



Mountain Regional Library System Technology Plan FY23-FY28

Background

The Mountain Regional Library Board of Trustees and staff recognize the impact of technology, specifically electronic communication and information, upon the lives of the residents of the Mountain Regional Library communities. In order to continue to provide a high standard of public service, the library offers a variety of electronic services. This document presents the current and planned technology implementations necessary to continue delivering these services.

Mission and Vision

Mission: Improve the quality of life for our communities by providing focused services and materials.

Vision: Be available, important, and welcoming to our communities

System Values:

The Mountain Regional Library System will be:

- Community Focused
- Educational and Entertaining
- Good Stewards of Our Resources
- Inclusive
- Patron Centered

Plan Objectives

This plan is intended to guide technological development in the library system for the next five years. It supports the needs of the library's mission and vision statements, stimulates thought and discussion about the technological needs of our community, provides structure for planning and budgeting. The majority of the contents of the plan are being extracted from the MRLS FY23-FY25 Strategic Plan. The strategic plan can be found at <https://www.mountainlibrary.com/about-us/mission/>

Summary of the Current State of System Technology

- Public computing access is widely available by use of Chromeboxes and the wireless network
- Printing, copying and scanning is available for guest and staff use
- All library branches offer broadband access at speeds up to 1 GB/sec
- Wi-Fi access is offered at all locations with access being offered 24/7 outside of all of the facilities
- The branches' networks consist of routers, firewalls, a domain controller, switches, servers, computers and peripherals.
- Multiple branches offer self-checkout capabilities via RFID technology and barcode scanning
- MRLS maintains its own website - www.mountainlibrary.com
- Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS) provides Google Workspace access and support for MRLS staff
- MRLS contracts with Boaz Networking Solutions for troubleshooting, maintenance and monitoring of MRLS computer networks and equipment
- The library's integrated library system is Evergreen ILS hosted by GPLS
- MRLS provides access to e-books and e-audiobooks to its patrons via OverDrive
- Subscription online databases allow library guests access to information in the library and elsewhere.
- Remote access databases include
 - OverDrive
 - GALILEO
 - Ancestry Library edition
 - Heritage Quest
 - Gale Legal forms and more

Review of Existing Automation Systems

Network Devices

The Library has one domain controller and one networked attached storage server.

MRLS utilizes Ubiquiti equipment throughout the branches for simplicity and redundancy purposes. Ubiquiti provides network switches and wi-fi equipment currently being used by MRLS. Network switches host three separate VLANs for public, staff, and wireless usage.

MRLS will use battery backups on all major network components to reduce the possibility of lost work and connectivity.

Network Routers

Routers are supplied by Internet services providers and are packaged within Erate funding requests. MRLS does not own the routers since they are leased.

Firewalls and Wiring

MRLS uses open-source pfsense firewalls that also acts as the content filter devices. Filtering software is monitored by Boaz Networking Solutions and maintained by a 3rd party provider.

Wiring in all the facilities is rated Cat5 or 5e. Improvements to wiring systems in all branches will need to be improved as most organizations have replaced Cat5 wiring.

Internet Access

All MRLS branches provide dedicated internet access at speeds approaching 1 GB upload and download speeds. MRLS internet connections are paid by a combination of USAC Erate grants and GPLS funding. All internet traffic, wired and wireless, is filtered to a minimum level required by CIPA / Federal government to satisfy USAC Erate requirements. Current Internet access providers are Windstream Communications for Towns and Union Counties and Ellijay Telephone Company (ETC) for Fannin County. Providers are subject to change when service contracts end and price bidding for a subsequent contract is required.

Integrated Library System (ILS)

Evergreen Project develops an open source ILS (integrated library system) used by more than 2,000 libraries around the world. The Evergreen ILS Project was initiated by the Georgia Public Library System in 2006 to serve their need for a scalable catalog shared by (as of now) more than 275 public libraries in the state of Georgia. After Evergreen was released, it has since been adopted by a number of library consortia in the US and Canada as well as various individual libraries, and has started being adopted by libraries outside of North America.

Automation

MRLS is in the midst of implementing RFID technology by the use of RFID tags, self-checkout stations, and other various devices. FE Technologies is the supplier of the equipment. RFID will allow for a more efficient and effective staff and patron experience.

Email Services

Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS) provides Google Workspace access and support for MRLS staff. Workspace includes Google email, Docs, Sheets and more.

Website

The MRLS website is www.mountailibrary.com

The MRLS web server and domain host is hosted by Dreamhost. The web site is built using WordPress. The current version of WordPress is 6.0 and will change over time. The website uses a combination of WordPress modules for functionality and appearance modifications. The website is currently maintained by MRLS staff.

Wireless Access

MRLS provides wireless access to anyone inside the facilities and offers 24/7 exterior access at all locations. There is no charge for wireless access. The wireless network is configured into two separate networks with the second network dedicated to staff and MRLS specific operations. Both networks are subject to the same filtering configurations as the wired network.

The wireless networks are monitored and maintained by Boaz Networking Solutions.

Guest Access Computing

Guest access is provided on the public internet Google Chromebox computers. MRLS utilizes LibData to handle reservations and print management. The Library also provides Chromebooks available for patrons to check out at the circulation desks. Printing is also available at all public computing stations. Wireless printing will also be available in the near future.

