Collection and Discovery Services Open Forum:

We Want to Hear from You

Lessons Learned from Depository Library Council's Open Forum, April 21, 2021

Depository Library Council

Collection and Discovery Services Working Group

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Collection and Discovery Services Working Group

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The video recording, chat transcripts, and presentation slides from the open forum are available at:

https://www.fdlp.gov/training/2021-dlc-meeting-collection-and-discovery-services-open-forum-we-want-hear-you

Introduction

The Collection and Discovery Services Working Group (the Working Group), held an open forum at the spring 2021 Meeting of the Depository Library Council (April 21, 2021) in accordance with its charter to:

- Act as an open forum for communications among FDLs, GPO, and other stakeholders in the sphere of Federal government information production, dissemination, and utilization
- Act as an open forum for the discussion of major developments in the fields directly impacting the management of FDLP collections and for developing collaborative plans and actions to assist FDLs to incorporate such changes to the operations and workflows

The Working Group designed a series of five discussion questions (with five related poll questions) in order to elicit feedback from meeting attendees on issues affecting Federal Depository Libraries (FDLs) in the areas of cataloging and metadata, technical services, collection development and management, and discovery services. The Working Group asked attendees for ideas, suggestions, and questions related to the following discussion questions:

Discussion Questions

1. What should the ideal library technical services department look like in the 21st Century?
2. What information would you like to see in a registry for cataloging and metadata projects?
3. What challenges or issues would you like to see the Collection and Discovery Services Working Group address?
4. LSCM (Library Services and Content Management) is exploring a new series of item numbers for historical publications. What do you think of this idea?
5. What new, or changes to existing, cataloging services and products would you find useful?

Open Forum Discussion Questions and Attendee Responses

Open Forum Discussion Question 1

What should the ideal library technical services department look like in the 21st Century?

The Working Group proposed this question because at the time, several working group members were facing a number of retirements at their libraries and were interested in learning how other libraries might revise their position descriptions or reorganize their departments if the opportunity arose.

The Working Group ran two simple polls before posing the first discussion question. Following are the two poll questions with their respective answer choices, response results, and percentages:

Poll 1: Does your library have a dedicated technical services department for government documents?

a) Yes: 27/294 (9%)
b) No, but we have dedicated technical services staff for government documents: 71/294 (24%)
c) No: 71/294 (24%)
d) No Answer: 125/294 (43%)

Poll 2: Has your library recently reorganized your technical services department?

   a) Yes: 32/296 (11%)
   b) No, but we are considering it: 18/296 (6%)
   c) No: 108/296 (36%)
   d) No Answer: 138/296 (47%)

After reviewing responses to the poll questions, the Working Group opened up the discussion with the question, **"What should the ideal library technical services department look like in the 21st Century?"** The Working Group was seeking input on how FDLs reorganized and renamed their technical services departments, what kinds of skills are needed, and what kinds of roles and responsibilities exist in the ideal technical services department.

The takeaways from this discussion are clear: FDL librarians and staff want more education and training. Here is a sample of comments and questions that attendees typed into the chat:

- A desire for cross-training between technical services and public services librarians and staff
- Reference librarians want to understand cataloging and want resources for non-catalogers, specifically a "Gov Docs Cataloging 101" webinar
- Catalogers also want to understand the public services side so that they can understand how what they do impacts library users.
- Tech services work involves a lot of electronic resource management
   o Need training on how to weed electronic materials, cataloging special formats (maps, e-resources), vendor negotiation, software migration
- Cataloging/collection development of FDLP documents training for public libraries
- Training for new librarians, "Gov. Docs for those who don't yet know how to tell what a good question is to ask"

One attendee stated that more staff is needed in technical services departments, especially with cataloging government information, digital or special collections. Another attendee expressed the importance of communicating to library administration that though there might be less print acquisition, the roles of technical services librarians and staff are still important, especially with new cataloging, ILS systems, BibFrame, RDA changes, etc.

