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Adventures in Librarianship -- Datamaze Reviews

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showing the signs of a meltdown in managing the workload. When you have libraries that once processed and managed 1,500 subscription titles now faced with access and management of the 20,000 titles that their library now has access to, one should not be surprised to see the workload of that unit increase beyond manageable portions.

This is where the extreme makeover comes in. Libraries have to face the shift to electronic formats and embrace the impact on the infrastructure and the library's staffing. While almost every library has added an electronic resources librarian as a specialist to manage the e-resources, there is insufficient manpower to meet the needs of the digital library.

When considering best practices for technical services, the best practice of all is to revolutionize the organizational structure. Every library that I visit has a similar problem: the library has shifted the acquisitions budget to cover the electronic resources cost with upwards of 70%² of the journal acquisitions funds going to the electronic collection, but the library is still organized to support a print model. In effect, you have 90%³ of the technical services staff still devoted to the print collection when the collection is shifting rapidly to the electronic world. I would not be surprised to see the e-resources librarians going out on strike, as they have been left with this demanding workload and pressure from the users to have access immediately!

Folks, this system of e-resources support is not working. The e-resources librarians are drowning in work as other staff in the library continues to support print. In former days, print collection management issues included funds, missing/damaged issues and collection assessment. Unlike print, e-resources bring the challenges of trial use, evaluation, ordering, payment, renewal, IP addresses, proxy support, authentication, URL maintenance, user IDs, admin information, access restrictions, hardware needs, usage statistics and license terms.

From what I see, libraries must reorganize to take care of e-content. The old print-based library organization built on silos must be dismantled. What is the future of traditional cataloging? What is the impact of library or Web 2.0? What happens to the library when the majority of the staff is still print centric and the library needs e-centric? **Ty Pennington** may as well be standing in the front yard saying, "Move that bus!"

Will the future librarian or information worker be an MLS or an information services professional? Are we creating feral professionals? Are we surprised that many of the new hires in libraries are not librarians but computer-skilled or Web knowledge-based individuals and they are coming in at a higher salary than the librarians? I have talked to a number of the feral professionals and they are not happy being treated as second class citizens and "not professionals," but yet saddled with a huge responsibility.

While there is adjustment all across the board, it is the library that is facing the great

est change in the information chain. The subscription agents have a valuable role in supporting libraries with their workload and have developed a wide range of new services. The publishers have shifted all of their content to an electronic format, but it is the library that has to face the task of re-organizing to provide the access and management that the users require.

In this process, they need to look at the online catalog in light of Web 2.0, as the environment is expanding beyond traditional e-journals. New and different access pathways are overtaking "traditional" library offerings such as the OPAC as the quickest path to scholarly content.

The library as we have known it is changing. Its place on the campus is evolving, the content is going digital, and its staff is aging. Perhaps many of our libraries need an extreme makeover!! 🐼

Endnotes

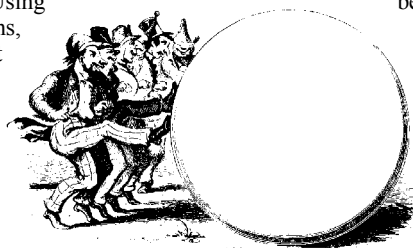
1. This is based on analysis of EBSCO data from large academic libraries in the U.S. Seventy percent of sales for 2007 had an electronic component, and this is consistent with other vendors in the industry.
2. Estimate based on industry experience.
3. Estimate based on industry experience, (actually visiting libraries and observing the number of staff dedicated to e-resources, as opposed to print).

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by **Ned Kraft** (Ralph J. Bunche Library, U.S. Department of State) <kraftno@state.gov>

GossamerX is being touted as the next big thing by its engineers. It will allow library customers to access the Internet, search it using several "search-engine" options, display the results of each search, and print results onto ordinary paper. It will offer online shopping, airline tickets, up to date news services from thousands of sources, expert analysis of current affairs by professional "bloggers," weather forecasts from around the world, pictures of cute kittens, and much more. Hey, wait a minute! When I asked the regional sales director what the difference was between his product and the Internet itself, he hung up the phone. Not recommended.

CopusGTB is a highly specialized source focused on the pharynx of the Nematode *Eudorylaimus acuticauda*. Using charts, graphs, photographs, sound recordings, and text files, the database allows customers to explore the many fascinating details of the pharynx of *Eudorylaimus acuticauda*, including... many... you know, fascinating



details. Highly recommended for Post-grad Nematode collections.

Wahoo! hit the market with much fanfare. Designed for public, school, and museum libraries serving children and anthropologists, **Wahoo!** makes relics of yesterday's fun and games. Children can research and watch outdoor games played by previous generations. "We're interested in preserving our cultural heritage. These non-digital, outdoor children's games may be lost forever if they aren't documented and preserved," says **Wahoo!** founder, **Reed Weatherall**. Using "Super 8" home movies from the fifties, sixties, and seventies, **Wahoo!** digitizes, indexes, and preserves such classics as "Kick the Can," "Dodgeball," "TP the Weird Old Lady's House," "Ringing Doorbells," and "Smoking Behind

the Garage." Whether or not today's children will understand what drove previous generations to play outside, their parents and grandparents will enjoy the trip down memory lane. Recommended.

The **Encyclopedia of Profanity** is finally available online. Beyond classic profanity such as "&)%\$#!" and "\$#@)!!," this edition includes the profanity of yesteryear, the expletives used by our grandparents, like "dag &%" and "holy ?+&*!" French terms of astonishment and condemnation are included only in the online, for instance the always-insulting "&ý%€€®!" and "Le□¥←ý!" Recommended for undergraduate collections.

Amalgamated Data International recently improved its front end to the point where it can now be used by researchers outside the **Amalgamated Data International** office. This product is aimed at the engineer and statistician markets. We asked several experts to review the product. They were unable to determine the nature of the data. Not recommended.

Cobblerbase is the first ever online directory of shoe repair shops around the world. Your customers need never be stranded in Tucson with a broken heel, they'll never again be embarrassed in Johannesburg by a hole in the sole. Highly recommended for libraries whose patrons wear shoes. 🐼