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BUILDING AND MANAGING AN ACQUISITIONS PROGRAM

CAROL PITTS HAWKS

INTRODUCTION

When I sat down to write this paper, I reviewed the scope notes that the Institute Planning Committee had given me and found that just *reading* the general topics to be covered in my talk would take 10 minutes of this 20-minute speech! But, let me give it a shot. Let me start by saying that despite the difficulties and the headaches, I would not want to do anything else but be an acquisitions librarian. Regardless of the size of the unit you manage, acquisitions can be the most challenging, ever changing, and rewarding part of the library. Let me acknowledge from the beginning that my experience with acquisitions and libraries in general is exclusively in ARL university libraries. However, what I hope to share with you today can be used regardless of the environment or setting in which you work.

Let us look at an overview of acquisitions management in four areas: organization of the acquisition unit, managing resources, managing in times of change, and resources for decision making.

ORGANIZATION OF THE ACQUISITIONS UNIT

Defining Acquisition Unit Relationships Within the Parent Organization

Some acquisitions librarians express feelings of isolation and powerlessness within the organization. Power is not something that you necessarily inherit or have given to you. You must work to establish your department's worth to the parent organization. One of the best ways to do this is to empower yourself and your staff particularly by leading the way in new initiatives and taking on responsibility in new areas before they get a foothold somewhere else. Let me use license negotiation as an example of stepping in early and convincing your library that this is just another piece of the acquiring function. Through our efforts at Ohio State University (OSU), we forged a powerful working relationship with our legal services department.

Another way to empower your department is to build allies with like concerns and interests. I know of one acquisitions librarian who works with what he calls a "shadow cabinet." He has a set of people within the libraries with whom he has lunch monthly in order to get a reading on how his department is perceived, what works, what does not. Similarly, after my first year on the job I surveyed our primary clientele —40 collection managers —about what they liked about the Acquisition Department and what they thought needed improvement. Early in my first year I also

visited each of the libraries served by my department and now that I have been at OSUL for six years, I am considering a second round of visits.

Organizing Acquisitions Functions and Workflows

Any quick survey of the group assembled here today would reveal at least 150 different organizational structures related to serials and acquisitions. I manage a very large centralized acquisition and serials operation, but I do not have the binding function. I am convinced that Joe Barker at UC-Berkeley actually has all of that library reporting to him! In reality, he does have government documents as well as most of the traditional acquisitions and serials functions. Each of us would have a different twist in our organization, yet we all consider ourselves acquisitions librarians.

So, there is no one "right" organization. Instead, look for an organization that makes sense within the organizational culture and institutional value in which you find yourself. These two factors — organizational culture and institutional values —cannot be minimized. However, they should never be used as excuses to avoid changes. For example, I believe that there is a natural relationship between acquiring material (Acquisitions) and borrowing and lending material (Interlibrary Loan). However, in some library cultures ILL is definitely viewed as a public services function precluding it from incorporating in an Acquisitions Department.

My fundamental message here is do not be afraid to change things. The first year that Trisha Davis was in my department as head of the serials section, she had almost 60% of her positions vacant. Her staff did not know from one day to the next what job they would be doing —literally. They did whatever needed to be done that day, that week, that month.

Setting Departmental Service Priorities

This topic —setting departmental service priorities — flows naturally from my last statement. It is imperative for efficiency and good morale to identify what you intend to accomplish, in what time frames, and share that information widely. OSU, as have most of us, has been hit heavily in the personnel area by budget reductions. We are in the somewhat enviable position of having had our materials budget protected and routinely incremented for the past few years, but the loss of staff has been very detrimental. For example, between FY90/91 and FY92/93 the materials budget was increased by 1 million dollars, $800,000 of which was allocated to monograph purchasing. We all know that adding money to the serials line to pay for price increases is not that much more work, but adding significantly to the monograph line means more ordering, receiving, claiming, invoicing, etc. At the same time, the Acquisition Department has been reduced by six positions from a high of 35 in 1987 to the current figure of 29.

So, how does this relate to setting priorities? First, we articulated a set of activities that were most important to the library based on our institutional values. For example, basic priorities for the Monograph Acquisition Division of the Department included keeping our INNOVACQ system running, maintaining the weekly flow of approvals through the review shelves (we receive such a large volume on approval that we cannot afford to get behind), order processing, and claiming. Each priority has a time frame associated with it, for example, rush orders are placed within 24 hours. Other orders are verified and placed within three weeks. Plus we guarantee these time frames. If we have to vary from them, we inform our clientele. Let me make an aside here —if you think three weeks is too long before orders are placed—this was done during a time of extensive vacancies, plus we are an extremely high-volume operation. We do not like having it

take three weeks to place an order, but at least we are clear to our patrons what they can expect.

