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Biz of Acq -- Acquisitions: The Next Generation

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to be encoded in the fund name, accessibility of represented meaning is an issue, as well as the creation of a compact code. Mnemonics become important: use codes that sound/look like what they represent. Thus, Old World History may be clearly encoded OWH, Chemistry becomes CHE and English becomes ELN (so as not to be confused with ENG for Engineering). Limiting the subject-specific coding to the first three characters makes development of codes for the entire subject spectrum straightforward.

Encoding of subject librarian authority for the transaction can be easily done numerically. Small through medium size institutions may find the ten digits 0-9 sufficient to indicate who is responsible for transactions charged against particular fund names. For instance, the Humanities subject librarian may be designated "6" and purchase of a copy of **Jane Austen's Emma** may be charged against ELN6.

To carry this example on, *Emma* can be bought in a variety of ways. It can be purchased through an approval books plan (A for approval book), as a firm order to replace an older edition that has become worn (D for direct-purchase book), as an audio book for the visually impaired (DA for direct-purchase audio book), as a book in electronic format (DE for direct-purchase eBook) as a continuation/standing order (STO) as part of the **Complete Works of Jane Austen** (C for continuation), as a video starring **Gwyneth Paltrow** (V for video recording), or as streaming video of a dramatic reading from *Emma* (VE for streaming video). The more complete fund name then becomes ELN6A, ELN6D, ELN6DA, ELN6DE, ELN6C, ELN6V, or ELN6VE depending on the item and how the transaction is made.

If this purchase is made from an endowed fund or with grant monies, mnemonic coding may be added to the format suffix and assignment made to a separate ledger. In that way, the **Paltrow** video of *Emma* purchased with funds from the **DeFarge Estate** becomes ELN6VDEF.

There is a final issue to be resolved after

the fund name schema is worked out to represent the above factors of discipline, librarian, funding source, and format. This concerns the sufficient design of ledgers so that summarization and subtotaling can occur in a fairly convenient manner. In general, one ledger can represent an entire library materials budget or one ledger can be used to represent a separate funding source within the entire materials budget. Since the fund name proper carries ample information, the arrangement of ledger(s) can be thought of as an aesthetic to a certain extent. What a multi-ledger system allows, however, is multi-level subtotaling. A public university library probably has a finite number of funding source types and state-authorized funding object codes. In the state of Kansas, for instance, library materials purchased with state funds are authorized against only two object codes, one for monographs and the other for subscriptions. The funds allocated and charged to these object codes could be handled by two separate ledgers. In addition, all endowment funds could be located in a third ledger, subdivided by donor name, and all grants and cooperative purchases in yet another ledger. Four ledgers are sufficient for our medium-sized academic library and may be sufficient for many larger, more complex libraries.

Within this four-ledger system, some sort of logical organization must be enforced so that ledgers organize similar transactions in predictable ways. Since most administrators prefer fiscal reporting that reflects program support, subdivisions of the ledgers can follow the design of university organization by college

and department. Thus, the state-funded Monographs ledger tree could look like this:

A simple, logical, four-ledger accounting tree representing nine colleges and 61 departments results in a printed report of over 1,250 lines. Therefore, spreadsheet sorting can be a real issue. It is highly desirable that a quickly sorted list place major totals and subtotals at the top of the list. Therefore, the fund name for the ledger summary is preceded by a tilde, e.g., ~Summary of Monographs. The fund name for the college is preceded by a "greater than" symbol, e.g., >Liberal Arts and Sciences Humanities. And, names of endowment funds in the Endowment Ledger are preceded by a "less than" symbol (<), with the colleges arrayed under them separately. Using these symbols allows for sorting of grand totals and subtotals at the top of the list and ready access to the allocations and expenditures at any level of the hierarchy.

Wichita State University Libraries applied the accounting tree described above to the FY07 material budget allocations. Collection Development and Acquisitions staff worked as a team to develop the hierarchical structure and ledger design, create fund names and codes, prepare spreadsheets of hundreds of specific allocations, and transfer the scheme and fund codes to the Library's Voyager Acquisitions module. The new fund code system will be well worth the effort as it will allow us to more easily track expenditures by college, discipline/department, funding source, and format. 🌱

MONOGRAPHS 3695 (2007)

~Summary of Monographs

>Liberal Arts & Sciences Humanities
English

ELN6A
ELN6C
ELN6D
ELN6DE
ELN6V
ELN6VE

Ledger/Object Code
Grand Total Ledger
College Subtotal
Department Total
Approval Book
Continuation
Direct Book
Direct E-Book
Video Recording
Video Streaming

