



Background

BDL has been at the forefront of technology for a long time. We computerized our circulation system shortly after the district formed in the early 1990s. BDL was the first Internet service provider for Branch County in the mid 1990s. Since 2003, we have more than doubled the number of public access computers, and these computers are all pre-loaded with useful software to help our patrons accomplish a wide array of tasks.

BDL began providing wireless Internet access to our patrons at all locations in 2004. In 2007, we helped to bring high-speed wireless Internet service to Algansee township, an area underserved with connectivity. In 2008, we became the first public library in Michigan to switch to the open-source Evergreen Integrated Library System, saving money while increasing features and future potential. In 2010, we started our OverDrive program, opening up the world of e-books to our patrons. In 2011, we started offering Mango, an online language learning platform. In 2015, we upgraded the district's internal network connections to gigabit ethernet. In 2016, we began offering the Hoopla digital media platform to our patrons, as well as providing wireless printing from patron's own devices. In 2017, we brought in tablet computers for the youngest BDL patrons, deployed document scanners to help our adult patrons with their business and office needs, and installed a modern voice-over-Internet-protocol telephone system at all locations.

In 2019, BDL faces an interesting challenge in terms of available space. There are certainly additional new and exciting services we would love to offer our patrons—maker spaces, audiovisual labs, and more—but our existing space constraints are putting a damper on further expansion at this time. Creative solutions may be required, both in terms of facilities and budgets, to continue to keep our technological services at the forefront of what public libraries offer. The availability of sufficient network speeds in our more rural locations will continue to be a problem, especially with continually increasing usage of the public's own mobile devices in our facilities.

Mission Statement

To provide the people of our communities with library collections and services to meet their educational, informational, and recreational needs.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to provide vibrant resources and inclusive spaces for people to thrive through innovation, education, and entertainment.

Technology Goal

A robust technological infrastructure is a requirement for the Library to achieve the goals in the above Mission and Vision statements. Technology comprises an ever-increasing part of what it takes to be a successful library, something that the Branch District Library (BDL) has recognized for decades. It is our goal at BDL not only to continue to offer high-quality technology resources, but to stay at the forefront of technological trends that will maximize the impact of our library services on our community.

Strategies

Achieving the above goal will require financial investment in hardware and software, digital services, and training to library staff and the public. We will maintain our Library's computer resources at approximately the levels they were in 2018, while carefully examining usage statistics, patron needs, and feedback to determine if our computing and network infrastructures need changes.

Recognizing that library services—and education and entertainment in general—are increasingly relying on delivery over the Internet, BDL will always seek to maximize our Internet connectivity. We will continue to stay highly engaged with our patrons through our web site, social media presence, and other online communication.

Change is a fact of life when dealing with technology. BDL will continue to train staff on what they need to know to successfully perform their duties via in-house training, remote workshops, online courses, and any other effective means that is available. Library staff will continue to foster technological literacy to our patrons through group training and special events, guest presenters, and interactive one-on-one classes to address patron needs.

Evaluation

BDL will conduct periodic technology user surveys, either on their own or as part of larger, library-wide user surveys. Shortcuts are on the desktops of all library-provided computers so that patrons can easily and anonymously offer their feedback on our technology, or any other aspect of library service. We also offer written pre-paid postcards to send feedback to the library.

Library staff, for whom technology is a key job skill, will be evaluated on their technological skills at minimum as part of their annual performance review, and

throughout the year as needed. Periodic quizzes will be administered to staff to help assess their technological readiness.

Funding

To maintain our 2018 levels of service, BDL will attempt to provide approximately \$40,000 per year from the Operating Budget to fund system-wide hardware maintenance, as funding and needs permit and warrant. In addition, materials budgets will also include dedicated funding for digital resources and online services selected by the library to best meet the needs of our patrons. Wherever feasible and available, grant monies or reimbursements will be used to offset costs of our technological offerings or enhance technological services.

