ATG Annual Survey Report

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ATG Annual Survey Report

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Executive Summary
Against the Grain’s Annual Survey is designed to provide readers with library information that is unavailable anywhere else. The survey is an opportunity for readers to give opinions and statistics concerning libraries and librarians around the world. Results were obtained from readers who submitted surveys electronically and by mail. Forty-nine surveys were received, but two of those surveys were blank so the results of this report are based on forty-seven surveys completed, a number comparable with the past two years’ results.

Concerns in the Industry
The first survey question dealt with the top concerns of the industry for the 21st century. The foremost concern was funding: issues concerning money, or lack thereof, and increasing costs were indicated by 87% of respondents. Also high on the list, at 70%, were issues surrounding electronic formats — reliance on, difficulties with, and archiving of. Staffing, salary, and tenure issues rang in at #3 on the list, with 26% of respondents indicating a concern. Tied for fourth place were: mergers of publisher/vendor groups, new technology, patron demands, and shrinking public support, each at 17%. Number 5 on the list was a concern over media giants in publishing at 15%. E-resources have been a concern in the past two years’ surveys, as well as the merging of publishers and vendors.

eBooks
When asked if their library has bought eBooks, 87% of respondents said yes, and 13% said no. This is up from around 75% reported two years ago. The budgets for eBooks varied widely, from 0 to $600,000. 17 people said eBooks were combined in other budgets, four said the budget was unknown, and 11 did not respond.

Outsourcing
Library outsourcing is most common for approval plans, with 49% of respondents claiming this. Cataloging is next in line at 32%. 28% of respondents checked the “other” category; other items outsourced include binding, foreign language materials, and government documents. Only one person indicated that acquisitions are outsourced. These results are comparable with the 2003 and 2004 results, almost statistically identical. The only difference is in outsourcing acquisitions; in 2004, it increased to 11% from 8% the year before, and this year it decreased dramatically.

Downsizing
60% of respondents say their technical services operations have NOT been downsized in the past two years; 40% have been downsized. This is one question that everyone answered, showing the strong feelings people have on the topic. The effects of downsizing are spread across the board — 19% say the effects were positive, 13% negative, 23% other, 3% not applicable, and 39% did not respond. Apparently, the effects of downsizing don’t concern respondents as much as the downsizing itself.

Budgeting
Since money was the number one concern for the industry in the 21st century according to the first question of our survey, here is the corresponding information regarding the budget continued on page 71
ary reasons for this concern. In the past year, 58% of respondents indicate that their materials budget has increased. 21% say they have experienced a decrease, while 21% say they have seen no change. One person did not respond to the question. The average increase was 7.6%, ranging from 0.5% to 30%. The average decrease was 7%, ranging from 3% to 10% reduction.

The materials budget for books is much more widely split. 36% report an increase, 43% report a decrease, and 21% report no change. The average increase was 13%, ranging from 0.5% to 50%. The average decrease was 11%, ranging from 1% to 50%.

Journal budgets have increased for 60% of respondents, decreased for 19%, and have not changed for 19%. One person did not answer the question. Of those with an increase, the average was 8%, and ranged from 1.1% to 12.5%. Decreases averaged 15.2%, ranging from 2% to 50%.

The greatest increase was seen in the budget for electronic resources. 75% report an increase in the past year, while only 6% experienced a decrease. 13% say there was no change, and 3 people did not respond. The average increase was 14%, ranging from 2% to 100%. Decreases averaged 7.5%, ranging from 3% to 12%.

On average, the biggest portion of the budget is going to books by a narrow margin of 24.5%. Journals and E-Serials are tied at 18.5%, online resources earned 14.8%, CD-ROM/s were 1.6% and the other category received 15%. It is important to note that these are the averages of the percentages reported on the survey, so the responses do not add up to equal 100%. Nine people did not respond to this question at all.

Homepage
The majority, 87%, of respondents do have their own homepage. Only 10% said they did not, and one person did not respond. This seems to be on par with the past two years' results; 81% reported having a Webpage in 2004, and 88% in 2003.

Document Delivery and Pay-Per-View
When asked if their library used commercial document delivery or pay-per-view, the results were fairly evenly split. 45% said yes, 49% said no, and 6% did not respond. Of those who indicated yes, their budgets varied much more; percentages ranged from 0.6% to 3%, with an average of 1.2%. Dollar amounts ranged from $5,000 to $142,557 with an average of $40,510.

Most people, 51%, feel their document delivery operation is very effective. Only 4% said they were not very effective, and 11% indicated "other." Comments from those who indicated other ranged from "effective" (as opposed to "very effective"), to "cannot evaluate." 34% did not respond.

Pay-per-view operations did not receive the same praise; only 15% said their operations were very effective. 4% responded that they were not very effective, 32% responded "other," and 49% did not respond.

A majority of respondents indicated that they use ILLs or pay-per-view operations as a concrete factor in collection purchasing decisions. 64% said yes, 26% said no, and 10% didn't respond.

The vast majority keep and use statistics on their electronic resources. 94% claimed that they did, while no respondents indicated no for an answer. The other 6% did not respond to the question.

Training
96% of those surveyed indicate that their library provides training for Library Technical Assistants. Only two people responded that their training was not provided. Survey respondents were asked to indicate what type of training was being provided, and most marked more than one category. 80% said that in-house classes were provided by existing staff, 53% use continuing education with experts from outside the library, 32% use satellite transmissions, 70% have travel to conferences and workshops funded, and 19% fund credit courses. 17% indicated "other."

