american libraries

WINTER 2011

THE ~~MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY~~ ASSOCIATION

American Libraries
Digital Supplement
Winter 2011

PLUS
Online Resources from ALA

The Best of Both Worlds

Face-to-face with cutting-edge online classrooms

CONTENTS

Features

8

Departments

22
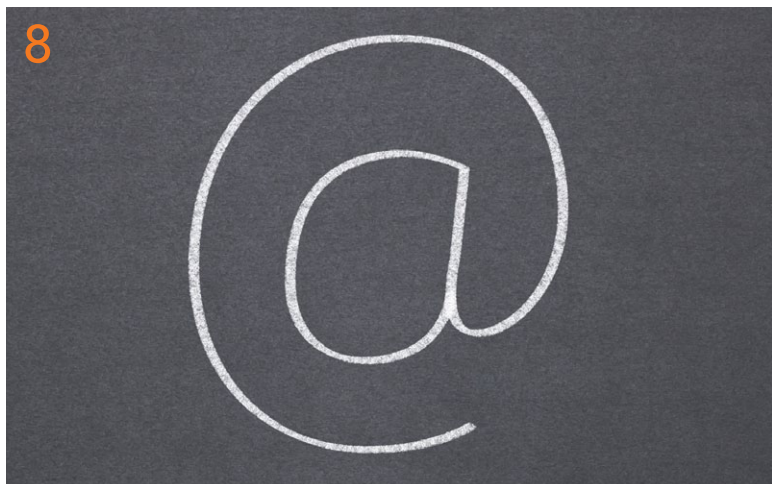
INVESTING IN YOUR STAFF WITH ONLINE LEARNING
by Jenifer Grady

Libraries are in the news more than ever as budgets are cut and the use of their services escalates. Staff may feel overloaded and overwhelmed, particularly when they are given new responsibilities as positions are frozen or cut. There is no better time to invest in staff by supporting their professional development.

The cost and availability of in-person, face-to-face educational opportunities may limit the number of staff who can attend a program. Online learning can be an effective alternative—education delivered by computer, using the internet and software that delivers coursework through data, video, or audio files. Advances in technologies allow for increasingly dynamic and interactive remote learning environments. A variety of methods for online learning is now available.

ALA has long provided continuing education as part of its mission to enhance learning. The June 2010 debut of the ALA Online Learning website (ala.org/onlinelearning/) has made it easier for the library community to find high-quality webinars, podcasts, and online courses on relevant topics. The site brings together online learning opportunities from across the Association; a wide range of options is listed, with a clear menu of choices outlining the investment in time and fees (if applicable).

Topics offered at ALA Online Learning include:

· Collection management
· Issues and advocacy
· Management issues for library leaders
· School libraries
· Service delivery in libraries

ALA Online Learning also lists offerings by the sponsoring ALA office or division.

The ALA Online Learning website brings all types of e-learning together in one location. Here you can find short webcasts and webinars as well as longer courses and you can select from learning events delivered synchronously (occurring in real time on a defined day) and asynchronously (prerecorded so they are available at any time).

Come to the ALA Online Learning website and find the wealth of offerings from all parts of the Association and reflecting all aspects of librarianship and types of libraries.

The site also contains a convenient glossary of terms and definitions. (Note: ALA units use these terms interchangeably, so be sure to read the fine print about when the event is offered or available.)

Explore options for you and your staff at the ALA Online Learning website. If you have one hour to learn something new, are beginning a new initiative and want to know current best practices, or want to be inspired by a thought leader in your area, the ALA Online Learning website is right at your fingertips with quality professional development choices to invest your energy and resources on in the topic areas you need most. ∎

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AL focus

**Emily Sheketoff
ALA Washington
Office Director**

2011 Midwinter Meeting Video Coverage *American Libraries* Video Editor Greg Landgraf's coverage of the 2011 ALA Midwinter Meeting, held in San Diego, California, January 7–11, includes interviews with attendees, the Unconference, the Buy India a Library project, the John Cotton Dana awards, the Washington Office update, the Youth Media Awards, the exhibit hall, and the "Wrap-up, Rev-up" closing event.

Additional AL Focus video coverage includes the 2011 ALA Presidential Candidates' Forum; the Stonewall Book Awards; a review of the Council I session by Peter Hepburn, Councilor for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table; a discussion on Oregon State University's use of the Book Genie mobile service, and more....

GLOBAL reach

Egypt Pulls Internet Plug to Silence Dissent Egypt, which has a major internet economy, pulled the plug for one week on the web in an apparent attempt to silence dissent, the Associated Press reported. Beginning 12:30 a.m., January 28, "the handful of companies that pipe the internet into and out of Egypt went dark as protesters were gearing up for a fresh round of demonstrations calling for the end of President Hosni Mubarak's nearly 30-year rule." He resigned February 11; Sohair Wastawy considers what role access to information played at *American Libraries Online*. . . .

Solutions and Services
New products showcase from *American Libraries*

Solutions and Services, the *AL* print column, has expanded online with regular posts about new product offerings from the profession's top vendors. In a February 4 posting, *AL* reported that Evanced Solutions has collaborated with the Texas State Library and Archives Commission to build downloadable templates based on the graphics for Texas Reading Club 2011 youth and teen programs. The templates will be available to customers the first week of March....
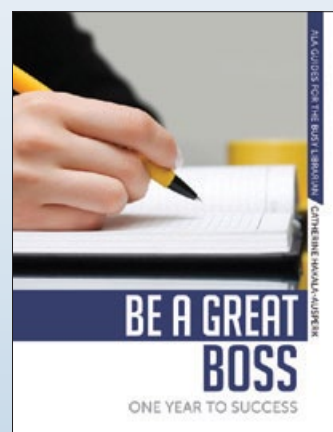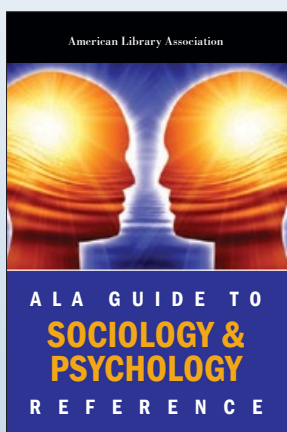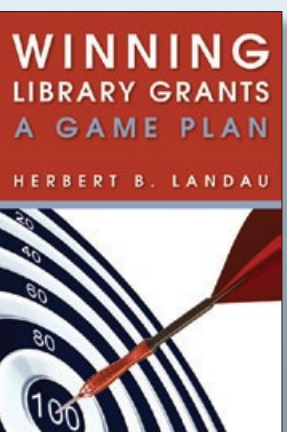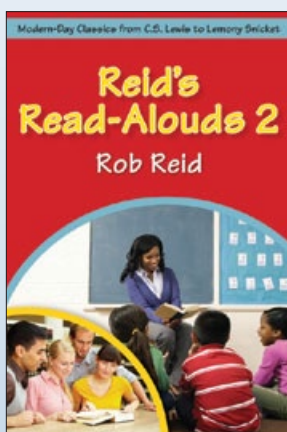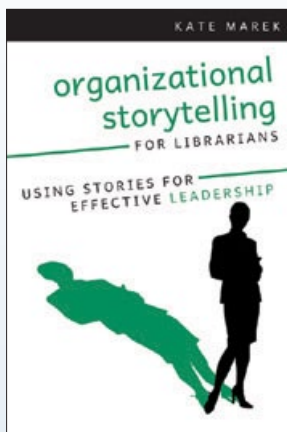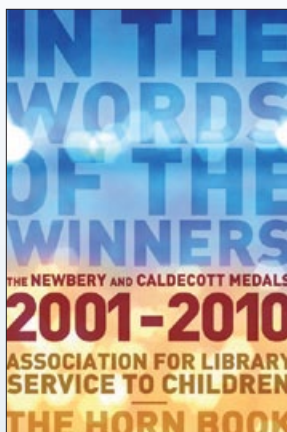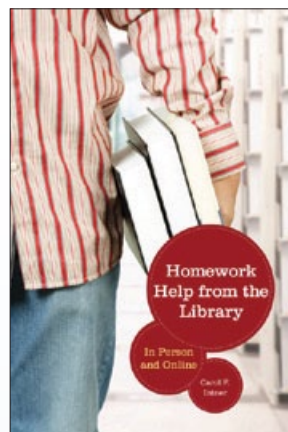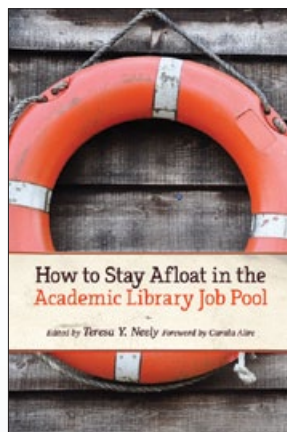
Explore and Grow Professionally with ALA Online Learning Access ALA's library-related online learning, which covers fundamentals, advances, trends, and hot topics! Find webinars, webcasts, e-courses, and e-forums offered by ALA divisions and offices.