We will attempt to set our annual hardware spending estimates to a target of three-quarters to seven-eighths of the budget amount to leave room for unexpected expenses.

Bidding

Whenever feasible, competitive bids from at least three vendors will be sought for all major purchases, per the BDL Purchasing Policy.

Inventory Overview and Replacement Schedule

At BDL we strive to keep the actively used public and staff computers on a five-year replacement schedule. "Computer" in this case is defined broadly as a server, desktop, laptop, tablet, or other mobile device that is directly involved in supporting staff or patron general purpose computing needs. There are approximately 149 computers as part of this rotation (51 staff-use computers, 88 public-use computers, and 10 servers). The computers providing access to our online catalog are not part of this rotation. These less critical machines are pulled from public- and staff-use computers that have aged out.

Printers, cash registers, time clocks, and scanners are also kept on a five-to-ten-year replacement schedule, as much as possible. It is important not to run such devices past their dates of support and operating system driver availability. There are currently 27 receipt printers, 17 laser printers, 1 inkjet printer, and a handful of label printers in use at BDL. There are 6 tablets used as time clocks and 6 tablets used as cash registers currently in use. We have 18 flatbed scanners, 17 document scanners, and 4 microfilm scanners.

Displays, networking gear, barcode scanners, and other sturdier technology that do not require operating system drivers are generally kept for the duration of their functional life, or until a major upgrade is planned. The same goes for the networked

media players that we employ around the district for digital signage and audiovisual cart usage.

Hardware that has aged out and is no longer needed is donated to eligible non-profit organizations, sold in accordance to library policy and any applicable grant terms, or recycled, as the situation warrants.

Purchasing Assumptions

While technology costs generally decline over time, the cost of a decent PC workstation capable of withstanding abuse from public use for five or more years has remained surprisingly consistent: between \$500-\$700 each. For planning purposes, the cost of a workstation is assumed to be \$600, whether it is a desktop or a laptop.

Displays are assumed to be \$130. Receipt printers are typically around \$300. Barcode scanners are about \$325. Tablet computers and camera smartphones cost about \$300. Macintosh desktops count as 2 PC desktops, and the Library Director's and IT Director's and Assistant Director's Macintoshes count as a server. Servers, of which there 1 at each smaller branch and 5 at Coldwater, run about \$3,000 each. Other less-common items will have their cost estimates noted in the plan below.

Year 1: 2020

Replacing computers originally purchased through 2015.

	Staff PCs	Staff Macs	Public PCs	Tablets	Servers	Totals
Alganssee	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bronson	6	0	1	0	0	7
Coldwater	5	2	16	0	3	26
Quincy	0	1	0	0	0	1
Sherwood	0	0	0	0	0	0
Union Twp.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	11	3	17	0	3	34
Cost	\$6,600	\$3,600	\$10,200	\$ 0	\$9,000	\$29,400

Other: replacing 20 displays: \$2,600

Replace all wifi access points: \$3,000

Grand total: \$35,000

Alganssee

None

Bronson

Staff: Basement Staff, Media Center Staff, Office, Service Desk 1-3,

Public: Microfilm

Coldwater

Staff: Breakroom, Cataloging 1, IT Staff 2-3, Workroom 1-3

Public: Adult Lab 1-14, Heritage Room, Heritage Room Microfilm

Server: Deep Freeze/MyPC, Public Gateway, DOPS

Quincy

Microfilm

Sherwood

None

Union Twp.

None

Year 2: 2021

Replacing computers originally purchased through 2016.

