

The SCLS Windows 7 Patron PC Model

South Central Library System, last revised December 14, 2010

Introduction

In 2011, the South Central Library System will be undertaking two major technology projects: the move to Microsoft Windows 7 operating system and the consolidation of SCLS supported computers on one unified network after fiber optic connectivity is installed at member libraries. Both of these projects allow us to radically re-envision many of the products and services we offer, including the Patron PC experience.

This document details our plans for Patron PCs on the SCLS network. It includes a list of the applications and services we plan to offer on two separate Patron PC models.

The Patron PC Survey

Our first step in creating a Patron PC model was to ask our member libraries what they would like in a Patron PC. In September of 2010, we created a survey tool in order to figure out what sort of software applications libraries wanted on a Patron PC, what sort of tools and applications were missing from the current model, and how they envisioned SCLS support.

Some of the highlights from the survey include:

Uses for Public PCs

Results indicate patron PCs are used primarily for Internet browsing, social media, email, games, Office applications, and filling out job applications. Some of the uses we didn't list but which were mentioned by respondents include: watching movies, burning CDs, instant messaging, and video conferencing. Some staff noted that patrons don't scan because their library does not have scanning capabilities.

Gadgets that patrons bring in to interact with public PCs

The 3 "biggies" in this category were iPods, other MP3 players, and digital cameras.

Privacy and security

Responses for this question indicated both physical and technological concerns about privacy and security. Some patrons are concerned about others being able to see what they are doing and where they are going while they are using a public library workstation. Some patrons are concerned about others having access to their private information, browsing history, credit card or bank information on the PC after they are done using it.

Unmet needs and desired features

The "patron needs that are currently unmet" and "desired features, applications, and services for public PCs" overlapped quite a bit (which makes perfect sense!). Some of the needs/features identified include: scanners, photo and video editing software, downloading eBooks and music, right-clicking, better support for cameras & USB drives, and consistency in programs, shortcuts and versions of software among PCs.

After examining the survey results and talking directly with many of our member libraries, it became clear to the Technology Team that a two model system for Patron PCs would meet most of the needs of the libraries: A "Full-Featured" Patron PC containing numerous software applications and a limited featured "Catalog" PC that allows quick access to LINKcat, the electronic databases, and the Library Online Reservation system if needed.

The Full-Featured Windows 7 Patron PC Model

Most of the Patron PCs supported by SCLS will be considered Full-Featured Patron PCs. Think of this model as the one most used by patrons who need to conduct research, access the Internet, create documents and presentations, and work with other media such as digital photos and video. The Full-Featured model will be rich with applications, including

- **Windows 7 Operating System**
Each PC will feature the Windows 7 operating system, incorporating the latest features and security provided by this new OS
- **DVD Player (if hardware is available)**
Patrons will be able to use the PC to view DVDs
- **CD/DVD Burning ((if hardware is available)**
Patrons will be able to burn data to CDs and DVDs on the Patron PCs
- **Document Scanners (Optional)**
If desired by the library, a document scanner can be attached, allowing the patrons to convert analog media such as photographs into digital images. Each workstation would be configured to accept the SCLS supported scanner, meaning libraries will be able to purchase far fewer scanners yet they'll operate on all of the Patron workstations.
- **Photo Editing Software (Free)**
Each PC will have software installed that patrons can use to edit, manipulate, and save digital images

- Microsoft Office Suite (See cost comment at bottom of this section)
A full range of Microsoft Office products will be available to the patrons including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, and Access
- Digital Camera Support (Optional)
With the addition of a SCLS-supported multi card reader, patrons can easily download the photos saved on their camera's memory card (ie: SD card) onto the Patron PC
- Video Editing Software (Free)
Video editing software will be included, allowing patrons to make simple digital videos
- Video and Audio Conferencing (With purchase of additional optional hardware)
Software such as Skype will be available for patrons.
- Overdrive
The Overdrive media console will be available to patrons
- Printing
Each PC will be able to print to local and network printers located in the library
- USB Drive Access
Patrons bringing in a USB Flash drive would be able to retrieve and save data from the Patron PC
- Accessibility Tools (Free)
Each Patron PC will have accessibility tools like Magnifier and Narrator installed
- Time Management Suite (Optional)
Libraries can utilize the Library Online software suite to manage patrons' time on Patron PCs

With the exception of the Microsoft Office Suite and the optional Library Online software, all of the various applications listed above are either included with the Windows 7 operating system or are applications that are free to use. Moreover, optional hardware components such as scanners, video conferencing equipment, or digital camera hardware could be purchased through SCLS.

