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The OBS/TS Summit 2020 & Linked Data in Libraries Conference

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The first ever summit of our two special interest sections produced several excellent sessions:

Facilitating Open Knowledge: The Intersection of Wikidata and Libraries: Presenters shared how "inter-collectional connections broaden the experience to go into parallel and related items." What a fantastic summary of Linked Data, and Wikidata in particular. Many slides, available at http://hdl.handle.net/1805/23387, gave specific examples of using Wikidata for legal faculty scholarship. It was noted in the session and from commenters in the Q&A that "we're in the wild west days of Wikidata (just like Wikipedia used to be - it is very community based)." When considering Wikidata, remember that most things in Wikipedia are in Wikidata, but it is not always true the other way around. The discussion following the presentation focused heavily on "notability." Presenters made sure to comment that Wikidata allows you to create entries for faculty members that might not make it into Wikipedia. Questions were asked like, "Is just being a faculty member enough notability to be in Wikidata?" But the goal here is to build a robust citation network in Wikidata, adding items to support structure and more. One problem discussed was that not all language versions of Wikipedia have embraced Wikidata, so the benefit of Wikidata is not across the board. Presenters also shared about a new Wiki-project called Wiki abstract which hopes to dynamically pull summaries from Wikidata. The biggest takeaway was "Notability (Wikidata) is not the same as bibliographic warrant (authority control - NACO)."

Finding the Silver Lining in System Migrations: I discovered at the end of this session that it was originally intended as a large face-to-face program in New Orleans, had the AALL annual meeting and conference not gone virtual. It was planned to be a platform-neutral panel with speakers from a variety of law libraries talking about their migrations. As a result of things going virtual, this smaller session and the one following it (Hot Topic/Local Systems Committee Meeting: Making Post System Migration Efficient and Effective) covered the same terrain in two slices. There were so many takeaways from this session that I can't possibly share them all here, and even though the two speakers talked primarily about their library platforms, their joint experiences with systems and the discussion from attendees still rounded the session out to include a variety of platforms including III to Alma, Aleph, TIND, WMS, Folio, Sirsi, etc. A few of my favorite quotes and lessons from the presenters include:

- You have to always look out for other people (not just the records you touch).
- Always draw on the experience of people at other institutions who migrated before you, and don't be afraid to ask them, "Please help me! How did you do this?"
- You've got to build your own team. There's the team you are forced to be part of (your department, your library, your university, your consortium) and then your own external team. That is the team you can build yourself, where you can gather info about the migration process from those at other institutions and share it with others like you later, after you have gone through it.
- Carve out management and leadership opportunities for staff and other librarians using migration as the backbone. Since it is such a major effort, it can be a milestone for any individual's professional growth and take them further in their career.
- Turn it into a bootcamp (like a mini two-day conference), where you are migrating from one platform to another. Invite others in your area going through the same process (example was a DC area libraries migrating from Sierra to Alma).
- Know that other things may have to be sacrificed along the way. You will not survive migration if you try to do everything you have always done during a migration (or any other major project). If you're the manager, you should be shielding your team from the onslaught of "all the things" during a big migration.

- If you keep trying to do it all, you will not do any of it very well...and you may not make it. You have to think about prioritizing things in advance. What will you stop or delay to get the new, major work done?
- 3 years out and many are STILL cleaning up post-migration data messes. But it becomes the new normal.
- Get to know and use your university IT department as much as you can. That has been more helpful for people migrating than their law school's IT when there is not an ILS expert in your library or a true systems librarian at your library.
- Negotiate with staff and librarians to parse out what they really want and need to know how to do (you may need to reference interview the reference librarians!).
- Host a series of in-person sessions if you can (or virtual if you can't) to show staff and librarians how to do all the things they need for workflows as a live demo.
- Keep track of your training offerings and other documentation so you can show you did your due diligence for your library.

TS Resource Management Roundtable: Budget Cuts & Collecting Pivots: Wendy Moore from the University of Georgia Law Library led the discussion with a powerful statement that really summarizes the entire roundtable and the timeliness of the topics: "Crisis can lead to lots of creativity." Each of the panelists, Heather Buckwalter, Gilda Chiu-Ousland, and Anna Lawless-Collins, shared the state of things at their institution; the fallout from COVID-19 closures, including the stopping of shipments and the addition of online study aids and other e-resources to help students and faculty get through a quick pivot to virtual learning; and the budget that they are each facing for fiscal years 2021 and 2022. This session (as with several from day one of the summit) was not recorded to allow attendees to feel more comfortable sharing the details and situations of their library, law school, or larger institution. Two polls were executed in the larger Zoom room before dividing into smaller groups for more personalized and in-depth discussions. The polls were very interesting, revealing many of us still do not know our budget, or have vague numbers that are yet to be approved, and that the majority of us are cutting print journals more than any other area of our collections.

