

# Literature of Acquisitions in Review, 2008–9

Jeanne Harrell

*In this review, the author discusses key trends in acquisitions found in the professional literature published in 2008 and 2009. During this period, the decline of funding for libraries led to more creativity in purchasing materials. The move from primarily print collections to more electronic journals, databases, and e-books became more pronounced. The Big Deals began falling out of favor because of shrinking library budgets. Workflow continued to change as skills required for print acquisitions adapted to the needs of electronic publications. Approval plans continued to survive in an environment where e-books were increasing in usage and popularity. The volatile vendor market escalated during this period causing consolidations of companies into “mega” companies. Electronic resources continued to create challenges for acquisitions librarians who were trying to find the best tools and workflows to manage the resources while also developing the ability to negotiate and interpret e-content licenses.*

This review of acquisitions literature is the successor to two previous reviews of acquisitions literature by Dunham and Davis published in *Library Resources & Technical Services*.<sup>1</sup> A major theme in the 1996–2003 review was the changes in acquiring and accessing library materials brought about by technology and use of the Internet. In the 2004–7 review, library budgets and the management of electronic resources became the dominant topics. During 2008 and 2009, topics that dominated the literature were continuing budget challenges, approval plans, workflow and management changes in acquisitions, the changing landscape of publishers and vendors, the Big Deal, and electronic resources, including an upsurge in electronic books.

## Research Method

The author searched Library Literature & Information Science Full Text (LLIS) and Library and Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA) with Full Text, using “library” and “acquisitions” as keywords and limiting by the publication dates of 2008 and 2009. LLIS provided 239 citations and LISTA provided 822. The author also consulted ISI Web of Knowledge, retrieving 229 citations with the same search strategy. Sources used for this paper were limited to scholarly journal articles, conference proceedings, reports, and those published in English. The author included a selected number of articles related to serials acquisitions

**Jean Harrell** (jeanneh@tamu.edu) is Coordinator of Monograph and Automated Acquisitions, Texas A&M University Libraries, College Station, Texas.

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because the acquisition of library materials addressed acquisition and management of all formats. The author selected sources for this literature review that were representative of the recurring themes.

## Library Acquisitions Services

### Budgeting

As library budgets continued to shrink and demands for library resources increased, acquisitions managers became more creative in obtaining library materials. Tafuri described the results of a survey focused on secondary online sources for purchasing and found that sources such as Alibris, Abe Books, and Amazon Marketplace were used for out-of-print materials while book vendors were still the source of current materials.<sup>2</sup> Tafuri also discussed print-on-demand services.

Setting appropriate allocations for various formats and subject disciplines in library budgets continued to be a challenge and varied widely from institution to institution. Because accountability for expenditures is a key part of reporting purchases, several articles found creative approaches to this important acquisitions function. Kaay and Zimmerman developed a percentage-based allocation formula for allocating funds.<sup>3</sup> Two elements in their formula were book price and circulation data.

Williams and Schmidt examined the practice of including the average cost of books per discipline as a variable in determining allocation formulas by looking at average price data from four sources: *The Bowker Annual*, previous acquisition cost data, Blackwell Price Reports, and Blackwell approval plan profiles.<sup>4</sup> Williams and Schmidt found that the Blackwell method yielded higher average prices. They suggested that other libraries should consider the advantages and disadvantages of the four methods, which included the difficulty of matching university academic departments to Library of Congress classifications, the inclusion of non-English materials, the inclusion of nonbook materials, staff time required to compile the data, the type of binding, and the currency of the data when attempting to determine average prices for use in allocating funds to various disciplines.