Biz of Acq — Acquisitions: The Next Generation

by **Antje Mays** (Head, Monograph & AV Acquisitions, Ida Jane Dacus Library, Winthrop University, 824 Oakland Avenue, Rock Hill, SC 29733; Phone: 001-803-323-2274; Fax: 001-803-323-2215) <maysa@winthrop.edu>

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Column Editor's Note: Antje Mays reviews a range of trends and concerns regarding the recruitment and training of new acquisitions librarians. Her consideration of this topic will provide thought-provoking

reading for library educators and students, members of search committees seeking to fill acquisitions vacancies, and working acquisitions librarians. — AF

"It was the best of times and the worst of times..." What will be the outcome of our Dickensian plight? Where are we headed in acquisitions and collection development?

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Biz of Acq *from page 66*

Changes to acquisitions are driven by major technology shifts — both in productivity technologies and increasingly in electronic library collections. Other driving forces include outsourcing, budgetary constraints and staffing cutbacks, salary levels, and the limitations of library and information science curricula. What are some implications and solutions for acquisitions librarianship?

Shifts in Libraries

Technology-driven Changes

Similar to the overall labor market, acquisitions work has become increasingly interwoven with the online world. Continuous learning of new skills has become crucial in accomplishing increasingly technology-driven work. Skills and workflow needed in today's acquisitions environment have changed greatly because of new technologies, ever-increasing electronic collections, and consortial subscription agreements. The make-up of positions is changing as a result. Not only are acquisitions librarians tasked with shifting many serials to electronic subscriptions and overseeing database licensing agreements, overseeing these areas is more technology-intense as database accounts and database-coverage analysis tools are managed through vendor extranets and increasingly sophisticated library systems. As managers, acquisitions librarians are also charged with redesigning workflow and re-training co-workers from paper-intensive processing to methods that often are completely new. Computer-savvy staff members adapt with relative ease to more and more complex computer environ-

ments, but acquisitions librarians can be faced with designing comprehensive (re)training for those less comfortable with technology. Current job announcements for acquisitions librarians typically call for knowledge of business, acquisitions systems, and software suites, licensing agreements, and vendor relations, knowledge of subject areas as a foundation for collection development, and increasingly complex management and customer-service skills (*Chronicle* 2006).

Outsourcing

Outsourcing comes in many forms. Shades of outsourcing include approval plans, supply of fiscal data analysis for libraries whose systems lack adequate data analysis capabilities, subscription services, serials-management / coverage analysis systems, cataloging services, and materials shipped shelf-ready. Outsourcing, whether partial or full, is motivated by budgets cuts and staffing cuts paired with the need to maintain existing service levels, new projects added to existing workloads with no corresponding staffing increases, data analysis needs for which in-house tools or expertise are unavailable, or consolidation of several libraries' business functions. The extent of outsourcing varies by type and size of library, as well as by available expertise. Some geographic regions and prestigious institutions enjoy access to experts in specialized areas of librarianship (*Miller* 2006). Libraries with less access to such expertise resort

to outsourcing business processes to third party vendors in order to concentrate existing staffing on patron services and essential functions best performed in-house (*Nuzzo* 1999).

Library and Information Science (LIS) Education

Closing and/or Merging of Library Schools.

Reorganization and rationalization, long established in industry, is also felt in academic and public libraries. Similar to businesses forced to cut costs in order to survive, universities and libraries face funding shortages, which drive administrations to consolidate services as cost-cutting measures (*Ebersole* 2004 and *Koenig & Hildreth* 2002). Graduate education, while offering flexible programs designed to appeal to working professionals, finds itself in a scenario of small programs merged with larger ones. In Library and Information Science, merged programs vary by size, autonomy, and companion discipline. Fewer stand-alone library schools mean less practically oriented coursework and more coursework devoted to the philosophical tenets of information, technology, and education.

The Skill Gap between LIS Education and Practice

Library and Information Science curricula focus on philosophical and historical foundations, reference, computers, and technological developments. Real-world

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job preparation in practical fields such as acquisitions is generally left to impromptu learning on the job (Giles 2002, Gorman 2006). Skills needed for success in acquisitions librarianship include knowledge of business, accounting, automation, library systems, vendor relations, customer service to serve one's clientele, often other languages, and usually management. Rather than learning these areas in library school, librarians often learn them on the job and at workshops, or bring them from prior paraprofessional experience or previous career fields.