Several attendees responded that after being reorganized, their technical services departments had been renamed to imply a shift in emphasis:

   o Discovery and Resource Management
   o Discovery Services
   o Cataloging and Metadata Services
   o Collection Support Services

Open Forum Discussion Question 2
What information would you like to see in a registry for cataloging and metadata projects?

Prior to the discussion, the Working Group ran two polls to gauge preliminary interest in a cataloging registry. Following are the two poll questions with their respective answer choices, response results, and percentages:

Poll 3: Has your depository taken on cataloging projects to work toward having your depository collection 100% cataloged?

a) Yes: 74/298 (25%)
b) No: 50/298 (17%)
c) No, because my depository collection is fully cataloged: 33/298 (11%)
d) No answer: 141/298 (47%)

Poll 4: Would knowing the cataloging projects of other depository libraries be of interest to you?

a) Yes: 76/299 (25%)
b) No: 12/299 (4%)
c) Maybe: 78/299 (26%)
d) No Answer: 133/299 (44%)

The Working Group explained the proposed retrospective cataloging project registry to attendees; the proposed registry would centralize and share information on FDL cataloging projects. Interested in what FDLs thought of the plan, the Working Group asked the second discussion question, **"What information would you like to see in a registry for cataloging and metadata projects?"**

The overall response, as typed into the chat, was positive. Several attendees mentioned how they could use the registry for their present cataloging work and projects and to justify future projects. One attendee asked about the maintenance of the registry and the level of effort required to keep the information current.

Positive Responses

- I'd really like to learn about other cataloging projects! Maybe we don't always have to start from scratch, if we can share our ideas.
- The Registry would give us a guide of other stems to catalog at our own institution.
- Overall I think the registry is a great idea! It would be wonderful to know who is doing what out there.
- Ways to get $$ (grants) for retro cataloging

Questions

- Is this print only?
- How do you envision this registry being used? Not helpful if there's no easy access to records created. FYI, my library is 80-85% cataloged.
- How would you ensure that the Registry is kept up-to-date? Am thinking about the digitization registry that was decommissioned a few years ago.
- Do preservation partners commit to cataloging? Or can there be a cross link to areas of preservation partnerships? I tend to search a preservation library's catalog for a specific topic area.

Suggestions

- Info for registry: agency, SuDoc, date range, format, whether it includes only depository items or unreported publications as well.
- How about format (electronic, microfiche, paper, etc.)
- It might be nice to see in the registry if the library is willing to share a batch of the records for what they cataloged?
- I would like to see if the participating library would allow copying records and if they are Z39.50 or equivalent capable?
- Whatever projects people are doing, I'd just like to know to see if it can help me better manage our Gov Docs.
- It would also help if all the SuDocs changes are included as well as title changes in the registry for a collection
- Perhaps add a column to show if the library would be willing to share the records that they catalog.
- Having alternative SuDoc numbers is so helpful! Not just for changes, but when a joint publication was released under different item numbers.

After the 2021 Spring Meeting, Library Services and Content Management (LSCM) eventually decided not to proceed with the registry.

Open Forum Discussion Question 3

What challenges or issues would you like to see the Collection and Discovery Services Working Group address?

When asked, **"What challenges or issues would you like to see the Collection and Discovery Services Working Group address?"** Most attendees' responses focused on issues such as obtaining grants, transitioning to the new version of RDA, searching SuDoc numbers, and the need for cataloging guidance and help. LSCM responded in the chat that there was a webinar on MarcEdit (still available for viewing), and that the GPO is working with the Documents Data Miner (DDM) people about some options for GPO.

FDLs are clearly interested in receiving help with their government documents collections — we have an opportunity to provide help and support in our area of expertise.

Challenges and Issues:

- Ways to obtain money/grants for retrospective cataloging, e.g., if a large public library has an old collection but only a shelflist.
- A comparison of LC and NARA collections—what is missing from both collections?