Walters suggested that because book prices increase at a slower rate than journals, undergraduate libraries should invest more of their budget in books that support the undergraduate than in research-based journal literature.<sup>5</sup> Walters suggested that the most reliable way to achieve sustainability was to renew emphasis on books instead of journals; to evaluate print and online resources systematically for both quality of content and sustainable access; and to be open-minded toward new formats, new pricing models, and new avenues for scholarly communications. Walters pointed out that academic libraries had to support a high level of research

activity by providing journal literature, but purchasing more books would likely bring the library collections into closer alignment with undergraduate coursework. Walters found that few academic libraries held copies of a majority of the *Choice* magazine's 700 Outstanding Academic Titles. Public libraries were reacting to declining budgets by purchasing fewer journals and increasing book purchasing. Walters viewed selective purchasing of journal titles, which would include the top tier journals and journals with the highest impact factors, as a reasonable approach to journal acquisitions. He also recommended careful scrutiny of licenses for online resources to ensure perpetual access. He noted use of Portico and open access journals as trends that should be monitored for their sustainability in providing scholarly communication. Walters discussed the distinctions between books and journals in terms of pricing and bundling. Increased cost for other institutions would be the result if an individual institution or several institutions cancelled journal titles to save money. When Walters analyzed the demand and cost from a more global view, he suggested that high demand for research in "journal centric" disciplines could make the serial cost crisis "intractable," but if the prices reflected the minor role of certain nonprofit journal publishers, then the problem of rising journal cost might be possible to address.<sup>6</sup> Walters suggested that the unbundling of journal articles would be helpful because libraries could pay for what they needed to access, but that was not likely a model that would meet publisher needs for revenue. Since books are discrete scholarly publications, purchasing single works was the chosen method of purchase in most cases.

Walters published a second article describing a book fund allocation formula based on demand (e.g., course enrollment, number of faculty positions, number of undergraduate majors and graduate students in a department, etc.), cost of books in a field, and supply (i.e., number of publications), not on the initial estimation of weights or allocations.<sup>7</sup> He concluded by stating that the method he presented "does require the careful selection of variables that are appropriate to local circumstances."<sup>8</sup>

VanDuinkerken and colleagues described another approach to fund allocation that was developed to give the library patron more ability to select titles.<sup>9</sup> It also reduced the number of discreet library material fund allocations overall and simplified the budget and fund tracking. They listed several goals of the radical change to fund accounting at Texas A&M University. One goal was to meet the information needs of university-affiliated library users. This goal was met by a User Generated Fund, which was used to purchase titles that cost \$150 or less and were requested by affiliated library users. Titles costing \$150 to \$1,000 were purchased with the approval of a subject selector. A second goal was to minimize "subject silo" behaviors. This goal was met by eliminating more than two hundred separate subject

funds assigned to subject selectors. Requiring approval of a subject selector for requests more than \$150 allowed the subject selectors to guide collection building. A third goal was to provide data to support administrative and selector decisions and foster a “big picture” view of collections. This was accomplished by using integrated library system reports and approval plan vendor reports, which were monitored to ensure balanced collection growth. A fourth goal was to foster greater transparency in technical service processes. Simplification of the fund structure was another goal. This was accomplished by eliminating numerous individual subject allocations. This also simplified the ordering and tracking of one-time purchases. Another goal was to build trust in fellow subject selectors and library users and to encourage collaboration and empowerment for all involved in the process. This was accomplished by creating a library-generated fund for the subject selectors and a library proposal fund to address purchases of \$1,000–\$10,000. These purchase requests were reviewed by a Funding Governance Committee composed of collection development librarians and representative subject selectors. The simplified fund structure helped meet a goal to enable responding to shifting collection needs and organizational priorities because funds could be more easily used for any purchases deemed appropriate by library users or subject selectors. Eliminating individual subject allocations accomplished the final goal, which was to provide meaningful measures of success in collection development. Librarians no longer were pressured to expend artificial subject allocations or to meet spending deadlines tied to the end of the fiscal year.

Chan suggested a modified zero-based budget approach for use at the University of Hong Kong Libraries.<sup>10</sup> Chan addressed the challenges and strategies in reallocating resources from print to electronic publication within an environment of inflationary increases and reduced funding increases.

Badics suggested that libraries maintain use data on all titles, including print journals, cancel unused series, and prepare a list of potential cancellations.<sup>11</sup> He believed that this is a reasonable approach because libraries are being held accountable for their financial decisions, so usage data can support decision-making.