Recruiting and Placement

Skilled Acquisitions Librarians: Why and where are they going?

Acquisitions job lists abound, as evidenced by a search in Websites of library associations and library journals, professional listservs, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Advertised positions often reflect increasing emphasis on electronic materials; positions for electronic resource and serials librarians comprise over half of listed positions examined. While electronic resources management is often a separate position, in lean times or in small libraries these duties are combined with the acquisitions librarian's overall duties. Often the work entails managing print acquisitions plus overseeing major technology and workflow redesigns. Acquisitions positions also reflect increasingly blurring lines between acquisitions and collection development, thus often marrying "the mechanics of purchasing" with the intellectual tenets of collection development and management.

What do hiring libraries look for? Stated requirements include knowledge of several areas or functions: business practices, software suites including spreadsheets and database programs, and library systems, in addition to the business of acquisitions. Preferred knowledge and experience include management, leadership (especially in large, complex, and/or multi-site organizations), accounting, vendor relations, negotiating license agreements, knowledge of scholarly publishing methods and trends, proficiency in other languages, understanding of international and specialized material sources, supervisory and organizational skills, complex problem-solving and decision-making skills, and a track record of professional development and service.

Many positions suffer from small candidate pools and reopened searches. Newly minted librarians interested in acquisitions rarely have the desired

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Antje Mays

against the grain people profile

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BORN & LIVED: Germany; lived in Georgia and South Carolina.

EARLY LIFE: Travelled extensively and learned early about music (classical Bossa Nova, and Latin jazz), art, antique books, great libraries, languages, and people from all over the world and their cultures. I also saw a lot of the East Bloc of the Cold War. Even as a child, it was impossible to miss the lack of basic freedoms behind the Iron Curtain. The two things that struck me the most: people living in constant fear, and the stifling censorship and general lack of real information. Perhaps this is why I consider access to meaningful information such an important building block of knowledge.

EDUCATION: MLIS, University of South Carolina. Currently working on my MBA.

FIRST JOB: Exporter/translator with an import/export firm.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Head of Monograph and AV Acquisitions at Winthrop University in Rock Hill SC. My favorite part includes curriculum analysis and working with colleagues who truly care about quality collection development. Research areas include the role of information and technology in society, education, economic development, human rights, globalization, and national security.

IN MY SPARE TIME I ENJOY: Painting, drawing, photography, digital media, music, scenic road trips, philosophical discussions with friends, volunteer work, and donating art to help raise funds for helping people in need and historic preservation.

FAVORITE BOOKS: My favorite author of all time is Leo Tolstoy. He had profound insight into human nature and what motivates people, and he was a great story-teller. Some books I've enjoyed more recently include *The World Is Flat* by Thomas Friedman, *The End Of Poverty And How We Can Make It Happen In Our Lifetime* by Jeffrey Sachs, and *El misterio del capital* by the Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto. My favorite light reading is about interior design and architecture, gardening, beautiful landscapes, and classic cars.

PET PEEVES/WHAT MAKES ME MAD: Incompetence, shoddy quality, lack of vision, "we've always done it that way".

PHILOSOPHY: Think outside the box.

MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Recently hosting an intern who was an undergraduate and very excited about her goal of going on to library school. I enjoy seeing love of books and knowledge live on. Another meaningful project was overseeing a one-year grant designed to bring language teaching tools for teaching Spanish to preschoolers in my university's laboratory school. It generated goodwill for the library in a roundabout way.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: Finish that MBA! Also, work more closely with linking information and education with human and economic development in the South and in tropical America.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Libraries will continue to evolve. To avoid the perception of diminished role in the information-knowledge equation, libraries are increasing their savvy in marketing their value to constituencies. Libraries will continue to mix print resources with high-tech information tools. Specialized libraries and research offices will move more toward specialized databases to save space and maximize access to more information. The tension between print and electronic resources will continue, and the reality of libraries' finite budget will bring more ideas about new electronic-access pricing models to the table. Print and electronic will be increasingly polarized: print will continue to be the preferred medium for traditional full-length books, "eBooks" are most likely to find niche applications for quick-look-up reference tools and course-pack-driven texts for computer-based distance education, the sciences will prefer the latest research online while the humanities retain more of their print roots. Multimedia teaching tools will break into college-level markets and thus gain more respectability for university-level contexts and viewed less as a children's medium. Some multimedia teaching applications are already in place as podcast lectures with multimedia enhancements. E-journals, aggregated databases, pricing issues, subscription and access models, and the tension between print and electronic media will continue to evolve. 🌱

