

Utilizing the Power of Continuous Process Improvement in Technical Services

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Project Goals

Examine the efficiency of work processes in the Technical Services Department, with the goal of reducing the turnaround time by **50% or more** for three specific processes:

1. Monographs from “order to shelving”
2. Implementing serials title changes
3. Handling of journal issues from “receipt to binding”



Who We Are

UMass Medical School

- Mass.' only public medical school
- Currently ranked third in primary care education among U.S. medical schools by *U.S. News & World Report*
- 800+ students
- School of Medicine, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Graduate School of Nursing
- Clinical partner: UMass Memorial Health Care

Lamar Soutter Library

- NLM Regional Medical Library for New England Region
- Over 80,000 volumes
- Journal subscriptions: 1430 print, 3200 electronic
- 8 FTE in Technical Services
- Special collections: rare books, government documents, consumer health materials, early childhood and pediatric resources
- Selective depository library in the Federal Depository Library Program

Timeline

July 2003

CPI team formed

January 2004

Recommendations submitted

February 2004-
July 2004

Pilot project

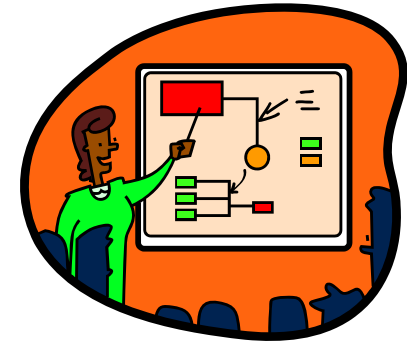


August 2004

Final report to be submitted

Project Management

- 2 teams: books and journals
- Both chaired by Associate Director for Technical Services
- Weekly meetings
- Timed current workflows
- Spreadsheets and flowcharts
- Report and recommendations for pilot submitted to management team



Continuous Process Improvement

- Many different methods and approaches
- How can we do things better?
- Uses “small steps” improvements
- Eliminate activities that have no value
- 80/20 rule: often said that processes account for 80% of problems while people account for 20%

(<http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/perform/process.html>, May 11, 2004)

Continuous Process Improvement

- Presentation to library staff from university's human resources department about one approach:
value-added flow analysis
- Video from American Management Association: "Time: The Next Dimension of Quality"



Value-Added Flow Analysis

1. Imagine yourself as the actual thing in process
2. Identify steps in the process
3. Determine if the steps add value:
 - The customer cares about it and recognizes it is important and correct (important to note that for Technical Services, customers are library staff and patrons)
 - The step physically changes the thing in process (moving/copying doesn't count)
 - The step is done right the first time

Value-Added Flow Analysis

Example: Copy cataloging a book from NLM copy in CatME



Steps	Timing
Locate record in Acquisitions file and move to personal file	1 minute
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review cataloging• Write call number in back of book and attach barcode• Click Produce, Export, Labels	3.5 minutes
Batch menu – Local Processing – Export, Print Labels	2 minutes

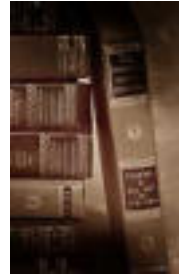
Goal 1: Monographs from “Order to Shelving”

Analysis revealed:

- Approval books are held for review yet not being reviewed
- Extra step to suppress items ordered but not yet cataloged in OPAC
- Duplicative work, e.g., more than one person reviewing records



Goal 1: Monographs from “Order to Shelving”



