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# Public Library Collaborative Collection Development for Print Resource (and more)

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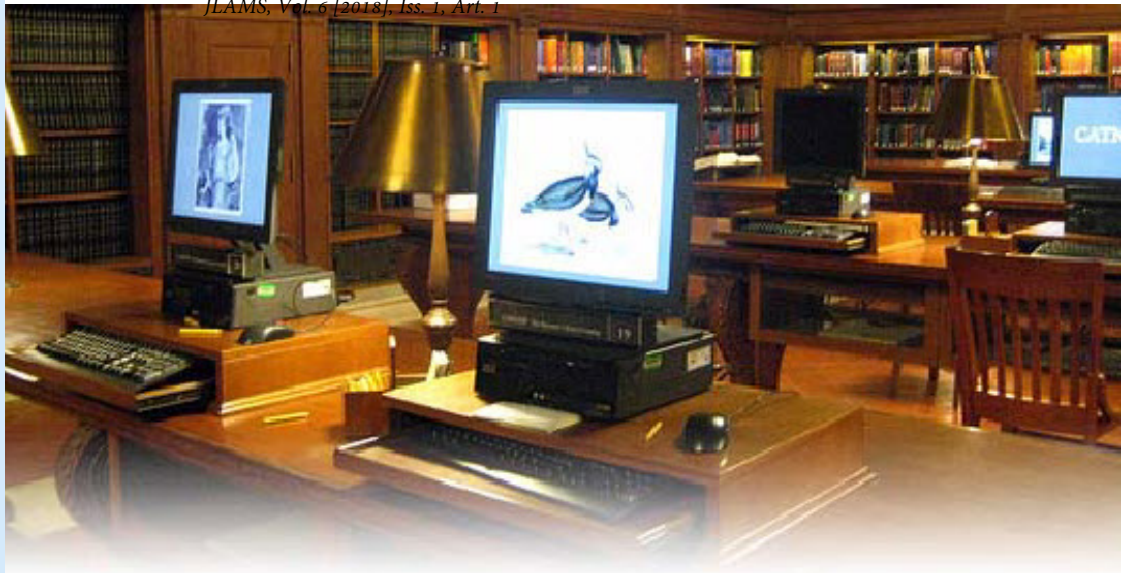
# JLAMMS

*A Peer-Reviewed Journal of the New York Library Association*

## Public Library Collaborative Collection Development for Print Resources **(and more)**



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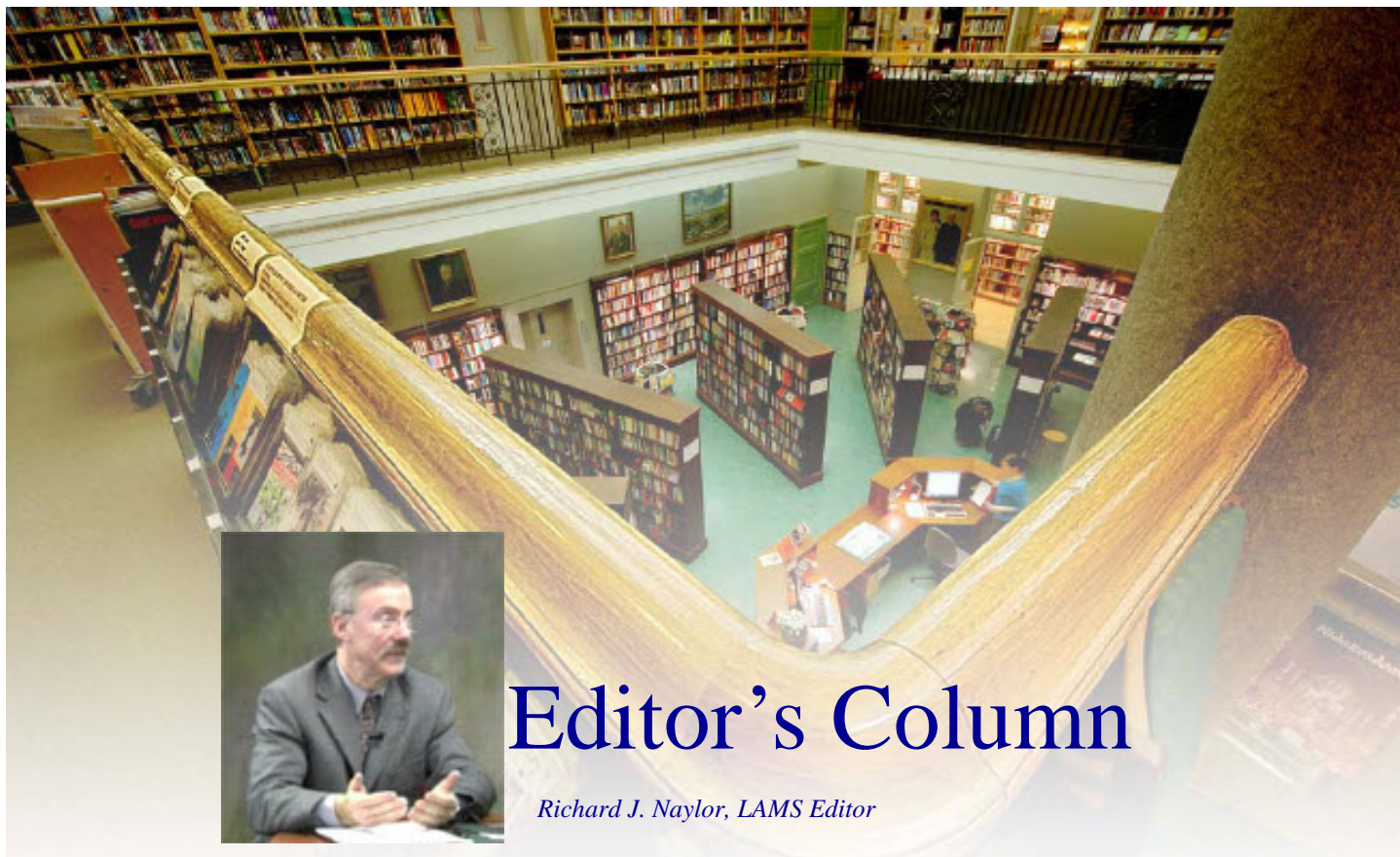
## President's Message

**Rebekkah Smith Aldrich**  
*LAMS President*

JLAMS, the electronic Journal of the Library Administration and Management Section of the New York Library Association, begins its fifth year, and as LAMS President, I'm privileged to introduce the Spring 2009 JLAMS.

JLAMS provides a valuable outlet for the dissemination of articles, academic papers, and essays of interest to administrators and managers of all types of libraries: academic, public, school and special libraries. As administrators and managers, we have a lot in common, but we have few places to share what we know. JLAMS was the first peer-reviewed journal in NYLA, and the goal was to set a high standard for future publications. Readers of JLAMS are well-served by the fine work done by Editor Richard Naylor and his team of referees, as are those whose contributions are published here. Submissions are always welcome. For information on article submissions, editorial policy, a submission form and more, visit the JLAMS website page at [http://www.nyla.org/index.php?page\\_id=922](http://www.nyla.org/index.php?page_id=922).

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## Editor's Column

*Richard J. Naylor, LAMS Editor*

Welcome to the ninth issue of JLAMS. Our peer reviewed journal on library management issues both practical and theoretical.

In each issue the number of our articles varies by the submissions we get that are approved by our Referees and this time we only had four make it. They should be of practical interest to many library managers.

Our first article is entitled “**Public Library Collaborative Collection Development for Print Resources** by *Matthew Roslund and Rebecca Nous*. Coordinated collection development has been an ideal for some for many years but our ability to use this tool to increase our service offerings at a lower cost is quite real as described in this article.

Our second article is “**Planning Your Library Vote**” By *Libby Post*. One of the most successful Library consultants in terms of helping public libraries win budget votes here lays out a sketch of what is needed.

Next *Mary Grace Flaherty* takes us through a horror scenario of a flooded library in “**Anatomy of One Library's Response to the Devastating Flood of 2006**”. Mary Grace was happy to share her experience just in case we need to learn from it.

Finally, Dr. Kanu A. Nagra provides a literature review of the evaluation of electronic resources and provides some models that can be used to improve our ability to plan in an area which suffers from an unfortunate lack of clarity.

Once again we must thank our authors for their hard work and creative writing without which we would have nothing to publish and our referees who reviewed the articles and made suggestions for improvement.

We invite all librarians and information science professionals in our state to submit articles and ideas for articles and we again ask for your help by volunteering to be a referee.

## Peer Reviewed Article

# Public Library Collaborative Collection Development for Print Resources

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*by Rebecca Nous and Matthew Roslund*

**A**bstract: This paper will explore collaborative collection development in public libraries for print monographs. It will present an argument for collaborative collection development (CCD) programs, and describe successful existing CCD programs. It will also explain how these programs can be used as a model for a CCD project involving public libraries in the Capital District of upstate New York utilizing the existing services provided by the Capital District Library Council (CDLC).

### Introduction:

None of the three public library systems in CDLC (the Upper Hudson Library System, the Mohawk Valley Library System, and the South Adirondack Library System) currently coordinate a collaborative collection development program for print resources, although libraries within the systems do collaborate for purchasing downloadable audiobooks and databases. Partially because they are easier to share, public library CCD programs for non-print resources are common and well documented. The physical nature of print monographs – the fact that they can only be in one library at a time – complicates efforts to establish programs to purchase them collaboratively, and examples of libraries that do so are scarce.

EBooks can theoretically be in more than one library at a time; however, even though the number of books available electronically is rising, publishers are still acclimating themselves to the digital environment, and battles over standards and proprietary formats need to be fought before e-books gain wider acceptance (Thomas 2007; Pace 2005). The limited number of titles, combined with the public's current level of comfort with e-reader technology, should be enough to ensure that the physical circulation of print monographs will continue to be an important function of public libraries into the foreseeable future.

In spite of the difficulties of implementation a case can and has been made for CCD programs with books. First, the provision of books to patrons is limited by cost and the expense of a book goes beyond

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its cover price; books must be cataloged and processed, and they take up valuable shelf space. These expenses, when considered in light of the fact that a number of the books a library purchases “based on reviews or perceived needs” will circulate very little, if at all (Perdue and Van Fleet 1999, 24) highlight the need to make monograph purchasing decisions thoughtfully. At some point it is more efficient for libraries to share lesser used titles through the system's ILL service. Collaborative collection development would seem to be an obvious method of avoiding significant costs associated with purchasing and storing seldom used materials. Because of implementation difficulties, however, CCD has failed to catch on in public libraries.

We will focus on CCD with print monographs in this article, but those libraries that need to focus on building collections with audio/visual or other types of materials can benefit from collaboration as well. While more recent and popular items will be in high demand and should be the responsibility of individual libraries, documentaries and educational materials of interest to the library's community are ideal candidates for CCD. The first step, as with print, is to identify areas of overlapping interest and gradually build partnerships and ultimately long-term collaborative networks.

