

# Managing Electronic Resources

A LITA Guide



Ryan O. Weir



Guide #20

# Managing Electronic Resources

A LITA Guide

Edited by Ryan O. Weir

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## Preface

Many librarians find electronic resource management to be an especially challenging endeavor, both because electronic resources themselves are a constantly moving target and because most librarians have little education or professional development in the area. *Managing Electronic Resources: A LITA Guide* is designed to fill this void; it describes the basic strategies and concepts of electronic resources management, namely the electronic resources life cycle, and provides practical tools and strategies to prepare librarians to manage these e-resources collections.

Librarians have been engaged in managing electronic resources for more than 30 years, beginning with electronic databases in the 1970s; however, with the advent of the Internet came e-journals in the 1990s, and now e-books are fast challenging print books for primacy. The field of e-resources continues to evolve and change rapidly, and librarians must adapt and keep up with these new developments.

While the format and specific types of electronic resources and services that are acquired and managed within a library's electronic resources collection change quickly, the strategies and concepts discussed in this guide will help the reader face the ever-growing complexities of the field of electronic resources for the foreseeable future. When mastered, these concepts and strategies can be easily adapted and applied to new challenges and resource types that will inevitably be introduced to the field.

*Managing Electronic Resources* is composed of eight chapters written by librarians with a range of experiences from institutions across the country, all of whom

deal with electronic resources management on a daily basis. The guide addresses the concepts and issues of electronic resources in a manner that is applicable to all types of libraries and institutions. Both seasoned electronic resource managers and less-experienced novices can gain helpful insights and strategies from this guide to implement in their libraries.

## ORGANIZATION

Electronic resources, as with most library resources, have a life cycle comprised of multiple processes. The chapters that follow parallel each of the different processes associated with managing an electronic collection.

Chapter 1 introduces the field of electronic resource management. The focus is the electronic resources life cycle—the process involving the acquisition, accessibility, maintenance, and renewal of electronic resources. The chapter also gives readers tools to bridge the gaps that may exist in their own training and preparation for handling electronic collections. Suggestions are offered on ways to improve the knowledge base concerning electronic resource management, including sources to obtain additional insight and training. These strategies include: conference attendance, using online workshops and tutorials, networking, and monitoring electronic mailing lists. Armed with these strategies, any professional will gain a strong foundation for managing e-resources.

Budget challenges are the focus of chapter 2. This chapter introduces the reader to basic challenges a librarian may face at his or her institution and provides ideas and examples of both free and proprietary resources that will help the reader meet those challenges. The chapter discusses the issues surrounding stagnant or decreasing budgets and the options that libraries have to combat these issues. PDA (patron-driven acquisition), PPV (pay-per-view), consortial purchasing, and both proprietary and open source ERMSs (electronic resource management systems) products are a sampling of the concepts and products presented in this chapter.

Chapter 3 covers the discovery and acquisition of electronic resources, the first steps in the electronic resources life cycle. The chapter presents the basic skills needed to acquire electronic resources in a variety of formats. Topics include the use of ERMs, work flow, consortial purchasing, PDA, access and delivery, and a variety of other topics related to the successful acquisition of electronic collections.

Building on chapter 3, chapter 4 examines licensing and negotiating terms and pricing for electronic resources collections. The chapter begins with a discussion

of the history of copyright law and contract law, as well as how copyright law and contract law differ. This difference is vitally important for every library professional working with licensing and electronic resources to understand, because electronic resources are not normally governed by copyright but rather the language that is negotiated in each license for each individual resource. The outcome of these negotiations will determine the freedom of use that the end user will or will not have with the resource. The chapter provides two main strategies for determination and organization of desired contract terms and desired terms checklists and for creating a model license.

After successfully purchasing and negotiating the content of the electronic resource, the next step in the e-resources life cycle is to make these resources available to patrons. Chapter 5 details myriad ways librarians can provide access to these e-resources to their patrons and gives insights about managing and troubleshooting this access during the subscribed access. After a brief discussion of access and security issues, the chapter focuses on eight different online access methods: online public access catalogs (OPACs), e-resources portals such as A–Z lists, subject indexes, federated search engines, link resolvers, discovery services, browsing lists (such as database and journal lists), and embedded lists.