>>> *American Libraries Direct* Every Wednesday in your e-mail, *AL Direct* delivers the top stories of the week. Sign up free.

>>> **New! Find us on Facebook** Now you can "like" our Facebook Page and get online content delivered to your Facebook Wall daily.

NEW FROM ala editions

ONLINE @ ALA

The American Library Association provides continuing education in a variety of venues and formats for librarians, library support staff, and library trustees. Check out the course list that follows for a sampling of offerings from ALA's 11 divisions as well as its Publishing Department; find even more professional-development classes and workshops online through ALA's Education and Careers section as well as the *American Libraries* Calendar.

ALTAFF Trustee Academy

ALTAFF's Trustee Academy is a series of online courses to help trustees become exceptionally proficient in their roles on behalf of their libraries. Each course is a recorded webcast that the trustee views on his or her computer any time of the day or night. All of the online courses are taught by a professional in the field and are priced both à la carte and as a full curriculum. Register on the ALTAFF website.

"Trustee Basics, Part I" will cover the role of the trustee in the community, who speaks for the trustees, governing vs. advisory boards, holding effective board meetings (getting consensus, open meeting laws, parliamentary procedure, etc.), and board self-assessment. This course will be led by Lynn Stainbrook, director of the Brown County (Wis.) Library.

"Trustee Basics, Part II" will cover understanding and setting policy, understanding and supporting intellectual freedom and patron privacy, meeting state standards, trustee liability and fiduciary responsibilities, considering D&O insurance, and trustee ethics. This course will also be led by Stainbrook.

"Working Effectively with the Library Director" will cover understanding and respecting the different roles, evaluating a library director's performance, and hiring a new library director. This course will be led by Peggy Danhof, ALTAFF past president and president of the board of trustees of the Fountaindale Public Library in Bolingbrook, Illinois, and Vicky Trupiano, director of the Fountaindale Public Library.

"The Library's Budget" will cover learning and understanding how your library is funded, understanding how spending decisions are made and who is authorized to make them, understanding the library's financial reports, making powerful budget presentations, and developing auxiliary funding sources. This course will be led by Christine Lind Hage, Public Library Association past president and director of the Rochester Hills (Mich.) Public Library.

"Advocating for Your Library" will cover sowing the ground with excellent public awareness and great service, how to design an advocacy campaign, collaborating with stakeholders such as Friends and patrons, and implementing the campaign. This course will be led by Carol Brey-Casiano, ALA past president and director of the El Paso (Tex.) Public Library System.

COST PER COURSE:

■ $30 per person for ALTAFF members and affiliates

■ $40 per person for nonmembers

■ $100 per board for ALTAFF members and affiliates

■ $125 per board for nonmembers

COST FOR THE SERIES OF FIVE COURSES:

■ $115 per person for ALTAFF members and affiliates

■ $150 per person for nonmembers

■ $225 per board for ALTAFF members and affiliates

■ $300 per board for nonmembers

http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/altaff/trustees/trustee_academy/index.cfm

Reading Instruction and Children's Books

Although children's librarians think learning to read is about books, teachers use buzzwords such as "Lexile," "phonics," and "word walls." Parents and students are often seeking grade-appropriate reading materials. Several methods are used to determine grade level. In order for children's librarians to effectively assist patrons, they need to understand how to interpret grade levels assigned to books by publishers and educators.

This course will provide children's librarians with an understanding of different methodologies for reading instruction and ways that the grade level of reading materials is determined. Books, periodicals, websites, and other material that children need to read will be evaluated from these perspectives. Librarians will be encouraged to develop strategies for explaining these grading formulas to parents and to communicate more effectively with teachers as a result of their understanding.

Spring (May 2–June 13)

Children with Disabilities in the Library

Imagine that Joey Pigza came into your library. Would he feel welcome? How would you provide library service for him?

A child with a disability may need an individual service plan. But many books or articles provide generalizations and all-encompassing descriptions. This course will take another approach. By reading juvenile novels about children with disabilities, we can discover their individual needs. First, we will examine how schools handle students with disabilities. Then we will explore ways that the library might be able to assist each child. We will look at inclusive programming, assistive technologies, staff attitudes, and legal considerations.

This course is not intended to be a comprehensive course. Rather, we will collaboratively develop strategies for determining needs and identify resources that can be consulted when an actual child requires our help.

Summer 2011 (July 11–August 22)

PRICES:

- $95 ALSC personal members
- $145 ALA personal members
- $165 nonmembers

Creating a User-Centered Website for Your Library

At 1 p.m. Central time on February 23, the Public Library Association will host a live, hour-long webinar, "Creating a User-Centered Website for Your Library," as part of PLA's "Public Libraries at Work" monthly webinar series.

Library professionals hoping to make their website as welcoming as their physical library should sign up to attend. They'll learn how to organize web content in an intuitive way that increases usability and navigability and will discover the impact of design and content on website effectiveness.

The webinar will be led by Nate Hill, web librarian at the San José (Calif.) Public Library and the PLA blog manager. Hill was an instrumental part of the Digital Futures Web Team, providing a "six blocks" design concept that was the structural basis for the new, user-friendly SJPL website.

Cost to attend the "Creating a User-Centered Website for Your Library" webinar is $28 (PLA members), $31.50 (ALA members), and $35 (nonmembers). Groups of any size can register for $129.

Virtual Spring Symposium

The Public Library Association will host a Virtual Spring Symposium 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Central time on March 30. This new online event will offer the premier professional education that PLA's Spring Symposium is known for but will be more affordable and convenient for attendees.

PLA will present a full day of rich programming with multiple program tracks, a lunchtime author interview, and keynote speakers. Program tracks will include: Technology, Administration/Leadership, Youth Services, and Adult Services.

INDIVIDUAL
- PLA members: $125
- ALA members: $155
- Nonmembers: $185

GROUP
- Up to 3 people: $225
- 4–9: $450
- 10+: $750
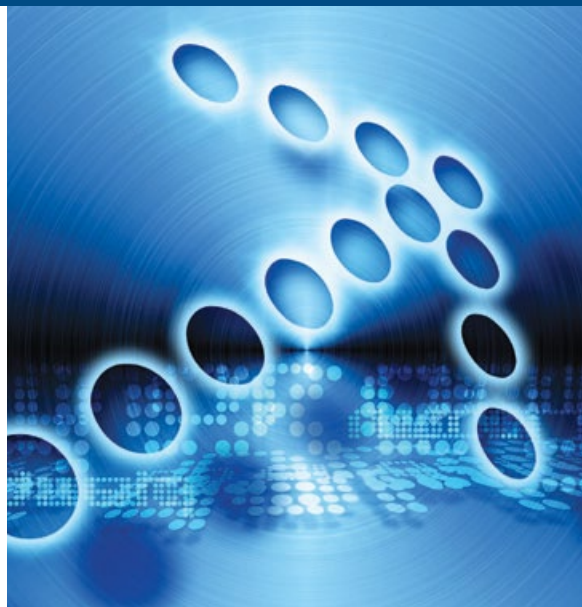
Institutional Repository Webinar Series

Supported by Berkeley Electronic Press, this series of webinars on institutional repositories is based on the presentations at the ALCTS 2009 Midwinter Symposium. The sessions have included a brief history of institutional repositories, key benefits and possible obstacles to a successful IR implementation, and a discussion of the future of the institutional repository within the larger context of the rapidly changing scholarly communication landscape. All sessions will last 1 hour and will begin promptly at 11 a.m. Pacific time; noon Mountain time; 1 p.m. Central time; and 2 p.m. Eastern time.