	Staff PCs	Staff Macs	Public PCs	Tablets	Servers	Totals
Alganssee	0	0	0	0	1	1
Bronson	0	0	0	0	1	1
Coldwater	11	0	10	0	0	21
Quincy	3	0	0	0	1	4
Sherwood	1	0	0	0	1	2
Union Twp.	3	0	0	0	1	4
Totals	18	0	10	0	5	33
Cost	\$10,800	\$ 0	\$6,000	\$ 0	\$15,000	\$31,800

Other: replacing 20 displays: \$2,600

Grand total: \$34,400

Alganssee

Staff: Service Desk 1

Server: Public Gateway

Bronson

Server: Public Gateway

Coldwater

Staff: Cataloging 2, Financial Manager 1, HHR Staff 1, ILL 1-2, Kids Staff 1-2, Service Desk 1-3, Teen Staff 2

Public: Laptops 1-10

Quincy

Staff: Office 1, Service Desk 1-2

Server: Public Gateway

Sherwood

Staff: Service Desk 1

Server: Public Gateway

Union Twp.

Staff: Office 1, Service Desk 1-2

Server: Public Gateway

Year 3: 2022

Replacing computers originally purchased through 2017.

	Staff PCs	Staff Macs	Public PCs	Tablets	Servers	Totals
Alganssee	0	0	3	2	0	5
Bronson	0	0	0	6	0	6
Coldwater	0	3	6	7	1	17
Quincy	0	0	5	3	0	8
Sherwood	0	0	4	3	0	7
Union Twp.	0	0	9	5	0	14
Totals	0	3	27	26	1	57
Cost	\$ 0	\$3,600	\$16,200	\$7,800	\$3,000	\$30,600

Other: replacing 20 displays: \$2,600

Digital signage media players: \$2,000

Grand total: \$35,200

Alganssee

Staff: Cash Register

Public: 1-3, Tablet

Bronson

Staff: Cash Register, Tablet

Public: Tablets 1-4

Coldwater

Staff: Admin. Asst., Cash Register, IT Staff 1, Staff Laptop, Tablets 1-2, Teen Librarian

Public: Kids 1-2, Tablets 1-4, Teens 1-4

Quincy

Staff: Cash Register

Public: 1-5, Tablets 1-2

Sherwood

Staff: Cash Register

Public: 1-4, Tablets 1-2

Union Twp.

Staff: Cash Register

Public: 1-9, Tablets 1-4

Year 4: 2023

Replacing computers originally purchased through 2018.

	Staff PCs	Staff Macs	Public PCs	Tablets	Servers	Totals
Alganssee	0	0	2	2	0	4
Bronson	0	0	15	2	0	17
Coldwater	0	0	0	2	1	3
Quincy	0	0	1	2	0	3
Sherwood	0	0	2	2	0	4
Union Twp.	0	0	1	2	0	3
Totals	0	0	21	12	1	34
Cost	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$12,600	\$3,600	\$3,000	\$19,200

Other: replacing 20 displays: \$2,600

Printers (5 large, 11 small): \$12,400.

Grand total: \$34,200

Alganssee

Staff: Laptop, smartphone camera, timeclock

Public: Laptop

Bronson

Staff: smartphone camera, timeclock

Public: Basement 1-4, Laptop, Media Center 1-10

Coldwater

Staff: Director, smartphone camera, timeclock

Quincy

Staff: smartphone camera, timeclock

Public: Laptop

Sherwood

Staff: laptop, smartphone camera, timeclock

Public: Laptop

Union Twp.

Staff: smartphone camera, timeclock

Public: Laptop

Year 5: 2024

Replacing computers originally purchased through 2019.

	Staff PCs	Staff Macs	Public PCs	Tablets	Servers	Totals
Alganssee	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bronson	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coldwater	0	0	0	0	5	5
Quincy	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sherwood	0	0	0	0	0	0
Union Twp.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	0	0	0	0	5	5
Cost	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$15,000	\$15,000

Other: replacing 20 displays: \$2,600

Replacing 33 cameras: \$10,000

Estimated Labor to install cameras: \$2,000

Grand total: \$29,600

Alganssee

None

Bronson

None

Coldwater

Server: security camera system (counts as 3), web server, file server

Quincy

None

Sherwood

None

Union Twp.

None