft.com</a>)</td>
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| 7   | Develop online reference forms | • Design online reference forms with mandatory data requirements  
• Customize online forms to respond to standard information queries | Phase 1 | Technology Team |

**Organizational Enhancement**

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| 1   | Enhance integration of the Public Services and Record Service units | • Utilize human resource development strategies such as training and mentoring to share institutional knowledge between the Public Services and Records Services units  
• Formalize assistance from the Records Services unit by assigning a “Research Assistant of the Day” to be utilized on an on-call basis  
• Develop a “Resource Person List” that identifies who can provide research assistance by area of expertise | Year 1 | Administration |
| 2   | Cross train/consolidate front desk staff with Public Services unit | • All front desk casual/seasonal employees and research room staff should learn respective job responsibilities  
• Cross-train employees to enhance service delivery within research room and ensure staff coverage for employee leave | Phase 1 | Public Services |
| 3   | Expand role of front desk position | • Transfer financial transactions from research room to front desk  
• Job responsibilities should include issuance of photo identification/debit cards, generating statistical reports on patron use, and providing first step of new patron orientation – the online or CD-ROM tutorial (if adopted)  
• Exit processing should include payment for recommended debit card services at front desk | Phase 1 | Administration and Public Services |
| 4   | Cultivate an in-house webmaster or IT specialist | • Enhance website and technology development; promote better integration with state IT Department by cultivating a high-level, in-house information specialist | Phase 2 | Administration |
### Strategic Planning

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| **1** Prepare for strategic planning initiative | • Consider consultant-guided process  
• Establish strategic planning team | Phase 1 | Administration |
| **2** Establish comprehensive strategic planning initiative | • Establish open, participatory process  
• Link performance measures to budget process  
• Develop a performance plan  
• Determine scope of accountability system (annual reports, unit progress reports, personnel evaluations, etc.) | Phase 2 | Administration |
| **3** Refine mission statement and goals to communicate and emphasize customer-service orientation | • Establish customer service standards and performance targets  
• Establish performance standards (i.e., responding to mail requests, in-person reference, or online requests)  
• Utilize customer feedback to refine measurable objectives | Phase 2+ | Strategic Planning Team |
| **4** Develop customer service plan | • Establish and communicate priority areas for service improvements  
• Develop descriptive customer service values  
• Provide list of customer service standards/performance targets  
• Develop online and on-site method to communicate customer problems/suggestions | Phase 2+ | Strategic Planning Team |

### Organizational Development

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| **1** Re-evaluate new hire selection process for front-line customer service employees | • Develop criteria to ensure customer-service oriented employees are selected  
• Develop interview questions concerning hypothetical customer service issues or problems  
• Expand selection team to include other front-line customer service employees | Phase 1 | Administration |
| **2** Institute new employee orientation | • Baseline orientation for all new employees should include: overview of customer service philosophy, physical tour and introduction to staff, review of orientation packet (to be developed by training team), and personnel regulations  
• Develop research-room specific orientation to include: introduction to equipment/technology, understanding of government in Delaware, review of Guide to DPA Research Room, and use of finding aids/research tools | Phase 1 | Training Team |
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| 3 Expand professional development opportunities to all front-line customer service employees | • Institute policy to offer professional development opportunities to all merit or casual/seasonal employees  
• Develop a program of in-house training for all employees to learn function of each service unit  
• Institutionalize existing continuing education of Public Services team including quizzes on finding aids, reading assignments, and use of website technology/finding aids | Phase 1 | Training Team |
| 4 Investigate distance learning and online continuing education programs | • Determine cost and feasibility  
• Determine applicability to job classifications within service units and/or Public Services unit | Phase 2 | Training Team |
| 5 Consider leadership development | • Conduct internal survey of staff to determine possible job vacancies through retirement in next 5-year period  
• Identify possible need for succession planning  
• Offer leadership development opportunities through rotating team leadership, SOP leadership development programs, special assignments, or job enrichment | Phase 1 | Administration  
Phase 2 |
| 6 Institute team building | • Develop special, purposeful and voluntary teams to study and make recommendations  
• Suggested focus areas for teams include: technology, policy development, training, public programming, and exhibits  
• Develop system to share weekly/monthly reports of service units  
• Establish fun, competitive activities among service units to promote team building and strength organizational unity | Phase 1 | Administration |
| 7 Investigate additional cross training | • Identify job classifications that would benefit from cross training opportunities (such as casual/seasonal front desk and research room personnel) | Phase 1 | Training Team |
| 8 Consider internships | • Determine feasibility of one-year, post-graduate internship program | Phase 2 | Administration |
| 9 Expand role of volunteers | • Determine if volunteers can be used to assist with new patron orientations  
• Determine if volunteers can be used to digitized microfilm images as reader/scanners are acquired  
• Encourage retired employees to serve as volunteers  
• Institute an annual volunteer recognition program | Phase 1 | Public Services |
| 10 Enhance existing "Extra Mile" Employee | • Establish a entranceway employee recognition board to post favorable | Phase 2 | Administration |
### Design of a Customer Service Model for the Delaware Public Archives