Four webinars about institutional repositories will be offered as a series between January and June. They are:

- January 26: Copyright and Contracts
- April 13: Metadata and the IR
- May 11: Utilizing IRs
- June 1: Reengineering the IR to Engage Users

You may purchase any one of the sessions or the series of sessions. If you purchase the series after some of the sessions have been presented live, you'll be given the access information for the webcasts of those sessions in addition to the live access to future sessions.

PRICING:

Single webinar: ALCTS members $39; nonmembers $49; *Group (members and nonmembers) $99; international $39.

Webinar series: ALCTS members $120; nonmembers $160; *Group (members and nonmembers) $346; international $120.

To register, complete the online registration form or register by mail for the session you would like to attend.

*Group registration applies to a group of people who will watch the webinar together from one access point.

Ahead to RDA Webinar Series

Catalog librarians and staff, department heads who will be planning RDA implementation, and library directors who need to understand the benefits and importance of implementing RDA should reserve an hour for an ALCTS webinar.

Five webinars about RDA will be offered as a series between January and June. They are:

February 2: "Changes from AACR2 to RDA: Part 1"; February 9: "Changes from AACR2 to RDA. Part 2"; March 2: "RDA and Serials Catalogers"; March 16: "Linked Library Data"; April 6: "Preparing Copy Catalogers for RDA."

You may purchase any one of the sessions or the series of sessions. If you purchase the series after some of the sessions have been presented live, you'll be given the access information for the webcasts of those sessions in addition to the live access to future sessions.

PRICING:

Single webinar: ALCTS members $39; nonmembers $49; *Group (members and nonmembers) $99; international $39.

Webinar series: ALCTS members $120; nonmembers $160; *Group (members and nonmembers) $346; international $120.

To register, complete the online registration form or register by mail for the session you would like to attend.

*Group registration applies to a group of people who will watch the webinar together from one access point.

Culling Your Collection: Fine Art of Weeding Webinar
MARCH 23

Weeding (or deselection) is an integral part of library collection management. Eliminating outdated, worn, or trivial items from your shelves can enhance the appeal of your collection and increase circulation. Topics covered in this webinar include understanding and using the CREW (Continuous Review Evaluation Weeding) criteria from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, creating a manageable weeding plan, and collection development policies for withdrawal and disposal of materials. Presented by Keri Cascio, branch manager, St. Charles (Mo.) City-County Library District, the session will last 1 hour and will begin promptly at 11 a.m. Pacific time; noon Mountain time; 1 p.m. Central time; and 2 p.m. Eastern time.

PRICING:

ALCTS members $39; nonmembers $49; *Group (members and nonmembers) $99; international $39.

To register, complete the online registration form or register by mail for the session you would like to attend.

*Group registration applies to a group of people who will watch the webinar together from one access point.

More information on future ALCTS webinars is available here.

Fundamentals of Preservation Web Course
NEXT SESSION: APRIL 4–29

This four-week course serves as an introduction to the principles, policies, and practices of preservation in libraries and archives. This course was developed by Karen Brown, University at Albany, SUNY, and Jacob Nadal, University of California, Los Angeles. It is designed to inform all staff, across divisions and departments and at all levels of responsibility. Fundamentals of Preservation will give you the tools you need to begin extending the useful life of your collections.

This course is one-third of the Collection Management Elective course approved by the Library Support Staff Certification Program (LSSC).

Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management Web Course
NEXT SESSION: APRIL 4–29

This four-week web course addresses the basic components of collection development and management in libraries. The course was developed by Peggy Johnson, University of Minnesota. Components include complete definition of collection development and collection management; collections policies and budgets as part of library planning; collection development (selecting for and building collections); collection management (e.g., making decisions after materials are selected, including decisions about withdrawal, transfer, preservation); collection analysis—why and how to do it; outreach, liaison, and marketing; and some suggestions about the future for collection development and management. This course is one-third of the Collection Management Elective course approved by the Library Support Staff Certification Program (LSSC) and is sponsored by Coutts-Ingram.

Fee: $109 ALCTS members; $129 nonmembers.

To register, complete the online form or register by mail for the session you would like to attend.

More information on future ALCTS web courses is available here.

www.ala.org/alcts

The Path to Collaboration: Making It Happen

Identify and analyze the factors that contribute to successful collaboration between classroom teachers and school librarians with Marilyn Heath. The Path to Collaboration: Making It Happen begins March 4.

Topics covered include the culture of the school, the role of the school librarian, qualities of successful leaders, and the various facets of the collaboration process. School librarians will learn what to bring to the collaboration table and how to develop and initiate an action plan to encourage teachers to join them. All students will leave this course with a collaboration action plan.

This course runs through April 1 and is self-paced.

COURSE FEE:
- $99 for AASL members
- $149 for ALA members
- $225 for nonmembers
- $99 for retired AASL members
- $75 for student AASL members

ACRL Webcasts

Digital Rights Management (DRM): Information Roadblock for Library Users
MARCH 1

Learn what DRM is, why it exists, its history with the entertainment industry, and the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

New Models for Credit-Bearing Information Literacy Courses
MARCH 15

Learn about best practices for credit-bearing information literacy courses based upon a literature review and several years of experimentation with various approaches to teaching a one-credit course.

So You Want to Create an Interactive Information Literacy Tutorial?
APRIL 19

Collect practical tools and analyze the concept of the information literacy tutorial as a flexible tool that can be used for strategic assessment in the classroom, as well as a standalone source for students that provides individualized feedback and the opportunity for review.

Embedded Librarians: Integrating Information Literacy Instruction at the Point of Need
APRIL 26

Embedded Librarians will describe examples of successful embedded projects across the range of academic levels and departments, including both online and on-campus instruction.

REGISTRATION FEES:
- ACRL members: $50
- ALA members: $75
- CACUL members: Can$90 (charges will be made in U.S. dollars)
- Nonmembers: $90
- Students: $40
- *Group: $295

*One person keyboards but the institution may project the webcast to others in the same location.

Asynchronous Courses

Copyright and the Library Part 2: Library, Classroom, and Other Issues Including the DMCA (Sections 512 and 1201)
APRIL 11–29

Focus on issues pertaining to libraries with a special focus on how copyright pertains to the classroom setting. Sections 108, 109, 110, 512, and 1201 will be examined for a thorough understanding of their impact on academic libraries.

Libraries and Student Affairs: Collaborating to Support Holistic Student Development
APRIL 11–29

Examine the goals and methods of student-affairs professionals and how libraries might collaborate with them to develop innovative programming initiatives.

Know Your Users: Employing Ethnographic Methods in User Needs Research and Library Assessment
APRIL 18–MAY 13

Find out how to develop, design, and implement a qualitative ethnographic research study to examine user practices and behaviors in a library setting.

REGISTRATION FEES:
- ACRL members: $135
- ALA members: $175
- CACUL members: Can$195 (charges will be made in U.S. dollars)
- Nonmembers: $195
- Students: $60

ALA Editions

ALA Editions offers nearly 50 self-paced eCourses on library management and other issues including:

Library Security eCourse/ e-book Bundle

This self-paced tutorial is adapted from the ALA Editions book *The Library Security and Safety Guide to Prevention, Planning, and Response,* by Miriam B. Kahn. It is organized in eight lessons and estimated to be four hours of instruction. This eCourse is licensed for single-site use.

