“Known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns.”

The Unbearable Insecurity of the Electronic Resources Librarian

In library school we thought of books
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Content of presentation:

To outline the:
Core Competencies for Electronic Resources Librarians. NASIG Core Competencies Task Force (July 2013)

and intersect them with practical everyday working experiences of an EResources and Periodicals Librarian
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Aims of presentation:

- To attempt to demystify many of the processes involved in the management of e-resources
- To attempt to convey an understanding of working in practical library office environment, while being aware of complexity of the theoretical competencies that are desirable and recommended.
- To outline real life job description
- To provide sources of assistance
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From Arts/Humanities background

General librarian duties (AL) in small government library

Health sciences → Computers & Engineering

EResources & Periodicals
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What are we expected to know?

MLIS – University College Dublin
2 Semesters – 3 months each approx.

Before college various levels of expertise among library assistants.

- Some do everything very competently
- Others spend hours shelving and are not permitted to do: “professional work”
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How do we know what we know? Microsoft Office, for example.

- Word no formal training (had to show cut&paste)
- Excel intermediate training
- Access never used it
- Powerpoint no formal training
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Core Competencies for Electronic Resources Librarians. NASIG Core Competencies Task Force (July 2013)


- 1. Life cycle of electronic resources
- 2. Technology
- 3. Research and assessment
- 4. Effective communication
- 5. Supervising and Management:
- 6. Trends and Professional Development
- 7. Personal Qualities
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Electronic Resources Lifecycle (Pesch, 2009)
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1. Life cycle of electronic resources

- Thorough knowledge of ER acquisitions
- Thorough knowledge of ER licensing & legal framework*
- Extensive knowledge of metadata: cataloguing, indexing and classification*
- Experience with bibliographic and other utilities
- Thorough understanding of records management
- Commitment to maintain awareness of trends/developments
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First essay in college: What is Authority Control?

School days?
Senior Management?
Fascism?
Nazis?

No: something to do with catalogue records
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2. Technology - conceptual and practical knowledge of:

- computing hardware & mobile devices
- Networking technologies (mobile & wired)
- Standards, protocols and structures
  - IP, FTP, OpenURL/z39.50, authentication (Shibboleth, EzProxy), EDI, OAI-PMH)*
- Database design
- Mark up languages (HTML, XML, wiki)
- Preservation tools
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- 2a. Technology- conceptual and practical knowledge of (continued):

- Software:
  - Link resolver, metasearch, data collection, discovery services, ERMS, admin functions of databases, bibliographic utilities*
  - Future
    - Digital preservation techniques & technology
    - Data visualisation
    - Cloud computing
    - Text mining
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A dialogue between:

- a vendor and
- a novice EResources librarian.

What LMS do you have?
What is your FTE?
Do you use Athens?
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3. Research and assessment - the ERL

- Understands data, distinct & interconnected
- Has ability to manipulate data*
- Broad understanding of Eresources subscribed to
- Uses research methods for collection assessment & troubleshooting
- Assesses and evaluates specifications, efficacy and cost efficiency of products & services*
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- The ability to manipulate data

Worries:

- What financial year is it? When does it start?
- How come you have to pay for journals a year ahead and then reconcile balances for €1000s?
- VAT
- Cost per use: do you divide the cost per the usage or the usage by the cost?
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- How to lose €18,000 in a day
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- 3a. Research and assessment- the ERL (continued)

- Able to identify & analyse emerging technologies and innovations in order to implement tech improvements

- Is able to apply principles of data collection, analysis and reporting by: gathering data, monitoring pricing/packages, writing reports, demonstrating problem solving, organisation and analytical skills
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4. Effective communication

- Communicate well in writing & verbally to target audience*
- Making complex/ambiguous phenomenon understandable
- Rising above feelings to provide services to end users
- Working with other units/staff, making & keeping working relationships
- Framing situations according to others’ perspectives
- Need for data to inform decision making
- Making clear and comprehensive presentations*
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- How to get reported to the minister
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- Presentations

- 10 minutes on my MLIS thesis.