- Transitioning to the new version of RDA—examples of records in addition to instructions. Our library is working on its treatment of non-government document records and I do NOT want to just use their approach. We need information and guidance from GPO.
- How-to's for various ILS systems and the best ways to use them for government documents.
- Documents Data Miner (DDM/DDM3)
- Ways for consortia to de-duplicate government document records.
- A way to search new and old SuDoc numbers—ways that a library could update their records to maintain the SuDoc number used in the stacks but also have additional alternative SuDoc numbers added to the catalog record.
- Need refreshers and/or help cataloging non-print formats.

Responses from GPO:

- LSCM is still in conversations with Documents Data Miner folks about options for GPO to take on DDM and Documents Data Miner. [LSCM is] working with GPO's Office of General Counsel and GPO IT on the technical details at this stage.
- We [LSCM] also had a MarcEdit webinar entitled "Better Faster: Using MarcEdit to Process and Enhance CRDP Records." The recording can be found here: https://www.fdlp.gov/better-faster-using-marcedit-to-process-and-enhance-crdp-records.

Open Forum Discussion Question 4

LSCM (Library Services and Content Management) is exploring a new series of item numbers for historical publications. What do you think of this idea?

Discussion Question 4 was prefaced by a poll question in order to ascertain how many attendee FDLs are working with collections of digitized historical content or might be considering building digital collections. The majority of poll responses demonstrated a level of interest in digital collections of historical content. Only 2% of the respondents indicated that they are not interested in any aspect.

Some respondents provided additional commentary on the poll question in the chat; one person opined that many libraries would be interested in historical content as long as "physical" materials would not need to be housed. A second person countered that having links to born-digital documents in bibliographic records would not help with preservation of the National Collection.

Following is the poll question with its respective answer choices, response results, and percentages:

Poll 5: Are you building your depository collection with, or providing access to, digitized historical content? (select all that apply)

   a) Yes, we are building a digital collection with historical content: 31/309 (10%)
   b) Yes, we provide access to digital historical content: 58/309 (19%)
   c) Yes, we provide access through links in cataloging records: 107/309 (35%)
   d) No, but we are considering building a digital collection: 21/309 (7%)
   e) No, my library is not interested in historical content: 5/309 (2%)

f) No answer: 161/309 (52%)

Before asking the discussion prompt, **"LSCM (Library Services and Content Management) is exploring a new series of item numbers for historical publications. What do you think of this idea?"** the Working Group explained to attendees the reason for LSCM exploring this possibility—some of the digital historical content that LSCM is cataloging pre-dates the development of the item number system that we know today, or their tangible version might not have been distributed through the FDLP. Therefore, these documents do not have active item numbers.

When asked to discuss a potential new series of item numbers for historical publications, 18 out of 29 responses were favorable, one person commented that a new series of item numbers for historical publications would "help with consistency" and another declared an interest in new item numbers for electronic publications. Several people emphasized that individual item numbers should not be used for multiple formats – and prefer that the new item numbers be clearly designated as "electronic, microform, paper, etc." Other suggestions included "electronic historical publications by agency" and a "whole new revision of the item number system." Several people were less than enthusiastic, commenting, "Don't we have enough item numbers?" "I understand the purpose of item numbers but wonder if we need a whole new approach?" "I would prefer fewer item numbers added, I have to pay my record provider per item and am close to cusp of paying a larger library fee."

Chat entries = ~29
Positive responses = 18
Negative/Critical Responses = 4
Questions = 4
Suggestions = 3

Participant Responses to Discussion Question:

- Paper? fiche? electronic?
- Would help with consistency.
  - Agree.
- I'm for that.
- Don't we have enough item numbers?
- I love this idea! (Do it! That'd be great! Sounds exciting. Yes I think it is a good idea. Yes, excellent idea! I think this is an EXCELLENT idea! Sounds good. Yes.)
- Series is great though.
- I think that would be a good idea.
- I think that will be confusing to users. They have enough trouble with SUDOC.
- Would "historical" simply be "superceded"?
- Will the item numbers be cross referenced with older item numbers (for the older depositories)?
- I would love to see a whole new revision of the item number system.
- As long as it is clear that they are electronic, microform, paper, etc. No combined item numbers for different formats!
- Good idea. We are going mostly electronic so if they are for electronic, we would be interested.

