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Abstract Sheet

Critical Issues Facing LIS Journals: A Reader's View

Line, Maurice B.

LIS (library and information science) journals suffer from gross over-production: while LIS articles are inter alia often repetitious, badly written, poorly presented, boring, unduly reverent, and parochial. Unlike books, articles are published with little consideration of their market, and there is no regular feedback. Selection of the useful from the useless is becoming more and more difficult, and means need to be found of making it easier.

Critical Issues Facing LIS Journals: A Publisher's View

Hajdukiewicz, Linda

The author describes the five critical issues which face journal publishers at a time of rapid change in technology and user expectations. First, the print versus online dilemma: how to publish electronically and how long to continue with hard copy versions. The benefits to authors of publishing in a journal of recognized quality and authority, as opposed to self-publication which may not reach the relevant audience, or be subject to the same quality control are covered. Second, given a diminishing subscriber base, publishers must identify existing customers and satisfy their needs. Electronic delivery systems may provide a means of identifying new customers and tracking use of journals. Third, quality control requires rigorous standards of selection, peer review and editing and statistics are provided to illustrate the importance of publishers in maintaining these standards. Fourth, the concerns of authors in signing over rights to electronic formats and the benefits, such as increased prestige from wider distribution of their work, are outlined. Finally, subscription pricing, the possibilities of pay-per-view and whether the latter will have an adverse impact on the existing subscriber base or generate a larger user base for individual journal articles are considered.

Critical Issues Facing LIS Journals: An Author's Perspective

Lor, Peter Johan

Three of the critical issues facing LIS journals identified by the Round Table of Editors of Library Journals are discussed from the perspective of an author who resides in a less developed country (LDC) in which the library and information sector is undergoing significant change. First, coverage: the "filtering out" of articles submitted by authors from LDCs may not be as great a problem in LIS as in other fields, but periodicals published in LDCs are impoverished by the tendency of their authors to publish in more prestigious foreign journals, which offer a greater likelihood of being read by their peers. Second, language barrier and bias: speakers of languages which are widely used internationally are less likely to read articles in other languages because unfamiliarity with terminology and conceptual frameworks and with the legal and administrative context of library and information work in foreign countries constitute real barriers.

Third, the balance between theoretical and practical content: because academic authors are highly motivated to publish, their work tends to predominate in high-ranking journals. This is illustrated by the unintended consequences of the South African system of state subsidies awarded for the publication of articles in “accredited” journals. The article concludes with a listing of the likes and dislikes of LIS authors.

Critical Issues Facing LIS Journals from the Point of View of a Hungarian Editor

Szántó, Péter

In smaller countries professional journals, such as those in library and information science, have three basic functions. First, they have to monitor world developments and evaluate them from a domestic point of view. Second, they have to inform professionals in the country about the selected foreign materials, through translations, abstracts, reviews and studies. Third, they have to make progressive domestic developments known to both domestic and foreign readers. The author uses his experience as an editor of the Hungarian journal *Tudományos és Műszaki Tájékoztatás* to demonstrate how this challenge can be met.

Freedom of Information: In Search of a Niche for the Library Profession in Swaziland

Muswazi, Paiki

Limitations to freedom of information in Swaziland are due to ideological preferences and the need to maintain traditions. Over 270 titles on communism, the African revolution and obscenity have been censored, library collection development prejudiced, and intercultural dialogue compromised in the last three decades. While the Swaziland Library Association’s response has at best been lukewarm, it is argued that opportunities to promote and institutionalize freedom of information exist in the Economic and Social Reform Agenda and the constitutional review initiatives. It is suggested that the pending National Library Bill should include intellectual freedom safeguards and enhance autonomy in collection development.

Building a Literate Environment: Using Oral-Based Reading Materials to Facilitate Literacy

Knuth, Rebecca

Research into the complex nature of traditional societies has redefined literacy as socially constructed and locally embedded practices or behaviors suggesting the potential for a dynamic, interactive, and mutually supportive relationship between orality and literacy rather than a dichotomous one. The article extrapolates from this body of research and explores options for the development of basic reading materials that support and validate the cultural practices of individual communities, help students to construct literacy out of

local knowledge, facilitate the transition from oral to written culture, and promote a literate environment.