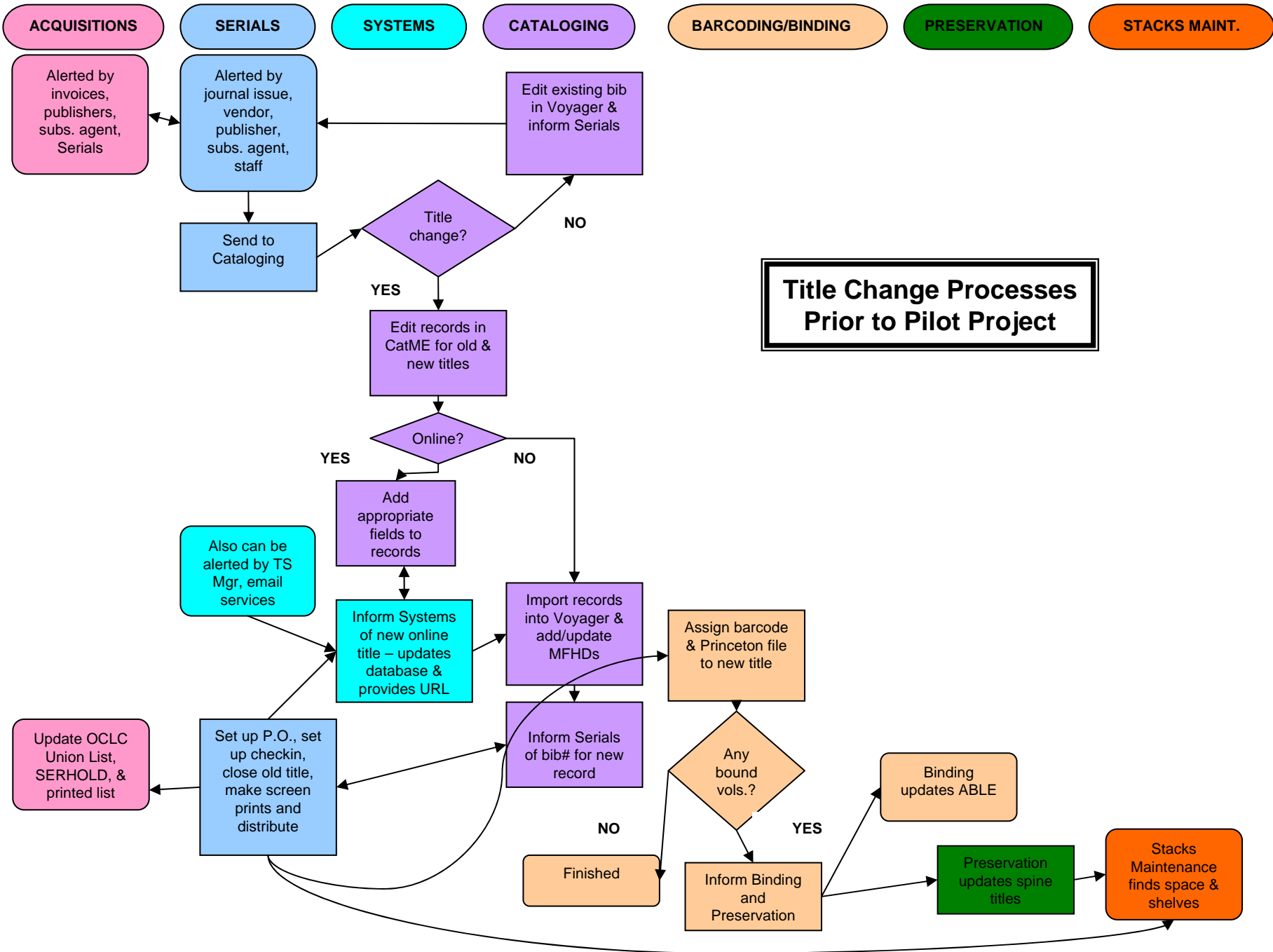
Major recommendations:

- Reduce review period for approval books from 30 to 5 days
- Do not suppress “on order” records in OPAC
- Develop a “cataloging on demand” service for newly received books with guaranteed 48-hour turnaround
- Eliminate duplicative processes

Goal 2: Implementing Serials Title Changes

Analysis revealed:

- Not enough communication among staff
- Much duplication of effort
- Process taking much longer than necessary
- Staff and patrons relying on printed holdings list that is often outdated or inaccurate