Wu and Shelfer used the solver function in the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet software to analyze “what if” scenarios for material budget allocation planning.<sup>12</sup> The two scenarios included one in which the materials budget increased and one in which the materials budget decreased significantly. In each scenario, the authors kept in mind the risk factors involved in dealing with those most affected negatively by budget cuts. Wu and Shelfer suggested the “Theory of Allocation Optimization,” which stated “the optimal local allocation outcome is a context-sensitive determination of the appropriate relative contributions of political influence

and data-driven evidence to the local allocation decision.”<sup>13</sup> By assigning numbers and weights to these factors, Wu and Shelfer suggested that libraries could plan ahead for various budget contingencies rather than simply reacting to budget realities.

Tucker described a project that assessed the monograph collection at the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) in which circulation statistics and in-house use of all monographs during a five-year period (2002/2003 through 2006/2007) for the nine colleges at UNLV were analyzed.<sup>14</sup> He also compared approval plan title use with use of titles ordered by subject librarians. Tucker found that use of monographs declined and approval plan books were used more than those selected by librarians. Tucker suggested that the fact that use of monographs was declining meant that the monograph budget should be adjusted accordingly. He also suggested that allocation by discipline in the monograph budget would be affected by circulation data.

### Approval Plans

Jacoby’s survey of college libraries in the United States examined the use of approval plans to purchase print books.<sup>15</sup> The 2006 survey, included as an appendix to her article, yielded information about trends over a five year period, from 2000 to 2005.<sup>16</sup> Jacoby targeted small and medium-size liberal arts college libraries for her survey, which was adapted from the survey instrument Blecic, Hollander, and Lanier developed to assess the use of approval plans in academic health sciences libraries.<sup>17</sup> Jacoby received 114 responses and was able to use 88 in the results. She found that the use of approval plans in college libraries has not declined. The number of libraries that considered setting up an approval plan or expanding the existing plan was higher than the number of libraries cancelling plans. The study found a direct correlation between the size of a library’s materials budget and its use of approval plans. Libraries with large materials budgets were more likely to have approval plans. The number of print books received on the plans decreased because of inflation and competition with electronic resources, but the approval plan continued to be a time-saving tool for subject librarians with increasing demands on their time. Jacoby also sought comments from four domestic approval plan vendors about the scholarly monograph market. Although challenged by the shift of library funding from print to online resources, three of the four were supplying e-books to their customers and actively making preparations to include e-books in their approval plans, anticipating their increasing role in providing scholarly content to academic libraries. Another trend revealed in the survey was the use of Internet bookstores. Most of the libraries (76 percent) used Internet bookstores for less than 25 percent of their book purchases, but 13 percent used Internet bookstores for

more than 50 percent of their books.

Czechowski shared her experience with attempting to refine an approval plan for a health sciences library that would reduce returns to less than 10 percent.<sup>18</sup> She concluded that this may not be possible because of the nature of the health sciences publications, but returning to notifications was not feasible because the subject librarians wanted the books in the library as soon as possible.

Cox, Cross, and Ballestro discussed music score approval plans.<sup>19</sup> They surveyed Association of Research Libraries (ARL) libraries with and without approval plans to determine their satisfaction levels. The consistent response was that the librarians were the ones to determine whether scores were part of an approval plan or whether they were ordered separately as firm orders. For some, approval plans meant a time savings and for others, approval plans meant inflexibility, loss of control, and the inability to bring in local, obscure, or out-of-print materials to the collection. The common thread seemed to be that the selection librarians were taking responsibility for obtaining the scores needed by the library in whichever method fit the particular institution.

### Workflow and Management

The 2008 *Fundamentals of Technical Services*, by Intner with Johnson, serves as a handbook for technical services managers in all types of libraries, offering guidance to acquisitions managers with recommended readings at the end of each chapter that enrich the basic concepts presented in the book.<sup>20</sup> One chapter presents various options for the administrative organization of technical services departments, with specific responsibilities listed. Another chapter is devoted to vendor relations, including various purchasing models, interactions with vendors, and evaluating vendor performance. Chapters also address staffing and budgeting as well as the impact of digital resources. The book offers an excellent overview with significant specific details included.

