1996-1997 CNI Program Plan

by Richard P. West

The CNI Steering Committee endorsed the final 1996-97 program plan for CNI at the committee’s July 1996 meeting. The Committee continues to provide direction to the CNI program that serves the common interests of the broad community represented by the memberships of ARL, CAUSE, and Educom, as well as the specific interests of the members of the CNI Task Force.

Embodyed in CNI’s program plan are four goals: to facilitate the transition to networked scholarly communication and publishing, to promote cross-sector perspectives, communication, and collaboration; to advance institutional readiness and professional development; and to influence the development of advanced information technologies and services.

Eight specific action initiatives are built around the program’s four goals. These initiatives provide a programmatic framework for CNI’s 1996-97 plan. They include:

- enterprise-wide information strategies
- assessment of the academic networked environment
- cost centers and measures in the networked information value chain
- networked information discovery and retrieval
- working collaborations between information technologists and librarians
- networked, collaborating learning communities
- access to and services for federal information in the networked environment, and
- subject access to networked information resources and services.

The lead action initiative is Enterprise-Wide Information Strategies. This action initiative identifies and examines the current state of implementation and best thinking in the development of networked information technologies and services at the enterprise, or campus, level. The premise of this effort is that the power of the network has to be harnessed by appropriate organizational models and tools so that a full range of networked information can be delivered to each empowered student, faculty member, and staff of a higher education institution.

The analytical framework is a familiar one. How do we create systems that easily exchange information (interoperate)? How do we organize, name, store, and define the information we have available for exchange (information management)? What are the best organizational strategies to distinguish between what is private communication and information and what is the institution’s domain? What kinds of behaviors by individuals create liabilities for organizations in a highly networked world? And, how does a highly leveraged networked information environment change hierarchies in our traditional organizations? (The relationship between the center and the departments is one example.)

In advancing Enterprise-Wide Information Strategies, CNI will focus on access to the full range of networked information venues, from administrative to community to scholarly sectors. CNI will also encourage the spectrum of professionals, specifically information technologists and librarians, to work together on CNI action initiatives.

To develop this initiative, CNI will organize approximately a dozen institutions to participate in a structured information collection and discussion process. The institutions will identify strategies and approaches that promote intellectual and institutional productivity using networked information technologies. Two multi-day workshops will then be planned to review the most successful approaches and to provide the opportunity for other institutions to discuss experiences and identify improvements. The results of these workshops will form the basis of Web page summaries as well as agenda items for CNI Task Force Meetings and regional conferences co-sponsored by CAUSE and CNI.

This Enterprise-Wide Information Strategies topic will be the theme of the Fall Task Force meeting of the Coalition on December 6-7 in San Francisco. This theme also serves as the integrating effort of the Coalition’s eight other initiatives.

Editorial space prevents examination of the other action initiatives, so I will describe the others in further detail in future editions of my CNI report to you. I will, of course, keep you abreast of our progress on the “enterprise” effort.

To remain up-to-date on this initiative or others that CNI is conducting, explore CNI’s Website at www.cni.org and subscribe to cni-announce. To subscribe to cni-announce, send the following single-line message to listproc@cnio: subscribe cni-announce Firstname Lastname.