

Evergreen Pre-Launch Update #5

August 31, 2010

To: All KCLS Staff

From: Jed Moffitt—Director of ITS

We are 20 days out from bringing Millennium down for the last time. Here are some highlights of the increasingly complex and condensed choreography of these final three weeks:

OPAC Training: OPAC training is in full-swing. If you haven't had a chance to register, please do. You'll be glad you did. Use the following link to login to the training catalog (or to sign up for the training catalog if this is your first time).

<https://intranet.kcls.org/lp/catalogentry.cfm>

Search on "Evergreen" to see a listing of available classes.

The training environment will continue to be a bit unpredictable at times. You may run across bugs in training. If so, just report them to the instructors. As a trade-off, given our available time and resources, we aren't able to update the training environment regularly with bug-fixes. We are making most of our bug-fixes in the Evergreen production environment that we will be using when we go-live.

If you can't make it to a training class and can only devote 15 minutes to your Evergreen education, then use those 15 minutes to view the following web tutorials:

Evergreen OPAC preview—by Kirsten Corning

<http://www.kcls.org/evergreenopac/EvergreenOPACDemo.swf>

and

Evergreen Circulation Basic Skills and Navigation Tips—by Jennifer Wooten

<https://intranet.kcls.org/training/Basic Computer Skills/Basic Computer Skills.html>

and

<https://intranet.kcls.org/training/Evergreen Navigation Tips/Evergreen Navigation Tips.html>

Go-Live: "Go-Live" is a funny term is it not? As though we were all in a state of suspended animation until the week of September 20th (which I assure you we are not). I mentioned a bit about our anticipated schedule in the email message—our timeline is to bring Millennium down for the last time on the evening of Monday, September the 20th.

For at least the following day (Tuesday the 21st) and ideally not much longer than that, we will be using Evergreen “Offline Circulation” software. This software will allow us to check items in and out and keep records of the transactions for later processing on Evergreen when Evergreen comes up.

Jennifer pointed out that the bulk of the documentation and guidance for use of Evergreen Offline Circulation came from the Sitka libraries in British Columbia who are also migrating to Evergreen. It’s nice to have some good company, and in this case useful help, from our neighbors to the north. Being able to turn to Sitka for help in this case is an excellent example of the evolving Evergreen community working as envisioned, with a growing number of library partners participating and contributing ideas, specifications, software, documentation, and training to help other libraries along the way. Thanks and props to B.C.

Stress-test: No, this isn’t more about the case of nerves I referred to in the email. In this case, the “stress” is being purposefully applied to the Evergreen system to help us anticipate its ability to perform under our famously abundant load of daily transactions.

There are a couple of types of stress-tests that are happening with Evergreen:

We are preparing scripts for a short live Evergreen cutover test where we will briefly switch the network over to the Evergreen production system and ask for some help from you in the libraries to perform some Evergreen transactions (mostly circulation related functions and searching of the catalog) for a couple of hours on a given morning (likely September 9th) before libraries open. We are working on the specifics of this stress-test and will have more information to you shortly. This test will give us a valuable preview of how Evergreen will react when we move it over to the network in earnest when we go-live.

The other stress-tests of Evergreen are computer generated simulations that are exercising the Evergreen production system on a daily basis, closely imitating the anticipated load that we will encumber Evergreen with on day one. These computerized simulations have already uncovered some valuable insights and led to some changes in Evergreen programming to improve anticipated performance of the system.

For instance, these tests exposed some inefficiency in the way that we read barcodes on the material handling sorter out at Preston (where time is truly of the essence). We are dealing in microseconds here, so the read was already quite fast, and probably fast enough—but the simulated stress test led to a 6-fold increase of performance, giving us some welcome breathing room and greater comfort with that particular part of our operation.

Loading “The Client”: That expression is funny enough without any embellishment. Where do we come up with this technological lexicon...for example—the phrase “Exit Out”? When you are using software, has anyone ever told you to “exit out” of the software? As though there is somewhere other than “out” to exit?

“The Client”, in this case, is that part of the Evergreen software that is loaded directly onto a staff, circulation, or reference workstation. Every staff PC needs a client in order to run Evergreen, and we’re going to need your help in the libraries to load (and re-load) Evergreen client software on your workstations based on instructions you receive from the Evergreen Team.

This process will be similar to loading software onto your PC that you find on the Internet. When the time comes, we will send you instructions with a web link, and that’s how we’ll get the Evergreen client loaded across the system. This process will likely commence in about a week or so, as an updated version of the Evergreen client will be needed to run the live stress-test.

As we find and fix bugs, we may ask you to re-load the client as necessary. When this happens, we will de-activate the link to the previous version of the client, so that only the current and valid version will work on Evergreen.

Well, I’m already into page 3, and that tells me I’ve been going on too long, so we’ll stop here for this week. More to come.

Thank you again for your support.

Regards,

Jed