### **Rationale for CCD**

Collaborating to develop print monograph collections has been a common practice in academic and research libraries for many years (Hoffert 2006, 38). The reasons for this are partly practical and partly based on the criteria used to evaluate the quality of a library and its collection. CCD is almost a necessity in academic libraries, which require a wide range of research materials across many different subjects, making it difficult for individual libraries to collect with much depth in any one subject. Public librarians tend to see their collections as specially created to fit the the unique community their library serves, and question the value of a program that will ask them to spend money on materials that may go to patrons of other libraries. In fact, collaborating to build print collections does not require spending more money on books, rather, it is a method of using the existing budget more wisely. It is also the case that “most public librarians have a lot of trouble imagining other systems shopping around for their books” (Hoffert 2006, 39). Fears that a CCD program will lead to a loss of control over purchasing decisions and create expenses for materials that will be unjustifiable to the local community are the major barriers we identified in our research and discussions with library directors. We hope to show that these are misperceptions, and that collaborative collection development can be a way for public libraries to save money and offer an increased variety of materials to their patrons.

### ***Budget Challenges***

As public libraries remain responsible for satisfying their users' needs with both electronic and print resources, the impact of stagnant funding or budget cuts make it more difficult to continue serving patrons. To satisfy the needs of patrons, public libraries have gone beyond providing access to traditional resources such as books, magazines, and DVDs to e-resources, computers, and the Internet as well (Bourke 2007). Public libraries are in the position of trying to provide an increasing variety of resources to patrons while receiving less money to do so. New York State's proposed 2009-2010 Executive Budget included a marked \$13 million, or nearly 14%, reduction in funding to support libraries (Paterson 2008, 53). Governor Paterson (2008) cited the state's great “economic and fiscal challenges” as necessitating these hefty funding cuts, demonstrating the vulnerability of libraries to the economic conditions existing within the state (Paterson 2008, 1). With essential state funding becoming increasingly vulnerable during difficult economic times, the need to find increased efficiencies in the materials and services public libraries provide, including within collection development, becomes even

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more important.

### ***Collection Diversity***

Wolfe and Bloss (1998) argue that library collections are becoming more and more homogeneous because of budget constraints and the misguided belief that a single library's collection could sufficiently serve all of its patrons needs, with only an occasional need for interlibrary loan. With the increasing costs of acquisitions, libraries are spending more and more of their budget on the same core titles, which leaves them with fewer resources to devote toward developing a diverse collection. Burgett, Haar, and Phillips (2004) also note that “similar libraries tend to develop similar collections” because they are serving similar user populations (Burgett, Haar, and Phillips 2004, 44). Cooperative collection development helps to reduce this homogeneity by providing the framework for libraries to reduce duplication in their collections and focus on acquiring unique materials, thereby enhancing all collections in the cooperative (Burgett, Haar, & Phillips 2004).

### ***Increased Efficiency***

Collaborative collection development can help libraries improve their financial efficiency. Because CCD allows libraries to focus a larger portion of their materials budget on acquiring unique materials and less of their budgets on unnecessarily duplicating other libraries' holdings, CCD moves the library toward optimizing its financial resources (Burgett, Haar, & Phillips 2004). Though libraries are allocating their funds more efficiently, this does not mean that “expenditures are reduced, only that they are realigned or redirected within a larger context” (Burgett, Haar, & Phillips 2004, 43). The same applies to each library's human resources such as subject specialists and catalogers as well.

### **Consortia**

Opportunities to collaborate abound in the library world. As budgets are cut and demand for new materials increases, it is natural for libraries to organize in order to gain negotiating power with vendors and pool expertise and resources. In fact, it is possible that library consortia have proliferated to the extent that they are beginning to compete with one another and create a “consortium conundrum” for librarians who wish to collaborate but are unsure which group can get them the best deals (Carlson 2003, 30). Librarians should be aware of the risks, sacrifices, and annoyances involved in entering into a consortial agreement: consortia make decisions slowly, require a serious time commitment on the part of library staff, are prone to falling apart before they accomplish anything, and require a certain sacrifice of library autonomy (Peters 2003, 111; Williams 2000, 13).

Much of the value of these consortia comes from their ability to obtain a “big deal” on an electronic database that is of equal value to the members of the group, since it can be accessed by any of them at any time. Sharing print resources works differently, however, because it requires “member libraries to relinquish the convenience of locating all these print items in their own collections in exchange for participating in an effort to broaden the group’s aggregate collecting strength” (Burgett, Haar, & Phillips 2004, 24). There is also considerably more risk, since if a member library loses a volume or drops out of the consortium, the entire group’s collection suffers a loss.

When libraries acquire print materials on behalf of a group, however, they eliminate *unnecessary* duplication, freeing up funds to purchase different materials that will increase the variety and depth of the group’s collection. Not all duplication is unnecessary; duplication of frequently-used core materials is both necessary and desirable as such books are already fully utilized. However, as frequency of use decreases, the possibility of reducing cost and increasing use by sharing increases (Kairis 2003).

Collaborative collection with print resources does require some degree of trust, organization, and acceptance of risk, which is perhaps why it is somewhat rarer. The successful examples of print CCD



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programs below, however, show that in appropriate situations the benefits can outweigh the risks.

### Models for Collaboration

#### *Subject-Specific CCD in Ohio: SWORCS*

The Southwestern Ohio Religious Cooperative (SWORCS) is a group of OHIOLink member libraries who collaborate to collect monographs in non-Judeo-Christian religions. From the beginning, one of the intentions of SWORCS was to serve as a model for statewide CCD (Jenkins 2004, 30). In 2002, Paul Jenkins began contacting libraries about the project with only the broad vision of a statewide religious CCD plan in mind. The libraries, five at first, mostly from colleges with Catholic affiliations, agreed to collect outside of the Judeo-Christian religions, since “cooperative collection development in any discipline will succeed only in areas peripheral to the core” (Jenkins 2004, 30).

The SWORCS libraries agreed to begin their collaboration slowly. Jenkins writes, “The fact that we could agree on general philosophy and ‘big picture’ decisions ensured that we did not get bogged down too early in the process by its details” (Jenkins 2004, 32). They did not write their mission statement until their fourth meeting, and purchases would not begin until the 2004-2005 fiscal year.

Each library was assigned a religion in which it would make purchases. Yankee Book Peddler’s Gobi2 software, which allowed the libraries to see the holdings and upcoming purchases of other OhioLINK libraries, was used to make purchasing decisions that would reduce duplicate titles. To help make purchasing decisions, OhioLINK shared its information about patron requests for religious monographs that went unfilled because no library in the consortium owned them.

This combination of bibliographic access (from the vendor’s Gobi2 software), cooperation from the “main consortium,” (in the form of OHIOLink’s circulation data and interlibrary loan system), a source of funding (in SWORCS’ case, a financial commitment from the member libraries), and a willingness to start slowly are the common factors in successful CCD projects.

#### *Statewide CCD in Illinois*

In projects where the subject is not so narrowly defined, a further step of collection assessment may be needed. In the early stages of the statewide Illinois Collaborative Collection Management (CCM) project, quantitative and qualitative assessments were conducted in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the region’s holdings (Shales 1996, 50). Once this step had been completed, the Cooperative Collection Management Coordinating Committee (CCMCC) began to award grants to allow libraries to make purchases for the CCM program. The money for these grants came from, among other institutions, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois State Library, and the member libraries.

In 2005 the CCM libraries joined with the Illinois Digital Academic Library and the Illinois Library Computer Systems Organization to form the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI). CARLI now has 153 member libraries, and coordinates and funds a number of collaborative collection projects, many dealing with environmental issues (CARLI web site n/d).

The preliminary assessments and the grants, when combined with the bibliographic access provided by ILLINET Online (Illinois’ statewide union catalog) and ILDS (the statewide delivery service) create a complete and successful statewide CCD program that includes and benefits large academic and small public libraries (Shales 1996, 52).

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### *State-Mandated CCD in Minnesota*

The decision to collaborate is not always initiated by librarians. A 1998 bill passed by the Minnesota State Legislature awarded \$3 million to libraries in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU) System with the stipulation that the money be used for cooperative purchasing. Fearing a loss of autonomy in purchasing decisions and the extra work imposed by a collaborative collection program, some of the schools were hesitant about participating at first (Richards 2002, 81).

The written plan that followed made it clear that the state universities, with their larger staffs and budgets, would undertake a larger part of the workload. Smaller schools would play a smaller role, but would still benefit from full access to the new materials, since all materials purchased with the new money would be made available for interlibrary loan. Under the plan, print monographs of interest to researchers in the region would constitute the focus of the new materials, although a loophole was included to allow libraries to use some of the money for library equipment.

To prevent libraries from diminishing their budgets for core materials and attempting to fill in the gap with the new funds, the plan included a “maintenance of effort” statement that placed responsibility for core materials with the individual campuses. In other words, libraries were to use the money for *supplemental* materials that would build the statewide collection. A mandatory annual assessment, prepared by each library, would reveal their adherence to this part of the plan.

The plan was carefully written, and with many of the fears assuaged and stumbling blocks removed, MNSCU librarians began to see that CCD would actually benefit all libraries in the system, and that “it really did seem that libraries would not have to give up anything essential in order to achieve the benefits of collaboration” (Richards 2002, 83).

Over time the guidelines for the use of the funds became more flexible, allowing libraries to use the funds to purchase electronic resources and serials. Interestingly, the state-mandated collaboration, originally opposed by some, led to increased communication and cooperation among Minnesota librarians, extending into areas beyond collection development such as virtual reference and information literacy (Richards 2002, 87).

### *A Local Example: Crandall Public Library and Glens Falls Hospital Library*

When the librarian at the Crandall Public Library in Glens Falls wanted to begin a consumer health education collection, she approached the librarian at the Glens Falls Hospital about collaborating to broaden their collections and reduce duplication. The collaboration was informal and consisted of frequent conversations in which the two librarians discussed their needs and upcoming purchases. The hospital library was able to devote more of its funds to professional-level resources, and direct inquiries and requests for consumer-level materials to Crandall.

This style of collaborative collection may appeal to librarians who are hesitant about joining CCD consortia: there is no bureaucracy involved, no scheduled meetings, and not a great deal of additional work involved. All that is needed are two library directors with the same goals who help each other to build better collections, and save time and money in the process.

However, such two-person partnerships can be fragile. When the director at Crandall moved to another job, the collaboration, which had involved several telephone calls each day under the old director, was reduced to several per year. The value of the collaboration was not lost, since the two libraries continue to share materials and assist one another, but the two collections will continue to grow independently.

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and become less complementary over time.

A more formal and organized system would help to keep a CCD program alive through the changes in personnel and funding that are inevitable in all libraries, but such systems do not spring up overnight. Small-scale, informal cooperation is perhaps the best way to build support and enthusiasm for collaborative collection development until more public librarians recognize the value and results CCD can deliver.