Chapter 6 delves into gathering and evaluating usage statistics, which are needed to make purchasing decisions for the subsequent fiscal year, and how to communicate this information to all of the library's stakeholders. Effective and efficient gathering and dissemination of statistics is vital to support and advocate for electronic resources collections. This chapter also looks at usability issues of online resources and provides real-world insight and practical advice and solutions to statistics gathering and dissemination.

Electronic resources librarians and library managers will need to address a variety of concerns and issues that will surface that involve workload management between traditional print collections and electronic resources collections, including possible restructuring of existing staff. Chapter 7 details how to meet the needs of a dynamic electronic environment and how to be an organizational leader by offering the following strategies and discussions: managing up (managing interactions and information flow with superiors), supervising employees, coaching colleagues, creating and maintaining teams, using appreciative inquiry, backcasting, and training new and existing staff.

Finally, chapter 8 takes an informational and insightful look at what is coming down the road for electronic resources. Topics include how e-books may change libraries, access problems, electronic resources becoming the primary collection/

service of libraries, open access, library closures and consolidations, organizational change in libraries, changes in public services, changes in special collections and archives, the relationship between electronic resources and technical services units, the role of consortia, potential challenges, and the shift from collection development to information as a service. Through these discussions, the reader will gain a sense of where the profession and electronic resources field may be headed, including the potential challenges that may face libraries and electronic resources professionals in the future.

Electronic resources is truly an exciting and dynamic field that is continually changing. *Managing Electronic Resources* serves as a wide-ranging resource that will help the reader navigate these complexities. The guide not only provides the reader with an introductory look at the field of electronic resources today, but also introduces the reader to strategies and concept discussions that will enable any professional to effectively manage e-resources in the future. Managing electronic resources collections effectively and efficiently can make or break the modern library's acquisitions budget and collection development goals!

# Learning the Basics of Electronic Resource Management

Ryan O. Weir

**M**anaging e-resources is vastly different from managing print legacy collections. While print collection management can at times be complicated, dealing with resources in electronic format adds additional layers of complexity to the process of managing collections. Electronic resources are ordered and invoiced much the same way as print materials, but there the similarities end. Electronic resources must be made available to patrons who are both physically in the library and those patrons who wish to access the materials remotely. The process of acquiring, licensing, troubleshooting, and providing access to these materials is complex and, in most cases, is developed over time once an individual has taken on the role of managing electronic collections. There are, however, ways an individual can seek to prepare before entering the profession and during the initial phases of employment.

Electronic resource management by its very nature is a dynamic and ever-changing field that has evolved from humble beginnings to a discipline that reaches into almost every aspect of the modern library collections. While electronic resources as a type of material format has been in existence for a long time, the professionals needed to address the complex variables of managing such collections have in many cases had to teach themselves what it takes to successfully manage these collections and thus are in a state of perpetual evolution. “Two decades after the advent of electronic journals and databases, librarians are still grappling with ways to best manage these resources in conjunction with their print resources. In addition, economic pressures at most institutions of higher learning are resulting

in librarians having to justify each dollar spent on collections and resource management” (Emery and Stone, 2011). This guide assists those professionals by offering practical insights and strategies to help them succeed in the realm of electronic resource management. Electronic resources collections differ from more traditional print collections due to the technology, price negotiation, contract negotiating, and access issues that are inherent in the resources’ procurement and maintenance. All of these topics will be discussed in the various chapters of this guide. The main focuses of this chapter are a discussion of the basics of successfully managing an electronic resources collection, basic personal management skills and the concept discussions of the electronic resources life cycle. These focuses frame the additional concept and strategy discussions of the guide.

The complexities of the field of electronic resource management are further complicated by the wide range of types of electronic resources. The range of items now being offered in electronic format continues to grow on a yearly basis. Journals, books, datasets, databases, hybrid content, audiovisual files, and services continue to evolve into unique forms of electronic content, which in turn create an ever-growing complexity in the day-to-day professional lives of those individuals working with these collections. In addition, each of the formats may also be offered via multiple access and ownership options that influence the patron’s ability to freely use and navigate these resources that must be taken into account every time an electronic resource is acquired. All of the following access models are discussed within the chapters of the guide:

### **Medical/Academic**

“The transition from print to electronic resources has meant better service to library patrons and helps advance the research and patient care missions of the Yale University School of Medicine and its affiliated hospital. The challenges of managing electronic resources have forced library staff throughout the Yale University Library System to work together more collaboratively and have created a more cooperative work environment, but this work is still far from being centralized.” (Dollar et al., 2007: 154)

- Traditional access model (ownership through contract)
- Access through pay-per-view services
- Database access
- Patron-driven acquisition
- Access to content through yearly subscription

A professional in the position of managing these collections must multitask, sometimes taking on many duties both in number and function simultaneously in order to be successful. These tasks can be easily managed when using effective time management strategies and scheduling/tracking tools. Many of these tools are also discussed throughout the chapters of this guide, ranging from Google Docs to proprietary ERM systems.

