



Editorial

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As a journal editor, I am frequently asked to suggest topics for research or a paper that will result in publication. The simple answer is to look at the scope and content of a journal. In the case of *LRTS*, the topics represent the interests of each of the sections of ALCTS—Acquisitions, Cataloging and Classification, Collection Management and Development, Preservation and Reformatting, and Serials. Specifically, *LRTS* seek papers that contribute to the advancement of knowledge by sharing research results or reporting unique or evolving technical processes or research methods. Papers should address topics of interest to practitioners, researchers, educators, and students.

This often is not the answer sought. What potential authors really want to know is, “How do I get ideas for potential topics?” I can offer several answers to this second question. Consider the problems you are trying to address in your work. Think of topics about which you want to learn more. Revisit a paper by someone else that left you with questions or with whom you do not agree. Revise a paper you wrote for a class or presented at a conference. Stake out an area related to your position and explore it from several angles—become an expert. Finally, read the library literature extensively and dip into the literature of other fields as well. Reading widely can engage your interest and lead you to areas you wish to explore in more depth.

I recently read an intriguing review piece, “What’s Ahead for 2004?” in *Information Today*.¹ In it, eleven well-known figures in the information industry make predictions. They identify several hot topics that are ripe for research and consideration and would provide interesting themes for papers that are appropriate for *LRTS*. These topics include:

- Understanding user behavior
- Standards
- Open access/open archives
- Creating added value
- Technologies with greater flexibility
- Data exchange, data mining, and linking technologies—the interconnect-
edness of content and access tools
- Archiving and preservation, including primary source digitization
- Access control that is more sophisticated
- Greater consolidation of online services and content providers

Think about the implications of these topics for catalogers, selectors, serials librarians, preservationists and conservators, and acquisitions librarians. They suggest a wealth of important areas for exploration—and for research and publication.

Reference

1. “What’s Ahead for 2004,” *Information Today* 21, no. 1 (Jan. 2004). Accessed Jan. 24, 2004, www.infotoday.com/it/jam04/whatsahead.shtml.