### *Capital District Library Council*

The Capital District Library Council (CDLC) is an upstate New York Reference and Research Library Resources System supporting the ten counties of the Capital District. Their mission is to “promote and facilitate improved reference and research library resource services to the region through cooperation among member libraries and administration of funds allocated by the state and other organizations”. In accordance with this mission, CDLC supports a variety of programs and services available to members, including a Coordinated Collection Development program available to public and not-for-profit colleges, universities, and community colleges. Through the facilitation of this CCD program, CDLC already has the fundamental features of successful, sustained cooperative collection development between other types of libraries in place.

Sustained cooperative collection development requires a strong framework to facilitate acquisition of and access to materials by participants and CDLC provides this. Burgett, Haar, and Phillips (2004) identify several core components of any successful CCD program, including: leadership, integrated bibliographic access, expedited document delivery, and participants' willingness to devote their resources to the cooperative mission.

### *Leadership*

The Coordinated Collection Development Committee (CCDC), a ten-member advisory committee to the CDLC Board of Trustees, is responsible for “develop[ing], implement[ing] and evaluat[ing] plans and other activities for Coordinated Collection Development within the Capital District Region” (CDLC). The CCDC has developed guidelines for resource sharing and worked with member academic libraries to coordinate acquisitions. With this framework in place for academic libraries and with the experience of participants in their CCDC and CCD program, there would be a strong support system for public libraries interested in pursuing the same type of cooperative collection development agreement.

CCDC is part of CDLC's broader Committee on Resource Sharing (CORS), which is responsible for advising CDLC on its numerous resource sharing programs, including Interlibrary Loan Protocol, the Regional Union Catalog (CaDiLaC Online), the Union List of Serials, and the Direct Access Program (DAP). Unlike CCDC, which consists solely of academic libraries, CORS members include academic libraries, public libraries, public school library systems, and several special libraries. Public libraries are already serving in a leadership position with regards to resource sharing, an asset if they are to consider their own collaborative collection development project.

### *Integrated Bibliographic Access*

CDLC provides online access to its regional union catalog, Capital District Library Access Catalog, referred to as CaDiLaC Online. Through this catalog, users can search more than 25 lending

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institutions, including college and university libraries, public library systems, public school library systems and BOCES, and New York State special libraries. CaDiLaC facilitates easy access to participating libraries' monograph holdings, an essential component of any CCD program. CDLC also supports a Union List of Serials, providing users with holdings information for more than 36,000 titles. Access to the Union List of Serials is provided through CaDiLaC and also through OCLC, making searching for holdings information easy for users, an integral part of successful cooperative collection development.

### *Expedited Document Delivery*

All CDLC member institutions agree to freely share their holdings with other members. To facilitate the sharing of resources, CDLC has a sophisticated, clearly defined interlibrary loan protocol and offers an optional professional courier service to members specifically for sharing resources through interlibrary loan. Institutions may choose to receive the courier service anywhere between once and five times per week, ensuring timely delivery of requested resources. In addition to interlibrary loan, CDLC offers the Direct Access Program (DAP), which allows patrons of member institutions to go directly to other member libraries and borrow items themselves with a special library card. Unlike ILL, this gives users immediate access to the resources of other libraries, though it does require that they be willing and able to travel. With interlibrary loan and DAP, CDLC members are able to easily obtain resources from other CDLC member libraries in the method that best suits their needs and as quickly as they are needed.

### *Funding*

CDLC's academic libraries receive "Coordinated Collection Development Aid" under section 90.15 of NYCRR section 8. The guidelines for the program state that materials purchased with coordinated collection development aid funds must be made available for interlibrary loan, and that duplication of materials is acceptable to meet local needs. Applications for the funding are submitted annually, and must include evidence that the previous year's funds were spent on materials for library materials that are to be shared through the CCD program.

### **Discussion**

CDLC already has a strong collaborative collection development program for academic libraries. The structural framework is in place: the interlibrary loan protocol, the courier system, the regional union catalog, and the union catalog of serials are all currently operating to support CCD for academic libraries, making it feasible for public libraries to use the same framework. In addition, the intellectual resources needed to create an effective collaborative collection development program are readily available to public libraries. Not only are representatives from public libraries currently serving on the Committee on Resource Sharing, but their colleagues are participating in an existing CCD agreement, giving them the knowledge base necessary to create a program that meets their needs and the needs of their patrons.

Library directors who are curious about the benefits of CCD but are unwilling to commit to a formal agreement might consider the very small step of increasingly using the tools provided by CDLC. With a union catalog in place and an ILL system available, libraries can engage in a kind of "informal CCD," in which no contact or communication of any kind between libraries is necessary. When considering a title for purchase, a librarian can check CaDiLaC for CDLC holdings. If the book is already in the system in sufficient numbers, the librarian may decide not to purchase the title and obtain it through ILL if needed, thereby reduce unnecessary duplication. This system has met with success at John

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Carroll University's library in Ohio, where titles requested for purchase by faculty are checked in OhioLINK's union catalog. If there are more than eight already in the system, the faculty member will need an exemption to get the library to purchase the book (Connell 2008, 22).

This is already a common practice in some CDLC public libraries, which already have strengths in different areas because of differences in the communities they serve. To serve patron demand, the Albany Public Library's main branch and the Schenectady Public Library both have a large collection of urban fiction, and several Adirondack libraries collect materials relating to Adirondack history. The Sand Lake Public Library has a large children's braille collection because of a fund-raising campaign by the mother of a blind child in that community. Librarians in the network generally know which libraries have such special collections, and tend to check the shared catalog before making purchases. Librarians who do this frequently may identify other libraries with which they can establish a more formal collection development relationship, similar to the one between the two libraries in Glens Falls mentioned above.

This system works to an extent, but the knowledge of which libraries collect in which areas is not collected in a central location. With a little bit of effort, public libraries who wish to have their special collections recognized could post information about them online. Not only would this make other librarians in the system aware of the collections, it would provide a gentle incentive for those libraries to continue purchasing titles in their acknowledged "specialties." A look at the CDLC web site shows that the academic libraries in the CCD program have their collecting responsibilities divided up by areas which have special relevance to the schools they serve (Albany Law School collects US and international law materials, and RPI collects in architecture, for example.)

One library's core is another's special collection – these libraries spend money on their collections not out of a desire to expand the holdings of the CDLC network or because they are "told to" by a CCD board, but because they want to meet the demands of their communities. There is no threat to autonomy when a library chooses its own area of special collection, and the librarian's duty to her patrons is not compromised. Considering the independent nature of public librarians, this may be an ideal first step towards building acceptance for public library CCD programs and overcoming directors' fears about losing control by entering into collection development partnerships.

### Conclusion

Although electronic resources are increasingly accessible and popular, it remains true that "money spent for books yields a capital asset in a community" (Parker 1991 as cited in Van Fleet 1999, 20). Libraries are struggling to keep their budgets balanced while maintaining a consistent level of service to patrons, and eliminating the needless duplication of book purchases is one way for libraries to spend their money wisely and add value to the larger collection. An unwillingness to sacrifice immediate access to a title for a larger overall collection is a major barrier to public libraries' involvement in collaborating with each other. Fortunately, a shift in attitudes about ownership is one of the main effects reported by successful CCD programs. Illinois librarians knew they were ready for formal collaboration when "libraries were able to think beyond serving a specified clientele and 'owning' certain books" (Shlaes 1996, 50). While libraries may begin special collections to serve their own patrons, the notion of what exactly constitutes a public library's "community" must continue to expand beyond its traditional boundaries. No library can hope to have an all-encompassing collection, even in an area it considers essential, so the "emphasis [must] shift from the number of core titles in the collection to the number of unique titles that a library brings to a consortium" (Connell 2008, 27). It is

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important to restate that this consortial attitude need not threaten the librarian's responsibility to her own local patrons. A library that chooses to collaborate can and *must* “preserve sufficient wiggle room to meet its institutional commitments and/or develop programs specifically to meet local needs” (Williams 2000, 25).

Taking small steps is important in any large undertaking, and the examples we have found suggest a “road map” to increasing collaborative collection development in the region. Increasingly, libraries should check titles they intend to purchase against the holdings in CaDiLaC. If a book is already owned by other CDLC libraries and is not one that is absolutely necessary to hold locally, the library could obtain the book through ILL and spend its money on another title. Through this process, librarians could identify other libraries with similar or overlapping interests, and a library-to-library cooperation like the one in Glens Falls could be established. If this method of collaboration becomes popular, an organization like CDLC may be needed to provide leadership and coordinate CCD efforts and possibly serve as a model for a statewide CCD program using tools such as NYLA's Aeon, Ares, and LAND.

We do not propose collaborative collection development as a cure-all for libraries' economic problems. It may not be appropriate at all for certain libraries, depending on their needs and areas of collection. Instead, we argue that collaborative collection development is a useful tool that has traditionally been overlooked by public librarians for reasons that are not entirely valid. Increased acceptance and realization of the proper uses of CCD can only come when more librarians embrace the practice and adapt it for the unique needs of a public library.

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## Editor's Choice Article

### Planning Your Library Vote

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By Libby Post

**A**bstract: Strategic communication and development are a key part of the effort to make a Library Referendum successful. We know that truly effective communication requires an innovative combination of traditional communication strategies and new media technologies. Understanding target audiences and developing strategies to effectively reach your audience are crucial aspects of strategic communication. The formula we've found that works the best is raising the library's identity in the community by positioning the library as an essential service through marketing campaigns and then segueing those campaigns into well managed vote campaigns. Basically, you can't ask people for money without giving them a reason why.

#### A Planned Process

Resistance from taxpayers. Reluctance from board members. It's no secret: waging a successful budget vote, building referendum or charter change campaign can be challenging for *any* library.

At the Finkelstein Memorial Library in Spring Valley, a certain segment of the community was actively organizing against the library. At the Jervis Public Library in Rome, NY, they were asking for a 700% increase on the taxpayer share from a school district ballot. The Saugerties Public Library asked its town taxpayers to ante up on average \$67 a year for 25 years to pay for a \$7 million building expansion.

Challenging? Yes. Were they successful—you bet. Why—because they planned.

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As librarians and library administrators, you're used to planning. Well, campaigns are all about planning and executing a series of strategic tactics that put your message out front and persuade people to vote for the library.

The first step in any successful campaign is putting together a campaign plan—an actual written document—that outlines the strategy you are going to use. Among the areas you need to include and need to know about to wage a successful campaign are:

- What your compelling message will be
- Who and where the voters are
- How you're going to convey your message
- How you're going to track your supporters and get them out to vote
- How you're going to pay for the campaign

We've been very successful in using Google Calendars to track campaign activities and to keep everyone who needs to know in the know. From scheduling photo shoots to mapping out when direct mail will drop to figuring out when Voter ID phone banking will happen, the Google Calendars have to be an invaluable tool in sharing information.

