Report of the ALCTS Collection Management and E-Resources Interest Group Meeting, American Library Association Midwinter Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, January 2017

The Collection Management and Electronic Resources Interest Group (CMERIG) held a one hour meeting at the 2017 ALA Midwinter Conference in Atlanta, Georgia on Sunday January 22, 2017, from 3-4 pm. Chair Sunshine Carter (Electronic Resources Librarian and E-Resource Management Unit Manager, University of Minnesota Libraries) and Vice-Chair Michael Fernandez (E-Resources Librarian, American University Library) co-facilitated the meeting. The 2017 program theme was innovative approaches to electronic resources workflows. The program featured four lightning talks with a brief period for audience questions.

The first lightning talk, titled “Master agreements with Master Agreements”, was given by Corey S. Halaychik (Assistant Professor & Head, Acquisitions & Continuing Resources, University of Tennessee Libraries). Corey discussed how the University of Tennessee Libraries designed and implemented the use of institutional master license agreements. These master agreements improved their contract review process and created efficiencies between the libraries, university contract offices, and vendors. Although some vendors had offered the University of Tennessee Libraries master agreements in the past, the University had a policy that didn’t allow them to sign this type of agreement--instead, they reviewed every license individually on a case by case basis. After years of evaluating agreements this way, librarians and administrators identified numerous issues and inefficiencies with this system. Even though librarians were not actually signing license agreements, they were still being required to take the University’s fiscal policy classes, and those fiscal policies were restrictive, confusing, and ineffective. The process of moving a license through the workflow was lengthy and antiquated, in part because everything was being done in print format, with many documents being scanned repeatedly and sent to other departments through interoffice mail. Some purchase requests were denied for reasons that couldn’t be identified. To combat this problem, Corey, along with the University’s General Counsel, wrote a master agreement that standardized language, provided greater library autonomy, and streamlined workflows across all relevant offices. Information in the master agreements is not confidential; all of the pricing and dates that go with each product are handled in the purchase order system rather than within the license agreement itself. Since the implementation of the master license, the Library follows a much simpler workflow: they identify the product to be purchased, compile a master agreement, review and negotiate Library terms with the vendor, send the agreement to the University’s contracts and legal office for fiscal and legal review, and complete the purchase. The Library has had excellent results--as of the date of this presentation, all of the Library’s major vendors have signed a master agreement, and the Library has over 150 master agreements in total. Their total volume of agreements was reduced by 80% and they estimate that they’ve saved over $200,000 per year in staff time and resources. In response to an audience question, Corey noted that early on in the implementation process, they received some pushback from vendors, however, once a few major vendors signed, they were able to get buy-in from most others. Corey also offered several tips for those wishing to implement master agreements at their institution--remain flexible, plan ahead (earlier is better), be persistent, and stay focused.

The second lightning talk, “Tactics for Tackling Title Transfers”, was given by Susan Davis (Acquisitions Librarian for Continuing Resources, University at Buffalo Libraries). Susan described six different tactics that aid in the management of journal publisher changes, and pointed out that librarians may need to use all of these methods for a comprehensive approach. The first tactic she suggested is to utilize Transfer (http://www.niso.org/workrooms/transfer/), which is a NISO recommended practice for publishers that helps to ensure that journal content remains accessible when there is a transfer of content between parties. Transfer titles are searchable in the Transfer Notification Database (http://etas.jusp.mimas.ac.uk/), can be received via an email listserv (https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=TRANSFER), or viewed using an RSS feed reader (http://etas.jusp.jisc.ac.uk/rss/). A second tactic is to leverage A-Z knowledgebase notifications that list database or journal changes, such as those that are provided by Serials Solutions. A third way to manage these changes is to use discussion listservs and email. Many vendors send announcements about changes to lists like SERIALST, ERIL-L, and Transfer. Monitoring these lists via email in combination with the direct emails that publishers and subscription agents may send to librarians allows for the use of email client tools like email folders, reminders, and task managers, which can make workflows more efficient. Publisher websites often provide price catalogs with upcoming changes or “for librarians” sites that provide annual updates. A fifth tactic, and one that many librarians rely on, is to utilize spreadsheets and checklists to track publisher or platform changes. Spreadsheets and checklists (or one of the many free project management softwares) allow librarians to track all the steps in local publisher change workflows. The last tactic, and maybe the most familiar to librarians, is to use Integrated Library System (ILS) order and holdings records to record notes about what changes have occurred and which staff have done the work. Additionally, the nature of a publisher change may necessitate internal communication within a library--these communications can be handled via internal listservs along with knowledgebase or e-resource management software alerts. Finally, when alerted to a title transfer, librarians should keep in mind the following:

- Budget implications (Need a new order? Cancel an existing order? Package still valuable?)
- Format considerations: print to online
- Catalog updates: update holdings records, order records, URLs
- Knowledgebase: update A-Z lists and Discovery Service
- ERM: update license terms and contacts
- Activation on new platform: not always automatic; may require librarian intervention
- Usage statistics: collect stats from old site before transfer

