Wow! NOTSL's eBook Conference Reveals eBook Soup

By Rhonda A. Marr, Technical Services Manager, Portage County District Library

This June I attended eBooks: New Opportunities, New Challenges, presented by NOTSL. My library had purchased a Rocket eBook for the staff to experiment with, so I was familiar with the format, but I had no idea how complex and confusing the eBook market is.

There are a variety of eBook readers, the devices that display the texts. These come in different sizes and shapes and with proprietary software so that texts on one reader cannot be transferred to another reader. The differences in the reader formats are reminiscent of the differences between the VHS and BETA formats for VCRs. There are at least four different varieties of readers currently on the market. With companies buying each other, and new companies trying to get into this market, this can (and will) change at a moment's notice. Which reader ends up being the dominant one in the market, and therefore the one most libraries will want to have, is expected to be determined this Christmas.

The readers offer a variety of features. Some of them give you the ability to change the type font and size or offer different lighting and backlighting levels. With some you can search for specific words or phrases, access a dictionary, or take notes. Other devices have the memory to store multiple books

At the other end of the eBook market are eTexts. eTexts are texts (books, articles, magazines, etc.) which are put into a digital format. Some of these are in the proprietary software of their own readers, so that you need a specific reader to access that particular text. Others are in standard HTML or ASCII formats that may or may not be downloadable to specific readers, or to your PC or Palm Pilot. An example of this is Project Gutenberg. Their goal is to get texts into digital formats as a way of preserving them for future generations.

Still others are loaded onto websites that you must subscribe to. netLibrary is an example of this. netLibrary chose to avoid the whole issue of reader(s) and instead negotiated with publishers to put texts on their website. Institutions then subscribe to netLibrary and netLibrary provides their patrons with access to those texts from a computer.

Also on the horizon is epublishing. Here publishers keep electronic copies of titles on hand that can be printed on demand, thus avoiding the issues of print runs and storage.

The whole arena of eBooks seems to be in a great state of flux. Microsoft has recently entered the field with its Pocket PC and Clear Type software, which should add to the confusion. To help local libraries sort some of this out Cuyahoga County Public Library has generously set up a website at http://cuyahoga library.cuyahoga.lib.oh.us/ebooks/index.htm. It's a good place to check for more detailed information on the variety of readers, texts, and other initiatives.

I don't know about you, but all I want for Christmas is for Santa to pick one format and give it to everyone.

The Value of Local Editing

by Bonnie Doepker, Assistant Director for Technical Services, Dayton and Montgomery County Public Library

Many cataloging managers today face tough questions about editing MARC records for their local online catalog. Should they ask catalogers and/or copy catalogers to routinely edit or augment information on the MARC record? Local editing takes staff time and staff time equals money. If catalogers do edit records, what should they edit? Are the edits improving access to library materials, or making the database less standard, and therefore more difficult to use and update? Do local edits provide added value for our patrons? Is that value cost effective?

We didn't have to think of these questions, at least not in this way, before OCLC, shared MARC records, and the online catalog. Each library developed their own local standards and policies and then trained catalogers to follow them. We did what we could with

catalog cards and typewriters, which often wasn't much. But public service staff and patrons, recognizing our limitations, were happy with our product.

Today, the online catalog allows us to customize bibliographic records in our database with ease. We can provide additional bibliographic detail; add or delete author, title, and subject fields as needed; even link our MARC records to a related web site on the Internet. Most of the time the changes we make to the MARC record take only seconds or minutes per record. But those enhancements, multiplied by the number of titles cataloged each week, often come with a price in efficiency, standardization, and staff time. Many library administrators are hesitant to pay the price. Our public services staff and our patrons, not recognizing our limitations, are increasingly unhappy with our product.

In a broad sense, determining the value of local editing is probably found in the two principles that many "for profit" businesses examine when they make a decision about adding local value to a service. Do we truly understand what our customers need and want? Are we willing to accept the trade-off between value and cost?

The answers to more specific questions about local editing will be different for each library, and require some self-study. How does your online system handle the changes you want to make? How long will it take to modify the fields that you want to change? Do you have the staff hours available? Are you committed to making the changes consistently? Will anything happen to the local edits when your system is upgraded to a new version? When you migrate to a whole new system?

I believe that editing the MARC record locally does benefit the staff and patrons at our library. We can add an additional LC o local subject for a topic not recognized by a cataloger in another part of the country, but important in our community. We can resolve call number, title, and author field inconsistencies so our patrons know where to find all of the books in a popular series. (Not even LC does each title in exactly the same way as they did the previous titles.) We can add important contents notes.

