The Sudden Systems Librarian

Hosted by ALCTS, the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services
Accidental
Unplanned
Unexpected

A quick poll – where are you at?

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Some help along the way

• Provide a foundational view of systems librarianship
• Discuss some areas that likely will be new along with some knowledge and skill sets you’ll want to develop
• Reduce the anxiety that comes with heading down a new and different path
How did I get here?

Glenn Bunton

- Juvenile Delinquency Counselor
- High School Social Studies Teacher
- Evening/Weekend Reference Librarian
- Reference Librarian/Search Analyst
- Microcomputer Specialist
- Head of Educational Technology Lab
- Systems Librarian for Internet Technologies
- Head of Systems
- Director of Library Technology Services
The Sudden Systems Librarian

So how did you get here?

- Technical Services/Access Services
- Public Services
- Technology

A quick poll
What is a Systems Librarian?

“The systems librarian is a unique breed. The position requires someone who not only understands libraries and computers but someone who can put both fields into context.”

---Patricia Ingersoll and John Culshaw

“Systems librarianship is the art and science of combining the principles of librarianship with the abilities of computing technology.”

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Common Library Systems

Integrated Library System
- Iliad
- Illiad
- Ex Libris - Sirsi

Web Server (s)
- Apache - IIS

Remote Access
- Ezproxy - WAM

Document Delivery

Digital repositories
- CONTENTdm – Digital Commons - DSpace
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A rose by any other name...sort of?

- Systems Librarian
- Digital initiatives librarian
- Innovative technology manager
- Metadata librarian
- Informatics librarian
- Web services librarian
- ILS manager
- Application developer
- Digital Librarian
- Web Manager
- Network Administrator

- Information systems librarian
- Library webmaster
- Digital services librarian
- Manager of library systems
- Lead library systems analyst
- Eservices librarian
- Head of information technology
- Digital collections administrator
- Technology Support
- “The Tech Person”

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It’s Bigger on the Inside

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What do we do?

- Administer the integrated library system
- Act as liaison between the library and campus computing entities
- Administer other library systems
- Act as liaison with technology vendors
- Provide information and training to library staff
- Computer hardware and software selection, installation, and troubleshooting
- Web presence leadership, oversight and maintenance
- Software development
- Database development
- Digitization activities
- Network administration and security
- Electronic resource management
What’s New?

- New perspectives
  - From apps to ops
  - From local to global
- New knowledge and skills (SAKI)
- New terminology
  - Network infrastructure
  - Network security/Firewalls
  - Authorization/Authentication
  - CMS-LMS-DMS
  - Tiered storage
- New activities
  - Backups
  - Updates and patches
  - Hardware assessment

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Decision-maker!

- Local versus Hosted
- Build versus Buy
- Proprietary versus Open Source
- Product versus Process

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Help is Available

We don’t know everything (and never will)

- Recognize you must know something or your organization wouldn’t have thought you were right for the position.
- Recognize most of the rest of us were in the same spot when we first began (and we survived and even thrived!)
How to survive and thrive

Find your support resources and use them.

• Find your local campus technology expertise and use it
• Vendor and product listservs/forums, particularly user-group driven can be invaluable
• Colleagues at similar institutions can offer a wealth of assistance and encouragement
Thank you!

Questions and Comments

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