The Catalog PC Model

Currently, most libraries have one or more LINK PC devoted to a set of very limited features and functions. Sometimes called "Restricted Browsing" or "Reduced Features" (or both!), these PCs

function to provide patrons quick access to LINKcat or the subscribed databases without having to reserve a PC or wait for one to be available.

We plan on continuing to offer this service to member libraries using a similar model. The Catalog PC will have the following features for patrons:

- Access to LINKcat
Each PC will be able to go directly to the LINKcat catalog website, allowing patrons to search for materials and place holds on items
- Access to the Library Website
Each PC would have full access to the library's web pages
- Access to library-subscribed databases
Each PC will have direct access to the various electronic databases purchased by the library
- Access to other websites
Each PC would have access to other designated web pages such as the IRS website
- Access to the Library Online reservation system
If a library subscribes to Library Online, their patrons will be able to use the Catalog PCs to reserve a Full-Featured PC
- Access to Library Subscription Services
Each PC would be able to access the optional, library-subscribed services such as the EVANCED calendaring site, Dear Reader, or Book Leaves
- Printing
Printing to a local or networked library printer will be available
- Accessibility Tools
Each Patron PC will have accessibility tools like Magnifier and Narrator installed
- USB Drive Access
Patrons bringing in a USB Flash drive would be able to save data from the Patron PC
- Multiple Browsing capabilities
Each Catalog PC will have multiple browsers installed in order to support resources on the Web.

The Partnership Program and the Patron PC Model

Given the fact that SCLS supports over 1,200 PCs in 52 libraries, you can guess that the two models described above will not be able to match perfectly the vision a library might have for their own PCs. Though we believe that the two models proposed will fulfill the vast majority of member library needs, we are in the process of developing a new service called the SCLS Partnership Program that will allow member libraries greater access to their Patron PCs.

For example, if a library chooses not to offer one of the applications on the Full-Function PC, they could join the Partnership Program and remove access to the application in question.

The Value of an SCLS-Supported PC

An SCLS-Supported Patron PC is much more than just the applications and programs available to the patron. With each PC comes a wide range of services that make the PC that much more valuable. Some of these services include:

- Antivirus software
Each SCLS-supported PC will come with the Sophos Antivirus client installed.
- Robust, consistent Internet bandwidth
- Automatic Authentication
A PC connected to the SCLS network automatically authenticates with all of our electronic databases.
- Fully supported and enhanced Wireless access
After the fiber is installed in your library, SCLS will be able to provide you with a more consistent wireless connection than a commercial provider such as Charter can. Moreover, there will be no need to pay a commercial provider for additional network access beyond SCLS. In the future, SCLS will also offer secure wireless connectivity for staff.
- Remote Management of PCs
SCLS technicians will have the ability to remotely access all SCLS-Supported PCs in order to diagnose and troubleshoot issues.
- Automatic Updates
PCs connected to the network receive automatic software updates with no need for a technician to be present to install the software.
- Documentation
Help files and other documentation are provided to help patrons with Patron PC features.

- **Unified Help Desk**
As we transition Patron (and Staff) PCs to Windows 7 and the SCLS Network, we will be able to provide member libraries with a unified Help Desk, providing technical support for all Patron and Staff machines as well as wireless support.
- **Skilled Technicians**
Each PC comes with the backing of several highly skilled IT technicians who can diagnose and promptly fix PC issues remotely, while continuing to provide on-site help whenever needed.
- **PC and Peripheral support**
So much of what goes into supporting a PC can seem invisible to most users. The SCLS model is one of “Cradle to Grave” support, and includes:
 - Extensive research on PC makes and models
 - A single point of contact purchasing
 - Warranty support by serving as liaison to PC manufacturer
 - Prepping and installation of new PCs
 - A Spares Pool of PCs available for PCs in for service
 - Peripheral support including barcode scanners, document scanners and printers
- **Technology Planning and Consulting**
 - Workstation status reports from the SCLS inventory database will now be available for all SCLS PCs to assist in PC lifecycle planning
 - Assistance in creating a technology plan for your library
 - Future SCLS Technologies such as E-commerce and print management