Collection Management

Libraries serve as content providers, but which content? Do we have room for all of yesterday's best sellers and out of date non-fiction? How should we handle ever changing electronic content? How can we take care of our heritage collections? Where does resource sharing fit into the picture?

User Input

Sharan Harvey, Manager Library Services, Brisbane City Council Library Services in Australia, spoke on “Collections Research: What do customers want?” at the IFLA Metropolitan Library Section, MetLib09 Conference, Brisbane, Australia. Her findings are applicable to American public libraries.


The Reference and Users Services Association of the American Library Association issued “Guidelines for Liaison Work in Managing Collections and Service,” an acknowledgement that many libraries involve users.


Policies

These are examples of collection development/management policies for some Pennsylvania public libraries:
- Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, PA
- Free Library of Philadelphia, PA
- Hanover Public Library, PA
- Moon Township Public Library, PA
- St. Marys Public Library, PA
- Tredyffrin Township Libraries, PA
- Allegheny County Library Association, PA
These are examples of collection development/management policies for libraries outside of Pennsylvania:

- **Greenwich Library**, CT  Includes disposal of discarded materials.
- **Hartford County Public Library**, MD
- **Longview Public Library**, TX  Includes binding.
- **Lucius Beebe Memorial Library**, MA
- **Montgomery County Public Libraries**, MD  Includes process for including authors who want their materials in collection.
- **Scottsdale Public Library**, AZ
- **Tempe Public Library**, AZ

**General Information Including Weeding**


The “Collection Management Webliography” was prepared by Julie Italiano for the InfoPeople Project supported by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.

Disher, Wayne. *Crash Course in Collection Development.* Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2007. Available through Access Pennsylvania Database. Table of contents available. This guide was created for those with little formal LIS training working in small, rural libraries, and it could be helpful for librarians who are new to this area of service or need to brush up on their skills.

To address the collection development training needs of Arizona’s small and rural libraries, the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records created the Collection Development Training for Arizona Libraries site and “provides the following types of information on each major aspect of collection development or information resource management:

- Theoretical principles regarding collection development; and,
- Definitions of key terms; and,
- Self-assessment exercises for individuals to evaluate their knowledge and understanding.”

This is an outstanding example of comprehensive, well written information provided in easy to digest sections.
The American Library Association provides helpful organizational information about committees and their work associated with **collection development**.


Karen Klopfer developed “**Weed It: For an Attractive and Useful Collection**” under the auspices of the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System. She includes a section of sacred materials.

When it is time to review your insurance, the Library of Congress provides a helpful interactive [spreadsheet](#) to value your collection. The values may be a bit high for a public library since it is geared to all published books, but it is certainly a start.

**Floating Collections**

Systems, district library centers and libraries with branches may want to consider floating collections in order to cut down on the transport of items and for other reasons.

Sarasota County Libraries, FL has compiled a [webliography](#) of presentations, handouts and reports dealing with floating collections throughout the world.
A preconference at the 2010 Public Library Association Conference, “Putting the Puzzle Together: Managing a Floating Collection,” describes not only how a few libraries “did it good,” but the problems involved in implementing and managing this. Note the tips for sustainability.


Barbara Spruill, Gwinnett County Public Library, GA presented “Adrift or Right on Target: Perspectives on Floating Collections” at the Public Library Association Conference, March 2010. Do take time to read the speaker’s notes. Although Gwinnett is a large system, there are many lessons for smaller consortia. On that website there are other presentations, handouts and notes from a question and answer session dealing with floating collections.

Later in the year Barbara Spruill hosted “Floating Collections E-Forum,” sponsored by ALCTS. The archives are available.

**Challenges to the Collection**

Procedures to handle challenges to library collections are often part of a collection maintenance policy. The American Library Association offers aid when a challenge occurs. Divisions of ALA also are helpful; for example, YALSA, the Young Adult Library Services Association has general information and a wiki.

**Government Documents**

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) retained Ithaka S+R to conduct a comprehensive study on the Federal Library Depository Program (FDLP) and to recommend how to respond to changes in an increasingly digital, networked environment that have caused a decline in incentives for libraries to participate in the Program. Both a summary and the entire document are online. Roger C. Schonfeld. *Documents for a Digital Democracy: A Model for the Federal Depository Library Program in the 21st Century.* New York: Ithaka, 2009.

**Electronic Resources and eBook Readers**


The Columbus Metropolitan Library’s video, “Digital Rights Management and Your eReader,” is mounted on YouTube. It is geared to the library customer who wants to know why various books are not available electronically.


Vendors, promoting their goods and services, often provide generic information that can be helpful:

“Funding: Considerations before Investing in Electronic Databases” was prepared by Ebsco Publishing
Lexis Nexis® InfoPro “Professional and Personal Development” covers daily library promotion.
Gale Centage Learning “Power to the User: Market Your Library” provides tips for library marketing.

The staff of the Alexander Street Press has presented papers on various topics pertaining to electronic resources.

At the ALA Annual Conference, June 2008, seven publishers shared their insights on the future of reference databases at the "Speaking Technically" panel.


