WHAT IT TAKES TO GAIN “MINDSHARE” FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS

Jim McGinty
28 February 2005
NFAIS
REPORT FINDINGS OF RESEARCH SPECIALLY COMMISSIONED FOR THIS CONFERENCE

- OBJECTIVES
- SURVEY PARTICIPANTS
- CURRENT LIBRARY ENVIRONMENT
- ACADEMIC LIBRARIAN’S ROLE
- LEARNING ABOUT NEW PRODUCTS
- VENDOR COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES
- CONCLUSIONS: WHAT DID WE LEARN

THIS BAR INCLUDES SOME VERBATIM COMMENTS FROM LIBRARIANS
OBJECTIVES

LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF THE ACADEMIC LIBRARIAN

DETERMINE WHAT ISSUES ARE OF CONCERN TO LIBRARIANS

DETERMINE HOW THE LIBRARIANS PREFER TO LEARN ABOUT NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

EVALUATE THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF OUR INDUSTRY’S SALES AND MARKETING INITIATIVES

LEARN HOW WE CAN IMPROVE OUR COMMUNICATION WITH THEM

“We welcome this research. Our profession really needs to address these issues.”
CREDITS

DAVID OGILVIE

PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER

SIMON INGER
Scholarly Information Strategies, Ltd

EUROPEAN SURVEY SUPPORT

BOB SNYDER
Chairman - Cambridge Information Group (CIG)

FUNDING AGENT
CAVEATS

SOMETHING TO NOTE ABOUT MAIL/ONLINE SURVEYS

- RESULTS ARE NOT PROJECTABLE
- DIFFICULT TO PROVIDE CLARIFICATIONS
- RESULTS ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF RESPONDENT
- RESULTS MAY VARY SIGNIFICANTLY BY RESPONDENT CLASS
SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

ALMOST 200 LIBRARIANS WORLDWIDE, INTERVIEWED ONLINE OR IN PERSON. THIS ADDRESS FOCUSES ON ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS IN USA AND EUROPE

“[39% 20% 16% 25%]

USA

[29% 18% 21% 32%]

EUROPE

‘I appreciate my staff and I being invited to take part. It is important research.’
SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

IN USA, A MIX BY SIZE OF COLLEGE: IN EUROPE, MOSTLY LARGE ...

... AND IN USA, A MAJORITY (55%) INDEPENDENT PRIVATE COLLEGES
### The Academic Librarian’s Climate

**Exhilarating – More Productive – Pressed for Time.** European librarians seem more sanguine about the Internet’s effect on scholarship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>% Agreeing</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>USA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not enough time to devote to students</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional climate is exhilarating</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>95%</td>
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<td>Reference desk more productive with digital sourcing</td>
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<td>Library website is used effectively</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet has improved standards of scholarship</td>
<td>65%</td>
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“It’s a madhouse. There’s no time to do anything as we used to do it.”
THE ACADEMIC LIBRARIAN’S ROLE

ENGAGEMENT OF FACULTY IN SUPPORTING AND WORKING WITH LIBRARIANS IS CRITICAL

KEY TO GETTING STUDENTS TO DO EFFECTIVE DIGITAL RESEARCH IS FACULTY SUPPORT

NEXT YEAR I EXPECT OUR OUTREACH PROGRAMS TO TAKE [MUCH] MORE TIME

FACULTY MEMBERS GENERALLY SUPPORT LIBRARIANS IN WORKING WITH STUDENTS...

I AM GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH OUR OUTREACH PROGRAMS

I OFTEN TAKE ON TASKS THAT SHOULD BE FACULTY MEMBERS’ RESPONSIBILITY

“We still need tellers and token booth attendants. So there’s hope for the academic librarian.”
“Do not just “Googleize” your interface - some people might call this dumbing down.”
“Quit forcing default search screens to emulate Google.”
“Google is here and leading the way. Pay attention to the thousands of students using it and learn.”
LEARNING ABOUT NEW PRODUCTS

A VARIETY OF IMPORTANT SOURCES, WITH TWO INDUSTRY SOURCES CRITICAL IN THE USA – CONSORTIA OFFERINGS AND COURTESY SERVICE TRIALS…

% SAYING SOURCE IS “IMPORTANT”

- **CONSORTIA OFFERINGS**: 99%
- **PEER DISCUSSION**: 94%
- **COURTESY SERVICE TRIALS**: 92%
- **TRADE SHOWS/CONFERENCES**: 80%
- **VENDOR BROCHURES**: 79%
- **IN-PERSON REP VISITS**: 73%
- **ADS/ARTICLES IN TRADE PRESS**: 65%
- **COLLECTIONS REVIEW MEETINGS**: 60%

“Be upfront and be willing to negotiate pricing with individual institutions as well as Consortia.”
LEARNING ABOUT NEW PRODUCTS

,, AND A SIMILAR OVERALL PATTERN IN EUROPE

% SAYING SOURCE IS “IMPORTANT”

CONSORTIA OFFERINGS 92%
PEER DISCUSSION 94%
COURTESY SERVICE TRIALS 96%
TRADE SHOWS/CONFERENCES 77%
VENDOR BROCHURES 73%
IN-PERSON REP VISITS 69%
ADS/ARTICLES IN TRADE PRESS 66%
COLLECTIONS REVIEW MEETINGS 50%

