

NEW ENGLAND LAW LIBRARY CONSORTIUM
9 DRUMMER RD.
KEENE, NH 03431



5-YEAR
STRATEGIC PLAN

2004-2009

Table of Contents

Introduction by the President	3
Executive Summary	4
Mission and Vision Statements	6
Statement of Core Values	7
Organization Profile and History	8
Strategic Issues	10
Ongoing Consortium Activities	11
Strategic Goals and Objectives	14
Appendix	17

INTRODUCTION BY THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the Strategic Plan! NELLCO owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to our Executive Director, Tracy Thompson. Her vision and leadership drove the process of strategic planning. She worked incredibly hard to make the process successful and the result is a wonderful plan. Thank you, Tracy, from all of us!

Thank you, as well, to the Strategic Planning Committee. We met many times to work out the process, do our own planning exercise, and evaluate and merge the results of all the planning meetings. I learned a lot from these meetings and am glad I know my colleagues better.

Thank you to all the libraries that hosted process meetings that allowed all levels of staff to participate in the strategic planning for NELLCO. The result is a plan that grows from feedback from many different members, working in many different libraries and types of positions. The plan is a stronger one for being so broad-based. It was amazing, in spite of the diversity of participants, how much the lists from the planning meetings agreed.

The process itself was a good exercise. We took time to contemplate NELLCO and the rapidly changing library world. We engaged in a dialog about what NELLCO is and what it could be. We examined our strengths and weaknesses. We looked at opportunities and threats for NELLCO. We matched the two lists, making it much easier to make decisions about new directions.

This plan is the end product of nearly a year of work. It will inform decisions for NELLCO for the next five years. This is a time of tremendous change in libraries and publishing. NELLCO will continue to thrive and be an important participant in law librarianship, thanks to the work we all put into this Strategic Plan.

Betsy McKenzie, President 2003-2004

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

First, I would like to thank the Strategic Planning Committee members for their commitment to this planning process, for their patience and good humor, and for their fortitude in seeing it through to the end. The Strategic Planning Committee included:

- Filippa Anzalone (Boston College)
- Claire Germain (Cornell)
- Darcy Kirk (University of Connecticut)
- Terry Martin (Harvard)
- Kent McKeever (Columbia)
- Betsy McKenzie (Suffolk)
- Marnie Warner (Massachusetts Trial Courts)

Strategic planning keeps an organization on track over time, and allows the organization to respond to change while remaining faithful to their mission and vision. The process itself may have as much value to the organization as the final plan, since so much can be learned from surveying both the position of the organization and the state of the environment in which the organization operates. For the New England Law Library Consortium this is particularly true.

The opportunity to step back and scrutinize, evaluate, consider and question our activities is crucial, and not afforded by the daily pace of the organization. As an organization that represents the interests of 65 member law libraries in 25 states and the District of Columbia (see current member list in the Appendix A), relies heavily on the voluntary participation of its members, and employs a single staff member, NELLCO rarely has the luxury of time for reflection. Having made that time during this process will prove to be invaluable to the life of the consortium.

We began this cycle of strategic planning with a meeting at the Boston College Law Library in May of 2003. Our first meeting was spent developing a framework that would support our planning process; we were planning to plan. We started by defining strategic and operational plans and clarifying what distinguishes the two (see Appendix B). This helped us determine the scope of our task. Next, we reviewed our mission and vision statements, and we continued to refer to them throughout the process, to be sure that our plans remained true to those underpinnings of the organization. Finally, we developed a list of planning principles that we agreed would guide us as a committee (see Appendix B).

The committee agreed that our plan would need widespread support and participation in order to be successfully adopted and accomplished. In order to build that support we agreed to hold a series of 4 meetings with member library staff members at 4 different locations: Columbia, Boston College, University of Connecticut and Suffolk. All staff were invited and encouraged to attend. At each meeting we performed a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis with the group. We also undertook this exercise with

the library directors at the Oct. 2003 meeting at the University of Connecticut, and within the committee at one of our subsequent meetings. The results of these meetings, combined with our own discussions over the course of 6 committee meetings, culminated in this strategic plan.