experience and skills listed in job ads, due to a shortage of acquisitions course work (Giles 2002). Many qualified professionals are deterred by low status (Desmarais 2002), disenchantment with the general lack of upward career paths (Miller 2002), and low salaries especially in light of the skills required (Shaw 2002, Tables 2006). Potential acquisitions librarians are also scared off by tenure requirements (Miller 2002). Excessive tenure-related burdens unrelieved by a support system can drive away newcomers (Olson 2006). Thus, some librarians with well-rounded business and acquisitions skills opt to work for database companies, book and serial vendors, automation vendors, research-centered companies, or in emerging non-traditional information-centered careers such as corporate knowledge managers and chief information officers (LIS job types 2006). Future shortages loom even larger in light of the graying library profession: it is anticipated that 68% of librarians now working will retire by 2017 (Lenzini 2002).

Where will Future Acquisitions Librarians come from?

Ironically, although some newly minted library school graduates may opt to remain in their paraprofessional positions to avoid pay cuts that can come with beginning professional positions, there are paraprofessionals already working in libraries who decide to move to the professional level and grow their careers (David 2004). Just as experienced librarians may opt for the commercial side of acquisitions and information management, some people working for vendors may fall in love with librarianship through the back door by working with librarians and decide to join our ranks (Kugel 2005). Equally ironically, personnel coming from other professions bring practical skills that can be transferred into the library setting.

How can we replenish the ranks of librarians? Strategies include "grow your own" initiatives focused on supporting full-time library employees' pursuit of library degrees, mentoring library-degree-seeking paraprofessionals through transitions to professional positions, programs pairing library pages with volunteer mentors, weekend and distance programs geared toward working professionals (Lenzini 2002), and recruitment of scholars from other disciplines, to bring multilingual scholars into academic libraries (*Career Opportunities* 2006). At Winthrop University, the library has supported several staff members who went to library school and then took professional positions; several of the library's student assistants went on to library school and became librarians.

LIS education is focused more on education than training; librarians do need a theoretical foundation to provide meaningful context to the practical work areas. Library schools should give equal exposure to all areas of library work. What are some possible hybrids between theoretical education and practical

acquisitions training? Solutions could include MBA-style class projects designed to tackle real-world challenges. Other possibilities: practitioners serving as real-world guest lecturers in LIS programs (on-site if practicable, or through distance programs), library-hosted acquisitions internships built into library degree programs, and library-hosted acquisitions internships for undergraduate students considering library careers. Winthrop University has participated in all three of these teaching approaches.

Once new acquisitions librarians are in place, how will we keep them? As more librarians enter the profession from diverse backgrounds and non-conventional paths, they bring beneficial skills, creativity, and perspectives. These newcomers also bring fewer preconceived notions of "how we've always run libraries". Valuing their contributions will help keep them motivated (Neal 2006). In academe, overloading junior librarians with excessive service burdens will result in driving them away (Olson 2006). Mentoring and support for professional development help acclimate new acquisitions librarians to the organization, their area of expertise, and the interrelation of acquisitions work with other library functions, the world of vendors and technology, and libraries' constituencies.

Outsourcing and the Future Face of Acquisitions

As more libraries face bottom-line mandates to cut costs, assessing the cost-effectiveness of acquisitions and technical services operations is more crucial than ever. Business skills are integral to making cost-benefit comparisons between in-house work and outsourcing time-consuming steps such as tattle-taping. Computer skills and technology expertise are important elements in achieving efficiency in materials processing and sharing library information. For example, computer programs that extract interactive Web-based lists of new acquisitions, with title-specific hotlinks to the online catalog, are more cost-effective and timely to produce in-house than if outsourced to a system vendor, especially if such lists are updated frequently and the acquisitions librarians know how to do the database programming.

Boundaries between business, cost analysis, research technology, acquisitions, and collection management are blurring. Knowledge of all these areas will equip tomorrow's acquisitions librarian to select appropriately from available vendor and technological support. Strategic approaches will help avoid obsolescence that could result from outsourcing business processes more efficiently performed in-house (Nuzzo 1999).

Major changes in libraries, LIS education, and career paths toward librarianship are altering the face of acquisitions. Proactive librarians will have an important role in elevating the variety and status of acquisitions work, thus attracting highly skilled persons to the field.

