1. **EXECUTIVE SEARCH PROCESS.** We'll soon know who will be the next System Executive Director, and member library directors, System staff and I had an opportunity to meet the three finalists, Barbara Brattin, David Hinkley, and Tom Sloan, on September 17th. The search committee and consultants conducted the final interviews on the 17th and each candidate was an experienced professional and appeared well qualified for the position.

    The candidates' resumes and letters of interest were shared with member library directors, as well as System staff the week before the final interviews. The finalists were selected from six semi-finalists by the search committee, which used a controlled set of questions and a rigorous scoring process administered by the consultants.

    A similar process was used on the 17th to rank the candidates following the final interviews. The search committee reported its rankings and recommendations to the MHLS Board on September 18th in executive session and, in open session, the board authorized the consultant Dan Bradbury to extend an offer to "Candidate A."

2. **ANNUAL MEETING.** The System's 54th Annual Meeting is Friday, October 18th, at the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel and Conference Center. It begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at noon.

    Tickets for the breakfast meeting are $25. The registration form is on the System's calendar. Directions to the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel are at www.pokgrand.com/directions. Parking is available in the Civic Center Garage and is free with a validated pass, which will be provided at the meeting.

    The meeting includes the election of System Trustees, amendments to the System Bylaws, recognition of System staff and member library directors, a presentation of a public library construction grant to the System by State Senator Terry Gipson, and a keynote address by Sue Considine.

    Read more about the ELECTION OF SYSTEM TRUSTEES and the AMENDMENTS OF THE SYSTEM BYLAWS. Download the PROXY FORM to designate someone from your library to vote in the election and on amendments to the Bylaws. Read more about SUE CONSIDINE.

3. **ANNUAL MEMBER LIBRARY SURVEY.** The MHLS Personnel & Planning Committee meets on September 30th to finalize and launch this year's members survey, which includes different questions for directors and board presidents. The results of the survey assist the board's in its annual evaluation of system services and of the director. It's conducted every October/November.

    The DA System Services Advisory Committee reviewed the survey when it met after the DA meeting in September. The questions are open-ended and focused on outcomes. The Advisory suggested that board presidents be provided enough time to complete the survey at a board meeting. Feedback will be more complete and board members will have an opportunity to share their understandings of System services.

4. **MOBILE ROLLOUT.** Implementing Boopsie will not be overnight and is likely to take a minimum of three, and as many as six, months. There will be a number of decision points along the way and System staff are identifying the many issues that lie ahead.

    One of the first decisions, which is partially technical, but would also impact cost, is whether or not Mid-Hudson will choose to go with Encore in the next 12 to 18 months. Encore is Innovative's discovery service. The DA looked at this a few years ago and was totally unimpressed. But the latest version is a much better product, as you will read in the Discovery Tools Sub-committee's minutes.
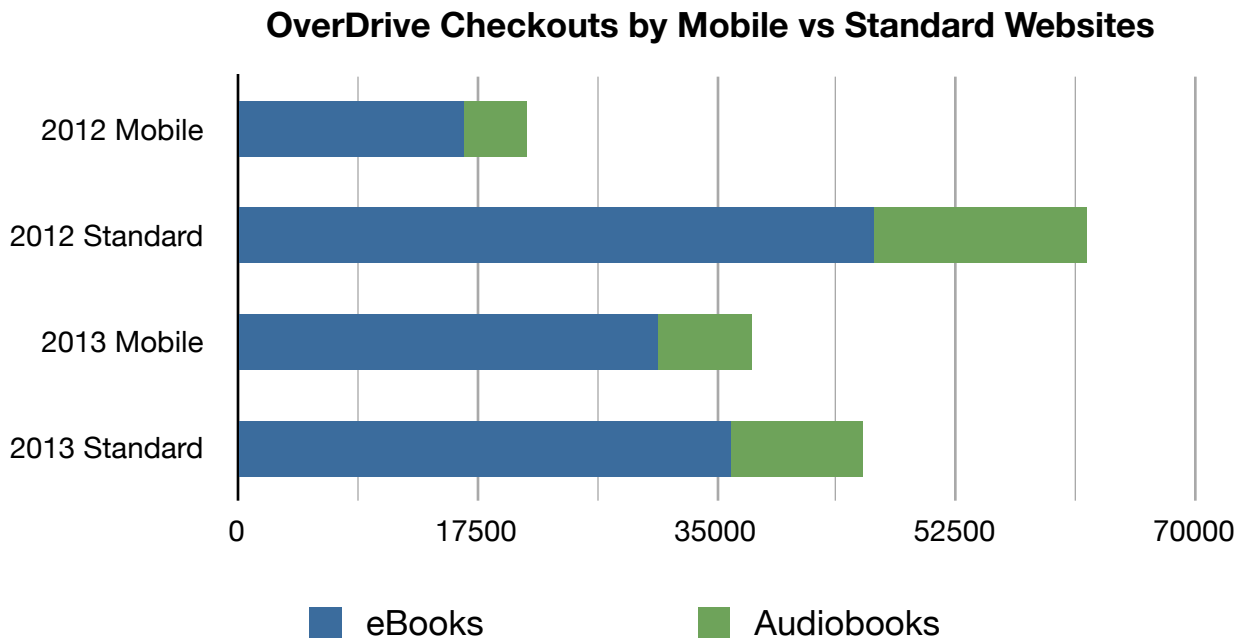
Briefly, Encore provides:

- A simple, Google-like, keyword search powered by more advanced algorithms than employed by Sierra.

- A catalog search that integrates a search of article databases and Overdrive; it uses EBSCO's efficient indexing in the backend to pull in database articles, a feature that is actually half the cost of Encore.

- Faceted search results that are easy to understand, at a glance. These are also configurable and would allow member library collections to be separated into facets, such as into children's collections, DVD collections, etc.

If Mid-Hudson were to include Encore in the initial rollout of Boospsie, there would be no additional cost. There would be an additional cost if added to Boopsie later.

Merribeth and Tom Lawrence are in the early stages of working out possible funding options for both Boopsie and Encore and the Discovery Tools Sub-committee is suggesting temporarily putting the implementation of Boopsie on pause.
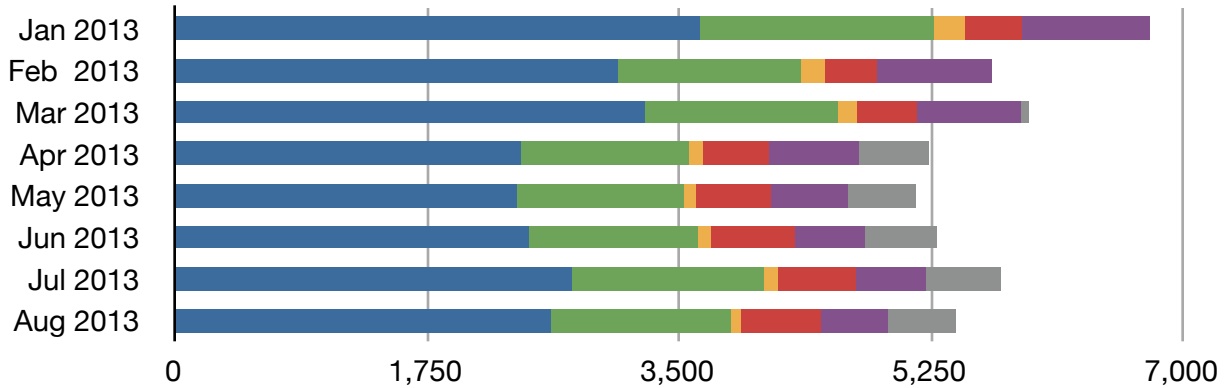
If you're interested in seeing Encore in action and integrated in a Boopsie app, visit skokie.boopsie.com on your mobile phone and download the Skokie Library app. Skokie isn't a consortium, but it's running the latest version of Encore and it's awesome!

5. **MOBILE JUST IN TIME?** When you look at recent OverDrive statistics, it's clear that access via mobile websites is catching up to access through standard websites, even when comparing the first eight months of 2013 to last year.
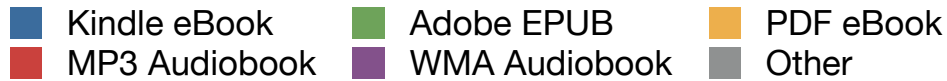
OverDrive Checkouts by Mobile vs Standard Websites