Even though this switch in dominant format to electronic content adds several levels of complexity, the benefits to the end user (patron) far outweigh these changes. These benefits and user preference levels can be seen at libraries across the spectrum.

### **K–12/Academic**

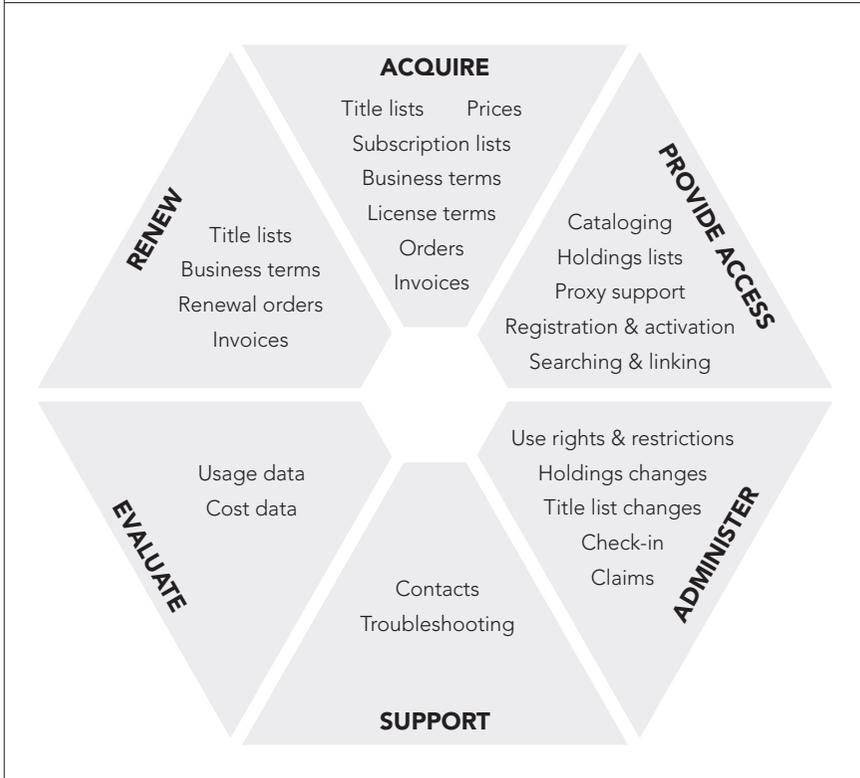
“The survey of school librarians extends what we know about the desirability of print reference sources at the K–12 level. Print reference resource use exhibits a general decline versus their electronic counterparts, receiving the least use at both higher education and school libraries. Although the preference for print reference resources increases as we move down from high schools to middle schools to elementary schools, in no case are print reference sources the preferred format.” (Lanning and Turner, 2010: 218–219)

## **THE ELECTRONIC RESOURCES LIFE CYCLE**

The electronic resources life cycle has become the standard concept by which electronic collections are acquired and managed. One of the best and earliest depictions of this cycle was featured in an article by Oliver Pesch (2008), “Library Standards and E-Resource Management: A Survey of Current Initiatives and Standards Efforts.” Figure 1.1, the E-journal Life Cycle, shows Pesch’s life cycle. His graphic walks the viewer through the stages of the e-journal life cycle. This guide will attempt to expand on this early concept and image to encompass the life cycles of all electronic content through discussions on the various tasks associated with acquiring and maintaining these resources.