Zhu studied 110 job ads for heads of technical services and found the same basic expectations in place in the 1990s were equally valid in 2008.<sup>21</sup> He identified the four most sought skill sets to be computer and information technology skills, communication skills, knowledge of integrated library systems, and cataloging. Leadership skills were valued along with knowledge of current trends and issues in technical services.

Whittaker pointed out the fact that electronic resources have changed the ways that acquisitions librarians perform their responsibilities.<sup>22</sup> The mission—to provide information access and preservation—remained the same, but librarians must understand licensing models, system requirements, file compatibility, authentication, proxy servers, and interface design to be able to provide access to the information needs of library patrons. Whittaker noted several particular

challenges in the digital age. Creating pricing models that benefit libraries and the publishing world were suggested. Other challenges identified were ensuring interoperability between systems, formats that were flexible and scalable, and a need for industry-wide standards. Measuring the value of an electronic resource was seen as a challenge because mere usage data did not compare from resource to resource and did not measure value of the content. Whittaker emphasized that librarians needed to ask publishers and suppliers to meet their needs rather than just accepting the terms offered to them.

Anderson recommended that the business of acquisitions look to the future and make changes in the traditional print purchasing model.<sup>23</sup> Several trends predicted by Anderson could guide the workflow and management of libraries. He suggested that print materials would decrease in importance in research libraries so staff members need to direct more effort to the acquisition of electronic materials and less to the acquisition of print material, observing, “with increasingly rare exceptions, buying printed materials for a research library collection is like drilling more holes in the hull of a sinking boat.”<sup>24</sup> He made several predictions. Library patrons will use online public catalogs less and less, and the importance of MARC records will decline. Institutional repositories will grow in importance, along with unique library collections. Nonunique, conventionally published materials will decline in importance. His suggestions to meet these changes and to “future proof” the library addressed his predictions. He suggested that libraries need to produce better discovery tools and settle for simpler, less perfect MARC records or alternatives to MARC. Anderson suggested that institutional repositories should be developed to assist academic stakeholders. He also suggested that libraries need to begin redirecting staff time away from the acquisition and maintenance of nonunique, replaceable materials and toward the development of unique collections.<sup>25</sup>

The major emerging workflow changes were related to making workflows more effective from a financial standpoint and the changes necessitated by the increasing numbers of libraries that are moving from print to online access for journals and books. Blake and Stalberg studied serials and electronic resources workflow looking for more efficiency, clarity, and simplicity.<sup>26</sup> Their work offered ideas that can be used by other institutions. VanDuinkerken used the perspective of a public services librarian to update best practices in monographic acquisitions workflow.<sup>27</sup> Pomerantz and White presented a plan for altering the workflow using the Innovative Interfaces Millennium acquisitions module for budget management that would improve tracking of financial information about electronic resources.<sup>28</sup>

The cataloging workflow in libraries affected acquisitions workflow because acquisitions staff need the ability to

determine whether a title is already owned by the library to avoid duplication. If a title is purchased by the library, it needs to be added to the online public catalog promptly. An article by Mugridge and Edmunds described batch loading bibliographic records into the online public catalog as a means of making holdings visible that were previously not discoverable because they were not recorded in the public catalog title by title.<sup>29</sup>

Getahun and Keillor described a cost-benefit method to purchase monographs used at small to mid-size libraries.<sup>30</sup> The studies were completed at Luther Seminary Library and Bethel University Library and examined whether searching for the best price for an item was cost-effective. The studies confirmed that money was saved by using multiple vendors. The study compared the cost of monograph titles and order and receipt processing time for titles provided by online vendors and by book jobbers. Getahun and Keillor made a strong case for the use of cost-benefit analyses to provide libraries with fact-based rationale for negotiating terms with various vendors, to inform work practices and decisions, and to evaluate workflow and identify inefficiencies.

Ward examined the acquisition of foreign language materials for a large research library, offering a model that could help with acquiring this often challenging material.<sup>31</sup> Because this type of purchasing required more human intervention, it tended to take longer and be less automated. Acquisitions staff were the first to see the orders and later receive the materials; therefore they needed foreign language expertise to ensure that correct titles were ordered and verified at receipt. Ward suggested working closely with vendors and using vendor-supplied records to improve the workflow.