### **Develop a Message That Moves People**

Before you can move forward, however, it is essential to develop a compelling message that has an emotional pull. We have successfully used a community-based values model to develop our winning messages. We start with a series of focus groups (see sidebar) to determine what those values are and how the library can reflect the community while the community's shared values are reflected by the library.

For those libraries that begin planning a year or so in advance, you can use these focus groups to rebrand your library using community based values and then segue that branding campaign into an aggressive vote yes campaign. For samples of this, go to [www.commservices.net/libraries.html](http://www.commservices.net/libraries.html).

Your message has to be clear and concise. To quote James Carville, the architect of President Clinton's 1992 Presidential victory, "Keep It Simple Stupid." Don't burden your message with complicated reasoning. Hone your message down so that it is clearly understood by everyone—from sophisticated voters to fifth grade library patrons. If your fifth graders can understand it and embrace it, the electorate will follow.

### **Identifying Your Voters**

You may think you know who your voters are. Before making any assumptions, merge and purge your local voter file (based on your chartered service area) and your library patron file. You can get your voter file from your county's board of elections. What you want to end up with is a list of patrons who are registered voters as well as the registered voters in those households who do not have library cards. Just because they're not patrons, doesn't mean they don't value the library just because someone else in the household brings home the library's goodies. These folks—as long as they're 18 years or older—are your primary target audience.

## Planning Your Library Vote

Logically speaking, these are the people who would vote for you—make sure you reach them early and often with your message. We usually mail four pieces of Vote Yes materials to this list over a six week period.

These voters also need to be called—that's where the Voter ID phone banking comes in. Someone on your campaign team needs to develop a short script explaining the voter initiative. The script must contain an ask—will you be voting yes? You have to ask the question. If you don't you won't know where folks stand and won't know who to pull out on the day of the vote.

These calls need to be tracked in a database. Those who vote yes are coded as 1s. Those who don't know are coded as 2s. Those who will vote no are coded as 3s. Since it's unlikely that all the calls will get done in your first wave of calling, you can call the 2s (what we call the undecideds) again during the second wave of calling (they will have already received a few pieces of mail) and ask them how they're going to vote.

Do not spend time trying to convince your opposition (typically anti-tax folks) that they are wrong. It's a waste of your time. Instead, reinforce your message with your base of support and try to persuade the undecided's.

### **Getting vital information from your focus groups.**

Knowing what is important to your community, what it thinks about your library and what values represent the community and the library is vital if you're going to be successful in your rebranding and vote yes campaign efforts. Below are the questions we routinely use.

- What values does the library represent to the community? (not talking free books here but education, commitment, responsibility, etc.)
- What are the strengths of the people involved in the library?
  - Staff
  - Board
  - Patrons
  - Volunteers/Friends (if applicable)
- What are the weaknesses of the people involved in the library?
- What are the strengths of the library's programs and services?
  - Include your building.
- What are the weaknesses of the library's programs and services?
- What is important to the community above and beyond the library?
- How does the library impact the quality of life in your community?
- What is the position of the library in the community?

Yes, some of these questions seem redundant. But it is in the repetition that we begin to see themes and messages. The question about what is important to the community above and beyond the library is key—it just may give you the nugget you need to make an important connection between the library and the community.

## Planning Your Library Vote

For instance, in Saugerties we found that the library was important but recreation (everyone does something in Saugerties) was more important. The Saugerties Public Library's new slogan? "*Recreation for the Mind: Discover, Connect, Grow*".

After rebranding Saugerties, we went on to win a successful \$7 million building referendum with 64% of the vote in May of 2008!

### What Do You Do With All the Info

Your mailings are in the mail. Your calls have been made. Your database is up to date. Now what?

Well, winning on the day of the vote is all about turning out the folks who support you and not reminding the people who don't support you that there's a vote going on. That means another round of phone banking. These calls are typically called "Get Out The Vote" calls (GOTV). Calls should be made to remind folks of the vote two days and one day before the vote. You call again the day of the vote.

If you have the capacity to track your voters at the polls (knowing who has already come to vote), you can start your GOTV calls at dinner time and only call those who you know haven't voted yet. If you can't track your voters, just call them all. But remember, only call your 1s. It's not our job to turn out the no voters.

The campaigns that are the most successful are the ones in which the library reaches out, engages the community and turns its supporters out to vote. This piece gives you a brief overview of planning for a budget, building referendum or charter change campaign. For more detailed information, go to [www.commservices.net](http://www.commservices.net) and click on libraries.

*In 2005, Communication Services developed its innovative Library Campaign Institute for the members of the Mid-Hudson Library System. After working with MHLS's libraries, 28 out of 30 that waged campaigns won. Since then, Communication Services has had a 90% success rate in winning various types of library votes from building referendums to 414s to school district ballots to budget votes. Finkelstein (April 2009) won their vote with a 70% margin; Jervis (May 2009) with 75% and Saugerties (May 2008) with 64%. On Election Day 2009, they were successful with two campaigns--Pawling and Hudson--effectively doubling the funding these two libraries receive from their communities and consulted with Elting Memorial Library in New Paltz to help them win their municipal ballot initiative as well.*



Recreation for the Mind:  
discover, connect, grow.

SAUGERTIES  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Peer Reviewed Article

### Anatomy of one public library's response to the devastating flood of 2006 (or beware of a River Street address)

Mary Grace Flaherty, MS, MLS

**A**bstract: In June 2006, the southern tier region of upstate New York experienced unprecedented, devastating flooding. This paper describes the experience of one small, rural public library during that time and the recovery period which followed. After a brief background, a chronological description of events follows; the paper concludes with a summary of lessons learned.

#### Background

In the library arena, we often hear of our colleagues dealing with all types of natural disasters, ranging from fires or floods to earthquakes. As noted by Green and Teper (2006) most of the literature regarding libraries and disasters pertains to large institutions; articles about disasters and small libraries are “few and far between.” In their comprehensive article, they outline the importance of preparation and planning and provide guidance for best practices for small libraries in terms of disaster response. Ashbaugh (2003) describes the effect of disasters on a rural library and also discusses planning and response. In an ideal world, library directors will be familiar with the literature before disaster



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## Anatomy of one public library's response

strikes, and have disaster plans in place. However, that is not always the case. This article describes one small rural library's experience in dealing with devastating flooding.

In June 2006, our region of upstate New York was inundated with unprecedented flooding. "A combination of storm systems moved through central Pennsylvania and the southern tier of New York the last week of June, depositing 8 to 15 inches of rain at some locations. Hydrologic conditions in the Susquehanna basin were already wet from earlier rain events, and the resultant runoff caused flash flooding and river flooding at many locations. The most severe flooding in the basin occurred in the southern tier of New York along the Susquehanna and Chenango rivers...thousands of homes and businesses were severely impacted or destroyed, hundreds of bridges were swept away or left unstable, hundreds of miles of roadways were impacted, and hundreds of millions of dollars in property damage were incurred." (SBRC, 2006)

### **Before: Prevention**

The old adage, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" could not be truer in terms of a successful response to natural disasters. Every library, no matter what its size, needs a current disaster plan. The plan must be reviewed and updated regularly. A current copy of the plan should be housed in an accessible location made known to all staff members. Additionally, the library director and board president should keep a copy of the plan, along with backup copies of all financial and policy files at an offsite location. There are a wide variety of resources for assistance with developing disaster plans. Boilerplate plans are available online through organizations such as the Northeast Document Conservation Center. (Green and Teper, 2006)

Beyond an updated disaster plan and supplies, the library director must make an effort to know personally all of the key members in the community including: the mayor, local and state government representatives, the fire and police chiefs, the town or village engineer, hospital director, superintendent, school principals, business leaders, community leaders, and local Chamber of Commerce representatives. An updated contact information list should be kept on file for all of these individuals. This is important not only when disaster strikes, but as a general policy. The library is an important member of the community, and should routinely be represented in community forums. Additionally, it is necessary to keep an up-to-date phone tree for library staff members so that notification and updating staff is made as easy as possible.

### ***Wednesday June 28***

After weeks of rain and saturated ground, the Susquehanna River started to creep up, threatening to overflow its banks. The library was contacted by the fire department at 8:30 a.m. and told to evacuate immediately. Because of partial flooding of creeks which was already occurring, the library director was not able to commute that morning, and so was not at the library at that time. The library was not yet open. The assistant director and administrative assistant handled the evacuation. The library had been in its present location for 50 years, and was located in the 500-year flood zone. There was little concern or conjecture that the library would be too adversely affected. The board president and assistant director were allowed to return to the library briefly in the afternoon. They moved some materials to higher shelves, loaded the elevator with electronic equipment, and noted that everything seemed to be fine at that point.

### ***Thursday June 29***

The River continued to rise overnight, and by morning had overflowed its banks and flooded the village. The director managed to drive to the village (with a canoe on the top of the car). The village was closed. The library was inaccessible due to high water in the surrounding streets. The director convinced the police officers

## Anatomy of one public library's response

who were controlling access that she had to get to the library. They were concerned about the high water and rushing currents. When it was agreed that her husband would carry her piggy-back through the high water, the police allowed them access. When they reached the library, they were met by the board president and assistant director, who had been able to get to the library via the other checkpoint in the village.

The basement of the library was filled with 5 feet of water. The basement (approx. 5000 square feet) contained a large meeting room, the staff lounge, two bathrooms, a large storage room used by the Friends to store book sale books, one staff member's workspace, the boiler room, and a storage room for two 500 gallon oil tanks. All of the phone and computer lines came through the basement, and the computer server was housed there. Most of the office materials and craft supplies for programming were also housed there. The library director immediately shut off all the power breakers and power supply for the small array of solar panels. The phone tree was activated, and all staff were notified that the library would be closed until further notice, but that they would be given regular updates. The fire department was contacted to arrange for pumping the water out of the basement, and the library was added to their list.

### **During: Response**

There were two major goals during the response phase for the library: to mitigate damages, and to become operational as quickly as possible. The community depended upon the library as its center for information provision and access. In a village of 4000 people, the library averaged close to 200 patron visits daily. Many residents were without homes, power, and/or communication capabilities such as phone or internet access for many weeks after the flooding.

In order to respond quickly and appropriately, it was important to use all of the available resources and to engage community members as volunteers according to their skills. Delegation was critical. The Friends group coordinated the contacting and scheduling of volunteers. We never turned down a volunteer, as it became apparent that it was very important for community members to be involved in making the library operational again. To keep things from getting worse (mold spreading to upper floors, etc.) it was vital to act as quickly as humanly possible and as agencies and the situation permitted. Simple gestures, such as making friends with the National Guard, (by way of friendly introductions and chit-chat) paid dividends in the long run, in terms of gaining access to the library. Also, regular communication through daily staff meetings and weekly Board meetings not only helped to keep everyone informed, but also served to keep morale high during the initial phases of the response."