The reaction from collection managers was phenomenal. They appreciated the directness and reality. In essence, they said just tell us what you can do, then do it, and we did. We had virtually no complaints while we were working under this document. The second piece of the document also listed activities that were to be done on an "as time permits" basis. In earlier, more dire versions of this document, there have been categories for suspended operations -things we have not given up doing permanently, but things that are on hold for a specified period. When we have to give something up permanently or streamline it, we discuss that with the collection managers, too.

By way of further example, one of the fundamental institutional values we hold at OSU is that (for now) we have extremely centralized serials check-in for all 19 libraries on our campus (excluding Law and Health Sciences), As a result, we guarantee 48-hour turnaround on serials check-in for between 300,000 and 400,000 pieces each year. During the period of this document, we had to increase that 48-hour turnaround to one week, though we were always at less than one week throughout this period. The document also reminded collection managers what was the previous definition of *current* (Figure 1).

Making Staffing Decisions

Because I manage a large department, I am not always intimately involved in the interview process for individuals to be hired in the Acquisition Department. However, the control I do exercise is through discussion about how the job description will be revised and posted, what we are looking for before we interview, and what the supervisor feels about the individual he/she recommends hiring. Now, let me acknowledge, that I have four extremely competent supervisors reporting to me—two are experienced librarians and two are very high-level, long-term paraprofessionals. I meet with each of them individually each week. I also meet with these division heads and the supervisors under them together as a group each week (and there is not a shy one in the bunch, so I get excellent feedback and interaction).

In making my own hiring decisions, I look for "people" qualities as much as I look for acquisitions knowledge and skills. Do they know how to get along with people? Do they know how to work as part of a team? Can they think creatively? Are they flexible and adaptable to change? Can they take and learn from constructive criticism? Do they care about what they do for a living, or are they just waiting for the clock hands to reach 5 p.m. every day?
How do you ascertain these qualities? I will concede that for me, gut reactions are a strong part of my hiring decisions, but only as a confirmation of what the interview and the facts tell me. Do your homework — call the references, call your contacts on campus. Let me use a current example — I recently hired a new supervisor to manage my Accounting Division. I had eight applicants from outside the library because there are few of these positions within the Libraries. The four applicants I interviewed came from the Accounts Payable Department, Travel Office, and the Bookstores. After reading the applications, I have an individual list of questions to ask each person. For example, for one of these people this job would be a lateral transfer. There can be reasonable explanations for that, but it is important for the person to explain those to me. Either a reasonable explanation will be forthcoming, or there will be red flags that can be followed up later in my reference checking. In this case, the individual's position was being phased out and she was planning ahead by looking for a new position within the University.

Receiving Division

Basic Priorities
1. Receipt and processing of serial issue --within 1 week (previous definition of "Current" was 2 days)
2. Receipt and processing of monograph orders—within 1 week
3. Check-in of CD-ROM material – within 1 week (previous definition of "current" was 1 day)
4. Problem solving in direct support of continuation and unit order check-in –within 1 week)

Activities processed on an "as time permits" basis
1. Damaged and defective returns and processing
2. Problem solving not in direct support of check-in
3. Quality control check on continuation processing – frequency of review will be lengthened
4. Snag processing – process under review for streamlining

Figure 1. Priorities document.

In a second case, the resume revealed that the person made a transfer on campus from an Account Clerk 1 position to an Account Clerk 2 position. After six months, they took a new job on campus at the Account Clerk 1 level. Now is this a real red flag — did they fail probation in the higher position? What is the explanation they will give me?

My next step was to contact informally the Libraries' Business Officer who was formerly a part of the Financial Management area on campus. Although she knew only one of the applicants personally, she had marvelous insights about campus politics. For example, she advised me that the Travel Office had been a mess and the director fired very recently. So, the person from that office could be someone who was a favorite of the ousted person. Or, maybe they are very competent and just want out of a tumultuous situation.

Because this person will be operating as a team member with me and the department's other division heads, I included those division heads as a part of the interview process. Their insights can add to or confirm my perceptions or can identify issues that I missed. In addition, this person must work effectively with them as a team so their input is critical to my decision. Finally, let me share with you a set of questions that we use in portions of my department during interviewing. The original set of these questions was developed by Trisha Davis. This version has been revised by me for use specifically with the account position interviews. Although you may think these sound a bit hokey, they actually elicit the most amazing and revealing answers (Figure 2).