Pesch’s image can be applied to almost any resource within an electronic resources collection if slight variations are made to accommodate the difference in the resources. Electronic resources collections as a whole function within this same cycle; this is perhaps the most important concept that a professional must be familiar with when working with electronic resources collections. The cycle takes the resource from discovery to acquisition to renewal and back again, and is generally performed on a yearly basis. The process will be the same for most

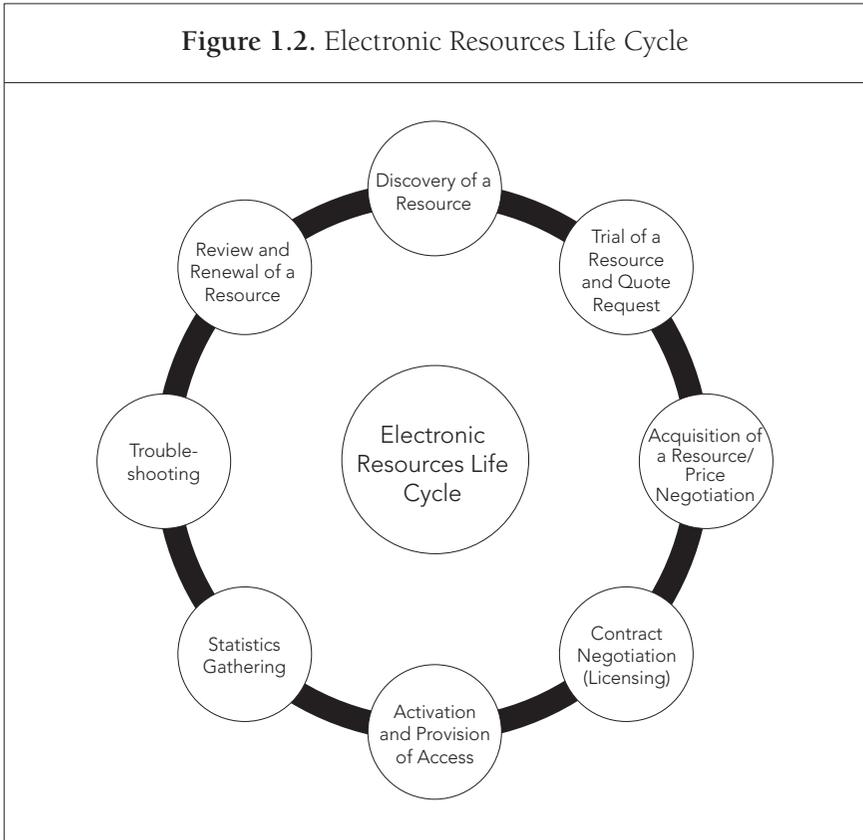
Figure 1.1. E-journal Life Cycle



resources within a collection, but may differ slightly from resource to resource. For example, a resource may be discovered by a librarian in one instance while researching new resources and be requested by a patron in another scenario. This guide loosely bases the format of its discussion on the concept of the electronic resources life cycle as depicted in figure 1.2. The stages of the cycle discussed are:

- Discovery of a resource
- Trial of a resource and quote request
- Acquisition of a resource / price negotiation
- Contract negotiation (licensing)
- Activation and provision of access
- Statistics gathering
- Troubleshooting
- Review and renewal of a resource

Figure 1.2. Electronic Resources Life Cycle



### Discovery (Becoming Aware) of a New Potential Resource

A resource may be discovered in a variety of ways, such as a vendor sales call, e-mail, or brochure; a subject librarian referral; or a patron referral. The manner of discovery for each resource may vary greatly within an institutional organization, but will definitely vary even more between types of libraries. Regardless of the form in which the discovery takes place, the initial point of interest is only the beginning of the discovery process. Once a resource of interest is identified, the following items must be determined and assessed:

- Overlap with current content
- License terms
- Possible access points and issues
- Pricing
- Audience size

Many of these items can be determined through engaging the next step of the life cycle, the trial of the resource, and a provisional quote request.

## **Trial of a Resource and Quote Request**

The quote and trial process for each library will need to be established within parameters that meet the need of each type of organization. At many organizations these two steps are managed by the electronic resources department and the acquisitions department. During the quote and trial process make sure to have the following information available:

- FTE or population served
- IP range
- Number and addresses of site(s)

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When setting up a trial, a librarian needs to ensure that the trial is configured in a manner that will meet the information needs of evaluating the resource for potential use. The librarian will need to determine the following variables:

- Length of the trial (sometimes this is negotiable, sometimes not)
- Target audience
- Mode of access and authentication for the target audience

IP authentication

Log-in and password access

- Availability of the target audience: Certain times of the year, in many cases, are better than others for trialing new resources. For school and university libraries, this may be during the middle of the semesters when teachers and professors are not consumed with year-end grading or assignments. For public libraries this may be the summer months, when more patrons are available to use the resources in-house.
- How will the trial be evaluated?

