Editorial

21st century funding and development strategies for libraries special issue

Libraries are resource-intensive organizations and rely primarily on their parent organization for the influx of financial resources to meet their mission. Funding is a major issue faced by both academic and public libraries, as funding support for higher education and public institutions continues to decline. Often libraries of all types have to compete within their parent organizations for available resources and funding. There is a consensus within the profession that libraries have to find new approaches to funding their budgets and communicating their value to ensure continued support.

My participation as the editor of this special issue of *Bottom Line* had its genesis in the intersection of my major responsibilities at Z. Smith Reynolds Library, Wake Forest University. As Associate Dean, I develop, oversee and administer an $11 million operating budget along with 32 restricted and endowed funds. I also coordinate a multi-year $20 million plan to renovate our 60-year-old building. The plan is dependent on our ability to raise most of the funds to underwrite it. Wake Forest is currently in the midst of its latest capital campaign (Wake Will; wakewill.wfu.edu) and, for the first time, the library has a formal goal in the campaign. So, at a local level, I have started to learn a great deal about cultivating donors and fundraising. Until the campaign, my library was like most libraries – dependent on our parent institution for the majority of our funding needs. Our one foray into fundraising to support a new exam-week program, "Wake the Library", (McGrath, 2012) involved putting on an annual 5K foot race (Smith and Mitchell, 2012). Although it was successful in community building and met fundraising goals, the revenue generated did not begin to compensate for the time and effort spent in months of race planning each year. However, our effort (coupled with students' declaration that the exam week event was a popular Wake Forest "tradition") demonstrated its value to university resource allocators. The money needed to fund the event was added into our annual operating budget. This was my first experience in seeing the power of creating narratives to communicate the library's value to the larger institution. This has become even more important as we cultivate donors in our capital campaign.

It is obvious that our library is not in a vacuum and that other institutions also contend with changing financial environments. Learning about the issues surrounding funding in libraries can inform future strategies and reviewing the literature is a good place to start. An article by Sootheran (2014) analyzed publication trends in library and information science journals in relation to academic library funding and development. His bibliometric analysis set the stage for further research on the topic of funding. He observed that "the topic at hand deals with a subject that is more complex than just finding money". There are hidden activities such as stewardship, gift management and marketing. Thus, the call for proposals for a special issue topic for this journal made me immediately consider funding and development and the potential for contributing new research about it to the literature.

It has been interesting to observe our university development team explore new ways to engage young donors using social media and initiate discrete smaller campaigns using the crowdfunding site Tilt (tilt.com). Two of the articles in this special issue

involve research on these emerging strategies. Joyce Garczynski's "#Donate: the Role of Social Media in Academic Library Fundraising" uses content analysis to examine the extent to which academic libraries are effectively using social media for fundraising. Debra Riley-Huff, Susan Ivey and Kevin Herrera report their survey findings on crowdfunding in libraries, archives and museums, accompanied by an informative literature review on crowdfunding.

Because libraries have traditionally relied upon their parent organization or government for financial support, many library organizations are unfamiliar and uncomfortable with new librarian roles that require outreach and development activities. Two authors present case studies about how each of their libraries tackled the issue. Mike Crumpton shares University of North Carolina-Greensboro Jackson Library's program to cultivate an organizational effort for development. His article includes practical tools that can be used in implementing your own effort. University of Utah's Alberta Comer and Jesse Whitchurch discuss their process in changing the culture of development at J. Willard Marriott Library. Both speak to the value of broadening development efforts by increasing involvement of library faculty and staff.

The final article presents an exploratory study of New Jersey's public libraries that is also pertinent for other types of libraries. The study sought to examine what factors influence decision makers in the annual budget request process. Edith Beckett surveyed New Jersey mayors and public library directors to ask them what had the greatest and the least influence on their funding decisions. Content analysis revealed that there was an agreement between each group on effective and ineffective strategies. Understanding up front what factors can influence budgeting decisions can inform library administrators as they shape their narratives to advocate for appropriate financial support.

Whether you have a formal or informal role in budgeting and fundraising at your organization, I hope these articles provide some food for thought or spark ideas for additional research topics.

Susan Sharpless Smith
Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, USA

References

McGrath, K. (2012), "Stress relief during exam week", *Wake Forest News*, available at: http://news. wfu.edu/2012/05/09/stress-relief-during-exam-week/

Smith, S.S. and Mitchell, E. (2012), "Putting on a race for funds and fun", in Krautter, M., Lock, M.B. and Scanlon, M.G. (Eds), *The Entrepreneurial Librarian: Essays on the Infusion of Private-Business Dynamism into Professional Service*, McFarland & Company, Jefferson, NC, pp. 129-154.

Sootheran, J. (2014), "Academic libraries and development: a bibliometric analysis of LIS journals relating to funding", *The Bottom Line: Managing Library Finances*, Vol. 27 No. 3, pp. 107-122.