- Slight improvement – from hot face to hot armpits

- Coping strategies – many people expect to be bored.
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5. Supervising and management

- Ability to supervise, train & motivate staff
- Skillful project management
- Ability to evaluate and modify workflows
- Producing concrete policy statements
- Familiar with systems administration
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- How to upset your periodicals team
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6. Trends and professional development

Maintain knowledge of current issues & trends in:

- scholarly communication
- Licensing*
- Copyright, privacy, freedom of expression, freedom of information, equality, intellectual property etc.

- Recognises relevance of new standards/best practices
- Educates colleagues where necessary/relevant
Sometimes it’s good to check the licence

Hello,
I'm Stephen Buck, the E-Resources and Periodicals librarian in Dublin City University. Thank you for the license information below. Please can you clarify something? In the Authorised Users section of the licence there is no reference to students and other users in the university, only to staff. Can you advise?

Kind regards,
Stephen
Dear Stephen,

Thank you for your response. We have read your suggestion and are willing to take it into consideration. However, we can provide you with new/modified version of License Agreement not earlier than in the start of September.

Until then,
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6a. Trends and professional development (cont)

- Maintains knowledge of cataloguing, metadata, indexing and classification standards beyond that of a generalist.

- Has extensive knowledge of digital tools, standards and initiatives
  - ONIX
  - SUSHI
  - OpenURL
  - COUNTER
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7. Personal qualities

- Flexibility, need to prioritise, changing systems and needs
- High level for tolerance and ambiguity*
- Customer service focus & persistence in service of users
- Skillful time management
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- High level for tolerance and ambiguity

Core of job.
*If you can cope with this you can manage anything*

So much depends on other people: response times etc.
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- First day: Job description:
  - 1. Manage periodicals Team
  - 2. Budget Codes
  - 3. Journal Subscriptions
  - 4. Management of Print Collections
  - 5. Binding
  - 7. E Journals (not e-books or repository)
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- Job Description continued:
- 8. Database Management
- 9. Staff Meetings
- 10. Distribution of Post/emails from suppliers
- 11. Queries from Library Staff
- 12. Populating ERMS
- 13. IRG Meetings
- 14. CONUL Committee on Collaborative Storage
- 15. Continuing professional development
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- Large portion of day reacting to e-mails.
  - Tuesday morning 150 e-mails approx.
- Access lost
- Journal cancellation that shouldn’t have been cancelled.
- Information desk
- Summon links
- Passwords for stats not working
- Pricing conflicts
- IReL consortium. What resources?
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How expert do you need to be?
How expert do you want to be?
Do you want to publish?
Do you have to publish

UK and Ireland: Permanent
United States: Tenure
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How to make a difference:
- Checking financial sheets
- Access
- Cancellations

- Strategies
- Workflows
- New technologies
- Ideas
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Intota and other web-scale management systems. Finance looked after Seamless workflows

- Do the periodicals team need managing?
- Do eresources need a manager?
- What do we do everyday?
- Will we be necessary?
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To sum up

Background: pathways into EResources

The core competencies (NASIG) / Practical work

Real life job description
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Where to get

- User groups, Listservs, UKSG, NASIG
- The E-Resources Management Handbook, http://serials.uksg.org/content/120087
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More help:


- Managing the transition from print to electronic journals and resources: a guide for library and information professionals
  Carr, Patrick L; Collins, Maria D. D  New York : Routledge 2008

- Journals:
  - Computers in Libraries
  - Journal of Electronic Resources Librarianship
  - The Serials Librarian
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The dialogue was adapted from:


NISO Whitepaper on 'Issues in Crosswalking Content Metadata Standards' (15-10-1998) by Margaret St. Pierre and William P. LaPlant, Jr.)
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Thank you for listening

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