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| **Recognition Program** | “Extra Mile” survey cards  
- Include on the Board a score board with summary survey ratings  
- Recognize exemplary team efforts  
- Consider incentives for staff who work research room shifts and weekend hours  
- Determine cost of enhancing existing incentives/awards program | | |
| **Institute Employee Mentoring Program** | Design in-house program to transfer institutional knowledge from seasoned to novice employees  
- Re-hire retired employees as casual/seasonal employees who are trained as mentors  
- Consider intra-agency mentoring programs to provide mentoring opportunities/support for seasoned employees | Phase 2 | Administration |

### Customer Services

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</table>
| 1 **Enhance customer orientation** | Develop CD-ROM with PowerPoint orientation to research room facilities  
- OR develop or adapt online tutorial similar to UNC’s or Yale’s online instructional tool/tutorials  
- Develop map and guide to demonstrate physical and intellectual layout of research room | Phase 1 | Public Services |
| 2 **Consider self-service microfilm role replacement system** | Encourage customers to re-file microfilm roles using a placeholder system similar to MSA’s | Phase 1 | Public Services |
| 3 **Enhance public program offerings** | Establish programming partners  
- Offer “Introduction to research room” workshop  
- Take lead on statewide Archives Week initiatives  
- Evaluate 100th year anniversary programs and determine which should be re-offered  
- Develop public programming based on feedback from survey mechanisms  
- Consider corporate sponsorships to offset public program programming costs | Phase 1 | Public Programming Team and/or Outreach |
| 4 **Develop equipment use guides** | Post on-site and online equipment guide, similar to University of DE library | Phase 1+ | Public Services |
| 5 **Develop technology use guides** | Develop guides and handouts for online catalogs and finding aids | Phase 1+ | Public Services |
| 6 **Assess need for accessibility upgrades** | Consider push-button automated door to research room  
- Determine if some existing chairs can be retrofitted with wheels to facilitate use by elderly | | |
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</table>
| 1 Website improvements | • Establish website improvement priorities based on customer feedback  
  • Determine priorities and responsibilities for digitizing  
  • Improve online guide  
  • Develop schedule for electronic delivery of archival documents  
  • Identify and consolidate auxiliary databases  
  • Determine feasibility of in-house webmaster  
  • Establish closer working relationship/communications with state IT department  
  • Identify access tool needs and implement plan for development | Phase 1 | Technology Team |
| 2 Develop technology plan to upgrade and/or acquire new technology | • Develop phased-in capital plan for improvements with cost estimates  
  • Develop a priority list for technology upgrades | Phase 1 | Technology Team |
| 3 Institute self-service copying in research room | • Determine feasibility of consolidated researcher identification card/debit card system | Phase 1 | Technology Team |
| 4 Institute self-service copying in microfilm equipment room | • Assess feasibility of converting existing microfilm readers to digital microfilm reader-scanners | Phase 1 | Technology Team |
| 5 Assess digital equipment needs | • Plan for the acquisition of digital scanning technology such as self-service scanner/copiers with compatible equipment and software.  
  • Consider the acquisition of a color scanner/copier similar to UD Library’s Lanier 232c | Phase 2 | Technology Team |
| 6 Enhance on-site “store” | • Provide technology items for sale such as computer disks, CD- | Phase 1 | Technology Team |

**Technology**

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<tr>
<td>7 Establish interactive children’s area in research room</td>
<td>• Promote use of archives by children, who are accompanied by adults, with area that provides interactive activities</td>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>Public Services/Outreach/Public Programming Team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 8 Re-evaluate fee schedule | • Review Archive Fee Comparison Matrix to assess fee schedule for all services  
  • Post fee schedule both on-site and online | Phase 1 | Administration/Public Service |
<p>| 9 Consider online mapping service | • Determine feasibility of contracting for services for online mapping of Historic Markers | Phase 2 | Administration/Outreach/Public Programming Team |</p>
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</table>
| 7              | Develop e-commerce | • Offer online sales of services such as purchase of birth/death certificates  
• Accept credit card payments for all online transactions | Phase 1 | Technology Team |
| 8              | Consider “matching” program for digitization of archival material | • Consider program similar to Maryland State Archives to promote digitization of records | Phase 1 | Technology Team |
| 9              | Consider need for specialized reproduction technology | • Conduct cost/benefit analysis to determine future acquisition of specialized reproduction equipment such as a face-up book scanner and an oversized copier | Phase 2 | Technology Team |
| 10             | Institute researcher ID/debit card system | • Assess feasibility of purchasing researcher ID card system that would also serve as a debit card  
• If dual system is not feasible, research functionality of compatible but separate researcher ID card/debit card system | Phase 1 | Technology Team |
TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1 – Comparison of Archives Hours/Days Open to Public
   Figure 1 – Comparison of Archives Weekly Hours of Operation
   Figure 2 – Comparison of Archives Annual Hours of Operation

