E-Resources Management as an Incubator: A Framework for Consortial Governance

- Lenore England, University of Maryland University College
- Randy Lowe, Frostburg State University
- Charles Thomas, University System of Maryland & Affiliated Institutions

2016 Charleston Conference
Concurrent Session, 3:35pm - 4:15pm
Friday, November 4, 2016
Introduction

- The establishment of shared governance at the USMAI will be presented from two viewpoints:
  - Subgroup/committee members’ perspectives
  - Consortial administration’s perspectives

- Based on ERM Ideas and Innovations columns in the Journal of Electronic Resources Librarianship (JERL), September and December 2016 issues.
Holistic View of Consortial ERM Components

- The USMAI ERM ecosystem includes more than the procurement cycle. Licensing management (inventory, tracking terms, making terms available to users, renegotiating/updating licenses, etc.) and data collection, analysis, and reporting are of equal importance.
History of ERM at the USMAI

- Established in the early 1980s with resource sharing as its founding principle.
- Electronic resources were incorporated into this mission in the late 1990s and were managed primarily in a buyer’s club arrangement until the last three years.
- Began to intentionally increase shared collection development activities and develop a new management structure.
Additional historical/current factors

- Complicated consortial ERM environment in Maryland.
- Procurement reality faced by USMAI.
- Budgeting for consortial e-resources.
Incubator Approach for Consortial ERM in the USMAI

- Incubator approach:
  - Application of established management theories.
  - Improve ERM work flows and establish innovative processes.

- Leads to: Generation of new management approaches to consortial ERM (the why’s).
Defining incubator approach for consortial ERM...

- How this was done to lead to success and effective change (the how’s).
  - Vehicle for incubator ideas; simple tools to lead to management strategies.
  - Defined our purpose.
  - Start small, grow to success; advocate for change and be willing to adapt.
  - Develop our ‘portfolio’ of project (8 initiatives) in order to stabilize growth and leading to change.
Defining incubator approach for consortial ERM – more

- How this was done to lead to success and effective change (the how’s).
  - Volunteers to lead change – perhaps serendipity or great timing for us?
  - Work with less clarity – discipline will lead to changes.
Related concepts to bring incubator changes to fruition…

- Business process management – work flows to effectively support the USMAI ERM goals.
- Disruptive innovation – working with more fluidity, less certainty to lead to great changes.
Related concepts to bring incubator changes to fruition – more

- Innovation management – managing innovation at the USMAI in effective processes and strategic planning.
- Long tail - move ERM for USMAI to a niche or is our framework a template for other consortiums, meeting the niche requirements as they are presented by consortiums?
Impetus for change

- Number of centrally-funded e-resources has increased.
- Licensing terms and an inventory is under investigation.
- Data assessment policies and practices are under review.
Establishing a New ERM Framework

- A “less than ideal” situation
  - USMAI not a recognized legal entity
  - No procurement authority
  - No dedicated ERM staff
  - No specific budget for new e-resources

- How do we increase shared consortial collection development activity for e-resources given this reality?
Establishing a New ERM Framework

◦ It was necessary to establish a new framework for the entire ERM lifecycle responsive to our operational reality
  • Identify areas for ERM improvement
  • Offer potential solutions to administrators
  • Develop new policies and procedures
  • Identify needed resources
  • Incorporate assessment

◦ Framework must be holistic and flexible to meet current and future needs and challenges
Establishing a New ERM Framework

- Inherent challenges of recent initiatives drove ERM planning
- Eight areas/issues for strategic improvement identified – our ‘portfolio’
- All items were researched, documented, and conveyed to USMAI executive director and Council of Library Directors (CLD)
Establishing a New ERM Framework - Portfolio

1. Establish an ERM collection development policy, including selection criteria
2. Employ dedicated ERM staff for the consortium
3. Review role of consortial ERM procurement/subscription agent
4. Licensing issues: Inventory & Terms
Establishing a New ERM Framework - Portfolio

5. E-Resources workflow practices
6. Training and professional development
7. Open access: Impact and strategic direction
8. Evaluation & Assessment: Formal and intentional
Establishing a New ERM Framework - Governance

- Consortium administrators supported further investigation and action of eight issues identified by ERM subgroup
- Challenge: Change leadership with no central consortium office
- Solution: A form of shared governance resulted from the process of establishing strategic framework for future ERM activities
Establishing a New ERM Framework - Governance

• Prior to 2014: Previous consortial committee structure allowed for narrow focus on procedures only with no effective communication channel to CLD.