Another important aspect of personnel management is learning to make hard decisions. Evaluating staff, rewarding them when appropriate, is an important aspect of a staff-intensive activity such as acquisitions. One of my favorite parts of my job is seeing staff grow in new

knowledge and skills; seeing them reach beyond themselves to conquer some new problem. And I love to see the day when they step across the line and make those decisions without needing every step approved and confirmed by me. Empowering them to trust their judgment means not second-guessing their decisions. The obvious corollary to that trust, or course, is their ability to know when they need to consult and when they may forge ahead — an easy line to walk for some, but quite difficult for others.

Disciplinary activities should not be deferred or ignored. They only grow into bigger problems. Libraries and technical services in particular can be a haven for staff that have difficulty adapting to the demands of the traditional working world. One of our challenges is to know when we have found a productive way for that person to contribute and when we need to set them loose.

Managing by Policy

Managing by policy is something I consider one of the most fundamental pieces of my job. I have very specific philosophies and beliefs about the kind of services we need to offer to our collection managers, about the kind of relationships we should maintain with related departments such as cataloging, and about the manner in which we conduct our business relationships for the university. Some policies are unwritten — for example, the speed with which any member of the department is to respond to a question from the Director of Libraries. The Director's questions do not go unanswered for very long! Now, of course, that is a pretty typical unwritten policy. However, we extend a similar courtesy to our collection managers. Problems that they bring to our attention, particularly serials claims, deserve an acknowledgement and status report within 48 hours. The status report may be nothing more than a phone call or note that indicates what we have done so far and when we hope to have a full answer to them.

Another of my philosophies involves how you manage all of this in the face of budget cuts and staff reductions. I believe in maintaining core/basic activities first — i.e., you must get the orders placed, the books received, and the invoices paid. In corollary, you must get the serials checked-in. Then we focus on high-end service such as going to great lengths to get rush books in as quickly as possible. Bibliographic searchers in the department will trudge over to the bookstore in the worst of weather to pick up a title (and they fight over the opportunity in the springtime). We will call local bookstores in town if we think that the title is likely to be available through such a source. Most recently we have introduced a new rush service with our major monograph vendor, which gives the collection manager the option of having the title shipped overnight mail from the publisher (at their cost from the materials budget, of course).

Applicant's Name: _____   Date: _____

1. What is your experience in or working knowledge of libraries?

2. Give me some examples of how you would consider yourself detail-oriented.

3. Describe your preferred method(s) of communication.

4. Give an example of how you handled constructive criticism.

5. Have you ever worked in an environment that was production oriented? If so, please explain.

6. How was the work output measured? Did you always remain current?

7. Give me an example of how you could function that requires a great deal of self motivation.

8. Give me an example of when you made a "contribution" to your job.

9. If I called your current supervisor what would he/she say about you?

10. If you could change any aspect of your current job, what would you change and why?

11. How would you perform in the following situation? I have given you a task to perform which needs to be done RUSH. You are the one person in the division. After beginning the task, you are uncertain about my instructions. How could you proceed to complete this task?

12. Are you aware that this is a job which requires a great deal of self-education and self-motivation? Would this be a problem for you?

13. What do you hope to gain in this position?

14. Give me the name of 2 people who have influenced you in your life and briefly tell me why.

Figure 2. Interview questions.

I would rather provide the real kinds of services that my collection managers need instead of checking every unidentified piece of serials mail that comes into my department.

Lest you think we roll over and do anything a collection manager wants, there is a flip side to this issue. We manage by policy to avoid unreasonable demands as well. Collection managers may suggest where a title should be purchased, but final authority for any purchasing decision and source is held by the Acquisition Department. Because we buy extensively in countries for which we do not speak or read the language, we do form a partnership with the collection manager to work effectively with the vendor.

MANAGING RESOURCES

Managing the Materials Budget

The role of the acquisitions librarian in managing the materials budget varies significantly from institution to institution. If you have a role in this management, it should probably be one of your highest priorities. Since management of this budget may be a responsibility shared with someone else such as the collection development officer or the library business officer, it is important that you clarify each individual's role. If this is not clear, some jobs may be done twice

while others are left undone.