“Be generous and flexible with trial times and extensions fro trials.”
LEARNING ABOUT NEW PRODUCTS VIA VENDOR INITIATIVES

MOST AND LEAST FAVORED WAYS OF LEARNING ABOUT NEW PRODUCTS

% RESPONDENTS

IN-PERSON REP VISIT
GO TO MY PC/REMOTE PRESENTATION
VENDOR WEBSITE BROWSING
TRADE SHOW PRESENTATIONS
VENDOR CATALOGUES
TELCONS WITH REPS

“Know all the ins and outs of your product when doing the demos.”
COMMUNICATING WITH VENDORS

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF VENDOR’S SERVICE CAPABILITIES

% SAYING IMPORTANT

- TECHNICAL/SERVICE SUPPORT
- COURTESY SERVICE TRIALS
- IN-HOUSE TRAINING OFFERINGS
- PERSONAL VISITS FROM REPS
- VISITS FROM SENIOR MANAGEMENT

“Having tech services available and understandable when a problem happens is critical.”
"Reps need to be much less sales focused and display much more knowledge of their products"
**SOME NOTICEABLE DIFFERENCES**

**... BETWEEN AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS**

- “AGREE STRONGLY” DIGITAL SOURCING MAKES THE REFERENCE DESK ROLE MORE PRODUCTIVE
- “AGREE STRONGLY” THAT GETTING FACULTY SUPPORT FOR LIBRARY INITIATIVES IS KEY
- “AGREE STRONGLY” FORMAL ACCREDITED COURSES IN LIBRARY SKILLS BE MANADATORY
- COURTESY TRIALS “EXTREMELY IMPORTANT”
- CONSORTIA OFFERINGS “EXTREMELY IMPORTANT”
- REPS’ UNDERSTANDING THE LIBRARY ENVIRONMENT HAS ‘IMPROVED’
SOME NOTICEABLE DIFFERENCES

... AND BETWEEN SIZES OF COLLEGE (IN THE US)

PERSONAL VISITS BY SALES REPS IMPORTANT

IN-PERSON VISITS IMPORTANT FOR LEARNING OF NEW PRODUCTS

COLLECTIONS REVIEW MEETINGS IMPORTANT FOR LEARNING OF NEW PRODUCTS

SATISFIED WITH OUTREACH PROGRAMS

FORMAL ACCREDITED COURSES IN LIBRARY SKILLS SHOULD BE MANADATORY FOR UNDERGRADUATES

TAKE ON TASKS THAT SHOULD BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FACULTY MEMBERS

INSTITUTIONAL ARCHIVING A POSITIVE IMPACT
SOME NOTICEABLE DIFFERENCES

... AND BETWEEN SENIORITY AND/OR RESPONSIBILITY OF LIBRARIAN (USA)

“AGREE STRONGLY” REFERENCE DESK ASPECT OF ROLE IS MORE PRODUCTIVE WITH DIGITAL SOURCING

“AGREE STRONGLY” THERE IS NOT ENOUGH TIME TO DEVOTE ATTENTION TO STUDENTS

SEE A POSITIVE IMPACT IN GOOGLE SCHOLAR

FIND TRADE SHOWS “EXTREMELY IMPORTANT”

FIND IN-PERSON REP VISITS “EXTREMELY IMPORTANT” FOR LEARNING OF NEW PRODUCTS

FIND PERSONAL VISITS BY SALES REPS IMPORTANT

FIND IN-HOUSE TRAINING OFFERINGS IMPORTANT
WHAT MESSAGE WOULD YOU WANT TO GIVE NFAIS ATTENDEES?

- FIFTY RESPONDENTS PROVIDED COMMENTS

- FOUR AREAS
  -- Budget/Economic
  -- Interface/Product Capabilities
  -- Communication/Sales
  -- Industry Issues

“Listen to comments/criticisms - Always report back”
WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED

ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS AS CUSTOMERS

- APPROACHABLE BUT VERY TIME SENSITIVE
- STRESSED BY CHANGE DRIVEN ENVIRONMENT
- “EDUCATED CONSUMER” FOCUSED AND PROCESS ORIENTED
- EXPECTS AND APPRECIATES COMPETENCY
- VERY SERVICE SENSITIVE, ESPECIALLY IN TECHNICAL AREAS
- REACTS DIFFERENTLY DEPENDING ON POSITION AND SIZE OF INSTITUTION

“We don’t suffer fools”
WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED (Cont.)

ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS ENVIRONMENT

- LIBRARY “OUTREACH” IS BECOMING MORE IMPORTANT
- ARCHIVING IN AN ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENT IS A MAJOR ISSUE
- FACULTY INVOLVEMENT IS CRITICAL TO DIGITAL RESEARCH PROCESS
- ACUTE AWARENESS OF ADVANTAGES AND PITFALLS OF WEB/GOOGLE
- CONSORTIA HAS BECOME A VERY IMPORTANT COMMUNICATION CHANNEL
- REPS ARE IMPORTANT…but they must meet librarians expectations

“Finding data is only the beginning of the scholarly task”
“You can never know enough about your customers”
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