- Item numbers have always been much of a mystery to me. I understand the purpose of item numbers but wonder if we need a whole new approach???
- Having a huge historical collection, I think this is a great idea.
- I would prefer fewer item numbers added, I have to pay my record provider per item and am close to cusp of paying a larger library fee.
- Better than using the current item number for old titles that libraries may not have.
- Would we need to do anything to "select" them?
- Yes, but that is still fewer than historic government agencies! ;-)
- Would like electronic historical publications by agency.

Participant Responses to Poll 5 in chat:

- Not sure I get the "digital collection with historical content." My library has a digital repository, and I collect and host locally born-digital documents in our repository.
- I am sure many libraries are interested in historical content as long as physical doesn't need to be housed.
- Remember, simply having links to born-digital documents in your bib records is NOT helping with preservation of the National Collection. See https://freegovinfo.info/node/3900/

Open Forum Discussion Question 5
What new, or changes to existing, cataloging services and products would you find useful?

Reviewing the responses to the open forum question (**"What new, or changes to existing, cataloging services and products would you find useful?"**), there are several existing services and technologies which should either continue as is or continue with improvements. Additionally, there were a couple of requests from the FDL community for new tools. The services and products that were noted for continuation or improvement are as follows:

- Offer access to electronic (online) historic publications or respective catalog records of online historic publications by issuing agency.
- Modernize the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP) to minimize technological glitches and improve overall ease of use.
  - LSCM is currently working on requirements and requesting a budget for a project for a new generation CGP.
- Offer selection of Department of Interior publications by State.
- Ensure the continuation of the non-GPO Documents Data Miner 3 (DDM3) or create an equivalent federal documents library management tool to replace DDM3.
- Continue the Catalog Record Distribution Program (CRDP).
- Improve the Depository Selection Information Management System (DSIMS) to include additional descriptive information associated with item numbers to make selection profile modifications easier. Additional descriptive information provided with each item number may include SuDoc stem, format, and titles.

- Improve the unreported publications submission tool in askGPO to automate capturing of unreported publications of an agency or government entity website when an unreported document from a respective agency or entity is reported to GPO for cataloging.
- Create a tool or mechanism which allows for libraries to link their ILSs to the CGP to find, display, and access electronic (online) titles.

Open Forum Lessons Learned – Conclusion

Government information products and services evolve. Library spaces are transformed, and staffing levels fluctuate over time. The Collection and Discovery Services Working Group learned from its spring 2021 open forum that the Federal depository library community is clearly engaged with GPO and the FDLP.

There are several key takeaways from the open forum:

- As they maintain and develop their depository collections, FDLs want training and educational programming from GPO.
  - Public and technical services librarians and staff desire cross-training to more fully understand how their work impacts library users.
  - Cataloging, processing, and effective management of electronic resources are deemed vital to providing permanent public access to digital U.S. Government information products for library stakeholders.
- FDLs identified very specific issues that they want the Working Group to address, such as obtaining grants for retrospective cataloging projects, transitioning to the new version of RDA, adding alternative SuDoc numbers to cataloging records, and cataloging non-print formats.
- On the topic of new, or changes to existing, cataloging services and products, FDL community members expressed a desire to improve the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP) and offered suggestions for improving existing LSCM selection, cataloging, and reporting tools.

After careful review of the spring 2021 open forum data, the Working Group decided that it is not necessary for the Depository Library Council to submit recommendations to the U.S. Government Publishing Office for several reasons. GPO continually offers new webinars and webcasts on topics such as cataloging, collection maintenance, special projects, and specialized research through the FDLP Academy. Additionally, GPO is already working on issues such as modernizing the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP) and obtaining Documents Data Miner 3. The modernization of the CGP was discussed at the fall 2021 Working Group open forum and will be addressed in a separate report from the Collection and Discovery Services Working Group.