Table 2 – Summary of Public Programming in Other Archival Institutions
Table 3 – Archive Fee Comparison Matrix
Table 1. Comparison of Archives Hours/Days Open to Public

Key:  
DPA Delaware Public Archives  
NJDARM New Jersey Division of Public Archives/Records Management  
PHMC Pennsylvania Historic & Museum Commission  
NYS Archives New York State Archives  
KDLA Kentucky Department of Library & Archives  
MHS Minnesota Historical Society  
VPL Virginia Public Libraries  
MDAH Mississippi Division of Archives & History

Figure 1. Comparison of Archives Weekly Hours of Operation

Figure 2. Comparison of Archives Annual Hours of Operation
### Table 2. Summary of Public Programming in Other Archival Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mississippi Department of Archives and History</th>
<th>Events</th>
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<th>Lectures</th>
<th>Exhibits</th>
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<td>Garden Tours</td>
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<td>Copper Magnolia Festival</td>
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<td>Music at the Mounds</td>
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<td>Christmas at the Old Capitol</td>
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<td>Holiday Open House</td>
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| The Library of Virginia                      | 1      | 5            | 17       |
| Library of Virginia Awards Celebration       | 1      | 5            | 17       |
| Library of Virginia Awards Celebration       |        |              |          |          |
| Baseball in Richmond                         |        |              |          |          |
| Women's History in Virginia                  |        |              |          |          |
| The Comic Arts                               |        |              |          |          |
| Maps, Charts & Atlases                       |        |              |          |          |
| Theatre in Richmond                          |        |              |          |          |
| Brown v. Board of Education                  |        |              |          |          |
| Free Black Barbers in Antebellum Richmond    |        |              |          |          |
| Radio in VA                                  |        |              |          |          |
| Women of Color and Indian Slavery            |        |              |          |          |
| Legacies of the New Deal in VA               |        |              |          |          |
| VA Roots Music                               |        |              |          |          |
| Jefferson and the Capitol of VA              |        |              |          |          |
| VA's Coal Towns                              |        |              |          |          |
| John Marshall                                |        |              |          |          |
| Gabriel, Nat Turner, and John Brown          |        |              |          |          |
| Political Life in VA                         |        |              |          |          |
| Mapping VA                                   |        |              |          |          |
| The Common Wealth                            |        |              |          |          |
| Lewis and Clark                              |        |              |          |          |
| Titanic                                      |        |              |          |          |
| Newspaper Mastheads                          |        |              |          |          |
| Landscape exhibit                            |        |              |          |          |

| Minnesota Historical Society                 | 3      | 6            | 12       |
| Victorian Dress Up                           | 3      | 6            | 12       |
| Sweet Grass Basket Workshop                  |        |              |          |          |
| The Windows on the American Home             |        |              |          |          |
| Guy Fawkes Night                             |        |              |          |          |
| Introduction to the Library                  |        |              |          |          |
| Lindberg House Exhibit                       |        |              |          |          |
| Presidential Sundays                         |        |              |          |          |
| Hand Drum Workshop                           |        |              |          |          |
| Dakota Reflections on the River             |        |              |          |          |
| Bird Feeders for Over wintering Birds        |        |              |          |          |
| Minnesota Remembers                         |        |              |          |          |
| Perfect Pie Crust                            |        |              |          |          |
| The American Presidency                      |        |              |          |          |
| Dream Catcher Workshop                       |        |              |          |          |
| Happily Ever After                           |        |              |          |          |
| Tales of the Territory                       |        |              |          |          |
| Homeplace Minnesota                          |        |              |          |          |
| Music in Minnesota                           |        |              |          |          |
| Weather Permitting                           |        |              |          |          |
| Titanic                                      |        |              |          |          |
| The Mystique of Mobility                     |        |              |          |          |

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Design of a Customer Service Model for the Delaware Public Archives