Hulm reported on four presentations at the 2008 ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim that addressed the workflow issues related to the movement from print to electronic.<sup>32</sup> Librarians, vendors, and integrated library system providers were actively developing procedures to merge print and electronic workflows. Some mainstreaming of ordering and reporting workflows were appearing, but electronic resources presented an additional set of procedures that did not merge easily with print procedures. The presenters addressed some successes with managing the electronic resources in ways that made the process more automated and less burdensome on library staff while simultaneously enhancing access for library patrons.

## Content Providers and Content

### Book Sellers and Vendors

The publishing marketplace continued to shrink as publishers and vendors merged. This was a particular concern

as libraries sought to sustain access to journal titles moving from publisher to publisher and vendor to vendor. Communication between libraries, publishers, and vendors has never been more critical to supplying resources to library customers in a transparent and seamless manner from the point of view of the customers. Jagodzinski wrote a history of university presses and their role in a digital, open access environment.<sup>33</sup> Adaptability was cited as the key to the survival of university presses.

Vendors' online tools have become more integral to the workflow in acquisitions and collection development processes. The advantages and disadvantages of this relationship were explored by Bowdoin and Barricella in a presentation at the Charleston Acquisitions Conference in 2007.<sup>34</sup> A major concern noted by Bowdoin and Barricella was the consolidation of business to a single vendor. Although this practice had advantages, it also could negatively affect the strength of a library collection. The individual online databases of the various vendors varied and none of them offered all available publications. Purchasing from multiple vendors and publishers enriched the mix of available titles, but added that disadvantage of requiring selectors and library staff to learn multiple online tools to purchase titles. This required multiple workflows for the multiple sources. It also required searching multiple online vendor databases, which added time to the process and increased the possibility of duplication of titles. The importing of records from various vendors also was complex, requiring difficult, detailed setup, but would ultimately result in the saving of time and effort. The quality of vendor records was an issue that varied widely from vendor to vendor. Bowdoin and Barricella identified eleven advantages to the online vendor tools. Among these were the speed of ordering and receiving materials, reduction of keying errors because subject selectors and acquisitions staff were selecting an existing title in the database, on-demand reports of order and receipt history as well as expenditure data in a variety of formats from HTML to Excel to PDF, and the ability to print invoices and statements directly from the online database. Stock level information and status of a title was cited as a distinct advantage as well as the ability to easily cancel an order. Sharing title notification information on the online database has eased the lives of subject selectors and acquisitions staff and a large amount of paper was eliminated by the online option.

Hane discussed the financial challenges facing libraries, resulting in significant cuts in acquisitions.<sup>35</sup> She reported that publishers and vendors were trying to survive in the difficult financial market by freezing prices in some cases and that newspapers were going digital to attract more readers.

Tonkery, of EBSCO Information Services, wrote an overview of the effect of electronic resources on publishers, agents, users, and libraries.<sup>36</sup> Publishers have benefitted

from the electronic environment because they converted their titles from print to electronic and many had projects to convert backfiles of journal titles. Electronic submission and peer review streamlined the publication process. Subscription agents have seen radical change to their environment. Print subscriptions declined dramatically so agents redesigned their online resources to accommodate the market. Agents were better able to provide services that publishers and libraries would be hard pressed to provide, although some of the workload has shifted back to the library staff because of licensing and access demands. Title-by-title support was essential to the efficient managing of electronic, as well as print journals. In the electronic age, customer service became even more important as needs from libraries and publishers have become immediate needs that have to be addressed instantaneously. Tonkery noted that library users were the winners in the electronic market, although they continued to want more. As Tonkery observed, “All of this opportunity is in front of us, but we are still looking for long-term financial solutions to support the information infrastructure.”<sup>37</sup>

### The Big Deal

As budgets have tightened, more questions have arisen about the Big Deals, which were developed as all-inclusive publisher packages offering special pricing with lower unit prices and controlled price increases. They normally included serial titles that previously had been recurring subscriptions for the libraries and additional previously unsubscribed titles. Big Deals usually locked the library into a comprehensive list of titles and resulted in the inability to manage local collections. One of the problems involved in these Big Deals was the movement of titles from publisher to publisher, requiring considerable time by acquisitions staff and librarians to track the movement of individual titles.

