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Library Perspective, Vendor Response

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and visualized volumes of history and other information for you. I have always thought that to be fascinating, but it could just as easily be memories created by odors from sticks or vials. We might even develop our minds to communicate for us without speech, like some Star Trek episodes I've seen. Will we be ready to accept those changes? How will the people staffing the library change to command those new devices or techniques? Is it the human being in the equation that continues the knowledge of information and how to find it? I still believe the human "x" factor is the most important to our definition of library and, no matter how virtual we get, we will always need someone to explain things to us. Our 24/7 reference service for distance education works a lot like that. The interviews and help come over the electronic email to the inquirer, and information leaps time and space to get there. The transference of information to another person not even in our contiguous space is amazing. The librarian must still be alert to the kinds of information transmitted and the needs from so many different cultural backgrounds and places of study. It is a challenge every day to keep up with those needs, and the various barricades we raise in the communication process require human beings to be the bearers of the information and explain the innuendos. It is a different, more diverse world these days and a challenge to keep "library" as the purist's image of knowledge. I find myself grieving the loss of our ivy-covered, leather-filled, quiet studying students in the Halls of Information. It is indeed past midnight, and the glass slipper has been lost. Perhaps we will need to think about our new and varied roles and how our definitions have changed to meet the world's challenges for us. What do you think? Virtual? Real? Both? 

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finally fulfilled her secret dream and is now the proud owner of a cute havanese puppy named Moondance.) And, in case you missed it, **Corrie** guest edited the highly cited *Serials Review* v. 35 #3 on IRs.

Talk about fast-moving! **Dan Tonkery** has left **EBSCO** and is working with **Content Strategies** which "is experienced in buying and selling content at the company, database, or product level. We are uniquely qualified to help identify targets for acquisition, participate in the due diligence process, or help you create successful long-term strategies for a changing market." And I recently got around to reading the **Dan Tonkery Profile** in *Serials* (March 2010, v.23#1). A fascinating piece of history complete with a picture of **Dan** with his granddaughter **Hailey**. <http://www.e-contentstrategies.com/>

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Library Perspective, Vendor Response

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Column Editors' Note: This column for Against the Grain is devoted to discussing issues affecting library acquisitions, library vendors, and the services and products they supply to academic libraries and the publishing marketplace as a whole. It is an ongoing conversation between a book vendor representative, Robin Champieux and an academic librarian, Steven Carrico. — RC and SC

Steve: **Robin**, in our last column I made a point of saying that publishers were behind the times when it comes to issuing, licensing, and selling their e-books to academic libraries — the old revenue models being used just aren't acceptable to today's library users. It's occurred to me that libraries are just as guilty of clinging to the past as publishers are, and they don't have the profit making incentive.

Robin: When speaking to libraries about eBook publishing, I often note that I don't think we're going to see significant progress on some issues (not all), until this revenue stream starts outpacing that of print sales. In some ways, I think this is true for libraries, as well. If eBooks are on the periphery in regards to collection development and acquisitions policies and workflows, then it is not surprising that some institutions struggle with how to successfully address this format. But, this is changing rapidly in both environments.

Steve: Fair enough, but now I have a question, as you work with many academic and college libraries, large and small: how often do you see libraries following organization structures that aren't always the most effective and workflows that aren't always the most efficient?

Robin: Umm, no comment. Though seriously, this happens in all types of organizations. I have witnessed it in both libraries and companies for whom I have worked. Hey, if you look at **R2's** customer list, you'll see that it's not just you guys with whom they are working. That being said, in library school I took an organizational management course with **Bob Holley**. We compared organizational change in for-profit and not-for-profit institutions. In for-profit institutions, change and re-organization happen often and quickly. This is not because they're better at recognizing the need for or implementing change, I don't think. Rather, health and success in for-profit organizations is primarily measured by revenue. This seemingly unambiguous indicator can make the need for change more obvious and easier to

implement. Moreover, measuring success in a library is difficult and it often takes a great deal of research to determine what is not working and to find solutions.