Most libraries have an automated system for purchasing library books and journals separate from the university's accounting and purchasing system. As a result, keeping these two systems in sync and maintaining your system under appropriate audit control becomes the responsibility of the acquisitions librarian. First and foremost, understand how and where you interact and mesh with the institution's accounting divisions. Make contacts in the various accounting areas and in purchasing. Find out what your obligations are regarding bidding contracts and maintaining records. Although our libraries' materials budget is exempt from any bidding process, we do chose to bid our major approval plan every five years or so. Our most recent experience, which some of you may have seen me discuss in a message on ACQNET, was a near disaster. Because of the University's financial condition, all contracts for over $500,000 are subject to special scrutiny to maximize the savings on the contract. As a result, our Purchasing Department decided to investigate approval plans and contracts on their own (we had already provided the detailed specifications and met with the purchasing agent). They were able to get a copy of the most recent contract from another state university and used that as the benchmark against which to set the terms for our bid. Unfortunately, that bid was three years old and the vendor market has changed significantly since then. The percentage discount received by that institution is no longer realistic in today's market, plus the plan for that institution is very straight forward and far less comprehensive than ours.

As a result of their investigation, the contract was submitted to the four vendors we had designated (but also to a vendor who we knew did not even have approval plans). In addition, a minimum percentage discount was included in the bid and was at such a high level that we were concerned that no one would be able to bid at that level. As we predicted, the vendor we did not suggest responded that they could not bid because they did not provide approval plans. Fortunately, we did receive one bid from our current vendor at precisely the minimum bid required. I believe that the only reason they could afford to bid at that level was because the profile and contract were already in place (requiring no start up costs). Fortunately again, the contract is for five years, so hopefully the players in Purchasing will have changed again by then and we will have to start all over!

Meeting the Automation Needs

What a challenge! At OSU we have the INNOVACQ system, and that has recently been upgraded to the first phase of the full INNOPAC as a result of our statewide project, Ohio-LINK. However, keeping pace with changing microcomputer needs is never ending. We face regularly the issue of upgrading the microcomputer that houses our CD-ROM databases used in the acquisitions process, specifically *B&T Link* (Baker & Taylor, Inc., Charlotte, NC) and *BIP Plus* (R. R. Bowker, NY). We would love to have the world edition of some of these products but simply cannot afford the storage. E-mail and word-processing requirements have expanded our demand for a microcomputer for everyone, though we are nowhere close to that goal. For those of you that have reached that goal, you will now face the upgrading issues of keeping the machines from becoming obsolete or too underpowered to perform as required.

The soundest strategy that 1 have seen in operation is one that plans for routine replacement of microcomputers on a regular cycle. For areas where powerful machines are needed for spreadsheets or other machine-intensive activities, continue to upgrade those machines on a regular cycle. The machine that is no longer adequate for that function is probably still very useful for the person who just needs to do e-mail or word processing. Recycling these microcomputers so

they can be used most effectively allows you to eliminate the lowest end computers that are no longer useful or needed.

If you are not in a situation where you can expect to have a personal computer for every person, you have to identify other ways to use the ones you have effectively. Clustering terminals may be useful so that no individual feels too much ownership about a terminal that must be shared with a number of people. Use terminal scheduling to maximize use of terminals and minimize frustration for staff members. Scheduling blocks of time for each person, at least allows them to plan their day and work around the availability of the terminal. Some institutions have also enhanced terminal scheduling with an "express" terminal. This terminal is not scheduled for blocks of time but rather is used for quick checks of information on an ad hoc basis, and sessions are limited to five or ten minutes.

As a corollary, buy more equipment for functions that make staff more productive. For example, if you have separate systems that need to be consulted regularly, consider placing one of the terminals on a lazy susan or rotating platform between terminals so that it can be freely shared. In another example, we have four stations that are used exclusively for serials check-in. Because staff members need to print labels for each piece and have occasional need for printouts to document problems or titles changes, the printers are linked to each terminal; the printers are housed on a double-decker stand with a switch box that can be flipped to indicate which printer is to be used. In this scenario, label stock can be maintained in one printer while the other has regular computer paper available. Changing the paper back and forth would be unthinkable. Again, this commitment to expensive equipment supports our institutional value of timely serials check-in.

RESOURCES FOR DECISION MAKING

The single greatest resource for decision making from my perspective is people. The talents of all kinds of people are helpful including the attitudes of collection managers, the knowledge your staff members have, the perceptions of other users, and the talents of those in other related units such as cataloging and preservation. Making decisions in a vacuum can be fatal. One of the things I learned from my former boss was the concept of trial balloons. When he had a new idea for technical services, he often ran that by a group of people he trusted, particularly collection managers, to get their reactions. This is similar to the "shadow cabinet" concept I mentioned earlier.

