The CHARLESTON REPORT  
Business Insights into the Library Market  
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The Leaders Predict

"Within a few weeks of installation of the self-service checkout stations, more than 13% of the Main Library's total circulation was being handled using the new equipment. Self-serve stations will be installed at the system's branches in 1996." Columbus Metropolitan Library Annual Report.

"The most hopeful lesson of the Nineties is that voters will support libraries as part of good government and fair taxes spent wisely for all the people." John N. Berry, III, Editor-in-Chief, Library Journal. "Here Comes the Sun!", May 1, 1996.

"We are a retail operation, and a retail operation wants to look a certain way to attract a customer, to keep that customer and to provide a high level of service. That's what our customers have come to expect, and, as a result, we're looking more like Barnes & Noble, and they're looking more like us." Sandra Polsak, Director of Plant Management and Construction, New York Public Library. San Francisco Chronicle, April 13, 1996.

"The challenge for vendors is to be successful at getting the customer to pay for value-added services on a sustained basis. Librarians have begun to buy information at the article level; they will soon buy at the chapter level and perhaps even at the paragraph level." Marion Reed, University Librarian, California State University, San Marcos. LRTS, Vol. 39, No. 3, 1995.

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The Trends...

... A major shift is taking place in the leadership of the large libraries. Twenty-eight ARL (Association of Research Libraries) and eight major urban libraries are recruiting for new directors.

... The funding for data base access and electronic products has shifted from the technology and equipment portions of the budget to collection development.

... The fastest growing service in public libraries is the circulation of audio books. Libraries are buying abridged and unabridged as their customers demand both.

... Public libraries are establishing circulating CD-ROM collections. They tend to purchase multiple copies of a core collection of under 100 titles.

... As the prices for new videos drop, libraries are shifting back to buying new features rather than used. Informational and documentary videos continue to be collected for the core collection.

... Electronic resources, including purchased, leased, and negotiated access, will increase from 0-5% of the budget in 1995 to 25% of the materials budget by the year 2000.

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The Charleston Report

The National Serials Data Program assigns between 6,000 and 7,000 new International Standard Serial Numbers a year. Why should you pay attention to yet another new publication? What good will it do you?

We understand your cynicism. But we pledge that The Charleston Report, Business Insights into the Library Market will make a difference to you and your marketing program. In its timely, concise four pages six times a year, The Charleston Report will bring together information about the library market of interest to the publishing world and will add insights important for increased profitability and for a greater library market share.

We have begun The Charleston Report out of our own frustration. There is a hole in the market of information that is not filled.

Publishers and vendors call us regularly. They ask questions that they cannot answer in traditional ways. Questions like: I am going to publish a new journal in engineering; what should I charge for it? I have developed a marketing letter for librarians; will you read it and react to it? What are the new directions and hot topics in the library market? The Charleston Report is a dynamic publication which pledges to help you answer these and other questions as you market your products to libraries. If you succeed, so do we!

Buyers Talk

Word is that two research libraries are not purchasing the Encyclopedia Britannica Online because their collection development committees feel that encyclopedias are designed for a different market than their institutions serve. On the other hand, the Citadel and the College of Charleston have purchased the EB Online because they believe that it will be a boon to their students with its hypertext links.

York College of Pennsylvania (York, PA) is instituting both a new criminal justice program as well as an enhanced MBA program. Accordingly, they have been "spending money like crazy" purchasing books and journals in these areas. They have already added 47 journals, mostly in science and engineering.

Some law librarians favor CD-ROMs over online services because of expense. For example, one law librarian stated that for $80 a month, she can acquire and search one CD-ROM product. This is the same price as it would cost her to search one hour online.
The Future of Library Technology

The future of library technology will be on view at the American Library Association's Annual Meeting in New York in July.

**Web and Windows—the interfaces of choice for the future.**

Web interfaces are on a majority of the stands featuring library OPAC's (online public access catalogs) and IOLS (integrated online library systems). The Web will be ubiquitous. Windows interfaces for both OPAC and technical services are equally prevalent—solving the age old problem of multiple interfaces for users. These two, Web and Windows, are the de facto standards of today and the future. The Web will win for broadscale public access, while Windows will be champ for specialized applications.

**True “seamless” access—to widely distributed resources.**

Long heralded as the users' nirvana, “seamless” access is arriving and will continue to grow thanks to the Web/Windows environment and the increasing level of support for standards like Z39.50. This trend eliminates the need for local loading of information, brings the network into even greater levels of importance, and makes every participant in the industry who has a server with content on it “open for business.”

**“Where’s the Beef?”—moving to full text, primary information wherever possible.**

The user doesn't care if you have it—he/she only cares if it can be delivered. Library systems of the future increasingly must deliver the real thing and in real time. New services are being designed with this goal in mind, and our future users will see this level of service as the norm.