Steve: Lessons from library school again! Maybe you should teach library classes... anyway it seems that once again it's a profit incentive pushing the envelope. For libraries, a not-for-profit institution if there ever was one, this reluctance to embrace change so often permeates the organization itself. For an example that's near and dear, the Acquisitions Department at **UF**: as with many acquisitions departments in academic libraries, we are still a part of technical services but really belong in the same division that is home to collection building. Until recently acquisitions probably did belong in tech services, when acquiring print serials demanded a continuous collaboration between serials cataloging and other tech service areas, such as preservation that handled the binding of the issues. Print monographs were purchased in large quantities and demanded hands-on cataloging and processing, so workflow necessitated close proximity and constant communication. But print serials are an endangered species and **UF's** print monograph budget is half what it was, while a large percentage of the books we receive come in shelf-ready and circumnavigate the Cataloging Department altogether. Acquisitions nowadays has more daily contact with collection managers than other staff in tech services. In fact, with so much of the budget wrapped up in consortially purchased, bundled journal packages requiring little if any selector input, one could argue that acquisitions is every bit as important to collection management as the subject specialists in our library.

Robin: Just to be clear, I'm not implying that a profit motive is the best way to lead change! But I definitely see what you describe at **UF** reflected in my everyday work. At one institution I will be working primarily with Collections, at another Technical Services, and yet another Acquisitions. The work of acquisitions, technical services, and collection development is changing dramatically and rapidly. And, what this work will evolve into is still being negotiated. I believe that many models will emerge. Were you at or have you read **Susan Gibbons'** working paper "Time Horizon 2020: Library Renaissance" presented at the **ALCTS Symposium at ALA Midwinter**? It is wonderful and offers a very persuasive articulation of the emerging landscape — both technologies and services

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— that will drive a major shift in the work of technical services and collection development. You can find it here: http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alcts/conferences/upcoming/ala/library_renaissance.pdf.

Steve: Have to be honest, I haven't read this paper... yet. Thanks for the citation, Professor. Now back to my soapbox: it's not just the organization of departments in academic libraries that are so often rooted in the past. Many librarians are resistant to accepting and adapting to the online environment. Let's use a specific example, again from UF: I know eBooks can be more expensive than print books and often titles aren't available readily, but at the beginning of this fiscal year, UF's subject selectors were afforded the opportunity to tag order requests for individual eBooks as quickly and easily as they can for print books. Yet, after six months only 1.1% of all monograph orders were for eBooks. It's a little frustrating to see how slow we all can be to embrace change — our users certainly aren't that reticent: they want everything online 24/7!

Robin: Well, do the collection development and acquisitions policies at UF address an electronic or print preference? Do you have a strategy for collecting electronic mono-

graphs and, if so, were the subject selectors engaged in its creation and who is charged with its execution? I ask these questions not to put you on the spot, but to come back to one of my first points. As with the transition to e-journals, I don't think the transition to e-monographs can be successfully traversed at the transactional level. A strategy is needed and an acceptance of that strategy reflected in every day decisions. Do I sound like a professor again?

Steve: Now it's my turn to say "no comment." But I see your point about having a strategy with eBooks vs. print. Our collection plan seems to be to purchase as many titles as possible with a given budget, so our selectors buy print with paperback the preference. Still, we've done two small studies at UF that show that if the library owns a print and eBook version of the same title, the eBook use is much higher. It's not even close! It's the strategy that needs to change, right? Fortunately, our eBooks firm orders have quadrupled this semester, so maybe our collection building is changing — if ever so slowly.

Robin: Yes, I think so. Also, and sorry for getting on my soapbox, but I wouldn't characterize what is needed as a strategy that addresses eBooks vs. print books. Rather eBooks and other technologies — print books included — need to be addressed within an overall strategy for resource access and discovery. And, this strategy should guide the

choices selectors make about format, among other things. That being said, I don't think this is easy or straightforward work. The recently released Ithaka S+R 2009 Faculty Survey highlights some of the complexities and needs when it comes to planning for the transition from print to electronic resources and meeting scholarly needs. The section on eBooks and non-journals materials is particularly interesting. And, in her paper **Susan Gibbons** notes that collection balance may suffer as libraries focus more and more on just-in-time access. And, then there are issues of preservation and born digital materials. So, there is a lot to consider and there won't be a single solution that emerges on any of these fronts, and no solution is likely to live for very long.

Steve: Whew! Thanks, **Prof. Champieux**, I just hope you aren't planning a quiz on this material. Actually, what you are suggesting is very well said and makes perfect sense — a collection strategy should take into account many factors as you say. By the way, you don't have a personal profit incentive for this lesson plan, do you?

Robin: Hey, I think I may be making it harder on myself! I'm looking forward to seeing you in DC. These and other hot topics are sure to be discussed and debated. I'll save the quiz for our next column; I wouldn't want to exclude anything we might learn at **Annual**. Until next time... 🌱