Mary LaMarca, Dartmouth College, and others presented “Managing a Collection of Electronic Information Resources” at the 1997 Cause Annual Conference. Although the examples are of large academic libraries, the principles are the same for small libraries as well; for example, the need to have a trial and formally evaluate it is critical even for the smallest purchase.

Golderman, Gail and Bruce Connolly. "In the Face of Diversity." *Library Journal* (1976) 134, no. 12 (July 2009): 40-2, 44-6. OmniFile Full Text Mega, WilsonWeb (accessed March 7, 2010). To ensure that the collection includes topics of interest to diverse groups, the authors prepared an overview and analysis of current, multicultural electronic databases that are available as of publication date.
Ann Okerson, Associate University Librarian for Collections and International Programs, Yale University, compiled “Electronic Collections Development.”

Carol Tenopir, Chancellor’s Professor, School of Information Sciences, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, has written prolifically on electronic databases and journals. Her professional website provides reference to the myriad of articles that she has written.

The Yale University Library Council on Library and Information Resources provides help for those who need assistance in understanding licensing terminology, vendor agreements, negotiating, and managing electronic resources. Their “Bibliography of Licensing Sources” provides other resources.

The Survey of Library Database Licensing Practices, published by the Primary Research Group in 2007, contains far more information than most libraries need. The abstract, however, provides an excellent list of issues that libraries should address when purchasing databases.

Local History and Archives


The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission offers an annual workshop. The 2008 Conference materials cover topics of interest to those involved with archives.

Local History Websites

The local history website for Santa Cruz Public Libraries, CA has a disclaimer. The White Plains Public Library, NY provides its scope. New Haven Free Public Library, CT’s overview includes its mission. Uniontown Public Library, PA includes its policies and collection scope.

Preservation and Conservation

The Library of Congress provides both basic and complex information on a variety of topics associated with conservation and preservation.

“Preserving Works on Paper: Manuscripts, Drawings, Prints, Posters, Maps, Documents”

“Preserving Newspapers”

“Ownership Marking of Paper-Based Materials”

“Care, Handling and Storage of Books”
In addition they have developed assistance for photography, magnetic images, sound, scrapbooks, etc.

The Northeast Conservation Center has a series of preservation leaflets on such topics as preservation planning, storage, handling, reformatting, etc. Their preservation toolkits should be helpful to those libraries considering a project.

The Library of Michigan’s “Library Preservation Information Resources” is a good starting point for basic information.

The Lyrasis Preservation Services and Supplies Database contains a collection of vendors who provide supplies, equipment and services for conservation and preservation activities in libraries and archives.

Consider the Preservation Week toolkit available from the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services as a way of promoting what you’ve done or what needs to be done.

Other Collections

There are tool collections for loan at the Grosse Point Public Library, MI and the Berkeley Public Library, CA; multimedia kits (Kidpacks) for children at the Boise Public Library, ID and toys at the Salinas Public Library, CA.

Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery


The “*Pennsylvania Interlibrary Loan Code,*” adopted in 1994 “reflects a philosophy that strong and well-defined collections must be available in libraries of all types and sizes. The *Pennsylvania Interlibrary Loan Procedures Manual,* published in 1995, was developed to standardize procedures throughout the Commonwealth. The draft revision, *Interlibrary Loan Guidelines,* and a draft of the *ILL Procedures Manual* are now available for review. Within the Guidelines it states: “Libraries endorsing these Guidelines are encouraged to offer interlibrary loan to their users at no cost, to lend returnable materials at no cost and to keep copy fees to a
minimum....It is the responsibility of each library to evaluate available options and maximize access to content, such as purchase, full-text, or web content, before using interlibrary loan to meet the needs of their users.”

Knox, Emily. *Document Delivery and Interlibrary Loan on a Shoestring*. New York: Neal-Schuman, 2010. Available through Access Pennsylvania Database. “Written specifically for libraries facing budgetary constraints, limited resources and inadequate training, this invaluable guide outlines the time-management skills and technical ingenuity that will help transform Interlibrary Loan (ILL) and document delivery service into an efficient and organized operation.”

*DocDel.net* has compiled a list of document delivery services that include only a few free sites. This is helpful to those users who wish to pay for services, generally of a highly specialized nature.

**Reviews**

In addition to the standard sources for reviews, remember to check news magazines, the *Wall Street Journal, The New York Times*, your local newspaper and the one from the nearest large city, *The New Yorker* and other periodicals that your users are likely to read. *Choice*, although geared to the academic community, has excellent review articles.

**WebJunction Courses**

*WebJunction Pennsylvania* provides a large selection of free and discounted online workshops and training courses available to library employees, library board members, and trustees in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This service is supported by a grant from the Office of Commonwealth Libraries. Log on to your account for access to courses such as:

- *Weeding the Library Collection (LibraryU)*
- *Merchandising That Works (LibraryU)*
- *Weeding: It’s Not an Option (LE@D)*
- *Gifts for Libraries: Be Careful What You Wish For (LE@D)*
- *The Customer’s Voice*
- *Capturing History: Digitization Projects (LE@D)*