



NOBLE

NORTH OF
BOSTON
LIBRARY
EXCHANGE, INC.

Value of NOBLE Membership, 2020

Each year we attempt to calculate the value of NOBLE membership through the value of services provided by NOBLE as compared to the cost of similar services contracted directly by a single library.

The services provided through NOBLE membership result in a very significant saving over the services acquired individually, as you will see on the following pages.

I hope you will find the numbers useful for comparison. Please feel free to share them as appropriate.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Ronald A. Gagnon
Executive Director

December 14, 2020



NOBLE

Value of NOBLE Membership, 2020

By banding together to save money and improve service, the libraries of NOBLE receive a considerable saving compared to going alone or being a part of other library confederations more limited in scope and synergy.

Access to Wider Variety and Quantity of Resources

Over \$17.8 million dollars worth of materials were shared among NOBLE libraries in FY2020 – 307,250 items sent to other libraries for local pickup, and 303,124 items borrowed in person at a NOBLE library other than their home library – cost-effectively meeting the needs of the 500,000 members of our communities and academic institutions. Averaged out, that is nearly \$776,000 of resources coming to each full NOBLE library member last year.

Doctoral research materials to children's picture books are available via resource sharing among NOBLE libraries, including 2.3 million books, over 100,000 audio recordings and 160,000 videos.

Greater access to materials is also provided through our connection to the statewide Commonwealth Catalog, with many more millions of items from academic and public libraries across the state available for direct request and delivery to any NOBLE library.

Note: Sharing numbers for physical items are down approximately 18% due to libraries being closed for much of the last quarter of FY2020 due to the pandemic.

OverDrive: Downloadable ebooks, audiobooks and magazines

NOBLE's OverDrive service provides online access to popular downloadable audiobooks and ebooks. Over 28,600 ebooks and over 9,900 audiobooks are available, with 125 in "always available" unlimited user format. The total collection has grown 12.5% in the past year. A recent addition is a collection of 50 always-available popular magazines with current and recent issues.

The total cost of a library seeking to build a similar collection would be over \$1.6 million.

NOBLE partners with six other Massachusetts library networks and the Boston Public Library to reciprocally share their OverDrive collections, expanding the available items and the value of participating in NOBLE's OverDrive collection to 747,803 copies.

Total FY20 OverDrive materials investment: \$453,818
NOBLE expenditure: \$233,200
Library Advantage expenditures: \$220,618
Ongoing server costs: \$ 12,000 per year

The online nature of the NOBLE OverDrive collection is an especially important resource to continue to provide service as library buildings close or limit access due to the pandemic. While overall FY2020 NOBLE OverDrive usage was up 25%, NOBLE OverDrive ebook usage during the spring and summer, March through August, was up 93% compared to the same months in 2019.

Integrated Library System: Circulation, Catalog and More

The cost of a standalone hosted vendor system with a comparable software package would be approximately \$90,000 for the initial year and approximately \$30,000 in subsequent years for a single library.

Cost of a hosted standalone Evergreen system would be \$10,000 for a server for a single library, plus approximately \$15,000 in configuration, data conversion and training costs.

A system librarian for approximately \$77,000 per year (with benefits) would be required for system operation, training, software updates, reports, etc.

Cost of at least a part-time professional cataloger (or additional cataloging hours) for searching and downloading MARC records for a local catalog, authority control and database maintenance, new books lists, etc., \$25,000 per year. Add the cost for downloading catalog records for all new titles, at approximately \$1.00 per title.

Total annual cost: vendor system 1st year: \$194,000 Evergreen 1st year: \$129,000
2nd year: \$134,000 2nd year: \$114,000

Changing to another Massachusetts network would require significant one-time costs for startup, system licenses, training and data migration in excess of \$50,000.

Manual Alternative:

Personnel costs of manually generating notices, maintaining overdue stop list, and catalog maintenance: \$83,000. (Manual process would have no access to other library collections.)

[2 full time workers @ \$16/hr. plus 33% for benefits, taxes, worker's comp]

EBSCO Periodical Databases:

NOBLE's EBSCO package of online databases provides over 4,000 full text titles in general periodicals, academic, business and health databases.

Average price of periodical titles in EBSCO's principal library database, MasterFile Premier for 2020 was \$349, as published in *Library Journal*, April, 2020.

Total value per library of current year's subscriptions in EBSCO if individual subscriptions to the titles were purchased [*without* home and Web access and backfile]: \$1,396,000.

The number of full-text articles accessed from the base database package shared by all libraries totaled 39,632, which works out to \$2.72 per article, a bargain for instant, always-available access to authoritative information.*

Single site purchase of comparable EBSCO databases is substantially more per year for a standalone library vs. through NOBLE group purchase: total annual standalone EBSCO cost for an average NOBLE library: \$39,879, saving each NOBLE library \$34,953 per year.

Member libraries can also take advantage of additional savings on a wide offering of optional EBSCO databases, ranging from academic research to crafts and *Consumer Reports*, many at half the price through NOBLE membership.

