

Editorial: The Bedrock of Library Services

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Mary Beth Weber



My library will implement a new library service platform, or LSP, this year. We have had an integrated library system with another vendor for twenty years. I was a rank and file cataloger (special formats) when an RFP was issued for the current system. I did not have input into the selection process and also was not part of the massive data migration effort. While I attended numerous training sessions, I did not prepare documentation or train others. Both my position within my library and our needs for a more sophisticated system and services have changed a great deal in those twenty years.

Our current ILS is more than a catalog of bibliographic records. It also provides access to LibGuides, enables patrons to create citations for their sources as they conduct research, offers a variety of interlibrary loan options, and provides users with the ability to provide feedback and report problems. Those reports are received in Central Technical Services, the department that I head.

As my library moves toward implementing our new LSP and discovery product, I am part of a small team composed of individuals from functional areas within the library (technical services, collection management, finance, circulation, systems, user experience) that is making decisions and driving the process. The importance of technical services in this process, and on the outcome of the discovery process, has been acknowledged. There are so many aspects to migrating library data, and our current system contains a multiplicity of records (brief, merged formats, vendor supplied, ILL, patron) created for various purposes, some according to the prevailing standard of the time, including AACR, AACR2 and, most recently, RDA. The new LSP will have the ability to provide seamless access to both our MARC records and our non-MARC metadata (MODS) from our institutional repository. The LSP will provide a single search box with the option to limit searches to specific resource types.

One of the biggest challenges we are facing is migrating our three million-plus records. Vendor and patron records will need to be verified for accuracy and revised (or deleted) as appropriate. Outstanding orders will need to be verified. Database issues, such as duplicate, incomplete, or inaccurate records, are being handled now to ensure clean and accurate bibliographic records are migrated to the new system. There are so many considerations and exceptions that make such a massive undertaking a full-time job.

Prior to our go-live date, there will be a two-to-three-week technical services freeze, which will coincide with peak ordering and receiving time. This will affect our ability to respond to patron and faculty requests to rush order and rush catalog materials in our local system. The freeze will not bring my department's operations to a halt, and the time will be used to undertake training and special projects. The freeze will have an impact on other library operations, such as circulation, instruction, reference, and collection management. Technical services may be regarded as a behind-the-scenes operation, which it is in some aspects, but it is also the underpinnings of effective library services. Without

it, our patrons would be unable to conduct research or discover resources in our collections and repository. My colleagues would be unable to conduct their collection development or instructional activities.

In closing, I wish to highlight the contents of this issue of *Library Resources and Technical Services*:

- In “Using Logistic Regression to Examine Multiple Factors Related to E-book Use,” Karen Kohn introduces logistic regression, which can incorporate multiple variables to determine what factors are the most useful in predicting e-book usage.
- Martin Kurth and Jim Le Blanc introduce a methodology and draft model with which technical services managers can better assess both their unit’s productivity and efficiency and the extent to which its activities align with a library’s strategic values and the behavior of its users in “Assessing Staff Alignment in Technical Services.”
- “Promoting Interlibrary Loan in the Traditional Catalog and Discovery Layer: Two Pilot Projects,” by Rachel E. Scott and Gail Barton, describes two projects that promote interlibrary loan in both traditional Online Public Access Catalogs and discovery settings to address user frustrations with gaps in the collection.
- In “Don’t Just Roll the Dice: Simple Solutions for Circulating Tabletop Game Collections Effectively in Your Library,” Diane Robson, Jessica Phillips, and Steven Guerrero detail the University of North Texas Media Library’s study to determine best practices and standards for preserving and processing tabletop games for circulation.
- Book reviews courtesy of my colleague Elyssa Gould, *LRTS* book review editor.