Building and Maintaining Professional Contacts
For me, this is something I cannot emphasize too much. Traveling to ALA or to smaller acquisitions-related conferences is a great way to meet colleagues. Some of these conferences such as this institute move around the country, so watch for something in your area. Others stay in the same place such as the Charleston Conference in Charleston, South Carolina, and the Feather River Institute in Blairsden, California, but draw larger numbers of participants. Not only do you gain knowledge at the meeting, but you will make contacts that can be useful once you return home. You will also find confirmation that everyone has many of the same problems. Because acquisition is very staff- but not librarian-intensive, acquisitions librarians often feel isolated. Having someone outside your institution to call or e-mail will help reduce these feelings of isolation.

There are other sources of professional contacts such as the electronic lists including

ACQNET founded by Christian Boissonnas, Nasignet for NASIG members, and AN2, the electronic newsletter of the ALA Association for Library Collections and Technical Services. Other lists are geared for users of a particular automated system such as INNOPAC or NOTISACQ. There are a number of library publications such as *Against the Grain* produced by Katina Strauch, who also coordinates the Charleston Conference; *Library Acquisitions: Practice & Theory,* which is devoted to publications on serials, acquisitions, and collection development; the *NASIG Newsletter; Serials Review; Library Resources and Technical Services;* and the *ALCTS Newsletter* from ALA ALCTS.

Doing Research and Analysis for Informed Choices

It is important to think of this category not as something elaborate and publishable (though publication may result as well). Instead, it can be a more modest investigation for your needs alone without thoughts of rigorous academic integrity. Consider these approaches:

1. Ask yourself, "what do I want to know?"
   Example, would it be faster to check in using the ISSN or title searching? You can have a group of your staff or just one person do similar titles to see what the sample results are. This can also be used as a way of convincing people to buy into decisions that a change can be more productive.

2. Search the literature.
   I have heard it expressed on lists that folks now take the easy way out and ask their question online without checking to see if something has already been written on a topic. The circumstances covered in print may not precisely mirror yours, but the situation may be close enough to your situation that you can accept the results as valid or replicate locally what others have done.

   Why should we bother doing research and analysis? Four reasons stand out for me:

1. So your decisions are informed ones not just gut reactions, though I will not discount the viability of those either.
2. Research can also be used to bolster your case when you need to convince others of something you already know. Who does not know of a circumstance where a library hired a consultant to tell the powers-that-be the same thing you know but they will not accept from you?
3. Research is often undisputable evidence of the Tightness of an opinion. It will help to convince others definitively. At OSU we have a great deal of current interest from a segment of our collection managers in decentralizing serials check-in. In acquisition, we believe that our centralized approach is the most efficient one. So, we are gathering data and looking for ways of presenting arguments so that they are convincing and nondefensive.
4. Because you may be the only one with your knowledge base in the library, what we consider standard acquisitions practice may be unknown to others. Reference librarians have a number of colleagues who can reach consensus and present a united recommen-dation. Acquisitions librarians are often out there alone on that limb.

MANAGING IN TIMES OF CHANGE

The acquisitions process has been subject to high levels of change in the recent past. It is essential in times of change to maintain effective communication throughout the library. One mechanism I use to be sure that the library administration is aware of our activities is a monthly report. The report includes three months' worth of comparative statistics with an analysis of what the statistics show. The report also highlights the accomplishments of each division and the department as a whole. Finally, it includes a status report on the priorities I mentioned earlier —whether we are current with each activity, whether we are meeting our goals, and, when we are not current, what the expected time frame is and why the priority is not being met.