In addition to the final plan, the committee made three important decisions. First, after reviewing the course and the results of the last strategic plan, we realized that we needed a standing planning committee to develop the operational plan and to execute and monitor the plan once the strategic plan was complete. That committee will be formed once the strategic plan is approved. Second, as a result of our discussions about ongoing planning, we determined that the vice-president/president-elect was a natural choice to head the standing planning committee. In this way, she or he would be involved with planning the direction of NELLCO for two years before assuming the office of president. This would allow the president to take office with a clearer view of the work and direction of the consortium. Third, as we discussed various aspects of the business of NELLCO we felt that it was important for us to develop a public statement of NELLCO's core values. We wanted to make it clear to people both within and outside of NELLCO that our internal decision-making processes are influenced by a set of important values that reflect our mission and vision. That statement of core values is included below.

This is intended to be a five-year strategic plan, commencing with its adoption in 2004 and guiding us through 2009. In 2007 at their spring meeting the Board of Directors shall assess the status of this plan. If it is determined that the goals of this plan are not being timely achieved the Board may call for an extension of this plan as needed. If the goals are being met and the plan is moving forward as expected a new strategic planning committee will need to be appointed to begin developing the next plan by 2008 in time for approval in 2009.

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS



MISSION

To provide efficient and effective access to legal resources by cooperating in a full range of resource sharing services that support the objectives of the individual law libraries of the member institutions and the group as a whole.



VISION

To be the leader of resource sharing and networking in the legal community through cutting-edge research and technology.

NELLCO STATEMENT OF CORE VALUES

The New England Law Library Consortium, NELLCO, is a member-driven organization. NELLCO exists to meet the resource sharing needs of its members in accordance with the organization's vision and mission statements. NELLCO, once a regional organization, now has members from across the United States. While our intent is to serve the membership, we are aware that often NELLCO's actions may have implications beyond the group. In an effort to be thoughtful, careful and visionary about decision-making within NELLCO we felt it was important to set forth the core values of the organization.

- 1) **LEADERSHIP** – NELLCO strives to be on the leading edge of resource sharing and collaboration between and among law libraries.
- 2) **COOPERATION** – NELLCO recognizes the benefits that accrue to our institutions, our staff and our users - faculty, students, attorneys, judges and the public - as well as to the library profession and to the publishers of legal information when we share our resources, expertise, time and energy.
- 3) **ADAPTABILITY** - NELLCO intends to be a nimble and flexible organization, able to adapt to the evolving needs of members and the shifting landscape of technology.
- 4) **DIVERSITY** – NELLCO members include multi-type libraries with diverse missions, disparate resources and distinct regional needs. Decisions made on behalf of the organization should recognize, respect and support these differences to the extent possible.
- 5) **EDUCATION** – NELLCO values the robust exchange of information and ideas, both among and between our own constituents and with those outside of the consortium with whom we may conduct business.

ORGANIZATION HISTORY AND PROFILE

The New England Law Library Consortium, NELLCO, was started in 1983 by 16 law library directors from throughout the New England region. NELLCO is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, and registered in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a charitable organization.

The idea to form a consortium was a direct response to the rising cost of legal information. The expectation was that by working collaboratively libraries would be able to share resources and cut costs. The first manifestation of those efforts was an agreement by the members to provide interlibrary loans services to one another at no charge, and to provide reciprocal access to the library patrons of all member libraries, thereby effectively sharing all of the member library collections with one another. Those agreements continue today and still provide significant cost savings for full member libraries.

Since 1983 NELLCO members have found numerous ways to leverage their collaborative advantage. Among them have been the successful submission of a grant for the group purchase of fax machines to facilitate ILL, the production of a NELLCO union catalog on CD-Rom, the development of a resource-sharing database, continuing collaborative acquisitions of both print and electronic resources, the creation of a model license, the electronic enhancement of Current Index to Legal Periodicals for member libraries, the development of a virtual reference service and the establishment of a shared repository for the legal scholarship emanating from our member institutions.