**Due to schools being closed mid-March through June, research assignments were sharply reduced which lowered usage of NOBLE EBSCO databases, increasing the cost per article accessed.*

Novelist: Readers Advisory and Collection Promotion

Novelist Plus is the premier database of reading recommendations, a comprehensive source of information about books that includes expert recommendations, reviews, articles, lists and more, covering fiction and nonfiction. Also included is Novelist K-8 Plus, a database about books specifically for younger readers, helping young readers

find books that are just right for their reading level and interests. Parents, teachers, and librarians can also find tools to teach with books and engage young readers.

NoveList Select is also provided to all NOBLE libraries in our catalog search display. Select provides additional information for book discovery by library users, with features such as reading recommendations, series information, book reviews, book jackets, and more.

Together, the NoveList services help to maximize the investment in library collections by recommending items already available in our libraries, directing users beyond current bestsellers.

Standalone cost of the NoveList suite would be approximately \$2,500, but is included in NOBLE membership.

Training and Consulting sessions:

Training and consulting are two important functions of NOBLE that are included with membership.

Training:

A total of 34 training/update sessions were held in FY2020 with 624 total attendees, or 26 attendees per full member library over the year.

At a comparable price of \$150 per person per training session, this represents an average value of \$3,900 per full member library.

Consulting:

Each library is eligible for two half-day onsite training or consulting sessions per fiscal year. Cost for similar services start at \$500 per session, total comparable value \$1,000.

In FY2020, 43 sessions were requested, with 84 attendees, a total value of \$21,500 delivered to NOBLE libraries as part of membership.

Authenticating Access to Electronic Resources

NOBLE provides proxy service via EZproxy to provide secure and expedited access to the variety of electronic resources provided by our member libraries and NOBLE. The service verifies that the user is eligible for the electronic resource by verifying their identity in Evergreen or recognizing their IP address.

Annual cost for OCLC's EZproxy service for a standalone library would be \$650, but is included in NOBLE membership.

Internet Access:

150 Mbps service from Comcast with a static IP address would total \$1,882 per year for service. Additional startup costs, including \$3,500 for a router and switches, would be required. Maintenance and monitoring of router and related equipment is \$1,200 per year. All of this is provided by NOBLE.

First year: \$6,582

Following years: \$3,082/yr.

Digital Heritage Server:

NOBLE Digital Heritage is a site showcasing and storing digitized items related to the history of NOBLE's communities, both public and academic.

Images, maps, books, manuscripts and sound files can all be searched and accessed. Searches can be conducted across all NOBLE collections or within a library's holdings or a sub-collection. Our collection is harvested and made available through the state's Digital Commonwealth site and the national Digital Public Library of America (DPLA).

Digital Heritage service is available to all full member libraries at no extra charge.

To have a comparable OCLC ContentDM small site with support would cost a library upwards of \$6,000 per year.

Discounted PCs and Group Purchases:

NOBLE's group purchase makes Dell PCs available to our member libraries at pricing lower than state contract pricing. Separate models are available for more powerful staff workstations and public workstations as selected and recommended by NOBLE staff.

In FY20, 11 NOBLE libraries purchased a total of 122 PCs and laptops, and 53 monitors and other peripherals, with the purchases totaling \$84,659. Compared to the standard Mass. state contract, ITC47, the saving per workstation was \$179 for staff workstation models and \$180 for public workstation models, a reduction of

25%, saving \$18,651 across NOBLE in FY20, or an average \$1,695 per library participating in the group hardware purchase.

NOBLE also provides discounted group purchase pricing on Envisionware PC management and printing services and Wowbrary new item promotion services, plus the full range of EBSCO databases.

Onsite Technology Support:

NOBLE's optional onsite PC support provides ongoing PC maintenance at an annual rate per PC that is less than the charge for an hour of PC work by most vendors, including state contract vendors, and less than a third of the cost of commercial contracts. In addition to lower costs, NOBLE's PC Support staff have specialized knowledge and experience with library software, including Evergreen, Envisionware and Deep Freeze, that can speed setup and repairs. The service includes anti-virus and anti-ransomware software.

Thirteen libraries participate in the program, with a total of 718 devices under maintenance, providing an average saving of over \$11,000 per participating library each year.

By using NOBLE's PC service, library staff can remain focused on library service rather than unexpected computer issues, maximizing valuable staff resources.

Web Site Hosting

Hosting of library web sites is available from NOBLE at an ongoing cost of \$500 per year, plus a one-time setup fee of \$375. NOBLE staff provides support and integration with our services and servers. Cost includes a subscription to JetPack, providing daily online backups and ongoing security and malware protection. Comparable cost is \$700 per year, saving \$200 per year.

State Funding Support

Being a part of NOBLE means sharing in over \$280,966 in subsidies from the state library agency, the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners, which helps to underwrite the costs of sharing resources and connecting our libraries to each other and the Internet. For FY20, that support underwrites \$12,216 of the cost of NOBLE services per library.

Personal networking opportunities, e-mail discussions, information sharing:

Priceless

**Standalone cost for a single library for the same package of services:
\$2,425,945**

Average actual NOBLE cost: \$62,679

97% saving through NOBLE membership