Refocusing Collections & Services – Working in an Electronic Setting

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Considerations to take into account prior to moving more electronic…

- The library should update collection development & public services policies or guidelines prior to the transition. This should include conducting a user need analysis.

- Anticipate a change in the staffing & skill needs of library staff.

- Arrange for IT support.

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Considerations to take into account prior to moving more electronic…

- Formulate a plan to promote electronic depository resources & make them visible within your library, library catalog, library Web pages, etc…
- Explain the purpose of the transition to the library staff to get everyone on board with the changes.

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Scenarios

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1. My director wants me to cut back on the number of items selected because it all seems to be all online. How can I do this or prevent it from happening?

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Cutting back on item selections…

- Assess what you are actually receiving in print. What content is of value for your users that you need to retain in print, what can be shifted to an alternate format?
- Develop the most efficient method for cataloging online versions in the library catalog.
- Train staff on the transition so they are aware of resources that have changed formats.
- Do not fight your administration, work with them, compile statistics & data to give your administration a fair assessment of the situation.

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2. We don't have the staff to process tangible materials.

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Lack of processing staff…

- After revising your collection development policy, re-evaluate your item selection profile & your user needs. Deselect what you do not need.
- Outline the available methods for cataloging online resources. Remember that cataloging electronic resources is still the most effective way to disseminate online materials. Investigate:
  - The purchase of commercial vendor records,
  - The staff time involved in selecting & copy cataloging individual online resources,
  - And the staff time involved in integrating online resources into library Web pages, course guides, etc…

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3. Electronic government publications need to be coordinated and/or integrated into general finding aids.
Is there a need to differentiate or brand electronic depository resources from other resources?

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Branding online resources as depository…

- It is part of the library's public service commitment to be a visible FDLP.
- How you go about doing it is a local decision.
- For libraries that are primarily electronic, there should be some reference to depository information available at a logical place on the library's Web site, or, "electronic front door".

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Branding online resources as depository…

- Some libraries will opt to create a government documents Web page & populate the page with depository resources.
- This type of set up is easy to "brand" as depository information.
- It may be harder for online users to discover the needed resources if they are unaware that they need Federal information.

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Branding online resources as depository…

- Other libraries opt to integrate depository resources within existing Web pages, Web guides, etc.
- Users need not know that the information they are seeking is "depository".
- This strategy makes it harder to "brand" the library as a resource for Federal information, although it can be done. Ask yourself, "how can the library teach users that the library is a location where experts can help them find & use Federal government information?"

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4. We have a historical collection,

but it is not used a lot.

We have a collection in closed stacks or remote storage that isn't used much.

My director wants this space.

What are my options?

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Reallocation of space for unused materials…

- Re-evaluate the present & future needs of your users. What electronic formats will be unacceptable to meet future needs?
- Identify if the library needs to promote the collection (cataloging, Web page development, outreach to classes, etc…) rather than disposing of it. Would increasing the usage alter the space issue?

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Reallocation of space for unused materials…

- Work with your regional library to identify if the collection is unique in your region. If it is, the collection may need to be transferred to another location or be retained at yours.
- Assess if the collection is a candidate for a digitization project.
- After offering publications to other libraries, dispose of the material per the guidelines established by your region. 14

5. How do I keep up with the copy cataloging of born digital materials? Are there tools available now or in the future that can help me?

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Keeping up with copy cataloging…

- Scan NET for in-scope publications for your collection.
  - Tailor your item selection profile with EL item numbers; use your profile to more quickly scan NET Monthly Archive Reports.
- Consider batch loading of records through a commercial vendor, either by getting all online material records or by tailoring the batch loads to your users' needs.

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6. How do I review and update my item number selections to select more electronic formats?

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Updating your item selection profile…

- Identify a peer institution with a similar collection scope that has already transitioned to be more electronic and review that library's item number selections.

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Updating your item selection profile…

- Keep in mind that online materials can be found in many places in the List of Classes:
  - Online materials are assigned a unique SuDocs class stem & are specifically designated as an (EL) item number.
  - Other online publications are multi-format publications like the "General Publications & Handbooks, Manuals, & Guides". Selecting them will give you various formats.

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Updating your item selection profile…

- Also keep in mind that you may provide access to online materials by cataloging or through other means, without adding them to your library's item selection profile. This often happens when libraries identify a new user need, but the Item Selection Update cycle hasn't happened yet.
- If you subscribe to a vendor for bibliographic records, don't forget to notify them that you have updated your item selection profile!

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7. What are the benefits of selecting EL item numbers since I can catalog or otherwise provide access to online publications that meet the needs of my community without selecting the item number?

July 15, 2003 AdNotes

"Consideration In Selecting Online Publications"

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Benefits of updating your item selection profile…

- You will automatically receive newly created item numbers that are similar to ones you already selected.
- You will automatically receive tangible publications if an item number changes from (EL) to a tangible format.

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Benefits of updating your item selection profile…

- Free use of online subscription services that are otherwise fee-based.
- For libraries which subscribe to cataloging records from third-party vendors, it may facilitate receipt of records for online publications. Libraries that don't select (EL) item numbers may not receive the cataloging records for them unless they specifically profile with the vendors to receive these.
- Assists researchers using locator services like the CGP, which direct users to libraries that select item numbers.

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Questions?

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