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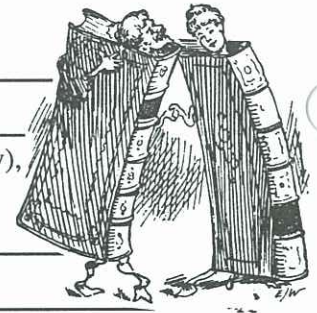
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On The Street

Budget Allocation Changes: A Survey of ATG Subscribers

by **Barbara C. Dean** (Fairfax County Public Library), **Linda Albright** (Winthrop University), **Eamon T. Fennessy** (The Copyright Group), **Anne Jennings** (Sinkler & Boyd), and **Kathern J. Miraglia** (Catholic University of America)



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Many of our surveys have focused on electronic products of one kind or another: what products libraries are buying, how many different titles, and how these products are accessed. This time, we decided to try to find out how the allocation of libraries' materials budgets have changed to accommodate these new technologies. For years, many libraries have had to divert more and more money away from monographs in order to continue to support serials as prices have risen faster than the Consumer Price Index. Many libraries are also experiencing cuts in their materials budgets. Are they cutting yet more money from monographs? What is happening with print serials? How are libraries managing to pay for electronic products? We begin to find the answers in this survey. Eleven people from ten institutions responded.

1. Has your materials budget increased or decreased over the last five years?

Nine of the libraries said their budgets have increased in dollars, although budgets have not kept up with inflation. Consequently, their actual budgets have dwindled.

One person reports the fact that a bond passed to build a new library has increased the administration's interest in improving the collection.

2. By what percentage has your budget changed?

Respondents reported changes, mostly increases, between five to 15 percent, but these have not necessarily been a standard yearly increase. One person said their budget has gone up and down. For others, their budgets have gone up or stayed the same for some years. One site was able to make up for the declines in their materials budgets of \$100,000 during 1991 and 1992.

Two libraries demonstrate how much experiences can vary. The good news comes from one library that has had an average upward change in the budget for monographs and other materials (excluding serials) over the last four years of 16 percent a year. The FY'97 budget is 75 percent higher than that for FY'93. The serials budget has gone up similarly. On the other side of the continuum, one library had experienced a decrease in their budget by about 15 percent.


3. Has the way your budget been allocated changed in the last five years? If so, please describe.

Two libraries said the way their budgets are allocated has not changed. Everyone else said their level of allocations for different types of materials has changed. In all cases, monographs continue to lose funds. More money is going to electronic resources, audio-visual materials, and preservation. One library noted a new preservation department was created almost exclusively to repair worn books. In many cases, more money continues to go to print serials in order to meet the ever increasing prices of that format. One respondent noted they do not have a separate line item for electronic resources, but a larger percentage of their budget, particularly the continuations budget, is being spent on electronic resources.

Some libraries mentioned how they are trying to accommodate these changing demands on their budgets. Three libraries were able to use endowed funds to finance monographs and/or electronic media. Another mentioned they are experimenting with consortial agreements, among other things, to maximize their ability to acquire electronic resources at manageable costs.

Our brief survey only begins to reveal the pattern of how budget allocations are changing among libraries. This year's **Charleston Conference** attendees heard more on this topic. The February/Annual Report issue of *ATG* (v.9#1) will also report on a survey of subscribers.

Our thanks go to all those who took the time to respond to our questions. Following is a list of those who gave us permission to use their names and institutions.

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