Library Info Alert

Library Info Alert focuses on recent developments in the field of library science and information management in the United States. The Library Info Alert contains summaries of recent articles from leading library-related periodicals and recommended Internet sites. Our goal is to help the growing number of Greek librarians to maintain their libraries as centers for information and lifelong learning in the electronic environment of the 21st century.

1. Geek Out
(*American Libraries*, September/October 2012, p20)
"Teenagers are natural and voracious media consumers. But new research suggests that teens can learn more effectively in hands-on projects where they can be creative and think critically. The Institute of Museum and Library Services and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation made $100,000 grants this past November to eight libraries and four museums to plan and design their own digital learning labs where teens can hang out, mess around, and geek out. In the process, the young people learn to create media rather than just consume it."

2. Joint Libraries: Models That Work
(*American Libraries,* September/October 2012, p25)
In the past, academic and public libraries had very different missions and ways of operating. Academic libraries were created to serve their own faculty and students and to facilitate research. Public libraries were created to allow educational resources to flow to a community through generous donations and tax dollars.

3. Counting on COUNTER
(*Computers in Libraries,* November 2012, p6)
"In 2007, the information science standards body NISO (National Information Standards Organization) created the Standardized Usage Statistics Harvesting Initiative protocol, known casually as SUSHI, which provides an automated way to download COUNTER reports via the web. While COUNTER and SUSHI have helped libraries come a long way toward improving the adoption and availability of usage statistics for library market vendors, I soon came to learn that there is still a good amount of work libraries must do to get the data they need to make critical collection development and database budgeting decisions. The rest of this article is about the results of a survey I conducted among my peers to not only satisfy my own curiosity but with the hope that such a study would reveal insights that the vendor community and COUNTER/NISO could use to improve the standards and protocols for collecting and reporting usage statistics."

4. Preserving Library Value Through the Shifting Tides of Technology
(*Computers in Libraries*, October 2012, p.27)
Libraries provide an essential set of services to their communities. But what's essential? At any given point in history, library services must be crafted according to the needs of the broader society and to the needs of each local community. Today, technology provides the means to help libraries deliver services relevant to their designated communities. At the same time, technology can introduce incredible disruption.

5. The Era of Open Government Era
(*Information Today,* November 2012, p1)

Governments are usually seen as change-resistant, but it should come as no surprise that government information production is changing beyond the very basic shift from paper to PDF. Agencies may need to make fundamental changes in the way they collect data, which can possibly risk the accuracy and availability of information they count on today. Statisticians and demographers met at the Association of Public Data Users (APDU) 2012 conference in mid-September in Washington, DC, to assess the current environment and what it means for the future.

6. Bringing Researchers Back to the Library
(*Information Today*, November 2012, p16)
Thinking the unthinkable is on the agenda at Utrecht University library (UUL) in the Netherlands. UUL created a study in 2011 to track how students and scholars sought its digitized material. According to the study, students and scholars are increasingly turning to third-party discovery tools, such as Google Scholar, WorldCat, and Web of Science. European digital cultural archive Europeana and OCLC are addressing online access quality issues. They are looking at ways to create semantic links between and among the many millions of digital objects accessible via Europeana. The goal is to improve the browsing experience for visitors looking at similar objects, including a painting and a photo of the same painting or different editions of the same book.

7. Let's Get Together
(*Public Libraries*, September/October 2012, p21)
"By nature, library technology walks a fine line between the new and exciting and the tried and true. This is particularly the case in public libraries, whose audience runs the gamut from Luddite to wizard. As we work to bring balance to these seemingly opposing forces, it's always important to temper our gadget lust with a certain sense of pragmatism. No matter how shiny a new app or gadget may be, any new tool must be tempered with a practical connection to the community it serves. "

NOTE: Library Info Alert is available to subscribers only. You may contact us through telephone, fax or e-mail to order full text of articles. The requested material will be distributed to you as soon as possible. Please send your comments and remarks to the American Embassy Homepage at AthensIRC@state.gov