February 1997

Against the Grain Annual Report Survey

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Recommended Citation

Lee, Barry and Lee, Judy (1997) "Against the Grain Annual Report Survey," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 9: Iss. 1, Article 10.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.1983>

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Against the Grain Annual Report Survey

compiled by **Barry Lee** and **Judy Lee** (Research & Reference Services)

The **ATG Annual Report** survey gathered answers by **ATG** readers and **Charleston Conference** participants on a variety of

issues — budgets, organization, staffing, the future. Four-fifths of the respondents consider themselves academic librarians. Almost half identified themselves as working in technical services. Over half the respondents have been librarians between eleven and twenty years. Below is a summary of some of the results. The complete results can be accessed on the **ATG** Webpage at <<http://www.against-the-grain.com>>.

Budgets

✓ Three quarters (75%) of the respondents reported an increase in their materials budget. Very few respondents, approximately one sixth, reported a decrease in their overall materials budget. Two-thirds reported an increase in their book budget. Three-quarters reported an increase in their journal budget. Almost three-quarters reported an increase in their budget for electronic resources.

✓ The percentages of the monies devoted to books was 30% and journals 53%, making total print resources take up 83% of the materials budget. The seventeen percent in non-print resources is dispersed between online resources and gateways (7%), electronic serials (4%), CD-ROMs (4%) and other (2%).

Personnel and Staffing

✓ Approximately one-third of the libraries reported being downsized and of those, a little over half (58%) have had to decrease their professional and paraprofessional staff. Surprisingly only one-quarter of the libraries report negative effects from the downsizing.

✓ Outsourcing is taking place in many of the libraries. Over 44% of the respondents reported outsourcing through getting an approval plan. Thirty percent have outsourced cataloging and 13% have not outsourced anything.

✓ Ninety percent of the respondents provide training for their Library Technical Assistants via in-house classes by existing staff. Forty-nine percent do continuing education in-house. Fifty-four percent fund travel to conferences and workshops and twenty-nine percent fund credit courses for staff.

✓ Four-fifths (82%) of the respondents reported being able to absorb the additional work into their current workflow. One-third are starting to teach end users to be more self reliant and do research on their own.

✓ Ninety-two percent of the respondents use a subscription agency. Approximately half (49%) have switched agencies within the past five years.

Concerns and Issues

✓ Seventy-four percent of the responding librarians are concerned about copyright and a third reported its possible effect on their electronic resources as being their primary concern.

✓ Librarians have found a variety of ways to incorporate the Internet into their daily routines. Two-thirds of the respondents (64%) have a homepage on the Internet. Thirty-six percent do not. Acquisitions services have incorporated the Internet into their routines in the following ways — electronic ordering (23%), email (23%), access homepages and other Web sites (18%), access databases (10%) and access Acqweb (10%). Three percent are cataloging Internet resources. Over one-third (38%) accessed the Internet in order to facilitate the answering of reference questions. Over half reported that accessing the Internet has made a difference in their collection development routines.

✓ Seventy-four percent of the libraries use commercial document delivery to fill Interlibrary Loans. Eight-eight percent rate their library's document delivery operation as being very effective or effective. Two-thirds reported that ILL statistics are a contributing factor in their collection purchasing decisions.

✓ Only fifteen percent of the respondents have implemented paperback-only approval plans. Fifty-four percent have not. Thirty-one percent do not have an approval plan at all. Only a third of the respondents reported implementing paperback only for firm orders.

✓ One-third of the libraries responding report canceled paper subscriptions for new media. As to the archiving issue, sixty-two percent say that they will keep electronic information in whatever format they acquire it. Sixty-two percent also say that they are keeping paper for the present.

✓ The overwhelming majority of libraries (82%) are not charging patrons for printing off of the Internet or the World Wide Web. One quarter of the libraries allow downloading data to floppy discs.

✓ Eight-seven percent of the libraries responding have workstations in their work area.

✓ Half of the institutions offer distance education. One-third reported library support for distance education.

✓ Only fifteen percent of the libraries have merged with a computer center.

✓ Respondents read a variety of library-related publications, many of them dealing with acquisitions. Two-thirds read *Library Journal* or *College and Research Libraries*. More than half read *Publishers Weekly* or *Library Acquisitions: Practice and Theory*. Ninety-seven percent report reading *Against the Grain*.

The Future

✓ Top issues that librarians reported as concerns for the 21st century are funding (33%), information access/management/overload (28%), copyright (18%), relevancy of the profession (13%), overemphasis on electronic media (10%).

✓ A third (36%) of the librarians responding see the library of the future as being a mix of print and new media resources.

Stay tuned for the results of next year's **ATG** survey.