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Collection Building

Report from the Charleston Conference 2015
Kay Ann Cassell

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Report from the Charleston Conference 2015

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to present a report on the 2015 Charleston Conference.

Design/methodology/approach – This paper is based on information gained at the conference.

Findings – Areas covered are privacy, the importance of the article, open access and electronic resources.

Originality/value – Conference of value to those interested in collection development, etc.

The Charleston Conference, an annual conference in Charleston, South Carolina, always has multiple themes. The overall theme of the conference was "Where Do We Go From Here"? But among the program themes, those that stood out at this conference were open access, the importance of the article, electronic resource issues and privacy.

One measure of the importance of the article is Carol Tenopir's research in her "Beyond Downloads" project. She interviewed both science and social science scholars to find out what the download counts are missing. Tenopir found that understanding article sharing gives us a more complete measure of the value of the databases. She found that scholars want to share but want to get proper credit, i.e. a citation if it is their article. The scholars share most often in a research group but also share to help a colleague fulfill an information need. Sharing could be a citation or it could be a pdf document – usually the sharing is a full text article. In all, 73.6 per cent of the scholars shared by email. Others are sharing by using Twitter. Sharing the final published version is important to the scholars, and the library was the key to sharing because the downloads come from the library.

As Tenopir's research shows, it is the article not the database that is now of prime importance. One program was devoted to how to get articles "just in time" or at the "point of need" for your users when you do not have a subscription. It was discussed as a patron-driven model for journals – not selecting but providing access. Providing articles is a way to respond to new areas of research. Librarians are now looking a "mediated access" and "pay per view" to get for the user what they need, although long-term librarians hope to have more open access articles.

Two programs on electronic collection development in academic libraries discussed some of the issues facing libraries. At one program, Syracuse University librarians discussed areas of electronic resources in collection development that they thought needed to be addressed which included:

- the need to look at how resources overlap;
- the need to identify cutting edge resources;
- the need to meet curriculum needs;
- the need to see what is being requested through interlibrary loan (ILL);
- the need to look at usability of resources;
- the need to have unlimited access to online resources;
- the need to have resources that can be used by users with disabilities; and
- the need for both turnaway and usage statistics from vendors.

The second program focused on the evaluation of electronic resources and was presented by librarians from the University of North Texas. They walked the audience through the steps they now take in evaluating electronic resources:

- *Feedback*: This is described as requests for a particular electronic resource.
- *Trials*: They set up trials of proposed electronic resources and promote them widely and then they follow-up with a survey form for those who examine the electronic resources to fill out.
- *Accessibility*: They depend on vendor reports for information on accessibility.
- *Content and scope*: They analyze electronic resources for overlap and for how it supports the curriculum.
- *Usability*: They have students to try out the electronic resources to see whether they are easy to use.
- *Contract licensing*: They ask for the contract early in the process so that they have time to examine it and would not be rushed by the vendor; issues they examine are the availability of usage statistics, the period of the contract, how confidentiality is addressed and where legal disputes will be settled.

Open access was an important theme at the Conference. It is obvious that open access is growing and that new business models are being developed. *Science* reported that 50 per cent of its papers are now published as open access, and by 2025, 80-90

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per cent of their papers will be open access. University of California reported on their Luminos model for digital monographs. Their business model is that the funding is composed of the author's contribution, library subsidies, a University of California Press subsidy and the sales of the print edition. Alexander Street is developing an Anthropological Fieldwork Online which will be open access as well as an Anthropology Commons. This is all primary source fieldwork notes never before available. Ubiquity Press, an open access publisher, discussed their cost efficient platform that journals can use and which makes quality open access affordable for all. One of Ubiquity Press's new products is the Open Library of the Humanities.

In many ways, the issue of privacy provokes more questions than answers. Lisa Macklin from Emory University discussed the issue of libraries and privacy. She pointed to the list of state privacy laws (USA) on the American Library Association Web site and the ALA Code of Ethics, which can provide librarians with essential information. Macklin posed many questions for librarians:

Q1. What data are being collected in the library?

Q2. Who has access to the data?

Q3. Do users have the right to opt out?

Q4. What data do the vendor collect?

Q5. How are the data used?

Q6. What does the licensing agreement say about privacy?

Privacy is a complicated issue for libraries and librarians who do believe that users have the right to privacy. Yet, as the speakers at this program noted there are many ways that the kind of data collected and available are not always used in the best interests of our users. It is important that librarians focus on ways to better secure the information they collect and that they not keep data not really needed.

Other issues receiving attention at Charleston were e-books. Libraries continue to survey their users as to whether e-books are acceptable. Michael Levine-Clark at the University of Denver found in a recent survey that 20 per cent of the undergraduates had never used an e-book. He also found that many students preferred e-books but used them more for classes than for pleasure.

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