



Cost Benefit: What iCONN Saves the State’s Libraries and Municipalities

Economy of Scale – Leveraging the State’s Purchasing Power

Content provided by the state through iCONN and reQuest is licensed for use by libraries, schools, faculty, students and residents throughout the state using statewide licenses (essentially, statewide subscriptions). Because these statewide licenses are heavily discounted, what they cost the state is *an order of magnitude less* than what it would cost in aggregate for all libraries in the state to individually subscribe to the same content. These numbers are estimated below for FY 2010 and FY 2011:

<i>Leveraging the State’s Purchasing Power</i>	FY 2010	FY 2011	Total
Total Cost of iCONN if provided by individual libraries and municipalities**	\$46,679,866*	\$27,549,281*	\$74,229,147
Total Cost of iCONN if provided by the state (the current system)**	\$ 2,092,628*	\$ 1,980,480	\$ 4,073,108
Cost Avoidance / Savings	\$44,587,238*	\$25,568,801	\$70,156,039

* FY2010 includes a *one-time* cost to purchase 50 e-reference books. Both FY2010 and FY2011 reflect resources discontinued during FY2010 due to budget cuts/holdbacks.

**Includes iCONN and reQuest Statewide Library Catalog (2 separate line items in state budget).

Note: In calculating what it would cost individual libraries and municipalities to provide iCONN, we relied on list prices supplied by each vendor (based on FTE counts) less a presumed 20% discount.

Equity of Access

The “economy of scale” analysis above is hypothetical as it posits that each of the libraries and municipalities that currently have access to iCONN could afford to provide a comparable service for their own patrons if the state service were to go away. In fact, a substantial number of libraries could *not* afford an added cost of this magnitude.

As a result, if iCONN as it exists today were to disappear, libraries would experience either significantly higher costs, or vastly diminished service, or a combination of both. In turn, because we know that this result would not manifest uniformly across all municipalities, the “equity of information access” that iCONN currently provides all residents would end.

Value of iCONN

Comments from Individual Patrons and Librarians <http://www.iconn.org/staff/Testimonials.aspx>

About iCONN

iCONN is part of the Connecticut Education Network. It provides all students, faculty and residents with online access to essential library and information resources. It is administered by the Connecticut State Library in conjunction with the Department of Higher Education. Through iCONN, a core level of information resources including secured access to licensed databases is available to every citizen in Connecticut. In addition, specialized research information is available to college students and faculty.

iCONN began in 2000 when the Connecticut General Assembly provided funding for the purchase of licensed information databases for Connecticut's libraries, schools and colleges. The Digital Library was one of several recommendations of then-Lieutenant Governor M. Jodi Rell in the Fall of 1999.

The Goals of iCONN are:

- To ensure universal access to a core level of library and information resources for every resident of Connecticut through their public library, school, college, and from home.
- To help provide necessary information resources to every school in Connecticut so that all students are prepared to function in an information society.
- To provide information resources to the increasing number of students taking advantage of on-line courses at Connecticut's colleges and universities.
- To support the information needs of all Connecticut citizens.

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