A hallmark of the library is its open-door policy, encouraging access to information for all, but it's important to ensure your library is both accessible and secure. Disaster and security consultant Miriam B. Kahn's Library Security eCourse provides you with the information and tools you need to identify and address the current risks in each area of your library.
Miriam B. Kahn
Publisher: ALA Editions
Price: $63.05

Library Supervision eCourse/ e-book Bundle

This self-paced tutorial is adapted from the ALA Editions book *Fundamentals of Library Supervision,* second edition, by Joan Giesecke and Beth McNeil. It is organized in seven lessons and estimated to be three hours of instruction. This eCourse is licensed for single-site use.

Today's library supervisor is challenged with managing teams and collaborative work groups rather than the more traditionally hierarchical structures in library services. A good manager must be able to demonstrate technical skill, good writing and oral skills, and time management skills. Most importantly, a successful manager must be flexible. The Library Supervison eCourse provides information and tools to effectively manage your library staff. Whether you're a newcomer to the library or have been promoted from within, this eCourse addresses specific opportunities to sharpen your management style. Quizzes at the end of each lesson test your knowledge, while "Further Reading" suggestions point you in the direction of additional information.
Joan Giesecke and Beth McNeil
Publisher: ALA Editions
Price: $64.35

Copyright and Electronic Resource Management eCourse/ e-book Bundle

This self-paced tutorial is organized in 16 lessons and estimated to be eight hours of instruction. This eCourse is licensed for single-site use.

Whether purchasing electronic resources from publishers, publishing blogs, or managing Flickr sites, library staff work with digital content every day. Understanding the basics of copyright as it applies to these resources can save the library trouble down the road. This Copyright and Electronic Resource Management eCourse will help you learn the legal, strategic, and practical implications of using, publishing, and redistributing licensed digital content.
Lesley Ellen Harris
Item Number: 7800-1664
Publisher: ALA Editions
Price: $156

Marketing Public Libraries eCourse/PDF e-book Bundle

This self-paced tutorial is adapted from the ALA Editions book *Bite-Sized Marketing: Realistic Solutions for the Overworked Librarian,* by Nancy Dowd, Mary Evangeliste, and Jonathan Silberman. It is organized in seven lessons and estimated to be 3.5 hours of instruction. This eCourse is licensed for single-site use.

The internet has ushered in a new wave of consumer-driven marketing. As a result of this flurry of offerings, communication networks have evolved into social networks. Interactive information sharing, described as Web 2.0 technology, provides tools that include word-of-mouth marketing. The Marketing Public Libraries eCourse explains how to create effective, community-based marketing campaigns using the latest and most popular Web 2.0 tools. Quizzes at the end of each lesson test your knowledge, while "Further Reading" suggestions point you in the direction of additional information.
Nancy Dowd, Mary Evangeliste, and Jonathan Silberman
Publisher: ALA Editions
Price: $60.45

PUBLISHING

Marketing Academic Libraries eCourse

This self-paced tutorial is adapted from the ALA Editions book *Marketing Today's Academic Library: A Bold New Approach to Communicating with Students,* by Brian Mathews. It is organized in nine lessons and estimated to be 4.5 hours of instruction. This eCourse is licensed for single-site use.

The library is a popular location on many college campuses, and if you're a librarian, you want it to stay that way. With social networking and other Web 2.0 technologies saturating academic institutions across the United States, it's crucial for librarians to skillfully use these tools to effectively market all aspects of the library's appeal. In the Marketing Academic Libraries eCourse, Brian Mathews, an experienced academic librarian who has used technology for a variety of library outreach initiatives, will help you make sure your library is more popular than ever. Quizzes at the end of each lesson test your knowledge, while "Further Reading" suggestions point you in the direction of additional information.

Brian Mathews
Publisher: ALA Editions
Price: $55

Interactive Workshops

Liven Up Baby and Toddler Storytimes with Sign Language (ALA Editions Workshop)

MARCH 23, 1–2:30 PM EASTERN

Using sign language during library storytimes is both a way to communicate with babies and toddlers and to broaden the appeal of storytimes by making them accessible to deaf and hearing-impaired children and parents. This interactive workshop will allow participants to learn from American Sign Language interpreter, librarian, and storyteller Kathy MacMillan, who will use video examples to provide easy-to-learn signs that can be retaught and incorporated into storytime ideas. Librarians will be able to use the skills learned in this workshop to create programs that will help parents communicate with their children at home.

Kathy MacMillan
Publisher: ALA Editions
Price: $50

Making Mobile Services Work for Your Library (ALA TechSource Workshop)

MARCH 9, 2:30–4 PM EASTERN

Library services for mobile devices like smartphones and iPads are becoming more and more common. As these devices explode in popularity, it's important that libraries be able to offer their patrons services and resources through them. In this workshop, Cody Hanson will provide a foundation for launching, maintaining, and expanding mobile services in your library.

Cody Hanson
Publisher: ALA TechSource
Price: $50

Check in at the ALA Store for more details and purchasing instructions about these upcoming ALA TechSource Workshops:

- "Gadgets and Libraries" with Jason Griffey (April 13)
- "Building the Digital Branch" with David Lee King (June 8)

More details and purchasing instructions at the ALA Store . . .

Booklist Webinars

Offering free opportunities to hear representatives from top publishing houses, *Booklist* editors and authors discuss a variety of book-related topics.

Details and registration instructions about future webinars are listed here.

Below are webcasts from a selection of recent *Booklist* webinars:

■ "Encyclopedia Evolution," an hour-long webinar that provides an up-close look at how encyclopedias have changed and their latest adaptations. Sponsored by Encyclopaedia Britannica, Grolier, and World Book.

■ "Seeing Is Reading: An Inside Look at Graphic Novels," an hour-long webinar that explores new graphic novel titles and the role of graphic novels in the library and beyond. Sponsored by Lerner Publishing Group, ABDO Publishing Group, and SLG Publishing.

■ "Reaching Reluctant Readers: Using High-Interest Fiction to Engage and Inspire," an hour-long webinar featuring panelists in the library, education, and publishing fields who have had success using fiction to reach at-risk and disengaged readers. Sponsored by Orca Book Publishers.

■ "Defending the Right to Read: Celebrating Banned Books Week," featuring special guest Judy Blume. This hour-long webinar features a stellar panel of experts discussing book-rating systems, the impact of the internet on challenges, the effect of censorship on children's publishing, and how to best prepare for book challenges. Sponsored by Random House Children's Books.

■ "The Scoop on Series Nonfiction," an hour-long webinar moderated by *Booklist*'s Books for Youth Associate Editor Daniel Kraus, which features five of the top publishers in this booming field discussing their latest titles and recent trends in series nonfiction. Sponsored by Heinemann-Raintree; Gale, part of Cengage Learning; Weigl Publishers; Black Rabbit Books; and Lerner Publishing Group.

■ "Love and Magic: Trends in Romance Fiction," an hour-long webinar featuring readers' advisory expert Diana Tixier Herald, best-selling romance author Katie MacAlister, and representatives from Sourcebooks and AudioGO (formerly BBC Audiobooks America) discussing the many facets of the romance genre, including today's hot supernatural and fantasy titles. Generously sponsored by Sourcebooks and AudioGO.

All *Booklist* webinars are archived here.

Other ALA Publishing Webcasts

RDA Toolkit—A Guided Tour
RECORDINGS OF THE WEBINAR PRESENTED FEBRUARY 8–9, 2010
The online RDA Toolkit provides a one-stop resource for evaluating and implementing RDA and is the most effective way to interact with the new standard.

RDA Toolkit–What's New Since August Webinar
RECORDINGS OF THE WEBINAR PRESENTED NOVEMBER 10–11, 2010
Also available are the slides including speaker notes (PDF file) used during the presentation.

Find out what makes *Guide to Reference* such a valuable resource.

Watch our four "how-to" video tours of the features *Guide to Reference* offers, which allows you to quickly find authoritative sources, take advantage of expert guidance, share annotated entries, and locate the sources described.