6. **MORE EBOOKS NEEDED?** In 2012, member library expenditures for ebooks, downloadable audiobooks and the OverDrive platform totaled about 3% of member library expenditures for materials. In *Library Journal*'s 2012 Materials Survey, our peers are reporting that even though their materials budgets are flat, they are still spending about 6% of their material budgets for ebooks.
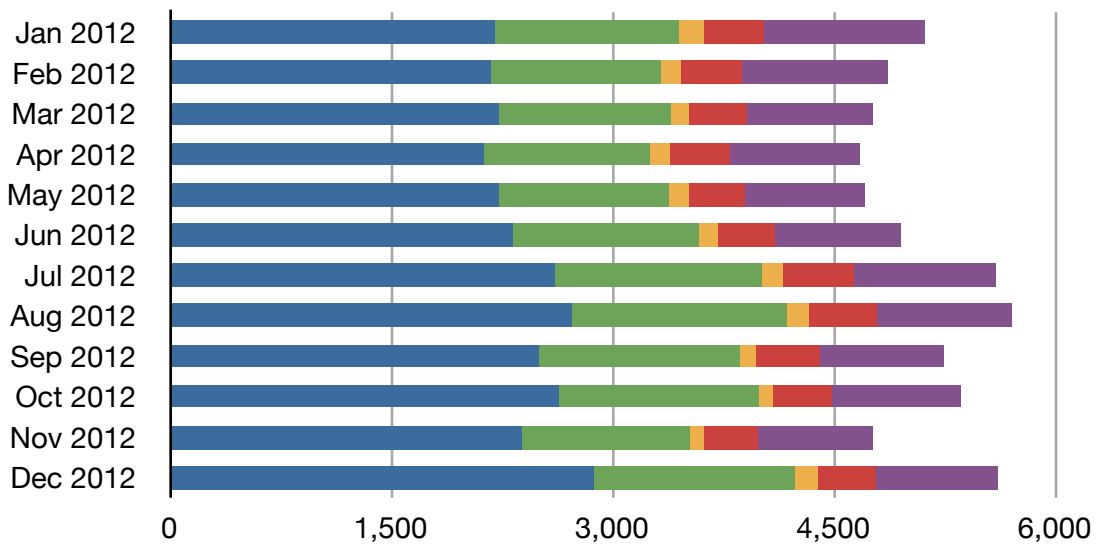
Jan-Aug 2013 OverDrive Circulation: 45,210 Downloads

Although downloads this year are on course to outstrip downloads in 2012, we're running out of money for new purchases. The statistics look positive, but without new content, we risk the use of our OverDrive collections flattening out in 2013, not a desirable outcome.
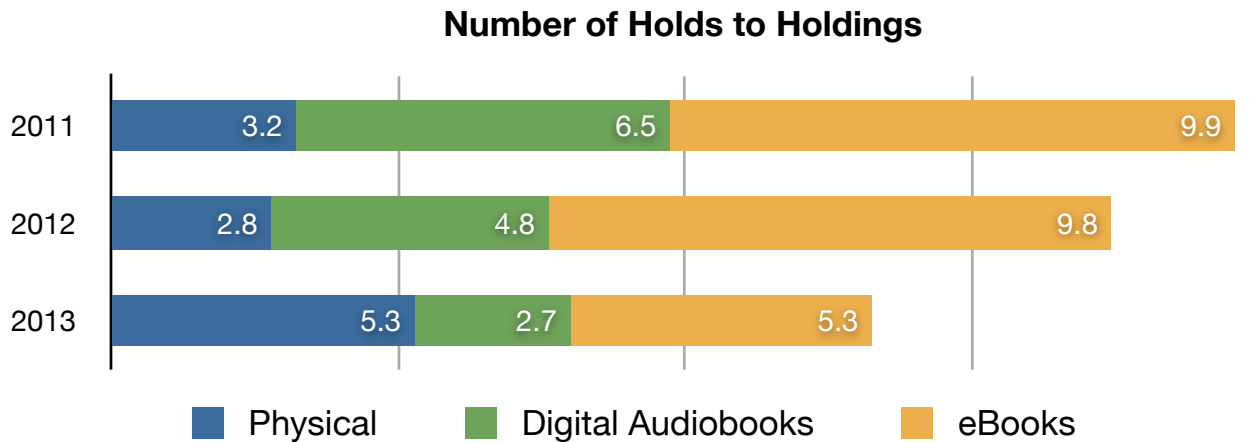
Legend: Kindle eBook | Adobe EPUB | PDF eBook | MP3 Audiobook | WMA Audiobook | Other

2012 OverDrive Circulation: 61,294 Downloads

7. GLASS HALF FULL OR HALF EMPTY? The chart below is a very rough look at how holds compare to available copies both physical and digital. The physical items are the number of holds filled per new items added to member library collections, with 2013 including only items added and holds filled through August. The digital audiobooks and ebooks are number of holds per items available, but the number of items used to calculate this are the totals available at the end of the year.

In my opinion, there are many more holds relative to available items with digital content than with physical items. But it would be useful to drill down into these numbers. I suspect there would be substantial differences between holds to copies with fiction versus nonfiction, book versus DVD, etc. But there would also be more accurate information on holds to copies for digital content if these comparisons were conducted month to month.

Number of Holds to Holdings

Year	Physical	Digital Audiobooks	eBooks
2011	3.2	6.5	9.9
2012	2.8	4.8	9.8
2013	5.3	2.7	5.3

In 2013, there's the hopeful possibility that holds to items for ebooks is in decline for the year. This may be because we're doing a better job of meeting demand. Then again, it may be that demand is exceeding available supply and readers are going elsewhere. Readers will have an increasing number of choices, including a subscription service like Oyster or just the low-cost titles available at Amazon.

Does Mid-Hudson need to do more?