Creative IT Partnerships for the Solo Librarian

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Case 1:

Find People Who Need What You Need:

Two Solo Librarians, stuck on an antiquated non-MARC ILS, create a mini-consortium for hosted open-source Koha.
• Similar size libraries with similar staff, IT, and budget issues
  • Very different collections and user groups
• Similar needs
  • Different funding sources and management
Is it Worthwhile: Are there real savings?

Financial savings

Staff of two libraries can support each other

Good will and better grant opportunities
Is it Worthwhile: What might you have to give up?

Less flexibility

Less freedom to customize

Contracts can be more complex
Is this a good partner?

How much interaction will you have?

Can you work together?

The person in the position now won’t be there forever

Institutional policies & practices compatible?

You need a basic formal agreement and written procedures
Vendor implemented shared solution that looks like 2 separate systems

“Mini-consortium” is working well for librarians

Library users have no idea the system is shared

We love hosted open source
Case 2: Find People Who Have What You Need

Heaven and Hell:

Agreeing to be a guinea pig in exchange for a system to handle digital archives resources
• New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs IT to implement a Collective Access system for management and discovery of digital archival material at the Bartlett Library

• Librarian to create procedures, workflows, and standards that could be used by other agencies

(Oh, whoops – trapped by another state budget crisis...)
Always have a Plan B

...and C and D and E and so on...

Three new partners are already onboard to work on a shared implementation of Collective Access

because IT takes a village