Getting more bang for your buck

Working with your vendor in the age of shrinking staff

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Member of Big Ten Academic Association

Collection budget: Over $25 million

FTE: over 55,000

Located in Ann Arbor, Michigan

Engineering campus, Michigan Medicine campus, Central campus, athletic campus

Two satellite campuses, Flint and Dearborn located within 50 mi. radius
ARL Statistics on Staff and Librarians

#1 of all 124 ARL members for number of staff positions

#3 of all 124 ARL members for number of professional staff positions

#3 in overall library investment

#2 in volumes held

#3 in library wages and salaries

ARL Statistics 2016-2017

What shrinking staff?

~75 staff in Technical Services circa 2000 vs. ~45 staff in 2019 in same jobs

No layoffs, no downsizing, just attrition and “right-sizing”

Staffing growth has been in new areas of emphasis: Data management, Metadata services, Data visualization, Accessibility, Publishing, Digital content, digital archiving, international programs, Assessment, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Collection services needed include...

- **Access:** If the outage occurs on an online serial handled by a subscription vendor, that will be the first report made.
- **(electronic data interchange) EDI invoicing:** This alone saves us 3/4 of the data entry time we used to devote to keying in each invoice by hand.
- **Online database** - a cornucopia of available titles, formats, pricing and details about access and licensing
- **Package management:** Vendor works with consortium; finds overlap and duplicate copies, applies our discounts, manages orders in publisher’s Deeply Discount Print program.
More collections services

- **Reports**: Time savings from preparing reports, security of historical data in clean formats

- **Title changes, publisher transfers**  The knowledge of a serials vendor is invaluable and it’s made easy for us to decide whether we to continue or cancel a migrated title, and the serials vendor will carry it out.

- **Invoices** we need might be broken down by item, or consolidated. We have the flexibility to ask our serials vendor to invoice us in a certain way that corresponds with our decentralized fund structures.
Building a relationship

Communication: Visits are important but are not a substitute for day-to-day communication. If you can’t get hold of the vendor, or they aren’t getting responses from your organization, how can they do any business.

Discuss standards - NISO standards and MARC standards and any other important ones that you need.

Discuss specific contents: A list of the titles you’re interested in having them order, which ones if any can’t they advise you on? What regions do they concentrate on?

Read their contract language; read their history and stories about themselves.