ALA Graphics offers free webinars on how to use the products of the READ Design Studio:

READ Design Studio: Next Steps for Advanced Poster Design
FREE: MARCH 24, 3 PM EASTERN
Learn how to take READ Design Studio customized READ® posters to new creative heights! This free webinar will explore advanced techniques in Adobe Photoshop Elements to design eye-catching and inspiring posters that promote READing at the library.

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Reflections of
Certification
Candidates &
Graduates

A LA offers two certification programs, one for Library Support Staff and one for public library managers with an MLS. For both, online courses are critical to candidates' learning and completion of the programs. It was clear from the outset that online delivery of content was preferred, whether asynchronous or synchronous.

Library Support Staff Certification Program

This is the first anniversary of the Library Support Staff Certification Program (LSSC). Library support staff (who, for the record, have many other titles and group identities, depending on their state and local customs) have been asking ALA for many years to develop a program that would establish national standards and recognize their expertise. In January 2009, the first candidates were admitted. Candidates must have a high school diploma or equivalent and have worked or volunteered in a library for at least one year. They develop portfolios or complete courses in six of 10 competency sets, and have four years to finish the program. Many of the courses are online, giving equal access to all candidates, regardless of the size of their library or location.


Debbie Odum was the first candidate to submit a portfolio in the LSSC Program.

"Working on my Library Support Staff certification has been a new, exciting, and challenging experience for me. I like the idea of being certified in my chosen field. I believe that it will give me credibility in my current position and any future positions I may seek.

"My goal was to have completed two competency sets before the end of the first year and I should be able to accomplish that goal. For the Youth Services proficiency, I submitted a portfolio. This entailed more work than I had originally thought but was still a good experience. It was interesting looking for information (through the internet, books, and talking to professionals) to complete the portfolio, as well as drawing on my own experience working with children. I started work on my second portfolio during the summer but have put it aside for a while to take an online course in Communications and Teamwork. This is my first attempt at taking an online course, and I have found, to my surprise and relief, that I am enjoying it. I like the flexibility of logging in at my convenience to do the work and getting to know others who are working on their certification too."

Debbie Odum, media aide, Washington School, Marion, Ill.
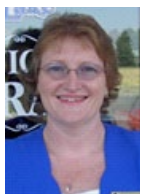
Georgette Rogers is the first graduate of the LSSC Program.

"I took part in the ALA Library Support Staff Certification so that I could be a well-trained member of the library staff. I have a Library Technician degree that is 16 years old, so to have an opportunity to upgrade my knowledge was an exciting challenge. It was thrilling to know that there were competencies that allowed me to choose what I wanted to take and train in. I actually chose to complete all of the competencies, which I did in about a year's time, and was the first to earn the certificate. I now feel that I can contribute in many ways to my library and be more of an asset to the director. I feel comfortable helping her with projects and answering a reference question to the best of my ability in the absence of the librarian. My boss, my family, and colleagues are proud of my success and feel comfortable asking me to assist where I may not have before because of lack of knowledge and confidence."

Georgette Rogers, circulation supervisor, Liberty Lake (Wash.) Municipal Library

Certified Public Library Administrator Program

The Certified Public Library Administrator Program (CPLA) is approaching its fifth year of operation in 2011. There are more than 35 graduates and 130 candidates who are building managerial skills in areas such as building management, budgeting, grant-writing, personnel management, and management of technology. Each CPLA candidate is a public librarian with an MLS and at least three years of supervisory experience. They take courses, many of which are online, in seven of nine competency sets. Here is some feedback from CPLA graduates:

JACQUE GAGE, director, Joplin (Mo.) Public Library—"I changed positions to a larger library system and believe that participating in the CPLA program helped me to make the change. (But I still have a lot to learn!)"

BRYAN FEARN—"First, I received a promotion and became the assistant library manager of the largest and busiest branch of the Henderson Libraries." Bryan is now Troutdale branch administrator, Multnomah County (Oreg.) Library.

BONNIE TOLLEFSON—"One of the best aspects is networking with people who are serious about librarianship all over the country. After the Budget class I was able to present a convincing argument to the Board of County Commissioners for hiring an additional staff member, who has been a godsend. The grant application that I worked on during the Fundraising class was successful."

EVE TALLMAN, Mesa County (Colo.) Public Library—"Because of my CPLA budgeting class, I have more ways to look at and work with budgets. I can articulate program costs and cost-benefit ratios much more expertly now, and I definitely 'work smarter.' "While my marketing skills were already somewhat honed by way of running a small library and donning many hats, the CPLA course gave structure and substance to my skills that were based on readings and discussions and weren't just 'seat of the pants.'"

One of the benefits offered to graduates is a review of their resumes by the CPLA Certification Review Committee. The graduates can then append CPLA to their names [like Dorcas R. Bowler, B.Ed., MLIS, CPLA], as it is a registered trademark.

DORCAS BOWLER, National Library and Information Services, Nassau, Bahamas—"I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for the business-card holder and also a review of my CV. Thank you for the fine suggestions."
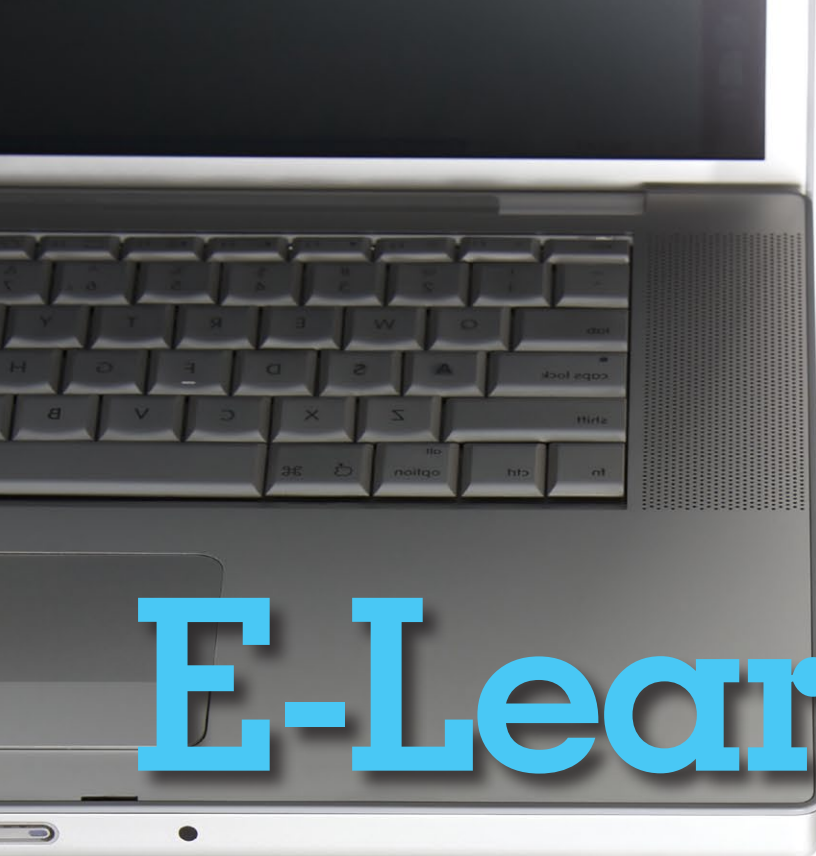
By Paul Signorelli

E-Learning:

The Product of a Risk Is a Lesson

Libraries' staffs and users alike are showing a keen interest in e-learning. Fortunately, there is no shortage of books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and online materials and internet-based resources about best practices in e-learning. However, a review of these sources suggests that libraries are far behind other organizations in developing effective and comprehensive e-learning programs.

If we mistakenly believe that e-learning is all about using technology in workplace learning and performance, we will not be successful in providing effective learning opportunities. Excellent e-learning practices that produce measurable results are rooted in the same foundations of the best classroom-based training-teaching-learning programs. These include good planning and follow-up; support and involvement from organizational leaders; better-than-adequate resources; engaged instructors and learners; and a variety of delivery methods.