But not every change that we can make is worth the staff time and effort it costs. David Nuzzo was writing about outsourcing when he said, "The current financial realities of library work dictate that better is not the only criterion. An operation must also be cost effective or lose the justification for allocating scarce resources to it." (*Library Journal*, 5/1/99, p. 46) That is ultimately what we are talking about when we discuss the value of editing the MARC record for our online catalog. And each library must make decisions about how much to do, and under what circumstances, within the context of their own situation.

Ohio's Technical Services Librarians Have Spoken!

Technical Services division members have elected **Jennifer Bull** as our new Assistant Coordinator, **Frances Acar** and **Georgianne Wiersch** as Action Council members, and **Margaret Maurer** as Secretary. **Marian Benjamin** also mounted a successful bid to be elected to Central Chapter Action Council, where she plans to represent technical services concerns and desires in a wider arena.

Newly elected officers take office in January. Here's how to contact your elected representatives:

- **COORDINATOR: Marihelen Hatcher**, Columbus Metropolitan Public Library, 96 Grant St., Columbus, OH 43215-4781 (614-645-2800) mhatcher@cml.lib.oh.us
- **OUTGOING COORDINATOR: Jeanne Poole**, Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, 324 Michigan Ave., Toledo, OH 43624. (419-259-5263) poole@tlc.lib.oh.us
- **ASSISTANT COORDINATOR: Jennifer Bull**, Ashland Public Library, 224 Claremont Ave., Ashland, OH 44805-3093 (419-289-8188) bullje@oplin.lib.oh.us

- **SECRETARY: Margaret Maurer**, Kent State University Libraries and Media Services, 370 Library, P.O. Box 5190, Kent, OH 44242-0001 (330-672-1702) mmaurer@lms.kent.edu
- **ACTION COUNCIL: Dale Greenbaum**, Euclid Public Library, 631 E. 222nd Street, Euclid, OH 44123 (216-261-5300 x 120) dale.greenbaum@euclid.lib.oh.us
- **ACTION COUNCIL: Rhonda Marr**, Portage County District Library, 10482 South St., Garrettsville, OH 44231 (330-527-5082) marrrh@oplin.lib.oh.us
- **ACTION COUNCIL: Georgianne Balcas Wiersch**, Cuyahoga County Public Library, 2111Snow Road, Parma, OH 44134 (440-794-9374) gwiersch@cuyahoga.lib.oh.us
- **ACTION COUNCIL: Frances Acar**, Cleveland Public Library, 234 Lowell, Kent, OH 44240 (330-673-6514) frances@kentinfoworks.com

Many thanks to everyone who ran for office this summer. It takes a great deal of courage to run for division office, and we sincerely appreciate the truly excellent candidates who volunteered for this honor. You made our choices most difficult!

We Need Your Questions

Have questions about a new product, or need information on a new standard? If your questions involve acquisitions, physical processing, cataloging, serials management, or a whole host of other technical services issues then just ask us. We'd like to turn your questions into information for all our readers, because if you're interested then others probably are too. You don't have to write anything formal. Give us the ideas and we'll take it from there. Send your ideas to Margaret Maurer at the address listed on the front page.

New Edition of GSAFD Is Available

The American Library Association has finally published the 2nd edition of the *Guidelines on Subject Access to Individual Works of Fiction, Drama, etc.* [ISBN: 0-8389-3503-6, $19.00] This slim, red, single volume work contains the list of form/genre headings used in the 655 field when I2 contains "gsafd". It also contains instructions on creating fictitious character subject headings, subject headings for fictional works about real people, and subject access to settings. To order, contact ALA Editions a 1-800-545-2433 or at http://alastore.ala.org.

OLC Annual Conference Programs

November 8-10 • Columbus

Come see what the Technical Services Division is arranged for you!

The Home Advantage: The Value of Local Editing
Karen Culp, Tiffin-Seneca Public Library, Jane Myers, Westlake Porter Public Library, and Bonnie Doepker, Dayton and Montgomery County Public Library, discuss how much MARC editing is right for your library.

The Nuts-And-Bolts of Plastic: Credit Cards in Acquisitions
Patrick Steele, Cuyahoga County Public Library, and Shirley Narwid, Euclid Public Library, discuss how libraries can use credit cards—even for Internet purchases. Co-sponsored by the Library Accounting Division.

PCC at Cleveland Public: It Really Works!
Louisa Kreider, Cleveland Public Library, explains how Core level cataloging helps CPL produce quality records that are cost-effective.

Acquiring Non-Book Materials
Marihelen Hatcher, Columbus Metropolitan Library, and Karen Fischer, Mansfield-Richland County Public Library, lead a panel discussion on locating vendors for AV and interactive media.

What? Your PCs Aren't Working?
Thomas Nason, Sr., Management Assistance, facilitates our discussion on what drives us nuts about our PCs.

MARC: Open the Door to Your Mystery Date
Georgianne Balcas Wiersch, Cuyahoga County Public Library, presents an entertaining and provocative session on how to make MARC work for you and your library customers.