Statistical information provided by the vendor/publisher

Patron feedback

Other forms of feedback such as surveys or other online tools

- How will the patron feedback be solicited and gathered?

Once a determination has been made on whether the resource will be acquired, the resource moves into the category of a resource that will not be acquired or moves into the acquisitions phase. It is important to note here that pricing was requested at the time of the trial request. Proceeding in this manner will ensure that work is not put into resources for which the institution or organization does not have adequate funding.

## Acquisition of Resource / Price Negotiation

During the acquisitions phase of the cycle, the librarian who manages the collections or other designee will begin the process of price and access level negotiation. The first step of this process is generally agreeing on what price will be paid for the resource at a given access level. The pricing of a resource is generally negotiable; even though the resource price was quoted in the discovery phase, it is not necessarily the price that will be paid once negotiation concludes. Maximizing the institutional or organizational financial resources ensures that this step of the process is always fully explored. For example, the librarian charged with conducting the price negotiation may offer to buy more content or commit to a longer time for a subscription in order to obtain better pricing. If the sales representative has reached the maximum discount that can be provided to the library, but this price is still too high, ask if the representative can communicate this to a supervisor to see if additional discounts can be offered from a management level.

Traditionally, the acquisition phase has focused primarily on ordering, receiving, and paying for published materials and services. These responsibilities have expanded within the context of the electronic resources collection. Librarians working with electronic resources must consider the following variables:

- Quantity
- Purchase type
- Costs
- Archival rights
- Vendor
- License terms

Once the decision is made that the library wishes to acquire an electronic resource, the task of negotiating the licensing and pricing of the resource begins. Chapter 3 discusses the acquisition of resources and the variety of variables that must be

taken into account during the acquisitions phase of the electronic resources life cycle.

## **Contract Negotiation (Licensing)**

Negotiating the contract terms goes hand in hand with the negotiation of pricing. Contract negotiation is a vital step in the process of obtaining an electronic resource, because the contract governs the use of the resource by the end user (the library patron). It is important that a librarian or other individual responsible for licensing review the terms in detail and negotiate for as much flexibility as possible for the end user. If the library negotiator does not secure the required flexibility, the resource will not be able to serve the purpose for which it was acquired. Chapter 4 of this guide is entirely devoted to this step in the process. Most vendors and publishers will negotiate terms with the library in a fair and equitable manner.

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Successfully negotiating the license terms of an electronic resource is vital to provision of access to the end user of the resources in question. Chapter 4 discusses the differences between contract law and copyright law. This chapter gives the reader a better understanding of contract law and of how to succeed in negotiating for desired terms. Some of the tools discussed in the chapter are licensing checklists and model licenses; the chapter offers both examples of these tools and information on where to find additional examples.

## **Activation and Provision of Access**

The majority of the electronic resources that are purchased by a library will need to be activated in some form or fashion. Many vendors and publishers provide tools to assist both in the registration of these materials and in the provision of access. A librarian will need to choose the mode of provision of access for all of the electronic resources that are acquired. This step of the process must be executed efficiently and effectively to ensure that the resource that has been purchased will perform its intended purpose. Making the resource available to the patron in as many locations and in as many ways possible will ensure that the resource is used by the largest percentage of the potential user population as possible. Chapter 5 discusses the provision of access to resources and varied ways in which access may be provided to the end user.

## Troubleshooting Resources

Electronic resources, unlike their print counterparts, come with a variety of issues and problems that may or may not occur during the life of the resource. These problems can range from human entry errors in date range availability or IP range information to errors in the products themselves. It is important for a librarian to know what types of issues he or she can resolve and what types of issues must be delegated to either internal organization information technology professionals (IT) or external vendor or publisher-based IT professionals. There will be many problems and issues that librarians will be able to fix using the administration interfaces of their institutions' subscribed products, but many others will require the assistance of others. Chapter 5 discusses this topic in more detail.

## Statistics Gathering

Statistics are vital in the evaluation of resources as they come up for renewal each year. Stakeholders always want to know that they are getting their money's worth out of a resource. Statistics can be used as a tool to justify the need for additional funding, or even in the battle to minimize financial cuts. There is a variety of services that can be purchased to aid in the gathering and processing of statistical information. However, many libraries of all types and sizes choose to create their own statistics-gathering models using a program such as Excel to gather and breakdown the usage information for various resources and resource sets. Chapter 6 discusses these topics in detail.