In the smaller groups, attendees were better able to share their own situations, including some very creative strategies for how to negotiate with vendors, what data they are using to make those decisions about what and how to cut items from the collection, and what they have already or are planning to cancel to meet the demands of the coming fiscal year. There was a big focus on mitigating expectations of faculty and other stakeholders, and many were open about having these difficult conversations with their faculty members related to monograph acquisitions and with their institutions related to print course reserve materials. Overall, an excellent program that was really open to sharing their situations so we can all learn from one another and continue best serving our library users.

Hot Topic: Technologies We Use: Presented by Jesse Lambertson, this session was more of an open discussion than a straight-forward presentation. Sharing his own library system as the beginning example, Lambertson pitched questions to the audience with lively responses in real time and invited members to un-mute and speak to their specific system challenges in the work from home environment. It was interesting to hear individuals sharing the pros and cons of their various integrated library system platforms once they were catapulted into teleworking. The clear up-side to having a web-based interface was the ease that these librarians and their staff could quickly pivot to working from home without the hassle of using VPN or requiring remote desktop. These included those using TIND and Alma to name a couple. Several of us still working with III's Sierra were able to join in chorus about our struggles in working from home with spotty VPN support and the differences in Sierra web as compared to the desktop client.

For importing and exporting records, both individually or in batches, many hacks were shared, including creative ways to use Marc Edit when working from home and the potential for more API's between Marc Edit and the ILS. It is, of course, that time of year when we are all gathering statistics. With much overlap from the previous session I attended, many of us commented we are accessing collection and user data much more right now to better inform decision making in a time of budget cuts. As a result, further roadblocks and workflow workarounds were discussed for various systems. Several attendees shared how they query their system for cataloging and other statistics, the issues they experience in the format of the data they pull out, and the obstacles that come with trying to do this type of work from home or with very limited access to the library. Many individuals are periodically retrieving data from their systems, exporting it at txt or csv files, and then taking it home on laptops or flash drives to be able to spend more time with it

when teleworking. Some shared more innovative approaches to both massaging data as well as collecting and sharing it, and Lambertson shared a highly creative approach using Python scripts to automate certain aspects of the csv to Excel conversion of his data. Another attendee shared their library's customized Google Sheets dashboard which pulls data from the ILS into the same location as reference transactions statistics (populated by Google Form responses). A truly fantastic session with lots of open dialogue between attendees. I am so glad I attended, and I can't wait to see and hear how the experiential system and data approaches our members are working with now unfold in the coming months and years as access to our offices and systems remains largely unknown during a pandemic.

Program Report

Mindful Middle Management: A Dialogue on Managing Up, Down, and Within

Alexis Zirpoli
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Moderator:
Holly Riccio, Director, California Judicial Center Library, San Francisco, California

Speakers:
Susan deMaine, Director, Indiana University Maurer School of Law, Bloomington, Indiana
Michelle Dewey, Legal Research Services Manager, BakerHostetler, Atlanta, Georgia
Joseph Lawson, Deputy Director, Harris County Law Library, Houston, Texas

This program was not centered around any particular practice of mindfulness or meditation. Rather, the goal of this session was to provide tools and ideas to practice mindful middle management at work. The panel examined several different mindfulness models and created 6 broad categories or "pillars." The panelists explained each pillar and shared their own experiences in applying these concepts in their careers.

1. Be Open to Experience and Have a Beginner's Mind: Having a beginner's mind means giving up pre-conceived notions of what you know or how things are done. It also means giving up fear of failure when wanting to try out new approaches. Quit worrying about the journey or the results, and be present in the moment. In terms of managing, this means being open about one's own ignorance, especially in situations where one is a new manager. This also means seeking out the expectations of hierarchical superiors. Being open and having a beginner's mind also opens us up to diverse ideas and approaches. Everyone is in a beginner position in dealing with the new realities presented by COVID-19.
2. Be Present in the Moment and Accept Reality: Slow down and purposefully guide your thoughts. Sometimes this is as simple as taking some deep breaths and focusing on your senses or sensations. Our brains contain two general states – the habit brain and the executive brain. The habit brain is useful for things like breathing. However, it has downsides, such as implicit biases. The executive brain is the part of the brain engaged when we're present and focused and guide our thoughts. We can use this awareness to challenge habits. Being present also aids us in accepting the reality that we must deal with, which is necessary in the decision-making process.
3. Non-attachment and Non-striving: Non-attachment means letting go of negativity or worries. Non-striving is about trying less and *being* more—being present in the moment instead of being solely focused on outcome. There are many negative attachments inherent to the legal profession, such as status, winning, being smarter, etc. This makes this pillar particularly challenging as managers in this profession. We do need to achieve, but we need to pair that with actively being present and celebrating positives.
4. Compassion and Connection: One aspect of mindfulness as a practice is generating compassion for yourself and your own emotional reactions. By focusing on the moment, we allow ourselves to notice our reactions and let them just be. This allows us to investigate our responses with respect and healing. This applies to management by extending compassion and connection to others with whom we work. By engaging this way, we can develop greater empathy for where others are coming from. We enhance this empathy by learning about our employees and superiors as people. Doing so enables us to work with each other with greater efficiency.