Several articles in *The Serials Librarian* highlighted the issues, alternatives, and current status of this pricing model that was popular in previous years as a means to provide access to large numbers of titles for one price. Carlson and Pope surveyed how libraries were responding and what alternatives were being explored.<sup>38</sup> Rolnik analyzed whether the Big Deal is a good deal and decided that it might even be a great deal because libraries gained access not only to titles to which they subscribed but also to the rest of the previously unsubscribed titles from a given publisher.<sup>39</sup> The multi-year agreement also capped price increases in most cases. This helped with budgeting because the libraries knew what the cost of the deal would be from year to year. Big Deals also allowed smaller institutions, especially those in consortia, to make considerable gains in titles that they could now provide to their authorized users. The disadvantages of the Big Deals included the fact that a consistently large portion

of the materials budget was consumed by payments to relatively few large publishers. This decreased the flexibility in managing the serial budget and the ability to choose high quality over lower quality publications. Rolnik noted that Big Deals locked small publishers out of the market because not enough money was left in the serials budget after the Big Deal invoices were paid. Another negative effect was the possibility that quality could be secondary to the increasing volume of unsubscribed content.

Best asked if the Big Deal was dead.<sup>40</sup> He noted that the Big Deal was continuing to evolve even as it began to fade in popularity and that some publishers offered flexibility in dropping little-used titles in the packages when licenses are renegotiated. Cleary described why the Big Deal continued to exist in libraries despite shrinking budgets.<sup>41</sup> The advantages of bundling e-journals together into publisher collections included increased access to information for the subscribing institution's clients, purchasing cost-effectiveness, and streamlined workflows. Libraries were moving from a philosophy of “just in case” to a more popular philosophy of “just in time” in whatever format was available. Cole discussed the electronic deals and the benefit offered to the end users.<sup>42</sup> She identified ways to gain the most benefits possible from the Big Deal and suggested potential developments that can allow the deals to be managed more effectively.

Wolfe and colleagues described the process of creating and managing Big Deal purchases in a North American Serials Interest Group (NASIG) 2008 program.<sup>43</sup> This particular deal involved an agreement between SpringLink and PALINET.

### Electronic Resources

Yu and Breivold's edited collection of twenty informative articles provides a comprehensive review of major issues related to electronic resources.<sup>44</sup> The chapters are written by authorities in the field of electronic resources, licensing, electronic resources workflow management, usage statistics, Electronic Resource Management Systems (ERMS), and include a history of electronic resources. As Jewell pointed out in the foreword, the book is as useful for beginners in electronic resource management as for seasoned electronic resources librarians.

A program sponsored by the ALCTS Collection Management and Development Section at the 2008 ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim addressed the movement of print to electronic access. Luther set the stage by stating that only 5 percent of ARL libraries subscribed to journals in electronic-only format in 2002 and the number surged to 37 percent in 2006.<sup>45</sup> Print-only subscriptions dropped from 64 percent to 30 percent during the same period. She predicted that publishers would move to e-only subscriptions

and slowly phase out print publishing in the next five to ten years. Emery's presentation described the switch from print to electronic at the University of Texas.<sup>46</sup> She noted that the electronic format was gaining popularity and the cost of justifying duplicate formats was becoming more difficult. The University of Texas began the switch with large packages and then proceeded with smaller packages and publishers. Portico, a dark archive, emerged and the University of Texas was able to target the publications covered by Portico for e-only subscriptions. Subject specialists also were offered incentives to move to e-only by receiving credit toward new subscriptions for the cancellation of a print duplicate.