Trainer-teacher-learners who are conducting research and documenting the results also cite the importance of providing enough time for learners to absorb the lessons being offered; an organizational commitment to creating, nurturing, and sustaining a community of learners; and effective assessment and evaluation systems that provide the likelihood of improvement at the earliest possible moment in the learning process.

Effective e-learning, like the best classroom-based instruction, is collaborative, occurring through a variety of formal and informal means. There are one-time sessions and lesson series, each building on previous sessions. Coaching and mentoring, on-the-spot (face-to-face or online) sharing of information among colleagues, learner-initiated reading and research—including use of websites as well as in-house resources—and a variety of other options are becoming prevalent through online social networking tools.

When we think about e-learning, we often mimic our overall approach to technology: We either allow it to inspire us with a sense of awe or we are overwhelmed by it. It is possible to lose sight of the fact that technology is a tool, a means to an end, and not the controlling factor that determines our goals and objectives. Workplace learning and performance need to lead to positive change that benefits organizations—libraries—and the people they serve in measurable ways.

If we see the tools of e-learning—the computer network, the learning management system, the programs, and the online social networking tools that help create effective, creative communities of learners—as resources, we realize that we must look at how learning occurs in our libraries. Only then can we produce and engage learners with first-rate e-learning offerings that produce results in line with libraries' mission, vision, and value statements.

We also need to recognize that e-learning technology is evolving so quickly that those of us who are involved in training, teaching, and learning will remain in a perpetual state of learning, which we can turn to our advan-

Effective e-learning, like classroom instruction, is collaborative and occurs through both formal and informal means.

tage as trainer-teacher-learners. Nothing will make us more effective than developing the ability to move comfortably between each of these three interrelated roles; we can use our own experiences and insights to develop and provide what those who rely on us need most. Attempting to master any one e-learning tool is secondary to having a clear understanding of how e-learning tools function.

With all of this in mind, we can argue—and we might even agree—that best practices in e-learning will avoid making the technology the center of our efforts. While we need a basic understanding of what is currently and technologically possible, we also need to take the broader view of what our learning colleagues need, what must be in place within an organization to support their learning efforts, and what can be done to promote the greatest possible returns for all the time and money we invest in our training-teaching-learning efforts.

Bringing e-learning to life

Libraries are currently in a paradoxical situation. They are the free community centers to which learners increasingly turn when they need help using technology, but they are often far behind what is happening in the training industry as it has developed outside of libraries. Because library staff and patrons often need to use online resources to gain access to what libraries provide, they are at a tremendous disadvantage if they do not have access to training in how to use the tech tools that libraries offer.

One significant issue facing library administrators and staff as they consider engaging in e-learning is whether to utilize existing e-learning offerings, either purchased or available at no cost; produce their own; or use a combination of both options. A survey commissioned by WebJunction in 2005 and later published by OCLC suggested, not surprisingly, that e-learning products were more likely to be produced by larger library systems, state libraries, and vendors than by smaller library systems. The Iowa and Maryland state libraries were already making e-learning work by providing content for libraries in their service areas, and a number of statewide training organizations including LibraryU in Illinois and Infopeople in California, regional networks including Amigos and SOLINET (which, in 2009, merged with PALINET to become Lyrasis), and WebJunction (which absorbed the LibraryU learning modules in February 2009) were active content providers of e-learning for library staff.

Another significant issue is what library users bring to the library in terms of experiences and expectations

and how well or ill-prepared library staff is to respond to those experiences and expectations. Recent national reports indicate that elementary and high school students are increasingly familiar and comfortable with e-learning.

Furthermore, members of library staff who are still struggling to learn and become comfortable with e-learning options are discovering there is even more to anticipate. The rapid evolution of mobile technology is creating yet another learning format: m-learning—learning opportunities delivered through mobile devices. "Mobiles are already in use as tools for education on many campuses," note writers of the New Media Consortium and Educause Learning Initiative's 2009 *Horizon Report* (PDF file), and increasingly "sophisticated tools . . . are quickly emerging."

In fall 2008, Abilene (Tex.) Christian University "became the first university to distribute Apple iPhones and iPod Touches to the incoming freshman class . . . to explore a new vision for mobile learning"; in spring 2009, the university also hosted a mobile learning summit "for campuses deploying iPhone and iPod Touch–focused applications, portals, and initiatives in higher education," according to a press release on the university's website.

"The fact that many students already own and carry mobiles remains a key factor in their potential for education," the *Horizon Report* adds.

Given that students—many of them library users—are becoming more comfortable with and attracted to e- and m-learning raises a fundamental question for library staff: How can they be uneducated in or uncomfortable with how these tools function if they are to continue serving library patrons in an onsite-online world?

The good news for interested library staff is that there are plenty of books and articles to help all of us become grounded in the basic and advanced issues we face as we become adept at e-learning. (An annotated bibliography of resources is available online as a PDF file.) The bad news is that we may currently be concentrating on less-than-central issues in terms of what produces effective e-learning.

OCLC's *Trends in E-learning for Library Staff* (PDF file), based on a survey that drew 651 responses from across the United States, suggests that e-learning in the library field "is still young," is attracting interest from a majority of those who responded to the survey, and is somewhat more likely to be purchased rather than produced by most libraries interested in e-learning because of the cost involved in producing original content and the level of expertise needed. Those who expressed most interest

in adopting e-learning during the year immediately following the survey cited "convenience for learners," "ability to reach more learners," and "cost-effectiveness" as reasons they were interested in e-learning, while approximately 25% of the potential developers and 10% of the potential purchasers cited "instructional effectiveness" as a reason for proceeding.

Cost-effectiveness, however, may include unanticipated challenges for those interested in producing their own e-learning content. Citing the results of a study published in 1999, Canadian educator Tracey Leacock writes in an article (PDF file) published in 2005 in Issue 4 of *The Learning Organization* that "many organizations have found that, although putting material online can potentially save time and money in the long run, the up-front cost and effort is significantly greater than in traditional lecture-based course offerings. . . . For a small organization that is growing rapidly, this front-loading of the development work poses a real challenge."

Documenting the success of e-learning efforts also poses challenges for those working in libraries. My own interviews and online survey conducted in early 2009 found no U.S.-based libraries that were studying and documenting differences between results produced by classroom-based learning and e-learning. Peer-reviewed journal articles and other sources summarizing studies from a variety of nonlibrary sources offer some guidance through reports that well-designed e-learning programs can be equally if not more effective than face-to-face learning opportunities.

Those interested in trying e-learning within their organizations have plenty of options via the purchase and sometimes free use of offerings from Infopeople, LE@D (Lifelong Education @ Desktop), Lyrasis, TechSoup, T Is for Training, WebJunction, and others.

In participating in course offerings or helping to design courses through some of these organizations, I have found that there is nothing like personal experience to bring the world of e-learning to life. Attending and participating in one-time webcasts and webinars, taking multisession asynchronous workshops, and becoming completely immersed as a student in two graduate-level distance learning programs since summer 2007 has given me an experience that no amount of reading and interviewing can come close to matching.

Considering the least challenging of these formats—one-hour webcasts and webinars—yields immediate lessons. A combination of dynamic PowerPoint slides that combine text with images and are integrated into the overall presentation rather than simply read verba-

> The rapid evolution of mobile technology is creating yet another learning format: m-learning, delivered by mobile devices.