In 2004, NELLCO is a consortium of 65 law libraries. Of those, 60 are ABA-accredited academic law libraries and 5 are non-academic, not-for-profit law libraries of other types (including 4 state, court and county libraries and 1 membership library). Of our 65 members, 25 are full members and 40 are affiliate members. There is currently a moratorium on full membership through Oct. 2004. Affiliate membership is open to any ABA-accredited law school library. Full members enjoy board representation and all of the benefits and responsibilities associated with full membership. Affiliate members enjoy a more limited benefit, participating in the shared acquisition of electronic and print resources but without board representation or participation in other activities of the consortium, such as consortium initiatives (like virtual reference and the shared repository), interest groups, training opportunities and task force and committee work.

NELLCO is funded entirely by membership dues. Full members pay \$5000/year and affiliates pay \$1500/year. Those funds are used primarily, though not exclusively, to support the administrative infrastructure of the consortium, including the salary and benefits for the single staff position of Executive Director. Funds are also used to fund programs and to underwrite projects and initiatives of the consortium, such as virtual reference and our shared repository.

NELLCO is governed by our bylaws, which dictate our governance structure. Our Executive Committee is composed of four elected officers; treasurer, vice-

president/president-elect, president and immediate past president. Each office is held for a term of two years. Our Board of Directors is composed of one director appointed by each of the 25 full member institutions. Affiliate members do not have representation on the Board of Directors. NELLCO employs one full-time staff member, the Executive Director, who manages the day-to-day business and activities of the consortium.

STRATEGIC ISSUES

In the course of our strategic planning process, the committee was able to identify those areas of the consortium's activities that require our strategic attention. Over the course of numerous meetings with the committee and the series of strategic planning exercises with staff members from member libraries, we identified the following 5 primary strategic questions:

- 1) Which of the current activities of the consortium should be continued? Which should we abandon?
- 2) Should NELLCO continue to grow? If so, how should we manage that growth? What role should affiliate members play in NELLCO?
- 3) How can we improve communication within the consortium? How can we improve communication about NELLCO within member libraries?
- 4) Are there ways that we can exploit technology to maximize the participation of members in the life of the consortium?
- 5) How can we secure the arrangements for the administrative management of the executive directorship position?

Obviously, many more issues came up in the course of our planning. However, given our resources and our need to focus our efforts, we decided to select those issues that received the most attention during the information gathering stage of the planning process. These strategic questions will serve as the basis for our strategic goals and objectives.

It also became clear during the plan development stage that we needed to state the current activities of the consortium that will need to continue as we move into the implementation phase of this plan. We want to emphasize that the goals and objectives laid out in the plan do not replace the current business of the consortium.

ONGOING CONSORTIUM ACTIVITIES

The following NELLCO activities will continue to be part of the regular business of the consortium. Not all members benefit from every activity of the consortium. Some collaborative opportunities are available only to full members, while others are available for both full and affiliate members. Some of these activities are reiterated in the goals and objectives of the strategic plan as they directly address a specific strategic issue identified during the planning process. Others are not included in the plan.

Operations management – The daily operations of the consortium include:

- Manage consortium budget
- Manage membership accounts and inquiries
- Handle all consortium correspondence via mail, e-mail, telephone, fax
- Maintain NELLCO office and equipment
- Develop PR materials

Regular meetings/conferences attended by the Executive Director – In addition to numerous ad hoc, committee and task force meetings and consortium programs, the Executive Director is expected to attend the following meetings and conferences each year:

- Two Board of Directors meetings (spring and fall)
- Three interest group meetings (Acquisitions/Collection Development, ILL, Reference)
- Annual membership meeting (in conjunction with AALL every July)
- International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC) (spring)
- American Association of Law Libraries (July)
- Virtual Reference Desk Conference (Nov.)

In addition, the Executive Director may attend the following conferences when appropriate:

- Association of American Law Schools (Jan.)
- American Library Association (Jan., June)
- Computers in Libraries (spring)
- CALI (June)
- Internet Librarian (fall)
- Relevant regional/local meetings

Regular meetings of the Board of Directors – The Board of Directors is composed of the Directors of every full member library. At this time there are 25 full members.