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While researching something else I ran across an item in a business journal that caught my eye. For those of you born on or after 1980, let me add that this is called serendipity in research. It's something that cannot be done in the electronic medium, and one of the many things we'll lose when all the world is digital. Now I know all the GenXers with hover parents will look askance and wonder why the anachronism but let me ignore them and go on. Serendipity is a coined word by **Horace Walpole** (I use as my authority the fabulous *Brewers Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, not the one online, but the 1870 edition that's damnably difficult to find anywhere anymore.) Walpole first used it to describe lucky and unexpected "finds" by accident. As he described it in a letter to his friend **Mann** in 1754, he based the word on a fable called *The Three Princes of Serendip* because the princes "were always making discoveries by accident and sagacity, of things they were not in quest of." Serendip is the ancient name for Ceylon.

One cannot do this now, or cannot do it well now, because so much is going digital. In the old days, when I was a boy, one hunkered down in a library and while working, did a good bit of browsing. One found many things on the way to the original quest, most of which one did not use right then, but made a note of it, literally, and used it later, most probably on an entirely different research project. Penicillin was discovered in this manner, along with many other things we now take for granted. With all things digital, the only serendipity one may hope to find must be in what text one had "up" at the time.

Anyway, while looking for this other thing, I ran across a notice where **Google** had purchased a thing called **YouTube.com** for over a billion dollars. It caught my eye because I thought I knew all about **YouTube** and could not for the life of me think why in the world *anyone*, even **Google**, would want to buy **YouTube** for a dollar, much less for almost two billion of them. Sure enough, there in the business journal was the purchase in October 2006. **YouTube** will remain independent but owned by **Google**. But, I said to myself, wasn't **YouTube** that site of various stupid clips, the best of which had been pulled for copyright and various other reasons?

So, off I went to **YouTube**. What could possibly be the attraction? Perhaps there were millions of things I had missed, or otherwise omitted in my original research. Perhaps I had looked at **Google's** videos before they bought **YouTube**, and so now **YouTube** would improve the silly clips on **Google**.

Once there, I recognized the site instantly and found myself in something of a predicament. **Google**

is, after all, the very site that is going to put us all out of work eventually if it hasn't already. I knew from prior research that young people use **Google** far more often than they use library Websites and even all those very expensive proprietary databases we librarians beat ourselves up over trying to secure to the tune of millions of dollars. In fact, *college-age* students use **Google** about three or four times more often than they use library Websites. It leads to the obvious question of why we librarians spend so much time and effort trying to secure them if students are only going to ignore them, but let's that pass for the time being. Let's leave, too, the obvious quodlibet why our own professional organizations, like **ALA**, complain that we aren't making our library search engines more like **Google** and so on. In any event, I want to be fair so I must give **YouTube** every opportunity to succeed even if I don't want it to.

I began delving into **YouTube** once again. By examining **YouTube's** top ten, its top 100, and its random categories I figured I would see its best, and so be able to judge it on its own merits. First on the list was a header which read "young woman with large hooters." This was followed by a young man setting his bum on fire as he tried to light his own flatulence, an enormous number of "jackass" stunts (appositely named), and about a dozen or more clips from various television programs, some of which I could view and others I could not because of my hardware. Since I didn't view the young woman I have no idea if her described attributes were her only "meritorious" ones, or whether she could also sing or dance as well. Perhaps she belonged to Mensa? Still, reading the first 100 descriptions, I wondered why in the world one of them would distract anyone from their daily labors. To say that the emperor, as personified in this **YouTube**, hasn't any clothes is to state both the factual and the metaphorical. Not only is the emperor naked, but also are the duke, the duchess, the prince and the pauper. Why would anyone go back to such a site?

As for the young man, well, there was one frame and sure enough he had a lighter and was poised for something. I did not view it either but I figured I had to dig deeper so I looked for more, sifting through nearly all "Top 100" as determined, I suppose, the way everything on the Web is determined to have value: for no other reason than many come to view it. Based on these merits alone — what makes people stop and gawk — every train wreck and every three-legged dog are more important than **Shakespeare**. Let's hear it for the self-absorbed and the unreflective. I can only hope the young man is suffering from third degree burns.

I did view a school principal, a white man, who was trying to rap. I suppose he did it to help children learn, though I do not know for sure why any educator, real or imagined, thinks this works. I can only guess that like principals who spend the night on top of an elementary school or cut their ties it is, putatively, to encourage children to learn. It makes sense, right? Do something stupid and children will jump at the chance to stay in school. What one has to do with the other is anyone's guess. I grew up in that antediluvian age when

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