Assessment in Technical Services

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What we will cover

- Why assessment is important for Technical Services
- Brief look at selected Technical Services projects
- Time to shelf studies done at selected CARLI libraries
- Other assessment ideas for Technical Services
Why is Technical Services Assessment Important?

- Hard to make evidence-based decisions without data
- To improve effectiveness
- To demonstrate the value of Technical Services to the library and university community
- To see how you compare with other institutions
Technical Services Assessment

- Little has been published on broad technical services assessment
- Most articles focus on specific projects
Two ARL libraries evaluating their monograph acquisition approval plan profiles looking at use, cost effectiveness and coverage.

Provides an overview of the statistical reports available through SFX, and offers suggestions for how the data can be used to evaluate the academic journal collections and their indexes.

Describes the University of Denver's project to consolidate cataloging and archives processing for all materials to efficiently create metadata that allows searches based on subject relevance rather than on collection provenance.

Presents the results of a single case study focused on an holistic assessment model, taking into account both public and technical services to explore inter-related question affecting both day-to-day operations as well as long-term, strategic priorities.

Discusses a problem with time it took to locate unprocessed materials within the Technical Services department at Ohio State University Library and the new workflow that was designed and implemented as a result.
Results and analysis of a survey that addressed batch loading issues such as staffing, budgets, scope, workflow, management, quality standards, IT support, collaborative efforts, and assessment.

Discusses assessing usage of electronic and microform holdings after batch loading at Penn State. Talks about the process of creating the batch loads.

Comparison of ILS systems.

Discusses Oregon State University's pilot project to purchase Kindles and load them with e-books and the novel workflow in technical services that came out of that experience. Describes using Provider-Neutral E-Monograph MARC Record Guide.

Assesses serials cataloging from two perspectives: the catalogers who construct the records and public services use of the records. Informally assesses perceived effectiveness of standard OPAC display patterns for periodicals information.
Captures user input from music researchers on five facets formerly in Lens, the University of Chicago's implementation of AquaBrowser. It considers the usage of the facets controlling Format, Topic, Genre, Geographical Region, and Time Period as well as information on how users employ music uniform titles in their research. Data collected was analyzed and used to generate recommendations for improvement of Lens.

Discusses the results of an ALCTS Task Force’s efforts to develop and articulate metrics for evaluating the cost and value of cataloging activities.

Describes the challenges, decisions, and priorities around cataloging electronic books at the University of Houston Libraries. Describes the workflow for batch cataloging, using the MarcEdit utility, ongoing maintenance of records and record sets and future directions.

Explores and discusses the problems in assigning book (Cutter) numbers to printed materials under the LCC system and considers why problems may be occurring.
Time to Shelf Studies

- Harper College
- Illinois State University
- Northern Illinois University
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Assessment at Harper College Library, September 1999

- **Context:** Completion of Harper’s first year using Voyager
- **Task:** Perform manual analysis of technical services processing from receipt of request to placement of ordered materials in Library collections
- **Purpose:** To evaluate workflow and devise improvements
- **Methodology:** Analyze 5% random sample of 4,301 title requests received during FY 1999 (215 titles)
Step 1: The Order Slip

- Voyager purchase order no.
- Date request received in Acquisitions: 9/28/98
- Date title ordered from vendor: 10/31/98
Step 2: Receipt in Voyager Acquisitions

Date received 2/4/1999
Step 3: Cataloging

Date cataloged and placed on the shelf 2/23/99

Date ordered 10/31/98
How Long Did the Process Require in this Case?

**In sum (for this title):**

- **9/28/1998:** Request for purchase received in Acquisitions
- **10/31/1998:** Title ordered from vendor
- **2/4/1999:** Title received from vendor
- **2/23/1999:** Title cataloged and added to collections

**Total time required:** 148 calendar days (106 working days)
Average processing time in working (w) and calendar (c) days

- Between request receipt and creation of purchase order: 3 w
- Between creation of purchase order and item receipt: 12 w/18 c
- Between item receipt and item cataloging: 45 w/63 c
- Total between request receipt and item cataloging: 60 w/84 c
Illinois State University

- Could not answer the question “How long does it take to catalog a book?”
- Large number of rush requests
- Only had anecdotal evidence
Group Buy-In

- Sample form and requested feedback from the group
- Spoke with everyone impacted by the study
- Stressed that workflow should not change because of the study
- Looking at the numbers as a whole and not the data from individuals
- Trial run for one week in September
Time to Shelf Study

- October 7, 2013 to October 18, 2013
- Stressed do not change your workflow for the study
- Reported results to the group in December
- Raised questions about the workflow
- Data provides the ability to start the conversation about effective workflow
Northern Illinois University

- Designed a study to determine how quickly materials moved through the various processes in Technical Services
- July 2011 to June 2012
- Wanted to find out how long it took to:
  - Place an order on a newly-requested item
  - Receive item after placing order
  - Get to cataloging
  - Complete cataloging
  - Get labeled
  - Get to shelving
Flagged every tenth firm order placed
674 items received paper flags
Each person who completed a section of the study wrote date of completion on the flag
Graduate student compiled the data
Average number of days items spent in Department were 30.2, but many items took between 13-20 days
Study to determine average time to get items from receipt to shelf
Requested by Branch libraries
2005/2006
Results of study:
- Moving books from unit to unit caused delays
- Copy cataloging was shifted to Acquisitions
- Time to shelf was cut from 30-45 days to 14 days
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

- Not an overnight change
  - Took time to train Acquisitions staff
  - Some cataloging staff moved to Acquisitions in 2006

- Time to shelf study is now done annually
  - Staying on track?
  - New formats?
UIUC – OCLC Call Numbers

- Looked at the call numbers in OCLC records that were imported to determine if changes were made
- Results of study:
  - 85% of call numbers were not changed
  - Allowed UIUC to purchase more shelf-ready materials
UIUC – Cataloging Time

- Study to determine average time to catalog a book or serial
  -Measured original and copy cataloging
  -Used reports from Voyager
  -Did not rely on a single snapshot – used 5 or 6 days per semester
  -Work done outside Voyager difficult to measure
UIUC – MARCette records study

- Study to determine if enhancing short records improves circulation and findability
- Started in summer of 2003 and continued to 2004
  - Full cataloging - subject headings, additional names, etc.
- Did a follow-up study in 2005 to track increased access
UIUC – MARCette records study

- Another follow-up in 2010 to determine if increase in circulation
  - Significant increases since 2005
UIUC – Use of Assessment Data

- To improve functions in Technical Services
- Reports shared with campus community
  - Shows money is well invested
  - Informs reports for risk management
For more information on UIUC’s projects please contact:

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Questions
Bibliography for Assessment for Technical Services Panel (Alphabetically ordered)

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