Outsourcing Technical Services: What Have We Learned?
Jeanne Poole, Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, Lori Moore, Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, and Magda El-Sherbini, Ohio State University, discuss their experiences with outsourcing.

Collection Development: Centralized Selection or Selection by Committee
Meg Delaney, Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, leads the discussion on this timely topic.

The Technical Services division is also sponsoring a pre-conference on Book Repair featuring Judy Aldrich, Toledo-Lucas County Public Library Supervisor of Book Conservation and Processing.

Annual Meeting of the Technical Services Division

Thursday, November 9
8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.
OLC Annual Conference • Columbus

Your Primary Chance to Take Part in and Influence Your Division's Future

YOU SHOULD BE THERE!

Abraham A. Schechter.
Basic Book Repair Methods.
Libraries Unlimited, 1999.
$19.50 102 pages.
1-56308-700-6

At first glance Basic Book Repair Methods appears to be just what a smaller library might need—an inexpensive, easy to understand resource on basic book repair methods. Schechter's book comes close to this standard, but doesn't quite answer all the questions an inexperienced processor might have.

Organized by type of repair, it provides good information on cleaning paper, mending paper, book hinge tightening, repairing interior hinges, hinging-in pages, case and textblock attachment, cloth rebacking, and retitling. These repairs were chosen, according to the author, because they were "geared primarily to general, non-valuable materials."

But smaller libraries don't spend much staff time re-attaching textblocks and retitling spines. Expanded directions for simple tasks would have better served these libraries. The author also chose to describe hinging-in pages instead of the practice of tipping-in, explaining that it was a superior method. While this may be true, the method described involved much more work, and efficiency is something that most libraries must consider when standardizing book repair routines, particularly for non-archival materials.

Each chapter in the book features a general description, a list of materials and tools needed, and directions intermingled with photographs illustrating the process. The directions are very detailed and soundly based in book preservation methods. However the author does assume the reader already has some knowledge of the topic, particularly relating to the repair materials used. The glossary of "selected terms" is not very helpful, precisely because it is too selective.

Definitely the best thing about this book is the photographic illustrations, most of which were created by the author. There are a lot of them, and they are intermingled directly with the instructions and directions they illustrate. Many of them are shot as if the materials illustrated are being handled directly by the reader—almost a "repair-cam" effect.

This is not the best book written on book repair, but it does have some nice features that will make it useful in many kinds of libraries, perhaps as a quick visual reference guide to infrequently performed repairs. Don't, however, count on it being the only book repair resource in your library.

Coordinator's Corner: MARC Made Simple

By Jeanne Poole, Assistant Manager Technical Services, Toledo-Lucas County Public Library

By the time you receive this issue of *TechKnow*, technical services departments throughout the state will have received their MARC books cataloging poster. This poster was the brainchild of the Technical Services Division of OLC, and as members of this Division, we thought you would like to know how and why this poster was developed.

Technical Services staff are well aware that they frequently work in areas of the library that few public service staff understand and that they sometimes undervalue. Because of this and because many of us are the only ones who do what we do, we are keenly aware that we do not always have the resources, the contacts, and the networking opportunities that public service staff have. To help counteract this situation, the Technical Services Division wanted to find ways to help staff function more effectively, efficiently, and productively. We also wanted to find ways to reach Technical Services staff with a wide range of cataloging experiences.

Out of these concerns came the idea of generating a series of cataloging posters, each treating a different format. The posters could provide Technical Services staff with the most commonly used and basic MARC fields for each format, including examples of each. The poster format was selected so that staff could mount them at their workstations, next to their PCs, where they could be referred to easily.

We decided that the first poster in the series should focus on cataloging books since all libraries, regardless of size and service areas, buy books. Jeni Bull, Margaret Maurer, and Jeanne Poole formed a committee that spent time looking at cheat sheets created by different libraries, analyzing their contents, and deciding on what should be included in the poster and how the poster should be laid out. The end result was published in May and distributed in early June.

The Division is planning to issue a series of posters, each one dealing with a different format. Deborah Hathaway, Jennifer Bull, and Georgianne Wiersch are currently working on the second poster in the series that will focus on DVDs and videos. They anticipate having the preliminary work done in the fall and the poster published in early 2001. After that, we plan to do one on serials, then sound recordings, and finally electronic media.

Catalog department staff across the state have responded positively and wholeheartedly to the poster. We have received comments on format and interest in future posters and hope to receive additional comments on what is of value to all of you. We hope that the poster will be as helpful as we had envisioned it would be. Perhaps your public services staff would be interested in seeing a copy of the poster; perhaps it would help them better understand what a treasure the MARC record is. If you would to receive additional copies of the poster, please contact the O office.