With shrinking library budgets it will become increasingly more important to be able to show the use and cost effectiveness of resources, and thus it is important for all libraries to have implemented some type of usage-data gathering and interpretation program. Chapter 6 also discusses the nature of usage statistics, the gathering of statistics, the validity of usage data, and the effective use of the data once it has been gathered.

## Review and Renewal of Resource

Review of the resource is the final step in the electronic resources life cycle. This step results in the renewal of the resource for another year, a multiyear contract, or the cancellation of the resource. This is the final step of the yearly process for

most electronic resources subscribed to by a library. This step of the process may be conducted by a single individual or by a group of stakeholders. Many libraries have created a committee of people who work on this type of decision-making process. In many cases all of the following people are included in such a committee:

- Electronic Resources Librarian
- Acquisitions Librarian
- Collection Development Librarian
- Collection Selectors
- Reference Librarian(s)
- Library Administrator(s)

Once this step of the process is complete, the life cycle begins again for the next year. This step is discussed in chapter 3 of this guide.

## **CHALLENGES AND CHANGES IN ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

Electronic resources is an evolving field that will inevitably continue to change at a rate of speed that most library professionals are not completely comfortable with. Many of the formats and services of the future will be driven by libraries and the end users themselves, while others will be driven by the perceptions of library vendors about what the library community needs to survive and thrive in the coming years. It will be important for libraries to continually evaluate whether new products and services that become available have been driven by the realities of the greater library community or by the perceptions of library vendors and suppliers. It will be equally important to maintain an open line of communication and feedback between these vendors and libraries to ensure that the perceptions and realities coincide. Many of the changes on the horizon include numerous issues discussed within the chapters of this guide, and some that are not.

Due to myriad factors, library budgets across the country either have become stagnant or have been on the decline for the past decade or more. It is becoming increasingly more important for librarians to come up with inventive ways to stretch the money that they have been allocated for collections, and to investigate new avenues of funding such as grant funding and philanthropic donations.

Likewise, it is becoming more necessary for libraries to come up with homegrown solutions to data gathering, tracking, and management to decrease the number of dollars being spent on proprietary services that accomplish these tasks and thus increase the amount of funding available for resources. Chapter 2 discusses many of these pressing issues and difficulties that are currently facing libraries today and endeavors to provide real-life examples of solutions for some of the issues discussed. Chapter 8 discusses the future of electronic resources, both the future challenges and potential future products and formats on the horizon.

Once a professional understands the basics of electronic resource management, the strategies that are needed to effectively manage an electronic resources collection, and the challenges that may be faced in the future, the next steps in becoming a more effective collection manager are to identify the holes in his or her training, find the means to eliminate these deficits, and seek additional guidance and information when required. The following section discusses options for meeting a librarian's professional training needs and ideas for making connections with other professionals to help solve the challenges faced in the collection management process. The guide addresses each of the steps in the process and minimizes the number of areas in which additional training will be needed.

## **GETTING STARTED IN ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

For many professionals across the nation, the training received in a Master of Library Science program or other formal education did not adequately prepare them for the role of managing electronic resources collections. Luckily, many places offer strategies, guidance, and training for those who are new to the profession.

### **Personal Management Skill Sets for Electronic Resources**

Before moving the discussion of additional strategies, training, and guidance specific to electronic resource management, it is imperative for a professional who manages these collections to understand the basics of personal management. These skills are time management, management of communication, and management of information. Without mastering these skills, a librarian will not be able to find the time needed to perform all of the work associated with the electronic resources life cycle for his or her collection and maintain a current

knowledge base about the profession. Librarians need to be organized, efficient, and able to communicate effectively across a range of constituencies in order to efficiently and effectively carry out the duties assigned to them. The reader will see these issues addressed in various ways throughout the content of this guide. After ensuring that these basic skills are in place, it is time to move on to the acquisition of the strategies and knowledge base directly related to electronic resource management.