The third lightning talk, titled “Providing E-Textbooks for Students: Acquisitions and Workflow Issues”, was given by Beth Bernhardt (Assistant Dean for Collection Management and Scholarly Communications, University of North Carolina Greensboro Libraries). In the fall of 2016 the University Libraries at the University of North Carolina Greensboro (UNCG) received a grant from the State Library of North Carolina that provided funds for UNCG and East Carolina University to purchase e-book versions of monographs adopted by faculty for course textbooks (not traditional digital textbooks). For the fall 2016 semester, UNCG purchased seventy e-books for $8,757, which provided a potential student savings of $109,191. In order to ensure that course-adopted e-books would be available for students when the semester started, the Library collaborated with the University bookstore (at the Provost's request), requesting a list of textbooks as soon as the adoption deadline was reached. It was also important to request updates from the bookstore each week, as many faculty were late in submitting their titles. The list of titles received from the bookstore required significant clean-up before e-books could be identified for purchase--in many cases, ISBNs were incorrect or not present for a given title. Once titles were identified, Library staff search their catalog to see if they already owned the e-book. The titles were also searched in the Library's wholesaler website (Gobi) to determine if the e-book was available on a platform that allowed for unlimited users with no digital rights management. Once located, e-books were purchased based on the following criteria:

- Publisher and edition had to match
- Platform had to allow for unlimited users
- Platform had to allow download and printing of book chapters
- E-book had to be assigned to a course with enrollment above a certain threshold (to provide savings to more students)
- Price had to be reasonable; funding was limited so very expensive titles were excluded

The workflow for acquiring the e-books was typical for a university library with two notable exceptions--once an e-book was paid for and became available online, acquisitions staff contacted the relevant faculty member via email with the link to the e-book, and also added the link to a LibGuide. Staff sent a total of 258 links to faculty in the fall of 2016 and received positive feedback from many faculty. A LibGuide was created that displayed links to each purchased e-book divided by department so that materials would be available to students from a single source. Beth noted several lessons learned during this project, most having to do with efficiencies--using Google Drive spreadsheets that could be shared among staff was the most notable lesson. Staff also made use of an email template when contacting faculty with e-book links.

The fourth and final lightning talk of the session was "Massaging ERM Workflows", given by Xiaocan (Lucy) Wang (Emerging Technologies Librarian, Missouri Southern State University). This presentation described how a cloud-based library services platform was used to transform workflows throughout the e-resource life cycle. Topics covered included unifying dispersed ERM activities, creating customized workflows for specific collections, establish/clarifying responsibilities for individual processes, engaging and training library staff, and streamlining ERM through departmental collaboration. The lightning talk began with background on Missouri Southern State University and the George A. Spiva Library. This four year university has a student FTE of just over 6,000 and the Library employs 7 librarians (FT and PT), 16 staff (FT and PT), and 16 student employees. The Library provides 674 databases, 764,905 e-books, and 293,781 e-journals, with approximately 90% of its collection budget going towards e-resources. The Library provides e-resource access to patrons through a discovery service (Summon), an e-resource portal (Serials Solutions), databases A-Z lists (one via Serials Solutions and one via Springshare), and their local and consortial library catalogs (both III

Sierra). Journal subscriptions are managed by Harrassowitz. The Library staff is not extensive and there is no dedicated e-resource librarian; previous to Lucy's arrival as Emerging Technologies Librarian, the Serials/Reference Librarian managed all of the e-resources and associated e-resource lifecycle software. When Lucy started in her position, she evaluated the Library's existing e-resource management workflows using the TERMS (Techniques for Electronic Resource Management) project (https://library.hud.ac.uk/blogs/terms/) to identify what steps were missing from current Library workflows. Identified issues included a lack of license agreements on file for purchased e-resources, a reactive instead of proactive approach to troubleshooting, and a lack of evaluation processes for e-resources, including a lack of usage statistics. In order to solve these issues, the Library implemented the Intota library services platform. This product allowed them to leverage e-resource management data for both end-user discovery and internal work and provided a rich variety of comprehensive reports and collection assessment tools. Lucy noted Intota's two most important traits--first, that it is highly customizable, and second, that it allows for a centralized and shared workspace for all staff involved in the e-resource lifecycle. The Library is now using Intota to track basic e-resource information, discovery service configurations, EZproxy configurations, renewal details, subscription costs and payment information, license agreements, and vendor contacts. It also allows them to harvest a variety of reports to assess e-resources and Lucy noted that these reports were very useful for completing the annual ACRL survey as well as accreditation reports. One of the best efficiencies to come out of implementing Intota was the creation of customized checklists for both new and renewal subscriptions. These checklists forced Library staff to establish or clarify which individuals were responsible for each step in the e-resource workflow. As a result of all of these changes, all staff have become more engaged with e-resource management as they train and work in the new platform. The Library also created a Collection Management Committee to guide their e-resource management transformation, resulting in an increase in staff communication.

Slides for all four lightning talks (as well as a sample master agreement from the University of Tennessee) are posted on the CMERIG ALA Connect site at http://connect.ala.org/node/263061.