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ATG Interviews Glenda Alvin

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ATG Interviews Glenda Alvin

Assistant Director for Collection Management and Administration, Tennessee State University

by **Katina Strauch** (Editor, *Against the Grain*) <kstrauch@comcast.net>

ATG: Tell us about your job at Tennessee State.

GA: I wear two hats: I am Head of Acquisitions and Serials as well as the Assistant Director. Our department purchases everything from office supplies to databases.

ATG: How many people work in your department?

GA: Cataloging (3), Acquisitions and Serials (6).

ATG: What is your materials budget?

GA: Capital outlay from state budget: \$1,464,000; I supervise an additional \$500,000 spent from Title III accounts for databases and periodicals.



ATG: Are you buying books and journals?

GA: Yes, both print and electronic

ATG: Are you buying eBooks? If so in packages or individually?

GA: Packages.

ATG: Who's your favorite author?

GA: I don't have one.

ATG: Anything else you want to add?

GA: I am a member of ACRL: Editorial Board of CHOICE and African American Studies Section; I am also an active member of the Black Caucus of ALA, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and the Zuri Quilting Circle. 🌿

Library Perspective, Vendor Response

Column Editors: **Robin Champieux** (Vice President, Business Development, Ebook Library) <Robin.Champieux@eblib.com>

and **Steven Carrico** (Acquisitions Librarian, University of Florida Smathers Libraries, Box 117007, Gainesville, FL 32611-7007) <stecarr@uflib.ufl.edu>

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**, haven't seen you since the Charleston Conference, and I remember you were working with the Orbis Cascade Alliance consortium to set up a shared eBooks plan. How is that coming along? Is this a patron-driven/demand-driven model?

Robin: Yes, I'm working with the Alliance implementation team now and we're planning for a late spring launch. It is a demand-driven model and, as you can imagine, a lot of the discussion and preparation is focused on how to apply our experience with individual institutions to a 36-member organization.

Steve: I've been busy with an initiative somewhat similar here in Florida. I'm a member of a collections committee representing the state's largest library consortium and we're

working on developing a shared eBooks plan. It's quite a chore trying to get 11 academic libraries on the same page and to all agree on an eBooks acquisitions plan. It took months just for an eBooks task force to convince all 11 libraries to agree to form another task force to invite vendors and eBook aggregators to present their eBook shared acquisitions models. Whew! Talk about complicated.

Robin: Yes, I can't speak for the Alliance, but I know this was a major endeavor. They too organized teams to lead phases of the investigation and implementation. This approach is very smart. As a vendor representative, it helped me better understand the consortium's goals and how EBL needed to re-think our approach to meet the requirements. The Alliance pushed out a lot of valuable information. Moreover, it's made our work with partners more positive. Several publishers, for instance, have commented on the clarity of the pricing model, its rationale, and the evidence we provided to support it.

Steve: There are a couple ironies that I have to point out: one being how radically different it seems for library consortia to agree on shared eBook models. There are long discussions and even disputes about the smallest issue when it comes to agreeing on an eBooks acquisitions plan;

meanwhile, consortia often with little fuss and much less debate, all kick in thousands even millions to fuel the Big Deal e-journal packages and database purchases. What really highlights the paradox is that most of these shared eBooks plans are funded with only a small proportion of the materials budgets when compared to the Big Deal. At least that's my perception of the landscape. You probably have a better sense and view on all this from your vendor seat, so what's your take?

Robin: The consortial projects I've worked on have been time intensive, but necessarily so in many respects. I think there are obvious and hidden complexities. For example, the Alliance implementation team's careful investigation of managing technical services and cataloging needs across the member institutions has been a real eye-opener. Every library has different resources and expertise. The implementation team is working hard to balance these with issues of discovery and the overall goals of the pilot. On the vendor side, working with publishers and gaining approval for a model can be a very long process. Often, we also have to define, build, and test new technology to support a model. But, as the models mature and the various stakeholders gain experience, I think the process will simplify and speed up.

Steve: That's good to hear! The second irony of eBooks is not in the acquisitions piece but in the cataloging and discovery side of eBooks. After much time and energy

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