#### ***Friday June 30***

The fire department arrived and pumped out the basement; the water went from 5 feet to 14 inches. Using a pump which was borrowed from the director's neighbor (as there were no pumps available for purchase within a 50 mile radius of the village), the water was further reduced to two inches. Once the water reached this level, it started gushing out of the toilets in the two restrooms. The toilets were plugged with rugs, and shelves and chairs were placed on top to keep the water from spouting. The initial clean-up started and the library dumpster was filled with debris. The local disposal removal company was contacted. They agreed to deliver a 30 yard dumpster as soon as they could. It became apparent that even though the elevator had been loaded with equipment, it had not been sent to the first floor. Thus, the elevator was ruined and the electronic equipment had been lost as well.

#### ***Saturday July 1***

## Anatomy of one public library's response

The library director continued pumping, and water went from 2 inches to ½ inch. It was necessary to cut a hole through the concrete floor, using a pick axe, so that the remaining water could drain. At that point, we were advised that we would have to wait for the water to recede, and for access to the village to return. The National Guard was posted at all access points, and there was a curfew in place.

### *Wednesday July 5*

Access to the village returned. The village engineer and code enforcement inspector met with the director to assess the building; the electrical inspection failed, as many of the circuit breakers had been under water. The electrician visited and isolated electricity so that there was some electricity in part of the building. The controls to the boiler and air conditioning unit were destroyed, the company was contacted. The solar panels were reactivated and they started generating electricity. The staff were notified that while they were not required to report for duty, there was plenty of clean-up work if they were willing and able. Per the library policy, staff were paid for the days the library was closed.



During the clean-up process, staff were paid only if they reported for work. The president of the Friends Board recruited a cadre of volunteers to help with the clean-up as well. As a preventive health measure, staff that required a current tetanus shot were sent to the village office where a clinic had been set-up. Rubber gloves and masks were provided for all those involved in the clean-up. The dumpster was delivered and staff and volunteers set to work filling it with everything that was in the basement. There was very little that could be salvaged, as the flood water was quite noxious. A circular system was established, where individuals were fed empty waste buckets through the basement window, and an assembly line filled the buckets with refuse and handed them up the basement steps. It took approximately 3-4 hours to fill the first 30 yard dumpster using this process. Large items were hauled out to the curb. One staff member was given a clipboard and assigned the duty of recording every item which was disposed of, this proved to be invaluable for record-keeping and inventory purposes for making claims later.

The local computer technician visited and offered advice on replacing the network router. The library system sent one of their technicians and he also gave advice on reinstating the computer network. The phone repairman came and ordered necessary parts for repair, but the phones could not function until the electricity was entirely restored.

The library director contacted local cleaning companies; one agency estimated a three week delay before they could schedule time for an estimate. Out-of-state independent insurance



## Anatomy of one public library's response

adjusters and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) application consultants showed up, requesting appointments with the director.

### *Thursday July 6*

The computer technician from the library system returned and installed a temporary server, the computers became functional. The first full dumpster was removed. Volunteers and staff continued hauling and started cleaning/power washing some salvageable items, such as metal shelving. The director signed a cleaning contract with the agency that could complete the job in the shortest time frame. The boiler repairman came and ordered parts; the air conditioning could not be repaired until the electricity was restored.

### *Friday July 7*

Staff and volunteers continued power washing in the parking lot. The library was partially open. Computers were operational, and very busy. Library staff bookmarked the websites for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and New York State on the public access computers and offered guidance for locating resources to patrons. Information on preventing mold and responding to flooding was made available free of charge. Many patrons were keen on returning library items. Fines were forgiven, and there were no charges for items lost or damaged in the flood. The parking lot was power washed overnight by the library's landscaping contractor; the cleaning agency started working in the basement.



### *Monday July 10*

On this day, the library was officially open, although the phones were not operating, and we only had electricity in part of the building. The cleaning agency claimed that they had completed their work; the director disagreed and required them to re-clean before they were paid. Due to the media coverage of the disaster, the library began to receive donations from concerned patrons and community members.

### *Week of July 10*

The cleaners returned for a second round of sanitation. The electrician assessed the situation and installed some replacement circuit breakers. The phones became functional with the use of extension cords. The air conditioning was still not working. Staff members brought in fans and posted at strategic places. The library director started her weekly task of sending thank you notes to volunteers and those who had made donations for recovery efforts. T-shirts were ordered from a local company, with the logo "Sidney Memorial Public Library Disaster Management Crew" and a design by one of the staff members (with a canoe floating through book stacks) and were given out to those volunteers and staff members who had helped with the clean-up efforts.



## Anatomy of one public library's response

### *Week of July 17*

The cleaners returned for a third round of cleaning after an unsatisfactory second attempt. Dirt remained on the walls and floors. The contract with the cleaning contractors stated, "The job is not complete until the customer is totally satisfied." The director contacted the Attorney General's office in Binghamton for guidance on the situation, and was referred to the Better Business Bureau. The representative from the Better Business Bureau advised the director to file a formal complaint with their agency, which she did.

The first FEMA and New York State Emergency Management Office (NYSEMO) meeting was held in a neighboring town. Initial forms were completed and submitted by the library director and a subsequent meeting was scheduled for later in the month. The electrician completed the work on restoring electricity to the entire building. The electrical company was contacted and they visited and approved the repairs. The boiler repairman was contacted again; the air conditioning was still not functioning.

### *Week of July 24*

The security alarm system company notified the library that they were receiving error signals as the security system was not functioning properly. The village engineer visited and determined that there was not much to do in terms of mitigation for future flood events. The basement restrooms were repaired and functional. The oil tanks and hot water heater were inspected. The oil tanks were fine (largely because they had been full and therefore could not tip over). The hot water heater and the electrical line to the heater needed to be replaced. The elevator maintenance contractor visited and estimated repairs at \$10,800. The library system visited and replaced the temporary computer server with a permanent one.

### *Week of July 31*

FEMA visited the library and toured the facility; more forms were submitted. The insurance company was contacted to re-confirm policy coverage. Estimates were solicited for painting, flooring, replacement storage cabinets and kitchen repair. The inventory list was completed; losses total \$97,000. The insurance adjuster visited. The air conditioning was fixed.

### **After: The Long Haul**

Following the initial elation of providing the community with much-needed resources, the library faced the very tough job of getting back to normal. In our experience, it was over two years before the final FEMA paperwork was completed and we could close the files.

### *August 2006*

Grant applications were completed and submitted to: the New York Library Association, the New York State Individual and Family Grant Program, the Empire State Small Business Flood Recovery Grant Program, the New York State Special Legislative Program, and the Broome County Library Foundation. Eligibility status for recovery funding was not yet determined by FEMA. The insurance policy covered the computers which had been stored in the basement; we received a check for \$3200. The director continued to plead with the electrician to complete work and to address the fire alarm, which was still not functional. We received a large donation of children's books from Penguin-Putnam Press, negotiated by the youth services coordinator at the library system.

## Anatomy of one public library's response

### September 2006

The painters completed painting in the basement. The library director was making daily calls to FEMA; eligibility status still had not been determined. There were still minor electrical repairs to be completed. The library director and administrative assistant made weekly calls to the electrical company. The fire and security alarms were fixed and once again functional. The Binghamton branch of Barnes & Noble sponsored a book voucher book fair as a fund raiser. The children's librarian attended and hosted a story telling session for the program. The New York Library Association sent a check for \$1000 for flood relief.

### October 2006

It became apparent that the library's FEMA application had fallen through the cracks. FEMA required the library to submit an application for a Small Business Loan before they could process the FEMA paperwork. The library was not interested in borrowing money, but this was a requirement by FEMA before the process could continue. The director completed the necessary forms after being assured the loan would not be processed. The installation of new flooring in the basement was completed.

### November 2006

Reconstruction was progressing. Replacement doors were installed; the walls were finished. The elevator was repaired with funds from a Special Legislative grant and the Friends group started on reactivating their book sale activities. Four separate work project proposals were submitted to FEMA.

### December 2006

The library received \$5000 for the grant submitted to NY State. The library was notified of a \$1000 mini-grant award from the Broome County Library Foundation. FEMA visited to give counsel on mitigation activities. Cabinets were ordered for the basement storage area.

### 2007

FEMA checks were received for four projects (debris removal - \$13,600; 2/07; building repairs - \$54,586; 4/07; building contents - \$49,419; 6/07; flood mitigation - \$28,560; 6/07). FEMA recommended that we should take the following mitigation precautions: move phone/computer lines (completed 5/07) and electrical and alarm boxes upstairs (completed 12/07); secure oil tanks (completed 11/07); install backflow for downstairs plumbing; and flood proof the boiler room. After contacting many contractors, it was determined that installing a backflow and flood proofing the boiler room were not possible or warranted. The downstairs rooms were completed, and the library hosted an open-house celebration for the community.



## Anatomy of one public library's response

### 2008

The close-out meeting with the New York State Emergency Management Office was held in March. The library was required to supply copies of all cancelled checks and proof of library board approval for any funds received (from the monthly board meeting minutes). There were flood warnings in the Sidney area in February and March. Preliminary cautions were made such as moving electronic equipment upstairs. The final meeting with FEMA took place, and it became clear that some of the mitigation funds had to be returned, as all of the allocated monies had not been spent. The funds (approximately \$9000) could not be returned until an official notification request came from FEMA, which took several months, and extended the encumbrance into the following annual budget cycle. The final correspondence with FEMA was in August 2008, over two years post-flood.



### Lessons Learned

Susan Curzon states in her article, “The first month after any disaster is the most critical period of time. It is during that time that you will lay the groundwork for the recovery of the library and library services, set the course for rescue and restoration efforts, and make key decisions that will impact the future of the library for many years ahead.” (Curzon, 2006) We found this to be absolutely true. Being prepared, with a disaster plan in place, can help enormously when the unexpected disaster strikes. Having an ongoing, up-to-date awareness of local resources and the support of the community are also invaluable.

In the initial phases of any disaster, it is vital to document, document, document, no matter how overwhelming it appears to be. Without documentation of the inventory we had lost, we never would have received the amount of reimbursement we did. It is also necessary to be persistent and firm with the contractors and government officials who are involved in the recovery process. While it may require a lot of energy at a time when it's in short supply, it will pay dividends in the long run. Additionally, it is necessary to realize that the process is likely to be a long one, so it is vital to be prepared for a large investment of time over a period of months and/or years, depending upon the circumstances.

It is important to remember that while disaster plans can be a great tool, when disaster strikes you must be ready to use all of your resources and skills. In the final analysis, as stated by Silverman, “Disaster response is largely about managing people.” (Silverman, 2006) It is critical to keep staff and community members updated throughout the process, and to celebrate all of the successes (no matter how small) along the way. Keep in mind that the library is the heart of the community, and the staff, volunteers, and community members are the heart of the library. The outpouring of support was overwhelming in our small community, and left the library a better place than it had been before the flood.