Bucknall addressed the move from print to electronic from his perspective at the University of North Carolina–Greensboro.<sup>47</sup> He began by referencing two 2004 reports that clearly indicated the advantage to electronic formats. One was Schottlaender and colleagues' "Collection Management Strategies in a Digital Environment," and the second was Schonfeld and colleagues' *The Nonsubscription Side of Periodicals*.<sup>48</sup> The first used usage data to support patrons' preference for electronic resources in a study where the ratio was 6,000 print uses to 97,000 electronic uses. The second report argued that life cycle cost for print materials would be significantly higher than the electronic. Bucknall asserted that too much time was spent managing serials when more time should be devoted to building better information gathering tools for users.

From a vendor's perspective, Springer's Owen reported that e-only subscriptions were common among academic library consortia.<sup>49</sup> E-only offered the best option by reducing the amount of time needed for library, publisher, and subscription agent intervention and management. She identified the challenges concisely. Licensing took time and required more staffing. Libraries opposed Big Deals, e-book packages, and multiyear commitments. Recurring funds for these commitments was always an issue.

Steinle, from Duke University Press, reported from the perspective of a university press, and enumerated the cost factors for producing both the electronic content and the print content.<sup>50</sup> After surveying customers, Duke University Press concluded that it would need to continue offering both formats to meet the specific needs of its customers. Steinle contended that this also is a workflow issue because staff that worked on print materials (ordering, receiving, tracking, and binding) need to be retooled to become electronic resources staff with new expectations and new skills. Ho and Toth prepared an annotated bibliography for this program.<sup>51</sup>

Albitz wrote a primer on licensing and managing electronic resources for academic institutions.<sup>52</sup> Her step-by-step approach is valuable in working through licenses and copyright issues. She stressed the importance of understanding one's institution when reviewing licenses so they

meet local needs, requirements, and restrictions.

Harris published a second edition of *Licensing Digital Content: A Practical Guide for Librarians* in 2009.<sup>53</sup> This guide has been well received by the library community and is widely used as a training tool for librarians who are new to the intricate features of licensing electronic resources. Business officers in libraries also can find this guide valuable as they work with librarians, vendors, and university attorneys.

ERMS continued to be a frequent topic. Collins wrote a review, based on survey responses, of nine ERMS products available in 2008.<sup>54</sup> She discussed CUFTS ERM (an open source ERMS developed by Simon Fraser University), EBSCOs ERM Essentials, Ex Libris' Verde, Colorado Alliance's Gold Rush, Harrassowitz's HERMIS, Innovative ERM, Serials Solutions 360 Resource Manager, SwetsWise eSource Manager, and TDNet Open ERAM. Whittaker pointed out that the cost of setting up a useful ERMS costs more than just the software.<sup>55</sup> Populating the ERMS with data to make it valuable to the organization had to be a consideration in the cost of an ERMS.

Riding described the draft National Information Standards Organization (NISO) Cost of Resource Exchange (CORE) Protocol intended to facilitate the exchange of financial information between systems, such as an ERMS and integrated library systems (ILS).<sup>56</sup> According to Riding, using CORE-enabled systems will allow libraries to retrieve cost information from their ILS or other acquisitions system to populate the ERMS financial subsystem. Needleman also shared information about this new protocol.<sup>57</sup> Note that CORE, while originally intended for publication as a NISO standard, was ultimately approved as a NISO recommended practice in 2010.<sup>58</sup>

Smith conducted an interesting study of the overlap of print and electronic backfiles that can inform decisions about whether to retain print backfiles or rely on their online equivalent.<sup>59</sup> She noted that print and microfilm, long the preferred medium for archiving journals, were giving way to the online approach, which saves shelving space and allows more flexibility for library patrons. Smith conducted a second study of the format overlap of the *New York Times* to determine whether deselection of print and microform formats in favor of online access would yield benefits for Adelphi University Libraries.<sup>60</sup> She determined that the three formats met separate needs and should be retained, but noted that this decision would vary from institution to institution. This study supports the need to make case-by-case decisions related to format overlap.

Clement and colleagues described the steps in a successful cancellation projects at the University of Kansas and Lamar University.<sup>61</sup> Previous cancellation projects involved faculty reviewing lists and librarians cancelling what the faculty recommended, but the authors found that

cancellation projects have become more complex. Big Deals have complicated the decision-making process. More planning and data collection are required and the timetable is longer. The librarians agreed that faculty input and support are important; therefore the decisions at both institutions were collaborative.