WHAT LIBRARY STAFF ARE SAYING ABOUT ALA ONLINE LEARNING

BOOKLIST ONLINE

The Scoop on Series Nonfiction: What's New for Fall

■ "The webinar on series nonfiction was a treat and a time saver. It was great, very well organized, and interesting. I'll be there next time for sure!" —*Danita Eastman, children's book evaluator, County of Los Angeles Public Library*

Sensational Summer Reading: Programming Tips and Titles for Children and Teens

■ "I just wanted to say thanks for the interesting and informative webinar today! I enjoyed all parts of it but especially liked some of the book information. The slides were good, the pace was good, and the presenters were all good. I will be signing up for both the graphic novels and teen presentations! Good job!" —*JoAnn Jonas, collection development librarian, San Diego County (Calif.) Library*

Fantastic Fall Fiction for Youth

■ "I just wanted to thank you for your continuing array of webinars. With budget cuts restricting our training funds for conferences and workshops, your free webinars could not be more timely. Additionally, with the stiff budget cuts in our materials budgets and the subsequent challenge of making the absolutely best selections possible, your book-related webinars add another layer of helpful and timely information. Thank you!" —*Debra Bogart, Eugene (Oreg.) Public Library*

ALSC ONLINE COURSES

The Newbery Medal: Past, Present, and Future

■ "If you have the opportunity to take this online course, I highly recommend it. Not only did it encourage me to read some of the older Newbery books I'd long neglected, but the insights from fellow children's librarians from around the country were fascinating. Discussions ranged from racism and sexism in early Newbery winners to popularity versus quality debates to planning mock-Newbery programs." —*Kiera Parrott, Darien (Conn.) Library*

■ "I am so happy that I decided to participate in this class and I highly recommend that everyone interested in the Newbery Medal take this course when it is offered again. This class gave me an excuse to do something

that many children's librarians wish to do—read lots of Newbery Medal–winning books. There were times that I read five books in one week, but I was having so much fun that I didn't want to stop. I will admit that I was originally a little apprehensive about taking an online class. I am happy to say that I was wrong. The online discussions were enlightening and the Moodle software made it very easy to follow each topic. A word of advice for those of you thinking about taking this class—for every bit of effort you put into the class, you will be rewarded tenfold." —*Julie Dietzel-Glair, Baltimore*

Reading Instruction and Children's Books

■ "The content of the course was relevant and something that I really felt that I needed to know about at work. I felt like I was opening up a mysterious box at long last, so I really enjoyed doing the reading and homework. The best part of the course for me was the final project, since it forced me to really think about what I learned. My project was a short tutorial for my coworkers that shared some of the basics of what I had learned in the class, so I felt like I had finished the class with a tangible outcome. I also appreciated the online format. It was a busy summer, and like many libraries, we are short-staffed. It would have been difficult for me to go away to a workshop, but the online format meant that I didn't have to go anywhere." —*Ann Hotta, Berkeley (Calif.) Public Library*

■ "On an almost daily basis, elementary schoolchildren burst into the library asking for books in, say, Level Q, and I used to look at them quizzically. Because of my need for this information, I designed a brochure for parents of public schoolchildren titled, of course, 'What the Heck Is Level Q?' I explained the system and shared with them ways to help scaffold their child's reading progress. I greatly appreciated this opportunity to pursue my own interests while providing myself and classmates with further information.

"This class was a shining example of what can be accomplished with an asynchronous Moodle class. I never felt pressured because I could work as quickly or slowly as necessary. I urge everyone to look at the latest class offerings and spend part of their summer learning something new." —*Rebecca Dash Donsky, library manager, Bloomingdale Branch, New York Public Library*

tim, live interactivity using Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP, two-way voice communication), and live (typed) chat creates an immediacy that in some ways exceeds the experience of a live classroom where the instructor is often the focal point. Seeing the names of other participants on the chat list is an essential part of the process; those rare webinars that do not show the names of other e-students leave participants feeling isolated and wondering whether they are the only ones attending the session.

Moving into more formal multisession workshops such as those produced by Infopeople and LE@D can be extremely engaging and productive for motivated learners. Reading brief, well-written lessons from the instructor, then immediately moving into a series of exercises designed to reinforce the initial lessons, helps participants master the material. Even better are asynchronous courses that include one synchronous session between the instructor and as many learners as are available for that live session. Viewing an archive of those live sessions is also engaging, but the immediacy of interacting with the instructor and other classmates better creates the sense—and the reality—of being part of a community of learners.

Not surprisingly, most engaging are well-run semester-long sessions such as those offered by many universities and colleges. There are several keys to success here: Students must be able to easily locate the various course elements. These include lists of weekly assignments; a calendar providing due dates; access to required readings; clear and concise notations to the readings rather than cryptic codes decipherable only by the instructors and those who have been in the course for several weeks; discussion groups/bulletin boards providing enough guidance to encourage interaction among students and enough flexibility to allow for explorations that add to rather than restrict learning opportunities.

It is as easy to destroy a student's interest as it is to cultivate it: If instructors create an overwhelming number of inconsistent and overlapping links, students soon throw their hands up in frustration and either lose interest in the course or revert to doing the minimum required to pass it—hardly a recipe for effective long-term learning. If an instructor defaults to posting long lectures (two or three hours of material per week) taped from a live classroom setting and expects students to view them along with endless bullet-point lists with clip-art graphics, there is little to stimulate learning and plenty to put the learner to sleep.

Faced with all these challenges, libraries in general still have much to do to catch up with organizations that are effectively producing and using e-learning pro-

Libraries still have much to do to catch up with organizations that are producing and using e-learning programs.

grams. At the same time, libraries have strong models they can emulate. Since e-learning benefits tremendously from communities of learners and strong collaborative efforts, libraries that are moving toward e-learning and anticipating growth in m-learning will benefit from shared resources as well as from content provided by those already familiar with and well versed in e-learning practices. Acknowledging, establishing, and contributing to an evolving set of best practices in e-learning as a component of workplace learning and performance should help libraries remain partners in the onsite-online environment their staff and users inhabit.

What e-learning producers can teach us

Ongoing conversations with colleagues working with libraries and other organizations throughout the United States reveal a great deal of passion, some fairly strong opinions about what is and is not effective, and innovations including the proposed use of virtual worlds in library staff training programs. Those contacts also provide examples of the varying approaches people within and outside of libraries are taking toward e-learning, and highlight sometimes-unexpected results.

More than half of the group responding to an open-ended question about "the most important elements of a successful e-learning program for libraries" cited the importance of buy-in from library directors and other key members of management teams.

Pat Wagner, a consultant and trainer working with libraries throughout the country as well as with the LE@D project at the University of North Texas, believes e-learning programs will not reach their full potential without library directors' support. "If I could do one thing, I would get directors to take learning side-by-side (with staff)," Wagner said. "When I used to do staff days for ALA in Chicago, the director would sit in the front row of every class and participate." E-learning, she noted, allows supervisors, managers, and employees to all take the same class together even if they are not in the same physical location.

"Management support at all levels is key," agrees Lori Reed, employee learning and development coordinator for Charlotte Mecklenburg (N.C.) Library, as well as managing editor of ALA Learning. "You need support from administration to even move towards that direction. You need support from IT to implement the tools or even allow access to e-learning programs. You need branch and frontline managers to be supportive because staff will need time away from the branch to attend training."

Cited nearly as often is the need for e-learning tools and systems that are accessible and easy to use by learners as well as providers.

"I get frustrated. I just want to move on. I don't want to spend 10 hours trying to figure out how it's going to work," said Joe Novosel, an online/blended-learning expert with more than a decade of experience including training-director roles with CompUSA and Good Guys. "The thing about free tools is that they're more difficult to use. They're free tools, but they're limited tools."

Maurice Coleman, Harford County (Md.) Public Library specialist III and technical trainer, said: "Your learner's comfort with the tool online will be the basis of your success whether you start live and face-to-face or online."

E-learning also needs to be easy for those who produce it, according to Mark Hall, a member of the San Francisco Public Library task force that has been working on prototypes for library staff and patrons. "We're actually using Camtasia. It's great. It's pretty easy to use." He and his colleagues initially tried recording 2–5-minute modules live, with no break, but felt the result was "not real professional." They then tried using a script, but also were less than satisfied with the process

because they were struggling to look at too many different elements while recording the modules. They now expect to record the audio first and then add screen shots, but they remain open to other discoveries as they prepare for complete modules to be posted for e-learners on the library website.

Collaboration and the social aspect of online learning is the third element mentioned by several of those interviewed.