## Anatomy of one public library's response

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Peer Reviewed Article

**The Evaluation of Use of Electronic Resources and Services in  
Academic Libraries:  
A Study of E-metrics and Related Methods  
for Measurement and Assessment**

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By Dr. Kanu A. Nagra

**A**bstract: This paper presents a review of literature for the evaluation of use of electronic resources and services in Academic libraries. E-metrics and similar methods for evaluation are discussed in detail. The paper highlights how some libraries approached e-metrics to start useful evaluations and dealt with technicalities to achieve better decision making for e-collection, services and infrastructure for their library users. The evaluation of use of e-resources and services is discussed in five parts explaining application of e-metrics, different methods to capture usage data in different settings, types of data requirement by libraries, complexities and technicalities involved in measurement of usage statistics and why such evaluation is significant for libraries. A model is designed and highlighted and recommendations are given to initiate an evaluation and assessment plan which will lead to evidenced based and better decision making concerning electronic resources and services.

**1.0. Introduction and Statement of the Problem:**

Libraries in the present digital era are significantly different and have a greatly increased range of services and resources in the fast changing environment of emerging technologies than in the past. The library has become a 365 days a year 24 hours a day access point to information services where users can access services and resources on their terms whenever and wherever they want. It often happens that users do not go to the library physically but virtually get access to library services and resources anywhere they want through proxy servers or with the help of authenticated login.

The high costs of E-resources and networked services are significant for libraries. As a result, it is necessary for libraries to carefully measure and evaluate the use of these digital services and resources in and outside of the library. In addition, they may need to present these new types of usage data for grants & donations, collection development, in-house decision making and communication.

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The measurement of usage of electronic networked resources brings with it problems in the collection of data. These numbers are within reach with e-metrics but there are a variety of complexities involved in analysis and in selecting a measurement tool /method. Librarians may need to devote significant time to plan and collect e-metrics and analyze them but the long-term gains are substantial.

E-metrics may be defined as any effort to measure electronic and networked resources.

E-metrics data often have the following issues affecting data evaluation.

1. Meta searching problems
2. Inconsistent datasets and definitions
3. Different time out settings
4. Different platforms
5. Double-clicks
6. Duplicate searches by the same users
7. Automatic full text display
8. Zero hit searches
9. Multiple full text formats
10. Search strings from other sources (sfx)
11. Vendor or local technical problems
12. Public PCs with multiple users
13. Software with different user interfaces
14. Different type of reception/receivers to access such services etc

Libraries have a number of e-metrics at their disposal, but librarians still have to grapple with the problem of deciding which ones to use and of how to implement them. (Bertot, McClure, and Davis 2004, 30) E-metrics data can come from vendor supplied statistics, web server logs, scripts in OPAC links, proxy server logs and EJMS (Electronic Journal Management System) providers. The trend is however that Libraries are increasingly dependent on external providers of academic and scholarly information for statistical data to evaluate their electronic resources.

### **2.0. Methodology:**

The review of the literature in the field is used to study and research e-metrics and related methods under reference.

### **3.0. Evaluation of the use of Electronic Resources & Services in Libraries:**

There follows a discussion of the evaluation of the use of electronic resources & services and of the technicalities involved in the process.

#### **3.1. E-metrics and its Applications in Libraries: Some Efforts**

In the year 1999-2000, The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) took the initiative to establish the E-metrics working group under the auspices of the “new measures initiative” to focus on issues related to

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measurement and assessment for electronic resources and services. ARL sponsored a major study to develop a standard approach for measurement and statistics for electronic resources. A group of 24 ARL libraries participated in three different phases of this study.

The ARL (ARL2002, 485) defines the scope of data collection and data elements that contribute to the measurement of digital collection and services. E-metrics is one of ARL's new measurement initiatives which fall into two broad areas: patron-accessible electronic resources (databases, e-journals and e-books) and services that support access to those resources (technical infrastructure, virtual reference, digitization projects). Each measure is defined in terms of rationale, unit of measurement, data source, frequency, process and related issues. These definitions are essential for accuracy and consistency. The complete set of measures consists of five parts which are project background, vendor statistics field test report, E-Metrics Instructional Module, Data Collection Manual, Linkage to Library and Institutional outcomes and analysis of accreditation standards for higher education. The study provides complete guidelines to start reviewing library practice, to train staff to collect statistics and assess outcomes to justify budget allocations for resources, and for staffing and infrastructure. In addition, accurate statistics have the potential to support libraries in their negotiations with vendors for fair pricing based on actual needs and use.

Ashcroft and Mcivor (Ashcroft and Mcivor 2001,378) stated that electronic journal management is not trouble-free and discussed the research project at Liverpool John Moores University. It focused on the evaluation and promotion of electronic journals in academic libraries in the UK and North America. The findings highlighted significant differences in the way e-journals are managed in different libraries and recommendations for best practices included:

1. Technical skills and competencies
2. Co-operation between key players (vendors, suppliers, publishers, librarians)
3. Working practices
4. Changes in collection management priorities and instruction for database searches to make users more aware of the library's resources and services.

Franklin and Plum (Franklin and Plum 2002, 123) examined networked electronic services usage at four academic health science libraries in Unites States. The impact of altered usage patterns and increasing expenditures by academic libraries on electronic services had invigorated interest among academic libraries to measure usage of e-resources and services. More than 9000 users participated as they accessed networked e-services in different locations and environments. The main questions in this study were:

1. What is a statistically robust methodology for examining the use of e-services.
2. How to collect demographic data for virtual and in-house users in different categories like faculty, graduate/ professional student, staff, undergraduate student etc.
3. How to determine the purposes of accessing e-services for different users,
4. How does the purpose of use differ between traditional, in-person and electronic services.
5. What information technology service should be implemented to make studies of patron usage of networked e-services useful in the decision making process.

The findings of study at four Academic libraries revealed following:

1. Remote use was larger than all other library services combined.

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2. Remote use of resources is for different purposes than in-library use. Also the users are demographically different. Funded researchers are heavy remote users and faculty /staff were not visiting the library in person as often as in the past.
3. The authors found that the distribution of usage of electronic services and print journals show a similar pattern, although it seems that researchers are depending more on electronic resources than traditional print journals.
4. Authors recommended that libraries should implement the gateways to obtain statistically valid samples for remote access and EZ proxy, Cold Fusion or Active Server pages may serve as the foundation for such a gateway. Gateways are an effective way to collect usage data anonymously.

S. Hiller (Hiller 2003, 10) reported that academic libraries in North America are increasingly depending upon statistical data, including transactional information for e-resources usage, to assist and support library management decisions. Efforts are also given to gain more direct user input through user surveys and focus groups. Libraries are also being asked by funding and accrediting bodies to demonstrate the impact of e-collections on library users by employing a series of metrics that are outcomes and data driven. There is keen interest among North American academic libraries in using qualitative and quantitative data in library management. However, there are a variety of problems like non-availability of standardized and consistent categories and many academic libraries are unsure what the data means and how to analyze and use it in library management. Different approaches are needed to provide librarians with the skills to make them numerically and statistically literate to use data in decision making.

G. W. White (White 2004, 177) explained how the business library and the college of business administration at Pennsylvania State University have formed a partnership to analyze, evaluate, make selection decisions, and provide funding for electronic resources. The collaboration methods followed to build electronic collections to support business research were very beneficial. The partnership led to benefits of greater access to e-resources for faculty throughout the university, an improved way to ascertain and understand the needs of faculty research, and the resources that are used by various faculties, academic departments in the university. The design for incorporating e-resources planning and evaluation is also well framed.

S. Thebridge (Thebridge 2004, 72) reports on progress of the e-VALUED project and the findings of previous projects for the development of its survey. The survey instrument was designed to collect data from academic libraries and helped in evaluating electronic information services (EIS). It highlights the necessity for EIS as a key component in outcomes assessment to represent libraries in online e-collection projects.

Ashcroft and Watts (Ashcroft and Watts 2004, 284) highlighted E-books as an addition to the online electronic resources market in academic libraries. Access to e-books can be possible through variety of platforms. A research project undertaken at Liverpool John Moores University investigated the collection of e-books in 127 academic libraries in the UK. Many libraries are providing access to e-books on different platforms as electronic delivery of information is a constantly changing arena. The e-book reading devices and web based access and links are subject to continuous change in the learning environment and simultaneously there are implications for the evaluation of access to and usage of e- resources and services.

Bertot, McClure, and Davis (Bertot, McClure, and Davis 2004, 30) reports that libraries are operating today in a hybrid environment. With the addition of electronic resources traditional methods of measurement are no longer reliable. Librarians and managers need reliable statistical data for all library collections and services to judge how users are utilizing collections in a modern networked environment. They also need this data to influence funders and stakeholders. This statistical data is within reach of libraries. The short term pain of preparation and collection of e-metrics leads to long term gain. Ignorance or failure to collect



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and analyze this data leads to undercounting the actual use of library resources and services. There are number of e-metric methods but librarians have to decide which one has the most application to their library.

Mei-Ling Wang (Wang 2006, 1) highlighted the issue of e-journal evaluation by application of e-metrics and performance assessment. The main focus of the study is on evaluation indicators and evaluation procedures for data usage, collection, and analysis. Three case studies are discussed including the application of usage-based metrics on evaluation executed by the University of Maryland, the ARL E-metrics project, and the analysis of e-journal usage project by the University of Nevada. The findings revealed that e-metrics and performance assessment can effectively evaluate e-journal usage in centralized as well as in decentralized environments.

Bertot, Snead, Jaeger, and McClure (Bertot, Snead, Jaeger and McClure 2006, 17) investigated usability, functionality and accessibility of digital library services in terms of quality. The study was designed to evaluate techniques, tools and methodologies for the Florida Electronic Library (FEL) and other digital libraries. The findings of the study highlight the needs of diverse user populations, the extent to which information and services are appropriate to all users, the extent to which features or links of the digital library are functioning appropriately, and the extent to which the digital library is satisfying user requirements.

### **3.2. Different Methods of Measurement of Use of Electronic Resources and Services:**

It is a challenge for librarians to measure the usage of electronic resources in different interfaces for diverse needs. The criteria defined by some accreditation associations are based on resources per student and on the actual use of resources by students use to meet their information needs. Let's discuss how some librarians and scholars approached this problem to calculating the measurement of use of e-resources for their libraries to ascertain user information needs.

The two studies done by Weber and Ridley (Weber and Ridley 1997, 202) focused on defining and measuring student borrowing of notable works in a given field and measuring the level of typical use of library volumes in terms of borrowing and browsing. They gave recommendations for design and decision making based on usage patterns and meeting students' information needs in information age realities in closer harmony with accreditation standards.