Paperback Only
30% of respondents said they have implemented paperback only approval plans. 38% said they have not, and 32% say they don't have an approval plan. Only 38% have implemented paperback only for firm orders.

Electronic Journal Subscription
In the ever increasing move to all things electronic, 89% of respondents claim to have cancelled paper subscriptions in favor of electronic subscriptions to journals. The approximate dollar amount of these cancellations averaged $319,460, with a range from $6,000 to $2.5 million. Archiving this information is a top concern for most; 32% say they are keeping electronic information in whatever format they acquire it. 13% are keeping paper for the present, and 45% have other methods of archiving their materials. 17%, however, believe that some other library will worry about this.

Distance Ed
Distance education is offered by 64% of institutions surveyed. These courses are offered in various locations, from "anywhere" via the Internet, to remote campus locations across state, to internationally. Distance education is supported by most institutions, though the degree of support varies widely. Some offer electronic resources only, some provide librarian(s) support, and some provide ILL services.

Type of Librarian and Years of Experience
The majority, 40%, of our survey respondents are academic librarians. 2% are special, 2% tech services, 1% reference, and 2% other. No respondents indicated government or public as their description. Again, the population seems to be an aging one. The average number of years our respondents have been a librarian was 19.8, with a range from 1 to 35 years. The past three years, the average has stayed almost flat, going from

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Biz of Acq From Student to Supervisor: Ten Management Tips for Recent Graduates

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Managing people can be one of the most challenging aspects of librarianship. This is particularly true for graduates who find themselves employed in a supervisory position straight out of library school. When I found myself in this situation, I began developing methods to help ease the transition from student to supervisor. These methods are outlined below in the form of ten management tips. The tips are explained from my perspective as the Section Head of an Acquisitions Department, but they apply virtually any supervisory situation.

1) Making a Positive First Impression
A supervisor needs to make a positive first impression. To accomplish this, I scheduled an informal meeting with each staff member my first week on the job. I prepared for each meeting by generating a list of discussion topics such as: work history, job satisfaction, job frustrations, and expectations for an effective supervisor. These topics served as a starting point for mutual discussions related to our work and personal lives. Overall, these sessions allowed me to develop a solid understanding of the staff’s personalities and work ethics, while generating a positive first impression.

2) Learning Job Duties
I needed to learn the functions of my employees to be a successful supervisor and strong advocate for my Section. To accomplish this, I scheduled a series of sessions where I received training from my staff. These sessions increased my understanding of the tasks and daily routines of my Section, and boosted the confidence of the employees who felt they were actually contributing to my development as their supervisor.

In addition to the training, I also sought to update or create internal documentation related to each staff member’s job. I reviewed the internal documents with the employees, and worked with them to correct any out-of-date or inaccurate information. By working together with the staff on this documentation, I began building the foundation for strong working relationships. Sharing in this task increased my understanding of their duties, individual work styles, and ability to function as a team.

3) Encouraging Open Communication
Communication is critical between staff and supervisor. With this in mind, I tailored my communication methods to fit the needs of the employees. I began by questioning each staff member about meetings and learned that the employees preferred to meet in one collective staff meeting rather than individual one-on-one meetings. If an employee needed to meet with me personally, they preferred to stop by my workplace as necessary.

I also made an effort to learn the preferred style of communication for each individual employee. While some of the staff members favored e-mail, others preferred face-to-face communication. I employed their ideal style of communication when needing to communicate with them directly. By tailoring myself to their communication needs, I found that I received a stronger response and created an open dialogue with my staff.

4) Delegating Work
Delegation was the single most difficult supervisory task for me to learn. As a student, I was responsible for starting and finishing tasks by myself. As a supervisor, I learned that delegating work was a more beneficial option. Delegation gave me the time to train employees in new skills and functions. Those new skills increased the strength of my department, allowed for professional growth within my staff, and made each employee more marketable. Furthermore, delegation was an implicit demonstration of trust. I trusted the abilities of my staff enough to assign them new projects and increasing responsibilities.

5) Attending Classes and Workshops
As a first-time supervisor, I understood the importance of learning management and supervisory skills. I did this by attending numerous classes offered through the Human Resources Department at the University of North Carolina. I sought out classes that emphasized in-class role-playing exercises, so that I could practice the management techniques in a confidential environment. Once I learned these management techniques, I practiced them until I determined which ones were most effective for me and my staff. Management is a continual learning process, and these classes ensured that I learned the most effective techniques for successful management.

6) Reading the Literature
I learned new supervisory techniques by reading articles and books related to management. Although a large body of information is available for library managers, I read across all management spectrums. Indeed, I found myself borrowing tips on motivation, rewards systems, and employee encouragement from corporate management resources. I discovered that reading material across all management settings allowed me to use techniques that I may not have discovered otherwise.

7) Seeking Peer Support and Advice
Attending management classes gave me the opportunity to meet supervisors throughout the university system. After the classes ended, I maintained relationships with some of these supervisors to establish a peer support network. In every management position, situations arise where advice and counsel are needed. After I established this network, I presented management dilemmas and received feedback from fellow supervisors. For particularly tricky situations, I role-played possible courses of action with fellow supervisors. This role-playing gave me the confidence to approach the real-life situation with a calm and collected demeanor.

Because one-on-one peer advice was not

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