## **Education and Professional Development**

There are many different types of education and professional development that can be explored. The four main areas a new professional should look into are:

1. **Formal education:** While still working in an MLS program, classes related to electronic resources, management, electronic searching, contract law, collection development, and negotiation would all be helpful in preparing for an electronic resources position.
2. **Continuing education:** Many of the professional organizations of libraries, consortia, and even some vendors provide additional continuing education classes and training workshops for library staff and faculty. Some of these sessions are offered for a fee, while others may be free.
3. **Vendor webinars:** Most vendors will offer free webinars to help librarians learn the specifics of their database content and search features and capabilities, and for training on their administrative software. Webinars are helpful because they are live presentations via the Internet and thus facilitate real-time back-and-forth conversations and questions.
4. **Vendor tutorials:** Tutorials are prerecorded vendor instruction sessions. Tutorials are usually available on topics ranging from how to perform a successful search to how to gather statistics using an admin site.

## **Conferences**

Many conferences are available to library staff and faculty that will facilitate a better understanding of the profession; allow the attendee to network, speak with vendors on the vendor floor during individual events scheduled by the vendor, or

at a prescheduled one-on-one meeting; and keep up on what is going on in the profession. The following are three suggestions for readers who want to have a rewarding experience and learn a lot about electronic resources.

### *ER&L*

ER&L (Electronic Resources and Libraries) is a conference designed to offer opportunities for communication and collaboration of information professionals and topics related to managing electronic resources. The conference is held in different locations around the country and generally lasts for three days. In her article “Keeping Current in Electronic Resources and Libraries,” Mary Moore offers many insights about the ER&L conference, including many of the benefits of attending the conference. Moore states, “No other conference seemed to appeal to all individuals working to develop, deliver, and assess e-resources” (Moore, 2011: 265). For more information on ER&L, visit [www.electroniclibrarian.com](http://www.electroniclibrarian.com).

### *Charleston Conference*

Charleston, as it is referred to by those attendees who have attended in past years, is a conference that started out primarily as an acquisitions librarian’s conference. However, Charleston is now arguably one of the best conferences for any librarian to attend, due to the wide range of session topics covered on a yearly basis, not to mention the large vendor floor. Speaking as a multiyear attendee, the Charleston Conference offers sessions on a wide range of issues, including many that relate directly to electronic resource management. The conference is large enough to facilitate sessions and discussions on a large number of topics, but small enough to get to know your fellow professionals and to speak with vendors one-on-one, and the venue of Charleston is breathtaking and engaging. For more information on the Charleston Conference, visit [www.katina.info/conference/](http://www.katina.info/conference/).

### *LITA Forum*

The Library and Information Technology Forum is an annual event held to facilitate networking and the sharing of ideas between professionals in the library community. Held in various locations around the country each year, the forum seeks to showcase some of the leading technologies in the field and give professionals ideas on how they may be able to implement these technologies in their home institutions. Like the LITA organization, the conference is highly respected in the library community. For more information on the LITA Forum, visit [www.ala.org/lita/conferences/forum/2011/](http://www.ala.org/lita/conferences/forum/2011/).

A large number of other conferences are also worth attending. These conferences range from small local gatherings, regional and state conferences like KLA (Kentucky Library Association), national association conferences such as ALA (American Library Association) and ARL (Association of Research Libraries), and large international conferences such as LILAC (Librarians' Information Literacy Annual Conference). This is in no way an all-inclusive list; the best advice for any professional when looking to choose a conference is to do the research and talk with peers who have attended specific conferences.

## Electronic Mailing Lists

Electronic mailing lists are a great way to keep up with conversations going on within the library community. The following electronic mailing lists provide information and discussions, as well as job advertisements and information on current trends. While not all of the following relate directly to electronic resources, they will all assist a professional in this field.

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### *LITA-L*

LITA-L is a list sponsored by LITA, a subgroup of the American Library Association. It is a list dedicated to the discussion of issues related to library information technology. For more information on LITA-L and other ALA mailing lists, visit <http://lists.ala.org/sympa/>.

### *Liblicense*

Liblicense is a mailing list hosted by Yale University Libraries that provides a discussion forum for issues relating to licensing library content. It is especially helpful when advice is needed on the wide-ranging issues that may arise when reviewing licensing for content. For more information, visit [www.library.yale.edu/~llicense/](http://www.library.yale.edu/~llicense/).

### *SERIALST*

SERIALST is a forum moderated by Birdie MacLennan of the University of Vermont that discusses serials related issues. This resource is a good place to start for questions relating to print and electronic journal content. For more information, visit [www.uvm.edu/~bmaclenn/serialst.html](http://www.uvm.edu/~bmaclenn/serialst.html).