The ARL E-metrics project is a basis of assessment for many libraries. W. Shim (Shim 2001, 71) emphasized that the ARL E-metrics project is a standard approach to describe and measure networked resource use and expenditures for supporting electronic services in research and academic libraries. Whereas Miller and Schmidt (Miller and Schmidt 2002, 19) focused on reliability and data consistency provided by vendors and the challenges to collate data through different methods and interpretation. They highlighted different interfaces and methods used by libraries to measure usage of e-resources based on the statistics of internet search engines, gateways, portals, web hits, server data and other related e-metrics methods. R. Poll (Poll 2001, 307) highlighted performance indicators for the electronic services developed and tested in projects like "*Assessing the Academic Networked Environment: strategies and options: coalition for networked information*" 1996, "*International Coalition of library Consortia (ICOLC)*" 1998, "*ISO.DIS 2789:2000. Information and documentation-international library statistics*", ARL New Measures Programme, "*EQUINOX: Library performance measurement and quality management system*" and "*ISO TC 46/sc 8/wg 4: indicators for the electronic library.*" He gave recommendations to libraries to continue to use these indicators and compare methods so that a general consensus on validated indicators can be reached and emphasized working with vendors to generate usage data for e-resources in categories that libraries need so that time spent in collection of data can be reduced.

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Bertot, Dalton, McClure, and Shim (Bertot, Dalton, McClure, and Shim 2003, 27) highlighted two major efforts ARL E-metrics from USA and eVALUED from UK to develop usage indicators for e resources and services to capture and utilize network resource statistics in libraries. The eVALUED project is a tool kit of resources to assist library & information professionals of academic institutions with the evaluation of their electronic information systems (EISs). The scope of the eVALUED project includes different aspects of the evaluation of EISs including usage statistics, impact on users, resource provision, collaboration and integration, and security features etc.

Lankes, Gross, and McClure (Lankes, Gross, and McClure 2003, 1) suggested two standards based on utilization and technical infrastructure. The utilization standard is for use and delivery of digital reference service and consists of both qualitative and quantitative data. The technical standard was developed based on hard tools (software, hardware, protocols and other standards enforced by programming with little or no interpretive room) and soft tools (meta data and organizational schema where aspects of human description are controlled but still open to interpretation). These standards are designed to be used together to capture statistics, measurement and costing services. The procedure is to simply embed quality standards and assessment data into software and infrastructure by linking technical and utilization standards. This approach enhances the collection and its analysis for digital reference services.

S. Kato (Kato 2004, 11) reported that vendor usage statistics vary from vendor to vendor and highlighted the activity of COUNTER and main features of the code of practice. COUNTER provides credible, compatible and consistent usage statistics of electronic resources. He also analyzed ICOLC and NISO for measurement of e-resources and provided guidelines for use.

G. W. Welch (Welch 2005, 371 ) studied NISO Z39.7 library standards and analyzed web site statistics of the University Library of North Carolina at Charlotte as a member of a task force team on web statistics. He recommended that usage of library generated web pages is a useful indicator to get a complete picture of the efficiency of the electronic services provided by the library. These statistics are useful in analyzing the effectiveness of the design of the library's website, leading to refinements for navigation and generating traffic, leading to better website management and decision making.

M. Kyrillidou (Kyrillidou 2005) highlights various measurement methods for e-resources and services and their significance. StatsQUAL<sup>+</sup><sup>TM</sup> was developed by the Association of Research Libraries and addresses the need of libraries to demonstrate outcomes and contributions. LibQUAL<sup>+</sup><sup>TM</sup> was developed with support from the US department of Education Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE). LibQUAL<sup>+</sup><sup>TM</sup> enables libraries to do systematic assessment and measurement of library service quality, over time and across institutions. It has been used in a variety of libraries including post secondary, academic, public and special libraries.

DigiQual<sup>TM</sup> is an online survey created through ARL by Texas A&M University and University of Texas for users of digital libraries to collect feedback on a library's website services, functionality and content.

MINES for Libraries<sup>TM</sup> stands for Measuring the Impact of Networked Electronic Services. It is an online transaction survey that collects data on the usage pattern of e-resources and user demographics. As libraries have linking URLs on their websites for academic portals, collaborations, consortium arrangement and related content, The MINES for Libraries<sup>TM</sup> protocol enables libraries to collect information from users in a setting where users no longer specifically enter the library in order to access resources.

Library Journal reports ( LJ2007, 34) that Sushi is another development that came into being when ANSI approved NISO's new standard called Standardized Usage Statistics Harvesting Initiative (SUSHI). It works on the principle of an automated request and response model for the harvesting of electronic resources usage data utilizing a web services framework.

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### 3.3. Difficulties and Complexities involved in Measuring Use of E-resources and Services:

There are varying practices for information delivery and use as well as measurement technicalities for capturing that use.

The Scientific Societies Lecture Theatre in London organized a seminar with speakers representing many of the interested parties – publishers, librarians (academic and corporate) and professional organizations (such as ARL and PALS). T. Hulbert (Hulbert 2001,7) presents an overview of the UKSG seminar. Some of the papers presented in this seminar are discussed in following text.

Hazel Woodward of Cranfield University presented an initiative organized by PALS (the publishers and libraries solutions groups of JISC, the PA and ALPSP). He outlined the current need for usage statistics and stated that some vendors do not provide usage data at all. Also, there are inconsistencies and variations in definitions in report delivery and formats. The findings reveal that any initiative in online usage statistics must aspire to the three Cs i.e. Credibility, Consistency and Compatibility. PALS has created a working group to develop a code of practice for vendor-based electronic journal and database usage statistics. This code of practice which complements existing initiatives from ARL, ICOLC, NCLIS and others, included guidance on following items:

1. Which data elements should be measured.
2. Data definitions.
3. Output report formats/ frequency/ granularity.
4. Combining usage data reports from a variety of sources.

Another task force was created by PALS to focus on issues such as data processing, reporting and gateways/hosts. Each of these groups was comprised of key members from academia, primary and secondary publishers, etc.

Jerry Cowling was instrumental in starting an initiative called EAJUS (Electronic Article and Journal Usage Statistics). He pointed out that each publisher usually gathers, stores, and provides data using their own proprietary methodologies. These methodologies are ever increasing with absolutely no independent validation. He suggestion the creation of a new industry measure, a top-line usage “score” for a journal title that’s audited and published.

L. Ashcroft (Ashcroft 2001, 147) described research carried out at Liverpool John Moores University that investigated the marketing and evaluation of e-journals in academic library collections in the UK and the USA. The findings and recommendations of this research involve accurate measurement, changing user expectations, and the evaluation and promotion of e-resources.

T. Goldberg (Goldberg 2003, 4), reviewed the changes that have occurred in the measurement of e-resources from 1990-2000 through an examination of the Integrated Post Secondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS) academic library survey. This survey used methods from previous practices in libraries for collection and use of data. With the most recent change in IPEDS, librarians have been somewhat left to their own in-house methods of data interpretation to make reports. Findings reveal that many libraries developed local solutions to accounting and decision making. S. Mundt (Mundt 2004, 107), stated that statistics for the use of networked resources have become increasingly difficult to obtain, sometimes partially incomplete, and often inconsistent. Under such conditions libraries have a hard time collecting and making use of data for management decisions and planning. He provides suggestions to standardize statistical usage data for the future after careful review of systems, needs and practical, formal and technical considerations.

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### 3.4. Types of Data for Usage of E-resources and Services from Vendors, Computing Software and Other Developments:

X. Li (Li 1999,153), reviewed the study which investigated improvements in the design of the library homepage and methods to facilitate user access. A web usage analysis was conducted at Texas University libraries through statistics generated by web tracking software. The study examined following things.

1. Geographic distribution of users.
2. Usage patterns of library webpage.
3. Peak usage times.
4. Computer environment information about type of web browsers, operating systems, screen resolutions and screen colors.

A comparison of usage statistics gathered before and after web page promotion was done to measure the effectiveness of the library marketing efforts. The findings of the study showed that key areas of the website needed redesign and modifications. J. Luther (Luther 2001,119) reported that each information vendor/publisher provides different measures and levels of statistical data and support. There are no industry standards and he raised questions and concerns for both publishers and librarians for evaluation of e-journals in US libraries. The findings of the study are as follows:

1. There is a lack of comparable data from different publishers as a result of variations in definitions applied and compilation methodologies employed.
2. There is a lack of context for understanding data available on the level of online activity.
3. The usage data is incomplete because journals are available in multiple formats and often available from several sources, such as locally in the library, directly from the publisher, or through an aggregate database of journals.
4. Marketers of e-resources generally acknowledge that the amount of time a database is available influences usage rates and that publicity and promotion make a difference in the level of use.
5. Usage is positively affected when back files are included with a current electronic subscription.
6. The user interface, including the need to register for use and the availability of links from the library's online catalog to an article's full text, affects usage.
7. There is a need for usage statistics to justify expenditures for electronic journals and alterations in existing collection development policies and procedures. J. Cowhig (Cowhig 2001, 233) proposed that publishers should work as a team to certify and publish key usage statistics relating to electronic scientific, technical and medical (STM) journals to avoid inconsistencies in measuring usage. The Electronic Article and Journal Usage Statistics (EAJUS) system's main data features are described in detail keeping in mind the different environment of libraries and its diverse user backgrounds.

J. Sumison (Sumison 2002, 29) reviewed the efforts of working group TC46/SC8 on revisions of the International standard for library statistics (ISO 2789) since 1997. New categories for database statistics were proposed. There were disagreements on which measures are most appropriate to measure usage statistics and other issues discussed. Further resolution of these matters is complicated because of the variations in the environments of libraries.

J. Eaton (Eaton 2002, 44), describes the problems of online usage statistics from the perspective of the infrastructure needed to deploy a performance indicator project at the London Business School (LBS)

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library. The author noted a persistent lack of agreement over how to describe and record usage and come up with a way of measuring the statistical usage of electronic services across a varied resource portfolio. The need for agreed upon standards to establish satisfactory measures of comparability is highlighted and simultaneously it is mentioned that with such diversity of librarians' electronic resources portfolio total compliance is a long way off.

Shim and McClure (Shim and McClure 2002, 499), reported the results from the ARL E-metrics study to investigate issues associated with usage statistics provided by different database vendors. The series activities and field testing of usage statistics from eight major database vendors to evaluate the degree to which the reports are useful for library decision making are described. The findings of study were as follows:

1. Library staff has little knowledge about vendor statistics and limited training in manipulation and analysis of data.
2. The evaluation and manipulation of data for usage statistics require special training and knowledge.
3. Most Libraries had no management information system for organizing, analyzing and reporting such data.
4. In general, libraries were not prepared to commit the necessary resources, staff time, training and effort to evaluation.
5. Both the Library community and vendors have much to learn about how best to define, collect, report, analyze and validate such statistics.
6. Libraries do not have a culture of evaluation that supports the assessment effort needed to use vendor based statistics successfully.
7. Specific ways to coordinate and encourage cooperation have yet to be developed for various international efforts.
8. Different types of libraries, e.g. academic, public, special, have unique dataset requirements and librarians need to work on them.
9. Both vendors and librarians need to realize that development, testing, refinement and standardization of vendor based statistics is an ongoing process.

