On April 24, 2013 Matthew Mattson was our tour guide at Los Angeles Public Library for our ILS visit.

Los Angeles has two library systems, a Los Angeles County system and a Los Angeles city system. We visited the Los Angeles City Library System that uses TLC's Carl X software. LA has a $7.2 million materials collection budget - 72 branches. They are part of the city of Los Angeles then they have a board that oversees the expenditures. Their vendor links all on order to the catalog so that when it arrives at the branch they receive it and it says it is on the shelf. Their "director" is called the "City Librarian" and answers to the mayor.

They have used TLC as their ILS vendor since 1993. In October 2009, they switched to Carl X. Because Carl X is developed on an open systems platform whereas Carl was proprietary and considered sole source, the City Attorney is requiring them to go out to bid on their ILS.

Their vendor processes their material then has a communications connection into their system that allows them to link all on order to the catalog so that when it arrives at the branch they receive it (check it in) and it says it is on the shelf.

Acquisitions system is linked to major materials vendors including for full cataloging.

90% of materials are received shelf ready; the remaining 10% are sent to Central library to receive whatever cataloging or processing is needed (some of these receive partial cataloging/processing from a vendor). They use Ingram, B&T, Brodart, Midwest Tape and they do all the processing for them. They use Online Selection Assistant (OSA) as a standalone web based product through TLC. OSA integrates with the budgeting system.

Materials are shipped directly to individual libraries but invoices are handled centrally. They don't check every invoice to ensure they have received all they ordered before paying the invoice. Individual libraries must notify Central of any problems with received materials.   A refund is then requested from the vendor.

Acquisitions system is not linked to a financial system for them; they think Carl may have integrated Chicago PL with their city financial system.

No reserves can be placed until materials are received. LAPL chooses to suppress all records without holdings; this includes on order materials not yet received; not a requirement of TLC system. You can place reserves on anything that has holdings. Through the staff catalog, staff can do additional things to allow reserves. They can place a dummy holding to allow reserves then when the item arrives they delete the dummy record.

They do not allow reserves on entertainment DVDs, which have a 2 day check out borrowing time. A report showing copies/reserves ratio can be obtained from the system

Not everything is cataloged. They use a generic barcode to check out mass market paperbacks like we do; however, genre information is not tracked. Based on what they said, we believe that the TLC system could accommodate genre tracking. Carl X has a report to allow them to do a mass delete of inactive generic records.

They have 3 catalogs (children's, old and new LS2PAC) but they want to reduce that to two catalogs. Children's catalog can include websites. TLC adds a base website for your collection. Staff can add others. The traditional catalog doesn't do websites. The LS2 PAC does RSS feeds and has then created RSS feed of events.

 Subscription databases can be included with the newest version but LAPL does not do this

eMedia records are included in the catalog; they receive records from vendors; say that TLC is working to allow checkout directly from the catalog i.e. no need to go to external site. Overdrive is just releasing their API's. Once that is done, OverDrive eMedia materials will also be in the catalog as TLC already has plans to integrate it.

LAPL uses their own system to receive customer suggestions through email. They receive about 500 per month. It's a web form not part of the LS2Pac. Matt recalls that other libraries have asked for this so we can ask if TLC will be addressing that. (Matt e-mailed the week after we returned and said that the release notes for the new version of Carl X said that it will be including a system for managing customer suggestions.)

There is a serials module that allows display of titles in the catalog but no holdings.

LAPL does not float any of its collection but Carl has a function for this which includes balancing. He knows other libraries that use it and they like it. Contra Costa uses it (Kathy). (TLC rep called Anne F. and she asked him about this and he said they do have a function that does automatic load balancing so that all items don't end up at just one library.)

Each library and each department of the central library has a budget allocation and they are responsible for their own budgets; they divide budget funds into adult, juvenile, and audiovisuals; not sure of system's ability to separate funds further e.g. in a tiered structure

A 'dusty books" report can be obtained for use in weeding

Cataloging records are downloaded individually from WorldCat as needed.

Authority control is integrated but updated quarterly through an external company, LTI.   The system allows both global bib updating and global item updating.

All indexes allow for cross references

It is possible to control which MARC fields and/or subfields display in the OPAC.

Last date that a record is updated is tracked. Which staff member entered/updated a record can be tracked if an individual staff log-in process is used. There are canned reports but since it is Oracle anyone who knows SQL can write a tailored report. Libraries have shared their codes for these reports and you can ask on a list and others share.

There is an ILL component. They don't use it and they think there may be functionality within the consortia package. They have a separate checkout for ILL but they could use the generic catalog option.

No holdings of serials in the catalog, only the titles. They have a serials module for the staff but it doesn't show in the OPAC (most ILS systems don't work well with the serials holdings) ; we're not sure if this is an LA issue or a reflection on the Carl X software.)

There is a yearly users group, which is how he knows which libraries use TLC, CarlX.   Libraries that run Carl X have a sharing resource so that you can get software development (code) from other libraries rather than having to do it all from scratch yourself.

Carl had a rough period but TLC has helped them and they are a good company that provides good support and the groups and really nice.

 CarX has committed to a mobile, web-based version right now they are only desktop client. One of the Florida libraries has had success with an app to run circulation.

What does it not do that you want?

- Web-based with apps to have mobility
- Call number searching is a desirable, the staff client does.
- Cloud access

A lot of ILS systems don't allow access to your data. Carl allows that.

What Matt likes about TLC/CarlX is that he can actually contact directly the exact person he needs to talk with, not just a rep. They are responsive with support.   Any time you open a ticket, it is always acknowledged very quickly. If you submit a ticket during off hours and it is marked urgent, they will get back with you within 15 minutes.

We were also told that TLC does quite a bit of custom development for their customers. If what you are requesting can be used by others, they may ask you to be a beta partner and they will then offer the new features to all of their customers. If it's something that is unique to your library and will probably remain that way, there will probably be a charge for the development.

LA has two of everything for redundancy so they have little to no downtime. They host their own servers. Most updates have minimal downtime and the vendor does their updates. They said that TLC tries to put out an update every quarter. They first update the test environment to make sure there aren't any issues and they then switch the database to the updated system and they are ready to go. LS2Pac (catalog database) updates take longer. Most releases take a lengthy time to re-index the files.

They gave us a tour of their central library and showed us where their back periodicals and 3 million photos are housed

Their holds/reserve slips are hand written with customers' full name.

Silver Lake has RFID and their self check accepts credit and cash. Silver Lake has an AMH.

 LS2Pac has a module to allow customer registration online. But they use Quipu helps with emedia card registration, which is an API for Carl. The use it instead because it checks gps on real time to see where, geographically, where the address is located. They will issue an eCard to city residents; your eCard number is e-mailed to you. They also will mail you a postcard and if it is not acknowledged within one week, your card is canceled.

For their RFID and sorters, they use TechLogic. They also use the Circ-It client that is used by Denver. Their express checkouts are a mixture of TechLogic and 3M.