"There has to be interactivity included in synchronous sessions," State Library of North Carolina E-learning Consultant Jeffrey Hamilton said. "We use Adobe Connect Professional to conduct synchronous sessions for library staff about various databases available though NC LIVE, our consortial statewide collection of databases. One of the required components of these 90-minute sessions is that interactivity is included throughout the session."

"The most important element of a successful e-learning program is human interaction," agreed Michael Wilder, learning technologies specialist with the University Teaching and Learning Center housed within Lied Library on the University of Nevada's Las Vegas campus. In an online chat he wrote, "There is a basic

human need for people (students, faculty, librarians) to interact with other human beings . . . and this is especially important in online learning. . . . Program developers need to find ways for people to interact with each other (such as through group work, case studies, collaborative projects and more)."

"By far the most important thing is to make every effort to create a community of learners," Infopeople Project Consultant Eileen O'Shea agreed. "In Angel, we have used the discussion board and online chats to try and create some sense of community. This works to some extent during the course—but the real trick is to keep the sense of community alive after the course."

WebJunction is also experimenting with online tools "to create a social cohort experience," according to WebJunction Curriculum Developer Betha Gutsche. "We create a group of people taking the same course during the same time period and bring them together to have discussions and contribute resources that they discover as they learn. So far, it's going really well."

Experiments are also underway at Infopeople with participants who initially met in classroom-based leadership workshops and then face-to-face for a five-day intensive leadership institute program before going online. A group blog and group webinars have helped participants stay in contact as they complete leadership projects in a variety of California public libraries.

But it remains to be seen whether the various online library communities for learners will be short- or long-lived. O'Shea revealed that "dropoff was consistent" during previous attempts at Infopeople to create communities of learning through the use of online discussion boards and chats, course-based wikis, and discussion lists. "One to two months is about the longest we see people continuing to participate after a course or project formally ends. And that is across all sorts of training," O'Shea said, adding, "We'd ideally like to see a cohort of Infopeople alums whose bond is not so much the individual course they took with Infopeople, but with Infopeople itself."

That sort of community can be seen developing through participants' continuing attendance in online sessions such as Coleman's T Is for Training as well as through the TechSoup/MaintainIT Project—live, interactive webinars that provide library trainers with venues to learn about and experiment with online learning tools and techniques. A unique approach to this sort of community-building was the presenters' deliberate choice to take risks during the MaintainIT one-hour sessions.

> "One or two months is about the longest we see people continuing to participate after a course or project formally ends."

"In all of our webinars, we invite librarians to participate as cofacilitators in the event, sharing the experiences, rather than a sage-on-stage approach," TechSoup Strategic Communications Manager Sarah Washburn explained. "You'll never sit in a MaintainIT webinar where just one person is lecturing. We use ReadyTalk, and we wanted to give folks as much opportunity as possible to engage with the participants. This meant taking risks and allowing all functions of ReadyTalk to be open to everyone. With risks, there are challenges: We've experienced a couple of moments where participants didn't fully understand the power they had, and accidentally selected functions that hindered the experience for others, but those were more rare than common."

Such hindrances can range from participants advancing or backing up PowerPoint slides while presenters are speaking to accidentally closing down the entire visual feed during a live presentation, leaving everyone only with audio. The result was an edgy and engaging learning experience for everyone, and the presenters modeled first-rate training techniques through their ability to work with whatever surprises participants provide.

"At first, we were a bit unnerved," Washburn admitted, "and would always ask: Is it worth it to allow such power? And always, we'd come back to the answer: Yes. We'd learn from our mistakes and try to be more clear, and also more poised, about dealing with the implications when the worst-case scenario surfaced. Sometimes this approach means taking risks, but the product of a risk is a lesson."

With all that online learners face in live formats such as webcasts and webinars, they may sometimes be overwhelmed the first time they join a session. When all tools are in place, the learner may be watching PowerPoint slides; hearing the audio feed from the presenter; joining the conversation through the use of a headset or speakers and microphone or by dial-in telephone access; using drawing tools to interact with what is visible on the computer monitor; jumping from the slides to another website via live links; and following and participating in the typed chat, which sometimes proceeds at a dizzying pace down one side of the monitor screen.

Experienced users find the experience helpful and exhilarating. "Running chat is one of my favorite tools," Gutsche said. "It's like being encouraged to pass notes in class—these are notes that everyone gets to read and therefore, everyone benefits. It's done without interrupting the flow of instruction. It gets people involved more continually."

The various forms of input can be daunting even for

experienced presenters, so many have at least one assistant next to them during live sessions. "If you are doing a synch [synchronous] class, you must have a producer. Big time," Coleman insists.

Measuring e-learning outcomes

Assessment and evaluation was of interest to several of those interviewed, but few were actively engaged in anything beyond the most elementary of efforts.

One potential evaluation model for libraries is the Friday5s technique developed and used by Fort Hill Company, which uses online follow-up to training sessions. Fort Hill has managers and employees meet before training occurs so that they can discuss goals and objectives; has the learners participate in a learning event; and engages them in the Friday5s program, which encourages contact between learners and their managers for up to three months through online exercises designed to take five minutes or less to complete every Friday. Learners use drop-down windows and text boxes to document how they have applied what they learned and to set achievable goals for the following week, and managers see these brief reports as soon as the learners complete them.

The process "increases transfer and application effort, interaction with managers, improvement by participants, and return on investment in the program," wrote Calhoun Wick, Roy Pollock, Andrew Jefferson, and Richard Flanagan in *The Six Disciplines of Breakthrough Learning: How to Turn Training and Development into Business Results.* It also made managers "significantly more aware of their direct reports' learning transfer objectives" than was documented in a control group, they reported.

"We know without a post-program support process (like Friday5s) only 15% of people follow through in a way that changes behavior," Michael Papay, vice president of business development for Fort Hill, confirmed during a live chat. "That means there is an 85% waste following learning events without a follow-through process."

Even without an automated follow-up system, library leaders can engage in follow-up exercises with learners. The staff of Georgia's multicounty Uncle Remus Regional Library System, for example, have two months to complete e-learning courses they are taking and then bring their certificate of completion with them to the manager's meeting, and a discussion of the topic is part of the agenda.

Pat Carterette, director of library continuing education for the Georgia Public Library Service, explained that she has also "used live webinars as a learning/discussion activity with a lot of success, inviting a small group of people to view one together, which is followed immediately by discussion." She noted how one library director drew staff back together for an entire afternoon of follow-up practice after attending a morning WebJunction session. "Under other circumstances the people might have gotten frustrated and walked away, never to do an e-learning class again," Carterette observed. *(Ed. note: Pat Carterette died of cancer January 12.)*

Within two years of joining Gwinnett County (Ga.) Public Library as training manager, Jay Turner worked with administrators and staff to increase e-learning offerings from 10% of overall staff training opportunities to approximately 75%; created original online content in addition to what was purchased; and engaged in evaluations at a level beyond others discussed here. Turner said he draws from the work of Donald Kirkpatrick and Robert Gagne "to engage all learning styles" and sometimes tests learners two weeks or a month after they have attended an e-learning session to "see if or how they are using their new skill imparted from the e-learning program. I like to wait at least two weeks before doing this level of follow-up to ensure that the halo has worn off and the learning has really taken hold."

Turner wrote during an online chat that what guides everything he does is the recognition that "a successful e-learning program corresponds with the library's business drivers so that it meets a real need. It's not training just for the sake of training. A successful program provides people with knowledge, skills, or a few golden nuggets that can actually be used sooner rather than later."

Innovation remains strong at GCPL, he noted: "One thing I'm working on, hopefully to be finished by this fall, is a 3-D website that serves as a hub for linking our virtual training resources together: Sharepoint, WebEx, and the LMS (learning management system). The 3-D space will include avatars, chat, and perhaps the ability to have your avatar attend a WebEx session." He has also prepared and implemented an e-learning preparedness checklist that he shares with colleagues in other libraries. ▮

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