Vendor statistics are easy to obtain. However, the standardization of key usage statistics and reporting format is critical. The validation of reported statistics also remains a critical issue.

Roe and Spencer (Roe and Spencer 2005, 124) described a research project at Newcastle University library that has been benchmarking e-resources using COUNTER-compliant usage data. As virtual access to libraries is common these days so the new tools are needed to determine the cost/benefit ratios of library resources and services. The highlight of study the is e-metrics for libraries and its potential to provide managers with more robust, empirical evidence to perform strategic planning and decision making more effectively.

H. H. Yeh (Yeh 2006, 453) studied the controversies derived from generating e-resource statistics by way of literature review to recognize the solutions proposed by libraries. The study highlights capabilities and limitations of COUNTER to provide librarians a reliable tool to report statistics and referable criteria for publishers for selecting log files.

United Kingdom Serial Group (UKSG, 2007) conducted a study on serial usage and use factors in libraries with the objective of obtaining an initial assessment as to the feasibility of developing and implementing journal Usage Factors (UFs). The survey was conducted in two Phases. Phase 1 was a series of in-depth

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telephone interviews with a total of 29 authors/editors, librarians and publishers. Phase 2 was a web-based survey in which about 1400 authors and 155 librarians participated.

The feedback obtained helped determine that UFs are meaningful and have the ability to highlight the worth and quality of online journals as well as provide ways to implement them. The feedback also provided related topics to be explored if it is decided to continue the project further. The large number of responses to the web survey shows the high level of interest in journal quality measures and the Usage Factor concept. Based on results it is clear that it is feasible to develop journal usage factors as there is support from large numbers respondents for its implementation. The conclusions and recommendations of study were as follows:

1. The COUNTER usage statistics are not yet seen as a solid enough foundation on which to build a new global measure such as Usage Factors, but results show nevertheless continued interest in UF.
2. A majority of publishers are supportive of the UF concept and willing to participate in the calculation and publication of UFs, and are prepared to see their journals ranked according to UF.
3. There is a diversity of opinion for calculating UF and specifically how to define terms such as “total usage”, “specified usage period”, and “total number of articles published online”.
4. Tests with real usage data will be required to refine the definitions for terms related to UF.
5. There isn't a significant difference between authors in different disciplines on the validity of journal impact factors as a measure of quality.
6. UF was reported as a highly ranked factor by librarians for evaluation of journals and decision making.
7. The publishers are unwilling to provide their usage data to a third party for consolidation and for calculation of UF. The majority appear to be willing to calculate UFs for their own journals collection after careful audit. This is generally perceived as an extension of the work already being done for COUNTER. While it may have implications for systems, these are not seen as being problematic.
8. COUNTER is on the whole trusted by librarians and publishers and is seen as having a role in the development and maintenance of UFs, possibly in partnership with another industry organization.
9. There are some structural problems for online usage data that would have to be addressed before UFs are judged to be credible. Notable among these is the perception that online usage data is much more easily manipulated compared to citation data.

Further research is needed for defining, developing measuring methods, testing, and implementation of UF.

### **3.5. Significance and Importance of E-metrics for Libraries:**

L. Ashcroft (Ashcroft 2000, 466) described the evaluation and promotion of electronic journals and discussed the findings of the Liverpool study of electronic journals in academic libraries in the UK. He traces the growth of electronic journals and their impact on the role of information professionals. He also reports that there is scope for improvement in areas of evaluation and promotion. Library providers can speed up the work of determining relevant statistics by providing a good cross section of needs. The focus is on the relationship between the information professional and the library provider, if they can establish common ground, then ultimately users' stand to benefit and there will be a win-win situation.

Shepherd and Davis (Shepherd and Davis 2002, 659), report that the use of online information resources continues to increase and is having a tremendous effect throughout the information value chain. While librarians and publishers currently have systems for measuring the impact and use of collections, confidence

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in the statistics need to be created so that librarians and other customers can make informed purchasing decisions.

Thebridge and Dalton (Thebridge and Dalton 2003, 93), highlight that there is supporting literature available based on both US and UK projects. Librarians would like a manageable and understandable system which assists them in proving the value of library service to their institutional directors/chairs. This was the perception of projects done internationally as well as from data collected in the eVALUED project in UK in order to show how the academic sector is moving towards developing workable methods for assessing and evaluating e-resources and services.

Covi and Cragin (Covi and Cragin 2004, 312), state that libraries are changing continuously and so are their systems, technologies, collections and usage patterns. Some unanticipated results based on these changes are also emerging. This has both immediate and long-term implications for library stakeholders. A system needs to be designed or followed to do the systematic evaluation of the effects of new technologies and related concepts such as bundled electronic resources. This research concludes that evaluating both use and non-use of electronic collections will supplement acquisitions and service measures for decision making and short and long-range planning in libraries.

#### **4.0 The Design for an Evaluation and Assessment Study for Libraries:**

Libraries need a clear, solid and reliable plan to evaluate electronic resources and services as discussed in five evaluation categories in section 3 of this paper. The assessment and planning guidelines are recommended and are available as outcomes of different projects like ARL, eVALUED, PAL, NISO and more. The following evaluation and assessment outline model is designed keeping in mind the literature studied to manage e-metrics for better and evidence based decision making for libraries.

#### **4.1 Evaluation of Usage of E-Resources and Services through Standardized Techniques or Software:**

The different methods should be analyzed carefully for evaluation of your library's E-resources and services keeping in mind the present and emerging technologies to identify common areas. The decision to what kinds of categories should be included in any method or software designed for evaluation of resources should be made by the library in collaboration with vendors. Because of the inconsistency in reports from different vendors, methods, and environment/platform needs, it is highly desired that software or techniques designed should be smart enough to include and simultaneously differentiate viewing information concerning content and usage levels of databases. The software or method for evaluation must therefore be able to generate reports that perform different functions. For example a librarian could create content evaluation spreadsheets, high traffic links or areas, use of journal titles through a particular database, comparisons by common categories like sessions, searches run, turnaways and items retrieved etc. The Coordinator librarian and other staff who deal with statistical reports must have training sessions for retrieving and working with statistical reports. There should be a well defined method to quantitatively evaluate the cost effectiveness of individual journal titles, databases, e-books and services besides defined qualitative perceptions. The quantitative method may include:

1. User population of area/ subject
2. Available Infrastructure and additions
3. Online and Information services
4. Total Cost and cost per use
5. Amount of money/ budget amount available
6. Subscription time

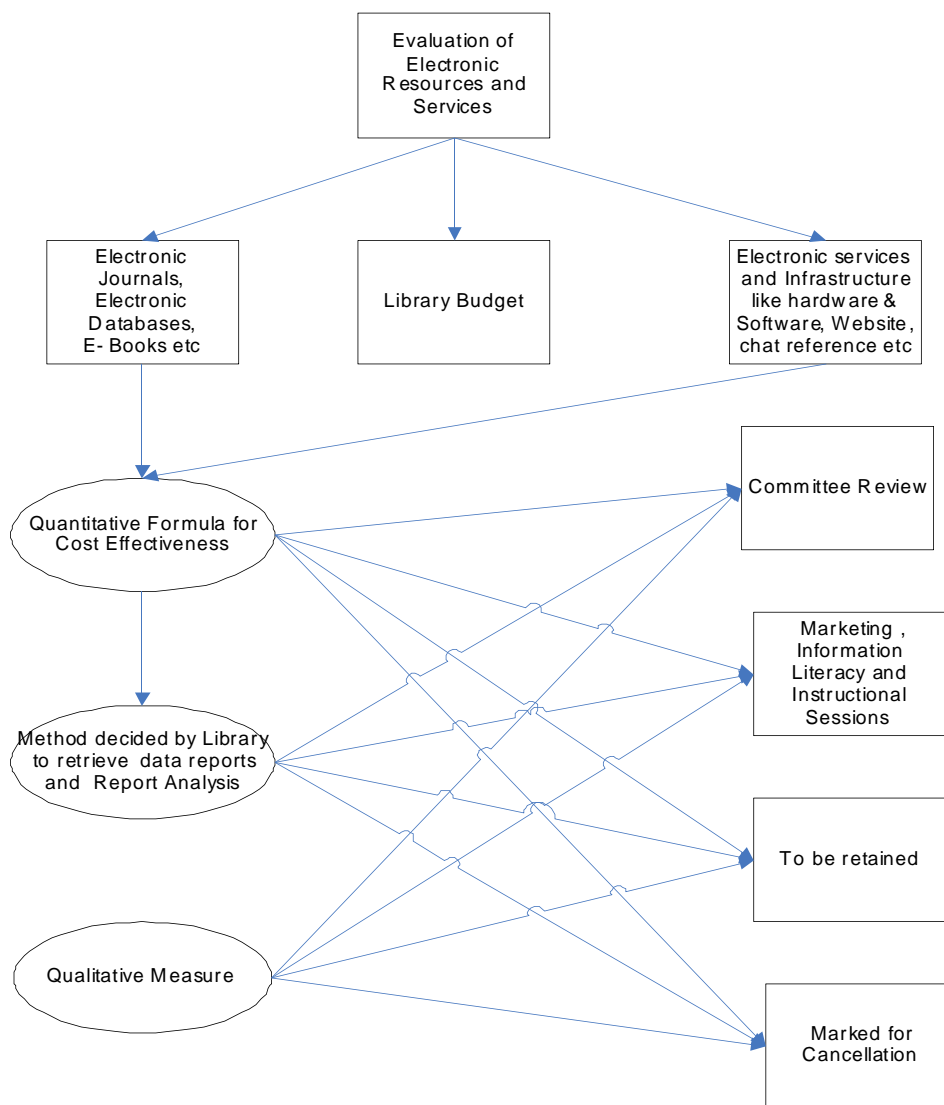
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7. Peak Usage Periods
8. Average frequency of usage
9. Breakdown of different groups actually using the resource etc

The qualitative methods should also be well defined and documented to evaluate cost effectiveness. It may include parameters like:

1. Formal/informal requests for information, information sessions and infrastructure
2. Reference desk queries and Chat reference queries
3. Faculty recommendations
4. Distribution and collection of user surveys and feedback forms from the user population to know their search strategies and general topics of interest etc.

### Model for Evaluation of Use of Electronic Resources and Services



**Figure 4.1**

### Model for Evaluation of Use of Electronic Resources



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Using above methods a library can evaluate cost effectiveness and decide whether to continue subscription/renting of resources or place it under one of several categories like “under committee review”, “highly recommended for marketing or for information sessions in collaboration with the faculty of that department”, “to retain” or “to mark cancellation”. Figure 4.1 “Model for Evaluation of Use of Electronic Resources and Services” represents systematic suggested procedure to follow for evaluation and decision making process which any type of library can utilize after adjusting it for local variations.

The implementation of clearly designed evaluation and assessment plan will definitely help and add up in evidence based and better decision making process concerning electronic resources and services to better serve users with efficient library services and achieving success in fulfilling library goals and missions.

### Notes

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