Another mechanism I developed to enhance communication with collection managers at OSU is the quarterly Collection Managers' Forum. Because of the organizational structure of the OSU libraries, it was necessary for me to attend three separate meetings to reach all of the collection managers if I want to discuss an acquisitions issue or detail a new procedure with them. Each of these groups meets only once a month so the time to reach everyone can be extensive. As a result, I instituted a quarterly forum run by the Acquisition Department specifically for the purpose of discussing acquisitions issues with all collection managers (and their processing staff, if they wish). The results from the perspective of the Acquisition Department as well as from the surveys completed quarterly by the collection managers have been outstanding. The meeting is announced well in advance, since many of the collection managers are responsible for branch libraries remote from the Main Library. An agenda indicating the items to be discussed is distributed with suggestions for additional items solicited with the first announcement. Time is always left for a question-and-answer session at the end of the meeting. Most presentations are made by the division heads or myself —some are informational items on changes to procedures; others are proposed changes for which multiple options are available; others are new ideas for which we want to ascertain interest. But, most important, it is an educational process for collection managers as well as for the Acquisition Department. Large numbers of the staff in Acquisition also attend so that they can hear directly the concerns and questions expressed by collection managers. We are careful to plan and design the forum so as not to waste the time of these individuals who spend not only the time associated with the meeting, but also the transit time from their locations. Most recently, we have concluded the forum just before lunchtime, which allows groups of collection managers who are often isolated in their libraries to lunch informally together.

Renegotiating Contracts, e.g., Approval Plans, Service Charges

I have already mentioned our recent experience with approval contracts, but that was for our large primarily domestic plan. We also maintain a number of smaller plans related to special subjects or country of publication for which we establish the terms directly with the vendor. We also have relationships and agreements about our service charges. Some of these are governed by standard policy on the part of the vendor, such as the level of credit or reduction in service charge earned as a result of prepayment. Others are negotiable based specifically on the library's mix of titles and desired level of service.

Some institutions require rigid processes and contracts for each business relationship, others allow letters of agreement, while some libraries operate on verbal agreements. I would strongly caution against verbal agreements, particularly since the individuals involved in any agreement may not remain in their positions for an extended period of time. Librarians move

around as do vendor representatives. If you do not want to engage in a bidding process, at least confirm your agreements in writing.

From my perspective the most important thing involved in contracts and vendor relationships is maintaining appropriate business standards. Some of this extends into ethical behavior, but much is simply common business practice. As we all probably know from our own experience, they do not teach much nitty-gritty detail about acquisitions in library school. A course or two in basic business operations especially accounting principles, record-keeping systems, and auditing practices should be invaluable. Vendor representatives are another valuable source of information on publishing practices and procedures in use in other libraries.

Cancelling Subscriptions/Dropping Exchanges

I have to concede that I have the luxury of never having participated in a serials cancellation project in my 11 years as an acquisitions librarian. But, there is certainly lots to guide us in the library-science literature of the last few years. However, cancelling subscriptions can be thought of as another "project" to be managed. Let me use the exchange issue included here as a better example of my own personal experience. When I arrived at OSU in 1987, one of the "new positions" (believe it or not) being requested in the library's annual report to the Provost was for a Gifts and Exchanges Librarian. Given our emphasis on international studies, this was felt to be a vital growth area for collection management. How far we have come today-not only is there no outstanding request for a Gifts and Exchanges Librarian, but the entire exchange operation is under detailed review with the intent to reduce the number of titles acquired in that fashion.

Trisha Davis designed and managed the project in this area—a three-year project for which we are just completing the first year. Each exchange is thoroughly researched including information on the titles received and sent to the partner. The form that documents an exchange includes information on what we pay to acquire the material that we send to the partner and information on what it would cost to purchase the titles we receive from the partner. This form is sent to the collection manager responsible for the funds with which these titles are associated. They are asked to make a decision about the value of the titles received with regard to their collection. Although there is no monetary benefit or consequence to their funds for these decisions, we find that the pricing information is important for their value assessment. Since these titles have not been reviewed systematically for years, we are finding many cases where the title received is simply not worth the price paid. As a result of the assessment made by the collection manager, titles are cancelled, transferred to paid subscriptions when possible, or retained as exchanges if necessary.

The library administration has backed this process through allocating funds from the materials budget to support transferring wanted titles to paid subscriptions. This allows the collection manager to make his decision about the title without having to worry whether he has any available funds to purchase the title. At this early juncture, we have saved enough money from the cancellations to fund the titles being moved to subscription. We do not think this trend will hold up for the entire project, but so far we are not only making the processing of these titles more efficient, but it has not cost us any more money!

CONCLUSION

Acquisitions and the changes of our times are a challenge for us all. Serials pricing issues have come to the forefront and demanded attention as never before. Automation has provided an

array of options for which our appetites regularly outdistance our pocketbooks. Budget reductions have affected the materials budget, but have also had a dramatic effect on our ability to process material. The things I have mentioned earlier all continue to be vital during times of changes. The flow of information within the department, between related departments, and to our clientele becomes ever more important. Although I have not talked much about communication directly, it is a vital component of a well-managed acquisitions program. It becomes increasingly important in times of change.