What is LION?

Libraries Online, Inc. (LION) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) member organization founded in 1982. The consortium's 30 libraries share an Integrated Library System, a discovery layer for its public catalog, consortium-wide collections of eBooks, audiobooks, and eMagazines, a delivery service for the timely and dependable sharing of materials among the consortium's libraries, an IT support team, an email system, and web hosting for member library websites. LION is funded entirely by member fees. All fees are set by the Board of Directors on an annual basis, and the membership regularly reviews services and resources for impact and relevance. LION maintains a substantial capital reserve to buffer the members from any short-term budget concerns.

LION is governed by a Board of Directors, which is composed of a designated representative, typically a library director, from each member library. Consortial responsibilities can be found in LION's Bylaws and Membership Agreement. The LION Office takes direction from the Board of Directors, and is responsible for enacting and supporting the initiatives set by the Board. These tasks include, but are not limited to, maintaining regulatory requirements, bulk purchasing, maintenance of computer hardware and software, database integrity, financial administration, documentation and training, and coordination of the organization's annual audit with an outside accounting firm. Members are responsible for active participation in LION, which includes serving in leadership positions, hosting meetings, encouraging staff to participate in LION working groups, and complying with consortium guidelines for lending, borrowing, and cataloging.

New member libraries go through an application process before a final vote for admittance by the full board.

Library Systems

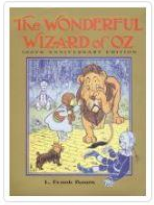
The LION Office supports Innovative Interfaces' Sierra, the consortium's Integrated Library System. LION's installation of it has been web hosted by Clarivate, Innovative Interface's parent company, since 2019. This solution provides extra security from external

threats, such as ransomware attacks, and guarantees up time close to 100%. Office staff manage Sierra reports, perform troubleshooting and system upgrades, ensure bibliographic database integrity, coordinate integration with third party products, and handle all support interactions between LION libraries and the vendor. There are quarterly meetings between the LION Office and a support representative from Innovative.

LION uses a discover layer, Pika, as the front end for its Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC). Pika is an open source product developed by the Marmot Library Network in Colorado. It features a clean visual presentation, and is branded for each individual LION library. Patrons can personalize the user experience by creating login credentials for the OPAC, which gives them access to their account. Account information includes details for checked out materials, the ability to place holds on materials, and book and movie lists for future borrowing. Pika also provides reviews from resources like Goodreads, Booklist, and Publishers Weekly. Book and media covers are provided by Syndetics, a third party product that integrates into Pika. Pika makes use of responsive design, which gives patrons a similar visual experience regardless of the device in use.

Pika's greatest value may be its ability to display individual library digital collections, such as those from Hoopla and Kanopy, in the OPAC. Prior to its implementation, LION members had to agree on a consortium-wide resource to be included in the OPAC, due to the limitations of previous interfaces.

This is an example of a public catalog display for a LION library that does not subscribe to Hoopla:



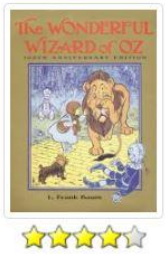
1) **The wonderful Wizard of Oz**

Author:	Baum, L. Frank (Lyman Frank), 1856-1919
Series:	Oz volume 1 Barnes and Noble classics Journeys 2014 More Series...
Language:	English

Choose a Format

+ Book Show Editions	Available from another library View All Copies	Place Hold
+ CD Audiobook Show Editions	Available from another library View All Copies	Place Hold
+ Large Print Show Edition	Available from another library View All Copies	Place Hold
+ Media Player Show Edition	Available from another library View All Copies	Place Hold
+ OverDrive eAudiobook Show Edition	Available Online 1 copy, 1 person is on the wait list. Online OverDrive Collection	Check Out OverDrive
+ OverDrive eBook Show Edition	Available Online Online OverDrive Collection has 1000003 View All Copies	Check Out OverDrive

This is a display for the same title in the public catalog of a LION library with a Hoopla subscription:



This flexibility allows member libraries to serve their patrons better by listing their resources in a single display record.