**Next opportunities.**

Efforts now are focused on access tools. The next opportunities will be harnessing the resources and managing use including providing guiding tools, validating content, validating use, providing unobtrusive billing and tracking systems, and enabling networked use of systems.

Rebecca Lenzini

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By The Numbers...

Libraries will spend $1.6 billion on books and other related materials in this year, according to the Book Industry Study Group. Library spending has increased 21% since 1989 and is expected to go to $2 billion by 1999. Library purchases represent 10% of all publishers' sales, a market share which is expected to remain stable or possibly increase slightly by 1999.

For university presses, however, the percentage of library sales is 31% and for professional books, libraries accounted for 25% of their sales. Public libraries spend $582 million for books; academic libraries spend $394.6 million; school libraries $367.6 million; and special libraries, $153.2 million. (From Library Journal, September 1, 1995)

A gallup poll commissioned by U.S. News and World Report and CNN reported that 67% of American adults went to a library at least once in the past year, a 16% increase over the 51 percent reported in 1978. Given a choice of a range of services, 80% of those surveyed reported going to the library to take out books.

For the fiscal year 95/96, public library budgets are growing 6%, with materials growing at 7.1% and salaries at 5.6%, according to a Library Journal (January, 1996) poll. The average public library spends 14.5% of their operating budget on materials and another 6% on technology. Nationwide, the per capita funding grew at 4.5%, from $20.60 to $21.56. Almost three out of four public libraries holding elections for bond issues secured them (up from a two-thirds success rate in 1994), with voters approving an average issue of $4,715,800.

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The Leaders Predict, continued from page one

"Public libraries buy more unabridged than abridged audio tapes. Librarians hope more cars will come with CD players so they can switch from the cassette format. They are concerned that some authors can read their own work very well, but others cannot. They want more variety and new titles." Don Sager, Public Libraries, March/April, 1996.

"Intellectually, the collection development process of buying digital products and books and journals have a lot in common, but electronic materials take ten times as much time. In both cases, we get brochures in the mail, and we read reviews in the literature, but then we talk to the publisher on the phone about technical matters, we host demonstrations, we pilot new tools, we gather evaluations from other librarians and users, we review contracts, we compare vendors, and then we go through some of the same steps at renewal time. And buying digital materials is the easy part. Cataloging them, paying for them, preserving them, etc., make them more like rare books than the run of the mill materials that we acquire most of the time." Tony Ferguson, Associate University Librarian, Columbia University. "Back Talk", Against the Grain, April, 1996.
An Academic Library View of the Future—Southern Methodist University

Our future will depend, to a great extent, on documenting and validating needs for new demands and expectations, improved downloading and printing capabilities, digital imaging, PC uses, microcomputer labs, interactive multimedia for use in the classroom and by individual users, electronic serials and full text, shared services, digital scanning, network issues (location, wiring, wireless, bandwidth), presentation, data storage, information retrieval, and data mining.

We must ensure our technology architecture is flexible enough to embrace innovations. We must continue to track and validate needed industry standards for electronic communication (Z39.50, DCE, TCP/IP, and other similar standards), printing images, and data storage.

The academic library has always been a repository of the inherited wisdom of civilization, and, therefore, a primary resource in the University’s mission of passing on learning and tradition to its students. Today, the library is also a key mediator of knowledge accessible through digital and other electronic systems, a gateway to the information superhighway. Neither of these two roles surpasses the other, for both are central to a vital academic enterprise. Both functions must receive equal attention as our libraries plan how best to serve the University in the coming decades.

Our libraries are central to the mission of preparing students in an age of ever-changing and increasing new knowledge by helping them become life-long, self-directed learners. In a world where much knowledge rapidly becomes obsolete, the University must increasingly teach students how to learn and inspire students to become independent inquirers. Today’s students must be prepared to change and adapt to tomorrow’s knowledge. To this end, a major library role is a learning laboratory, an independent classroom, even a bibliographic arcade, in which students practice this new, self-directed journey toward knowledge that must be constantly renewed and evaluated throughout their careers and their lives.

An increasingly electronic library will maintain the interconnectivity necessary to provide some alternative and unique information access to the universe of knowledge in all its current and emerging formats. In an information-rich environment, the role of the librarian as a resource and guide to knowledge will become more, not less, central to the academic mission of the University.

Maureen Pastine
University Librarian

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The Charleston Survey


Most libraries end their fiscal year on June 30. And many of them do have end of the year funds to expend. This is because a percentage of orders processed during the year have not been received at year end. Some libraries can pay for encumbered materials in the next year, but others cannot. And, if encumbered material does not come in, the money is lost.

This is why many libraries may have as much as 10-15% of the firm order book budget to spend at the end of the year.

Here are some tips:

$ Be flexible. Some libraries are able to prepay for materials already slated for expenditure in the next fiscal year. Planned binding expenses, sets of materials regularly received, and big ticket serial items are on the list.