### E-Books

E-books have become increasingly important in all types of libraries as an alternative to print books for many reasons. Authors identified many advantages of e-books, one of which was that they do not take space on shelves when libraries cannot afford to build new buildings to house them. E-books are accessible remotely at any hour of the day or night, based on licensing details. Disadvantages often included screen size and usage limitations. Vassiliou and Rowley attempted to define the term “e-book” and gave an overview of e-books, including the marketplace, various characteristics, and pros and cons.<sup>62</sup> Taylor reported that this format was increasingly important for public libraries as well.<sup>63</sup>

Sprague and Hunter took a closer look at e-book usage data for titles provided by the University of Utah’s major e-book suppliers and determined that usage of titles purchased from Ebrary, NetLibrary, and Books 24x7 was low, although usage of cataloged titles was higher.<sup>64</sup> The authors found that about 20 percent of the cataloged e-book titles had been accessed. Additional use studies were suggested by the authors to determine the best ways to use e-books to assist library patrons with research.

Slater reviewed several hundred books at Oakland University that were available both as print and e-books.<sup>65</sup> He determined that collections selected locally receive greater use than those selected at the consortia level. He also found that use of a particular title in one format did not correlate with usage of that title in the other format. Comparing the use of NetLibrary and Safari Technical E-books at Oakland University indicated that Big Deal consortia purchases were used sufficiently to justify continuing this type of purchase, but locally selected collections, such as the Safari Technical E-books collection, had much greater usage. Slater suggested that e-book collecting efforts should focus more resources on adding locally selected collections instead of consortia purchases.

Shelburne conducted a survey at the University of Illinois Library to determine usage patterns and acceptance factors for e-books.<sup>66</sup> Her study indicated that e-book usage was increasing rapidly and that student attitudes toward e-books were positive overall, but issues related to levels of access and usage rights remain. The primary difficulties were the difficulty of reading from the screen, navigation issues, and problems locating materials and searching in general.

Shelburne noted problems with Digital Rights Management (DRM) and with Internet access along with other technical difficulties such as the need for special readers and poorly scanned pages. Shelburne recommended that libraries work with publishers to encourage them to offer acceptable purchasing models and license agreements. Perrone’s article about e-books in Italy indicated that the increase in usage of e-books is an international phenomenon.<sup>67</sup>

Kovač, in *Never Mind the Web*, discussed the history of the printed book in contemporary societies and its relation to other media.<sup>68</sup> He opined that the print book has continuing value and has not been replaced by digital technologies and e-books.

### Conclusion

Libraries continued to face major challenges related to funding and management of prolific electronic resources during 2008 and 2009. Librarians sought various models to allocate funds appropriately based on a variety of strategies and reported on these strategies in the acquisitions literature. Approval plans continued to be popular with large libraries, even in a time of declining buying power. The workflow and management needs of libraries reported in the literature of 2008 and 2009 changed significantly because of the growing need for knowledge and expertise in dealing with the shift from print to electronic resources.

Vendors and publishers sought to deal with a shrinking, volatile market, trying to keep up with the demands of libraries for online databases to manage their monographic purchases and offering Big Deals as a solution to providing large numbers of titles (subscribed and unsubscribed) for a relatively low cost. Because budgets were shrinking, this approach began losing its appeal. Libraries were less willing to pay for unwanted titles to keep subscriptions at a lower cost per title. Big Deals were still a hot topic, but with funding shortfalls, libraries had to make difficult decisions. Libraries continued to struggle with ERMS to manage electronic resources more effectively as they reduced printed journals in favor of electronic formats. The changing vendor market also affected what libraries could purchase and how they could purchase it, but approval plans and the Big Deal continued to be used widely although under more scrutiny. E-books were a hot topic, gaining in popularity despite licensing and platform issues. They were not universally accepted as the best format for monographs, but were gaining popularity as a method for obtaining access to information on a “just in time” basis.

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