- Directors will continue to meet twice yearly, spring and fall

Meetings of select interest groups – The interest groups are the primary vehicles through which library staff members participate in the consortium. They are organized to correspond loosely to job function within member libraries. The following groups will continue to function:

- Acquisitions and Collection Development interests meet once a year in spring
- Interlibrary Loan Interest Group meets once a year in spring/summer
- Reference Interest Group meets once a year in fall
- Other interest groups (Associate Directors, Technical Services) may meet on an ad hoc basis

Collaborative acquisition of electronic resources – The collaborative acquisition of e-resources is one of the primary benefits of membership, for both full and affiliate members. The tasks associated with this function are the most time consuming work of the executive director. They include:

- Establish trials
- Negotiate discounts
- Negotiate license terms and stay at the forefront of licensing issues (through standing committee)
- Manage IP authentication
- Centralize billing of all accounts
- Solicit members to submit reviews
- Manage membership accounts
- Customer service

Other initiatives, programs and services – Opportunities to collaborate arise in many areas. The nimbleness of NELLCO as an organization allows us to exploit those opportunities whenever they meet our mission and vision and make sense for the membership. We will continue:

- Reciprocal access for patrons of member libraries
- Reciprocal interlibrary loan
- Discounts on print purchases through Blackwell's and YBP
- Discounts on bar code purchases through ID Label
- Referral programs through Amazon and Alibris
- NELLCO's Resource Sharing Database
 - <http://www.nellco.org/LegalResources.cfm>
- Virtual reference – Library LAWLINE
 - <http://www.librarylawline.org>
- Collaborative repository - NELLCO Legal Scholarship Repository
 - <http://lsr.nellco.org>
- Virtual union catalog
 - <http://www.law.suffolk.edu/union/>

- *Current Index to Legal Periodicals* enhancement
 - <http://cilp.nellco.org>
- Shared e-books collection
- Licensing standing committee (chaired by Diane Frake (Vermont Law School))
- Internships and exchanges committee (chaired by Stephanie Burke (Boston University Law School))
- Collaborative Web Page Development Committee (chaired by Irene Good (Boston College Law School))

Web page management – The NELLCO website (<http://www.nellco.org>) is an important source of information and communication for members. The existing site continues to function and a new and improved site has been under development for some time now. We will continue to:

- Post new trial/license information
- Post news or information of interest to the membership
- Update and maintain web page content
- Work to enhance site efficiency, functionality, design and content

Professional development programs and training opportunities – Often, NELLCO organizes training or programs that are relevant to the membership and not widely available from other quarters. We will continue to:

- Coordinate training opportunities, such as virtual reference or Innovative Interfaces
- Offer programs on relevant and timely issues, such as disaster planning and workflow

STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

I. Program Goals

Goal A: To make the most efficient use of consortium resources, both fiscal and human, to maximize the benefits of membership.

Objectives:

- 1) Continue all current consortium activities around collaborative acquisition of electronic resources, including negotiating discounts, establishing trials, negotiating license terms, and centralized billing functions.
- 2) Create a standing planning committee, chaired by the Vice-President/President-Elect, to develop and implement the operational plan. In addition to the chair the committee shall include the executive director (ex-officio) and 3 other members, one of whom shall be a front-line staff member. The committee, which will be appointed by the Executive Board, will report to the Executive Board at least once each year.
- 3) Develop small formal advisory boards for each NELLCO special initiative (such as virtual reference and the repository) that will be charged with monitoring and evaluating the value of each initiative to the consortium, and making annual reports and recommendations to the Board of Directors.
- 4) Encourage and support opportunities for collaborating and sharing work product at all staff levels.

Goal B: To develop a growth strategy for NELLCO that meets the needs of the members.

Objectives:

- 1) Continue to accept ABA-accredited law school libraries as affiliate members at the start of the fiscal year as decided at the start of the affiliate program in 2003.
- 2) Extend the moratorium on new full members through fall 2005 in order to allow the Executive Board to develop a clear, written growth strategy for adoption by the Board of Directors at the fall 2005 meeting. The growth strategy should address:
 - The merits of opening full membership
 - The role of affiliate members (should participation remain limited to shared acquisitions or should it be opened to further involvement)

- Whether affiliate status should be offered to other types of non-profit law libraries
- The impact of recommendations on NELLCO infrastructure
- The impact of recommendations on current dues structure

Goal C: To improve communication channels within NELLCO.