Miscellaneous Services

Patrons have access to microfilm viewers and scanners to view content loaded on microfilm reels. Microfilm saves space for each branch and offers easily researchable records for patrons.

Patrons have the ability to convert VHS tape content to a digital format with the assistance of a digital encoder. The process is quick, easy and efficient.

Any other services or equipment not included is unintentional and does not exclude those items or services from inclusion on this technology plan.

MRLS Strategic Plan

In May 2022, the MRLS Regional Board of Trustees approved an overarching strategic plan including a strategic priority focused on system-wide technology. The components of the strategic priority are listed below.

Strategic Priority - MRLS will blend contemporary Technology Integrations with existing service offerings

Objective 4.1 Embrace Technologies That Improve Our Library Services

Tactics:

- 4.1.1 - Introduce Self-Checkout Machines and Processes throughout the system
- 4.1.2 - Add STEAM, literacy, and imaginative play kits, games that can be checked out
- 4.1.3 - Digital Signage added to areas of high traffic
- 4.1.4 - Integrate RFID technology into our circulation processes

Objective 4.2 - Maintain and Expand Access to Digital Information

Tactics:

- 4.2.1 - Offer technology classes for patrons
- 4.2.2 - Formulate a Technology Plan
- 4.2.3 - Expand our current digital offerings including providing more funding for digital offerings

Objective 4.3 - Implement Digital Services to Meet Expectations Of Our Communities

Tactics:

- 4.3.1 - Implement wireless printing across all branches
- 4.3.2 - Continually improve the system website
- 4.3.3 - Review what is being offered as a service on the public computing machines
- 4.4.4 - Expand Wi-Fi services

System-Wide Technology Evaluation and Analysis

The Library Director will oversee the implementation of the technology plan and its evaluation. The plan will be reviewed annually with the Administrative Team and its periodic progress reported to the Mountain Regional Library Board of Trustees.

Planning technology for the future will require flexibility and the ability to adapt and adjust to technical trends, budgetary constraints, and organic changes. Implementation and development of current and future technology will also require MRLS to receive adequate levels of training. Training will ensure staff confidence and a better experience for MRLS patrons.

Since technology is constantly evolving, this plan is considered a framework that will guide, but not limit, the library's use of and implementation of current and future library technology.

Summary of Current MRLS Technology Inventory and Replacement Schedule Framework

Inventory Item		Replacement	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28
	FY Acquired	Schedule in Years	Items to Replace	Items to Replace	Items to Replace	Items to Replace	Items to Replace	Items to Replace
Network								
Server	20	5	0	0	1	0	0	0
Switches	17, 20	5	4	0	3	0	0	0
Wi-Fi Access Points	21, 23	4	0	0	7	0	5	0
Network Storage Device - warranty?	20	6	0	0	0	1	0	0
Public Facing Equipment								
Public Catalogs - Chromebox	15, 23	5	5	0	0	0	0	4
Chromeboxes	17	5	4	2	0	65	0	0
Monitors	17, 18, 20, 21	5	23	21	10	6	0	0
Copier	18, 21	8	0	0	1	0	0	2
Chromebooks - Circ	20	5	0	0	13	0	0	0
AWE PCs	14, 19, 20	5	3	2	0	3	0	0

Chromebooks - Trustees	23	5	0	0	0	0	0	25
Chrome Licenses		As Needed	13	2	13	65	0	25
Scanners	xxx	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Printers	xxx	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Circulation Equipment								
Circulation PCs	17, 18	7	0	2	7	0	0	0
Thermal / Misc. Printers	18, 20	5	9	0	2	0	0	0
Hand Held Scanner	UNK	5	12	0	0	0	0	0
Monitors	18	5	5	4	0	0	0	0
Self-Checkout Station	23	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
RFID Check-in device	24	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
RFID Inventory Wand	24	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Print Management Station	18	7	0	0	4	0	0	0
Staff Devices								
Staff Laptop / Chromebook	18, 21, 22	4	2	0	2	1	0	0
Staff PCs	18, 19, 21	5	5	1	0	8	0	0
Monitors	17, 19, 20, 21	5	4	5	5	4	0	0
Printers	15, 21, 22	3 / 5	1	1	0	2	1	0
Copier	20	5 / 8	0	0	1	0	0	0
Tablets	16, 19	3	13	0	0	0	0	0
Peripherals								
Microfilm Scanner/Reader	23	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Security System	UNK, 21	6	2	0	0	0	1	0
Digital Signage Monitors / Televisions	17, 19, 20, 21	6	7	0	2	3	7	0
Chrome Devices - Dig Signage	20, 21	5	0	0	6	5	5	5
Chrome Licenses		As Needed	0	0	6	5	0	0

Cash Register	UNK	7	0	4	0	0	0	0
Data Projector	16, 18, 19, 20	5	2	1	1	0	0	0
Cricut	19, 23	4	1	0	0	0	1	0
UPS Battery / Surge Protector		As needed						
Telecommunications								
Telephone	22	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cell Phone		3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cell Phone Plan		2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Software Subscriptions								
Productivity Software								
Dreamhost		1	1	1	1	1	1	1
LibData		1	4	4	4	4	4	4
Office 365		As Needed						
Canva		1	1	1	1	1	1	1