Borrower Services

In FY2022/2023, LION libraries circulated over 2,600,000 items. Riverbend, the consortium's delivery service, brought nearly 250,000 items to member libraries. As a participant in the Connecticard program, LION can access material through the Connecticut State Library's deliverIT program.

Patron notification occurs in a number of ways, including email, direct mail, and Shoutbomb, LION's third party texting service.

LION offers a variety of digital resources, all from Overdrive, for member library patrons. These include an eBook collection of nearly 20,000 copies, an audiobook collection of nearly 12,000 copies, and an eMagazine collection of nearly 5,000 titles.

Bibliographic Services

LION's Bibliographic Database Manager guarantees the quality, consistency, and integrity of member library holdings in the public catalog. This is necessary for not only the ease and success of patron searching, but it is essential for the smooth integration of the consortium's many third party products. The database manager also provides remote and onsite training sessions on how to catalog in the Sierra ILS.

In 2008, LION outsourced authority control to Marcive, a leading bibliographic services company, which process and updates this aspect of the database on a monthly basis.

LION contributes its entire MARC bibliographic and holdings database to the State Library's statewide library catalog, findIT CT. LION also serves as the Sierra representative to the state's public catalog ILS integration efforts.

The LION system also hosts online access to library created databases of community information and local newspaper indexes, and works closely with member libraries in creating digital depositories for local history.

LION maintains a shared objects collection that exists to support library programming. Its kits consist of button makers, Keva planks, cubelets, jewelry makers, LEGO Mindstorms, LEGO WeDo, Littlebits, Magna-Tiles, MakeyMakey, metal stampers, photo digitizers, Raspberry Pi 3, snap circuits, and similar products. This collection does not circulate to the public and is not discoverable in the public catalog.

Information Technology

LION IT serves as the support team for nearly all 30-member libraries. Their work includes, but is not limited to, installing and supporting Local Area Networks (LAN) Storage Area Networks (SAN), and Wide Area Networks (WAN), including security and vendor relations; installing, supporting, and upgrading staff PCs, public PCs, library servers, and OPACs; installing and supporting Wi-Fi networks; installing and supporting self-checkout stations; installing and supporting PC reservation and print management systems; providing email services and webhosting, including organizational listservs; providing expertise, services, and support to special projects (e.g. Minecraft game server, remote lockers; security systems, Local Area Network planning Consultation). LION IT support is available during all hours of library operations. The Help Desk is accessible 24 hours a day.

LION provides email accounts for all library staff members. It also provides hosting for member library websites.

LION coordinates the purchase and distribution of barcode labels for library patrons and library items. LION maintains and controls the numbers used (in order to prevent duplicates), and is responsible for administering the ordering cycle, ensuring a competitive price, and for assuring quality control.

The Connecticut Education Network (CEN) provides LION and the majority of its members with network telecommunications. LION IT staff sit on a number of CEN advisory councils.

Member Libraries

Clark Memorial Library, Bethany
Acton Public Library, Old Saybrook
Blackstone Memorial Library
Brainerd Memorial Library, Haddam
Case Memorial Library, Orange
Levi E Coe Library, Middlefield
Durham Public Library
East Haddam Library System
East Hampton Public Library
East Lyme Public Library
Essex Library Association
Guilford Free Library
Hamden Public Library
Ivoryton Library
Ledyard Libraries
Meriden Public Library
Mitchell College Library
Public Library of New London
North Branford Public Libraries
North Haven Memorial Library
Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library, Old Lyme
Otis Library, Norwich
Preston Public Library
E.C. Scranton Memorial Library, Madison
Wallingford Public Library
West Haven Public Library
Westbrook Public Library
Wheeler Library, North Stonington
Willoughby Wallace Library, Stony Creek
Woodbridge Town Library