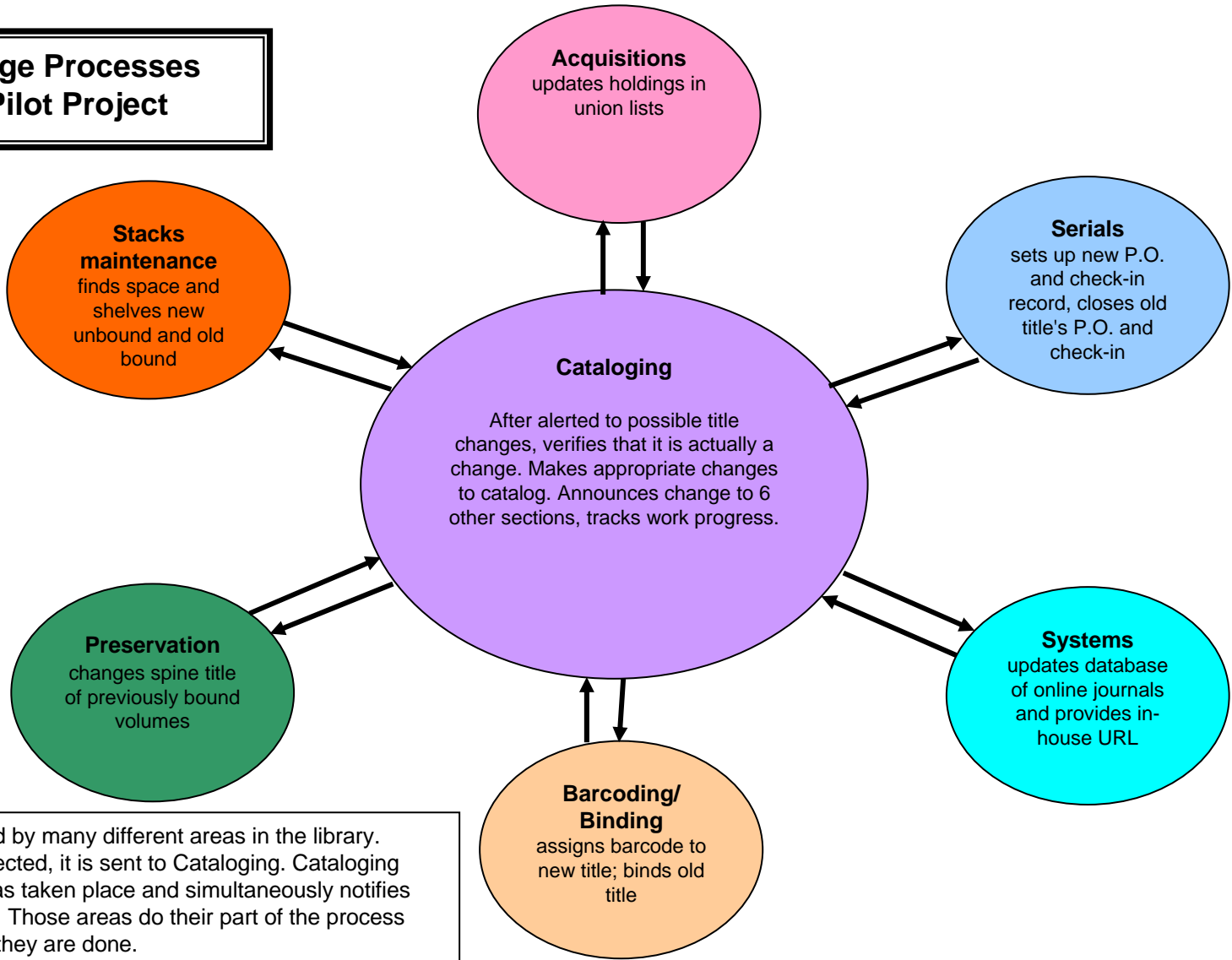


Goal 2: Implementing Serials Title Changes

Major recommendations:

- Develop e-mail or electronic tracking system to be used by staff when title change is identified
- Test a goal of 10 working days for in-house systems to be updated
- Encourage staff and patrons to search OPAC for serials information
 - Discontinue manual updating of printed holdings list (print annually only)
 - Provide more training and documentation

**Title Change Processes
during Pilot Project**



Title changes are discovered by many different areas in the library. When a title change is suspected, it is sent to Cataloging. Cataloging verifies that a title change has taken place and simultaneously notifies six other areas of the library. Those areas do their part of the process and notify Cataloging when they are done.

Goal 3: Journals from “Receipt to Binding”

Analysis revealed:

- Longest delay in process is time spent waiting to be bound (lack of sufficient funds in budget)
- Tattle taping each issue is costly and time-consuming, and tapes are then replaced in the binding process
- Policy to stamp each bound volume with library name on three edges is time-consuming and redundant
- Generally online issues of titles appear in advance of print copies, but analysis inconclusive



Goal 3:

Journals from “Receipt to Binding”

Major recommendations:

- Discontinue keeping daily check-in statistics manually
- Develop priority list for binding
- Estimate binding costs for calendar year and submit in budget request
- Rubber stamp library name on top edge only of bound volumes
- Tattle taping a good insurance policy, but investigate reliability of less expensive tattle tape



Pilot Project

- In progress now (February-July 2004)
- At conclusion, processes will need to be re-timed
- Freezing of book budget has prevented us from adequately testing book recommendations



Conclusions

- Value-added flow analysis is a useful tool for continuous process improvement
- We anticipate project goals will be achieved
- Technical Services better able to serve its internal and external customers
- Technical Services staff will have more time available for other projects: image database, rare books cataloging, digitization of Clara Barton letters

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