MANAGING CATALOGING DEPARTMENTS: USING CONTRACTORS, VENDOR CATALOGING PRODUCTS, AND “INSOURCING”

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WHAT TO CHOOSE?

- Hand-crafted by in-house experts
- Pre-Packaged by a vendor
- Provided by contract cataloger
- Add-ons
DISCUSSION!

- What vendor products do you use?
- What are you thinking about using?
WHERE TO BEGIN?

- Throw out assumptions – including both “in-house is the most expensive” and “outsourcing is evil”
- Ask questions: What are your needs? What are your specialties? What are your resources?
- What are the reasons for local exceptions? Are they still valid?
CONTRACTING: DEVELOP A PILOT PROJECT

- Involve all staff that touch the material during processing – not just your department
- Develop a vendor/contractor interview list
- Select test materials and ask for a pilot
- Develop how you will check quality
Batches & Packages: Always Sample!

- Large packages of e-titles = your route to an instant backlog
- Packaged records vary in quality -- Where did they come from?
- Always ask for a sample, always try to load the sample in your ILS
- What about your OCLC holdings?
“IN-SOURCING”

- What materials do you have that are unique/special to your library?
- Is language expertise required?
  - Consider amount of material and vendor costs
- Is subject expertise required?
- If special handling is scrutinized and determined to be required, it may actually be cheaper to do in-house
ASSESS & RE-ASSESS

- Remember to involve all the personnel you asked during set-up
- Vendors & contractors have turnover like everyone else – the product you get now may not be the product you get six months from now
- Set up a quality control timetable that makes sense for you – and commit to it!
DISCUSSION!

- If you use a vendor or contractor, have you done quality checks? If so, how recently? Did anything change? Did you make adjustments?
THE PERFECT BLEND

- Balance timely access with attention in areas of focus for your library
- Use your cataloger-hours wisely!
- Cataloging products are an evolving target – especially with a change in standards coming soon
- Constantly review your blend
Thoughts?