$ Opinions are mixed about sales calls. Though some say that sales calls are helpful, the majority say such calls are not helpful and a waste of everybody’s time. In any event, never call without having mailed information beforehand. Calling without having sent prior information gives the impression that you are being pushy and that you do not want to give the librarian the benefit of knowing all about the product that you are selling.

$ Going for the hard sell generally does not work. If you want to make a special offer, do so after you are sure that the library is interested. Offering special discount points may allow you to increase the possibility of having a continuing relationship with the library in future fiscal years.

Buyers Talk, continued from page one

Ingram has downsized its multimedia sales effort because of slow sales. The Charleston Report recently spoke with Baker & Taylor about their multimedia sales efforts. B&T reports steady but modest growth in the multimedia product line (including CD-ROM and software products); libraries are buying slightly increasing numbers of CD-ROMs in 1996 as compared with 1995.
Library Hot Topics—Outsourcing

Everybody is talking about it in academic and public libraries. Outsourcing means the transfer of tasks and functions from being performed inside the library to an outside source. Outsourcing is not new as management of libraries have always looked for better ways to provide service. A standard library measure is that the service be provided at the same quality or at a higher level than is presently provided and at the same or a lower cost.

Although outsourcing extends to areas beyond technical services, such as grounds maintenance, reference back-up services, and computer support, it is in the context of selection, acquisitions, cataloging and processing that the term is most frequently used. Shared responsibility for selection began with the Farmington Plan and evolved into approval plans. Acquisitions vendors also provide selection tools, serve as partners in maintaining accounting systems, and do the leg work to find and acquire materials.

Since the beginning of the century, libraries has always relied on the Library of Congress as a source for cataloging records. When OCLC went national in the early 70’s, libraries began to accept shared cataloging from their colleagues. Today, vendors and publishers are supplying high quality, customized cataloging records for all titles delivered. Like cataloging, many vendors complete the physical processing necessary for the materials to arrive shelf-ready, including protective covers, labels, pockets, and library property stamps.

The decision points for a vendor or publisher in evaluating adding outsourcing services are whether to offer a standard package or one that can be customized to the local library’s requirements. The challenges are to hire qualified staff (or to outsource it to another agency), to understand and apply consistently a local library’s specifications, and to maintain good quality control. Libraries will compare the vendor’s profit-base pricing with their internal costs, which may, however, include only the obvious library staff time and not all of the materials, overhead, computer charges, etc.

A strong group of librarians (catalogers and public service librarians who demand extremely customized products) continue to resist outsourcing. The number of libraries which have formed partnerships to outsource these functions, however, continues to grow. Some of the notable examples are the State of Hawaii outsourcing its total technical services to Baker and Taylor, Wright State University using OCLC for all its cataloging, and the San Francisco Public Library using a number of vendors to help select, catalog and process its new Main Library collection.

Future Issues Will Feature:
- What’s hot from the ALA July conference
- Charleston Survey: urban library directors’ biggest future challenge
- Marketing tips—how to get the librarian to read your brochure
- Electronic journal pricing

Marketing Tips

The following comments were offered to vendors, exhibitors and meeting planners by conference goers and panelists alike during the Wrap-Up Panel for this year’s National Online Meeting in New York, May 13-16.

- The “Wow” factor is important. Your products have to stand up amid all the “Internet Glitz.” Conference goers are fatigued with standalone CD-ROM products. These products are more appropriate for the home user market.
- Make sure the people staffing your booth know your products. Many conference goers met booth staff who had only been with the company for a few weeks and knew very little about the products they were selling, the industry, and their competitors.
- When delivering a paper (not a product review), take care to look professional—not commercial.
- Conferencegoers expect “hype” from product literature and booth signage, but many commented that for many exhibitors the “Truth in Advertising” had taken a vacation.
- Most memorable quote—“The Web is the new ASCII.”

The Future of Library Collections

The majority of library materials budgets is expended for traditional print book and journal resources. This trend will no doubt continue well into the twenty-first century.

There has been an expansion in end user needs and demands. More than ever before, libraries are purchasing to fill the specific information needs of patrons leading to the “just in time” model of service delivery. This trend allows libraries to fill user needs through commercial document delivery services as well as through traditional interlibrary loan.

Delivery of full text information via databases is the next logical step. No longer is what is held locally all that is readily accessible and what is not held locally relatively inaccessible. The role of the librarian becomes one of organizing electronic resources as well as print resources. In the twenty-first century, the ability of information providers to archive information and to make it accessible to the market which they serve for a reasonable price will increase their market share.

Standalone CD-ROMs are not a viable expenditure for libraries unless they are provided for circulation to patrons. Publishers must allow networking of CD-ROMs in an online, distributed environment.

The library collection of the next century will be more distributed and more accessible to end users and information providers alike. This is both a challenge and an opportunity.

Katina Strauch