Objectives:

- 1) Continue all current interest group activities, periodically evaluating the need for new groups and eliminating groups that have lived out their useful purpose.
- 2) Continue to work with an outside consultant to develop the new NELLCO web site in order to make it more efficient, dynamic, and user-friendly.
- 3) Establish an IT interest group to confer on technology issues of interest to the consortium.
- 4) Develop a web site advisory board to consult on content, functionality and management issues related to the NELLCO site.
- 5) Re-establish semi-annual meetings of the executive board and the executive director.
- 6) Executive Board will appoint an editor to create a regular web-based communication vehicle, such as a monthly newsletter.
- 7) Develop materials for use within NELLCO member libraries to convey a consistent message about the benefits of NELLCO and the opportunities for and importance of participation by staff.

Goal D: Provide a means for members to attend meetings or otherwise participate in the life of the consortium in a virtual environment.

Objectives:

- 1) Members of the IT interest group shall explore the possibilities for NELLCO to exploit technology solutions for virtual participation, including but not limited to the potential purchase or license of virtual meeting software, perhaps through grant funding, and shall make recommendations to the Executive Board.

II. Management/Operations Goals

Goal A: Secure the administrative relationship of the position of executive director.

Objectives:

- 1) Negotiate a written contract with Yale Law School to formalize the current relationship.
- 2) Investigate best form for long-term administrative structure of NELLCO, including the potential for additional staff and the possibility of an independent provider for employee compensation and benefits.
- 3) Develop a contingency plan to maintain the activities of the consortium in the absence of the executive director.

Goal B: Establish evaluation process for executive director.

- 1) Executive Board shall establish standards and process for evaluation and compensation of the executive director and shall initiate annual evaluation of executive director.

APPENDIX A – CURRENT MEMBER LIST

<u>FULL MEMBERS</u>	<u>AFFILIATE MEMBERS</u>
Albany Law School	American University
Boston College	Arizona State
Boston University	Baylor
Columbia	Brooklyn
CT State Library	California Western
CT Judicial Branch Library System	Cardozo
Cornell	Chicago-Kent
Fordham	Cleveland State
Franklin Pierce	Duke
Harvard	Georgetown
MA Trial Court Libraries	Gonzaga
New England School of Law	Hofstra
New York University	Louisiana State
Northeastern	Loyola Law School
Quinnipiac	Mercer
RI State Library	New York Law School
Roger Williams	Northwestern
Social Law	Notre Dame
Suffolk	Nova Southeastern
University of Conn	Pace
University of Maine	Pepperdine
University of PA	Seattle University
Vermont Law School	Southern Methodist
Western New England	Southwestern
Yale Law School	St. John's
	St. Thomas (FL)
	Syracuse
	Texas Wesleyan
	University of Arkansas Little Rock
	University of California Hastings
	University of Hawaii
	University of Idaho
	University of Miami
	University of Minnesota
	University of the Pacific - McGeorge School of Law
	University of San Francisco
	University of So. Cal.
	Whittier
	Widener
	Willamette

APPENDIX B – PLANNING DEFINITIONS AND PRINCIPLES

WHAT IS AN OPERATIONAL PLAN?

- 1) Functional, short-term and current-focused
- 2) Reflects and implements the strategic plan
- 3) Specifies process and objectives
- 4) Developed by those responsible for implementation
- 5) Provides tools for implementation, monitoring & reference
- 6) Realistic
- 7) Provides ongoing environmental scan

WHAT IS A STRATEGIC PLAN?

- 1) Fundamental, directional and future-oriented
- 2) Provides guidance for the long term
- 3) Allocates resources
- 4) Clear to outsiders
- 5) Reflects an understanding of internal and external environments
- 6) Develops from consensus and commitment-building
- 7) Formally adopted by Board of Directors
- 8) Subject to change

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

- 1) Inclusiveness
- 2) Responsiveness
- 3) Creativity
- 4) Nimbleness
- 5) Realism
- 6) Critical analysis
- 7) Confidentiality
- 8) Humor
- 9) Accountability