• Since 2014: ERM framework issues were identified, researched and documented by subgroup members and delivered to CLD by the consortium executive director.
Establishing a New ERM Framework - Governance

Current USMAI Working Group Structure:

- Recognizes expertise of subgroup members
- Empowers subgroup members to:
  - Formulate policy and identify future initiatives
  - Represent member library interests
  - Conduct assessment and reporting
  - Better serve in an advisory capacity to administrators
- Allows for a holistic approach – Subgroup serves as an ERM incubator where ideas “bubble up” to become actionable, strategic initiatives
Establishing a New ERM Framework - Governance

- Future ERM initiatives will be driven by operationalization of the framework
- Delineation of responsibilities among Consortium Acquisitions & Licensing Coordinator, procurement/subscription management agent, and subgroups will be a major procedural focus.
Establishing a New ERM Framework - Implementation

- Two Simultaneous Approaches:
  1. Operationalization within USMAI
     - RFP for e-Resources Licensing and Subscription Management Services issued
     - Policies and Procedures
     - License Issues
     - Training
     - Data Collection & Assessment
Establishing a New ERM Framework - Implementation

- Two Simultaneous Approaches:
  2. Inter-Consortial Dialogue/Advocacy
     ◦ Common ERM challenges facing consortia
     ◦ Data collection, analysis and reporting best practices for e-resources
     ◦ Advocate for/design better services and tools
     ◦ Evaluate effectiveness of consortial licensing agents/organizations
     ◦ Leverage collective influence to become more equal partners in discussing ERM solutions with agents, vendors, publishers, etc.
Administrative perspectives

- **USMAI ERM challenges & questions**
  - “USM” (14) + “AI” (3) = $ commitment challenges
  - Spending $ complicated / Group spending complicated+
  - As non-entity, we rely upon authorized business entities
  - Diverse, specialized libraries = selection challenges
  - What is the upper limit on group-licensed e-resources?
  - New business agent possibilities? (CSM, MEEC, etc.)
  - Moving from “best available” to “best fit” options
  - Demonstrating value to decision-makers
Administrative perspectives

Consortial ERM
- Mutual Interests
- Resource Commitments
- Shared Governance
- Rational Business Processes
- Leveraged Partnerships
- Measurable Value

Pushing more emphasis to consortial activity…
Administrative perspectives

…and translating consortial benefits to local benefits.

- Promoting more shared ERM practices
- Securing more nimble business partners
- New lib. data services from consortium
- New archive of agreements, terms, templates
- Promoting more subgroup opportunities
- Removing obstacles to working together
References


References

Thank You

• Questions, concerns, etc. please feel free to contact us

• Contact Information:

  Lenore England  
  University of Maryland University College  
  lenore.england@umuc.edu

  Randy Lowe  
  Frostburg State University  
  rlowe@frostburg.edu

  Charles Thomas  
  University System of Maryland & Affiliated Institutions  
  cthomas@usmd.edu
Questions and Answers

• See following slides....
Possible Objectives

- Discussion/Information Gathering – Ask our colleagues for feedback on our approach and discuss the ERM challenges other consortia are facing.
Possible Objectives

- Building on the first objective, identify ways that consortia can collaborate to improve all aspects of the ERM lifecycle and then organize ourselves in such a fashion that we are not only having occasional (but, useful) dialogues, but systematically and formally working to make progress in this area.
• What models do various consortia use to management their ERM activities?
• What feedback do our colleagues have on USMAI’s developing approach to ERM? Strengths/Weaknesses? What are we missing? Additional ideas?
• What management challenges do they face? Which ones are most common among consortia?
Possible Questions / Discussion Topics

- What tools do we need to better address ERM lifecycle processes?
- What data collection approaches (both quantitative and qualitative) do various consortia take? What are the challenges?
- How are consortia leveraging the data they collect to conduct assessment and create reports for internal and external stakeholders?
Possible Questions / Discussion Topics

- Comments by consortia colleagues regarding the effectiveness of consortial licensing agents (like LYRASIS). Are they effective generally? Where are they meeting and not meeting our expectations? Why?

- Address Objective 2 above – how can we systematically and formally address the ERM challenges we face by working together – so that this is more than just a dialogue of a snapshot in time. Identify action priorities and people who would like to work on them.