### *ERIL-L*

ERIL-L is a list hosted by Binghamton University that is devoted to the discussion of topics relating specifically to electronic resources. For more information, visit <http://listserv.binghamton.edu/archives/eril-l.html>.

### AUTOCAT

AUTOCAT is an electronic mailing list hosted by Syracuse University that is devoted to the discussion of topics relating to the cataloging of resources in any format. This a great place to go if questions should arise about how to catalog an electronic resource. For more information, visit [www.cwu.edu/~dcc/Autocat/AutocatFAQ-2.html](http://www.cwu.edu/~dcc/Autocat/AutocatFAQ-2.html).

## Building a Network of Other Professionals

As the next tool, and final point of discussion for this section of the chapter, a new professional in the field of electronic resources needs to obtain a network of other professionals that he or she can go to when a second opinion is needed. There are many situations in which having a second voice or perspective is helpful. For instance, if a librarian is researching a new resource for implementation at his or her home library, it is always better to contact someone in the profession who has already implemented the resource. By asking questions and learning from another library's successes and failures, the selection and implementation of a new resource can go much more smoothly. There are many ways to establish these relationships, but some of the best are the options discussed just above this section: establishing relationships during the MLS experience, attending and presenting at conferences, and using electronic mailing lists to meet librarians who are working on the same issues and topics.

The discussion lists mentioned in the section are another way to ask professionals about these types of topics if you do not know anyone who has or is currently working on a current project. It is important to note that lists are established with guidelines and expected topics of discussion and may exclude messages if they do not meet the list-specific criteria.

## SUMMARY

So where does this leave professionals who manage electronic resources? To be honest, there is too much to do and too little time to do everything they would like to do, but after reading this guide they will have tools to assist them no matter what the budget or other financial implications. This guide instructs electronic resources librarians or other professionals who manage electronic resources collections on how to achieve a balance and will give readers practical tools and insights to aid in managing collections and relationships. In addition, it also serves as a window

into the life and functions of electronic resources librarians for those who work with, supervise, or aspire to be someone in that role.

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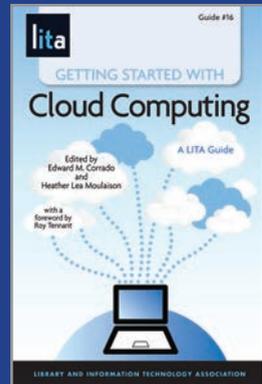
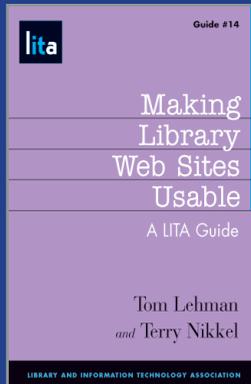
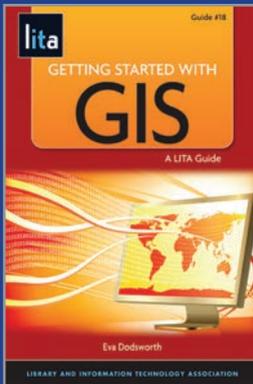
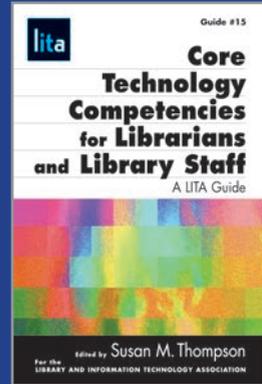
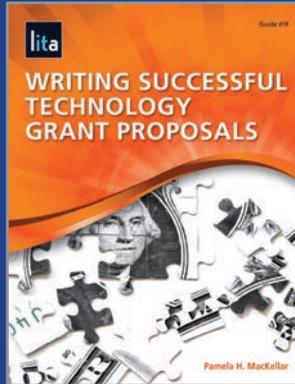
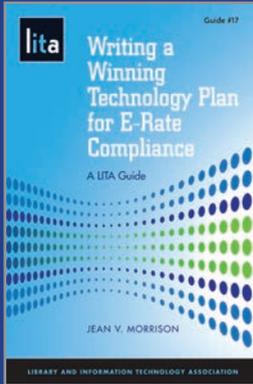
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