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<td>Exhibition: William H. Natcher: Gentleman for Kentucky</td>
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<td>Lecture: Using Archival Records for Architectural Research</td>
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<td>Exhibition: George Martin Cunha, Preservation Pioneer</td>
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<td>Lecture: Finding the Forgotten: Early Asylum and Other Mental Health Sources</td>
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<td>Exhibition: On the Water: Photography by John Flavell and Ann W. Olson</td>
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<td>Exhibition: Margaret I. King Library: Past and Future</td>
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<td>Lecture: Lewis and Clark: Discovery Then and Now</td>
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<td>Lecture: Putting Your Ancestors in Historical Perspective</td>
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<td>Lecture: Primary Source Materials of the KY Schools for the Deaf and Blind</td>
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Notes:
1) Events are shown for October 2004 only.
2) Several states are under a larger umbrella with funding for extensive programing.
## Table 3. Archive Fee Comparison Matrix

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<th>University of Delaware Library</th>
<th>NY State Archives</th>
<th>MD State Archives</th>
<th>The Library of VA</th>
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*Book copies or fragile materials copies*

| **Microfilm Copies** |                      |                                |                  |                  |                  |                  |                           |                          |                       |
| Per Frame cost      | $0.10, $0.15**, $0.15*** | $0.25, $0.50, $0.75, $0.30** |                  |                  |                  |                  |                           |                          |                       |
| Per roll cost       | $30                   | $25                             | $40              |                  |                  |                  |                           |                          |                       |
| **Photograph copies** |                      |                                |                  |                  |                  |                  |                           |                          |                       |
| 5" x 7" or 8" x 10" B&W | $10                   | $75 and up                      | Contact          | $15              |                  |                  |                           |                          |                       |
| 11" x 14" B&W      | $15                   | $20 and up                      | NARA             | $25              |                  |                  |                           |                          |                       |
| 16" x 20" B&W      | $20                   | $30 and up                      |                  | $50              |                  |                  |                           |                          |                       |
| 4" x 5" B&W negative (purchase) | $25 |                      | $10              |                  |                  |                  |                           |                          |                       |
| 4" x 5" color or duplicate transparency (purchase) | $50 |                      |                  |                  |                  |                  |                           |                          |                       |
| 4" x 5" color or duplicate transparency (3 mo. lease) | $10 |                      | $75              |                  |                  |                  |                           |                          |                       |
| 35mm color slide from original item | $5 |                      | $8               |                  |                  |                  |                           |                          |                       |
| **Printouts from Reference Room Computers** | 1st pg free, $0.20 add'l | $0.15 B&W | $0.50 color |                  |                  |                  |                           |                          |                       |

**Digital Images**

| Scanning from material in digital format - 150 dpi | $5 | $20 | $45 | $8 |
| Scanning from cartographic material | $25 | $150 | $50 |

**Legal Document Fees**

| Vital Records (Birth/Death Certificates) | $12*, $25** | $6 | $15 |
| Court Cases with Citation | $10*, $20** | $11 |
| Wills, deeds, marriage records, church records | $10*, $20** | $11 |

**Research Requests**

| State Resident | $15 | $20 | $15 |
| Non-state Residents | $25* | $20 | $15 |
| Additional Mailing Costs | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Commercial Use Fees | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

| Books, brochures, magazines, newspapers, films, etc | $50 | $50 | $50 |
| In advertising | $100 | $50 | $100* |
| Decorative Display | $25 | $50 | $100* |

**Additional information considerations**

| Off-site orders for services - prepayment required | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Form of payment | Cash, CHK, MO, CC | Cash, CHK, MO, CC | Cash, CHK, MO, CC | Cash, CHK, MO, CC | Cash, CHK, MO, CC | Cash, CHK, MO, CC | Cash, CHK, MO, CC |
| Order processing period | 4 wks and up | Consult staff | 2 wks & up | 60 days |

**Notations**

- *same day*
- **mail or pickup**
- "With copy card. Copy card costs:
  - **Cash**
  - "Color copy
  - "B&W copy
  - "B&W Transparency
  - "#Color Transparency
- *Plain Copy*
- **Certified Copy**
- *With purchase of 0.50 debit card.**
  - Max 25 pgs will be charged $25, plus $2.00/pg
- "$1.90 microfilm copies made by NARA staff
- Includes 10 copies. **Nonprofit or educational use - no charge

For more detailed information, please see Appendix H
BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Books


Documents


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The Institute for Public Administration (IPA) is a public service, education and research center that links the resource capacities of the University of Delaware with the complex public policy and management needs of governments and related nonprofit and private organizations. IPA provides direct staff assistance, research, policy analysis, training, and forums while contributing to the scholarly body of knowledge. Program areas include civic education, conflict resolution, healthcare policy, land use planning, organizational development, school leadership, state and local management, water resources planning, and women's leadership. IPA supports and enhances the educational experiences of students through the effective integration of applied research, professional development opportunities, and internships. Jerome Lewis is the director of the Institute and can be reached at 302-831-8971.