Taking Our Pulse: The OCLC Research Survey of Special Collections and Archives

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15 November 2010, p. 75: corrected percentage in final sentence.
17 November 2010, p. 2: added Creative Commons license statement.
28 January 2011, p. 25, penultimate para., line 3: deleted "or more" following "300%"; p. 26, final para., 5th line: changed 89 million to 90 million; p. 30, final para.: changed 2009-10 to 2010-11; p. 75, final para.: changed 400 to 80; p. 76, 2nd para.: corrected funding figures; p. 90, final line: changed 67% to 75%.

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Executive Summary

Special collections and archives are increasingly seen as elements of distinction that serve to differentiate an academic or research library from its peers. In recognition of this, the Association of Research Libraries conducted a survey in 1998 (reported in Panitch 2001) that was transformative and led directly to many high-profile initiatives to "expose hidden collections."

As this OCLC Research report reveals, however, much rare and unique material remains undiscoverable, and monetary resources are shrinking at the same time that user demand is growing. The balance sheet is both encouraging and sobering:

- The size of ARL collections has grown dramatically, up to 300% for some formats
- Use of all types of material has increased across the board
- Half of archival collections have no online presence
- While many backlogs have decreased, almost as many continue to grow
- User demand for digitized collections remains insatiable
- Management of born-digital archival materials is still in its infancy
- Staffing is generally stable, but has grown for digital services
- 75% of general library budgets have been reduced
- The current tough economy renders “business as usual” impossible

The top three “most challenging issues” in managing special collections were space (105 respondents), born-digital materials, and digitization.

We updated ARL’s survey instrument and extended the subject population to encompass the 275 libraries in the following five overlapping membership organizations:

- Association of Research Libraries (124 universities and others)
- Canadian Academic and Research Libraries (30 universities and others)
- Independent Research Libraries Association (19 private research libraries)
- Oberlin Group (80 liberal arts colleges)
- RLG Partnership, U.S. and Canadian members (85 research institutions)

The rate of response was 61% (169 responses).

Key Findings

A core goal of this research is to incite change to transform special collections, and we have threaded recommended actions throughout this section. We focused on issues that warrant shared action, but individual institutions could take immediate steps locally. Regardless, responsibility for accomplishing change must necessarily be distributed. All concerned must take ownership.

Assessment

A lack of established metrics limits collecting, analyzing, and comparing statistics across the special collections community. Norms for tracking and assessing user services, metadata creation, archival processing, digital production, and other activities are necessary for measuring institutions against community norms and for demonstrating locally that primary constituencies are being well served.

> **ACTION:** Develop and promulgate ***metrics*** that enable standardized measurement of key aspects of special collections use and management.

Collections

ARL collections have grown dramatically since 1998, ranging from a 50% increase in the mean for printed volumes and archival collections to 300% for visual and moving-image materials. Two thirds of respondents have special collections in secondary storage. As general print collections stabilize, such as through shared print initiatives and digital publication, a need for more stacks space for special collections will become all the more conspicuous. The arguments to justify it will have to be powerful.

The amount of born-digital archival material reported by respondents is miniscule relative to the extant content of permanent value: the mean collection size is 1.5 terabytes, the median

a mere 90 gigabytes. It is striking that only two institutions hold half of the material reported, and only thirteen hold 93% of it.

Receipt of a gift is the most frequently stated impetus for undertaking a new collecting emphasis. Some respondents noted, however, that they do not plan to acquire other materials to strengthen the new area, which may signal that the gift was outside the library's areas of strength or need. Such gifts sometimes become a liability over time. Deaccessioning of unwanted materials, some of which have languished unprocessed for years, occurs for appropriate reasons but is not widely practiced. Informal collaborative collecting is fairly widespread on a regional basis, but formal arrangements of any kind are rare.

> **ACTION:** Identify barriers that limit ***collaborative collection development.*** Define key characteristics and desired outcomes of effective collaboration.

The preservation needs of audiovisual collections (both audio and moving image) are well known to be staggering, and our data confirm that these materials have by far the most serious problems.

> **ACTION:** Take collective action to share resources for cost-effective ***preservation of at-risk audiovisual materials.***

User Services

More than 60% of respondents stated that use by faculty, undergraduates, and visiting researchers has increased over the past decade. Nearly half, however, were unable to categorize their users by type, even those in their primary user population.

User services policies are evolving in positive ways: most institutions permit use of digital cameras and 90% allow access to materials in backlogs. More than one third send original printed volumes on interlibrary loan, while nearly half supply reproductions. Conservative vetting of requests may, however, result in unwarranted denial of all three types of access.

> **ACTION:** Develop and liberally implement exemplary policies to ***facilitate*** rather than inhibit ***access*** to and ***interlibrary loan*** of rare and unique materials.

Cataloging and Metadata

The extent to which materials appear in online catalogs varies widely by format: 85% of printed volumes, 50% of archival materials, 42% of maps, and 25% of visual materials are accessible online. Relative to ARL's 1998 data, 12% more printed volumes have an online record, as do 15% more archival materials and 6% more maps. This limited progress may be

attributable in part to lack of sustainable, widely replicable methodologies to improve efficiencies.

> **ACTION:** Compile, disseminate, and adopt a slate of ***replicable, sustainable methodologies*** for cataloging and processing to facilitate exposure of materials that remain hidden and ***stop the growth of backlogs***.

> **ACTION:** Develop ***shared capacities to create metadata*** for published materials such as maps and printed graphics for which cataloging resources appear to be scarce.

On the other hand, great strides have been made with archival finding aids: 52% of ARL collection guides are now accessible online, up from 16% in 1998. Across the entire population the figure is 44%, which would increase to 74% if all extant finding aids available locally were converted. The other 26% reveals the archival processing backlogs that remain.

> ***ACTION:*** ***Convert legacy finding aids*** using affordable methodologies to enable Internet access. Resist the urge to upgrade or expand the data. Develop tools to facilitate conversion from local databases.

Backlogs of printed volumes have decreased at more than half of institutions, while one fourth have increased. For materials in other formats, increases and decreases are roughly equal.

Archival Collections Management

The progress made in backlog reduction for archival materials is aided by the fact that 75% of respondents are using minimal-level processing techniques, either some or all of the time. Tools for creation of finding aids have not, however, been standardized; some institutions use four or more.

The institutional archives reports to the library in 87% of institutions, while two thirds have responsibility for records management (of active business records). The challenges specific to these materials should therefore be core concerns of most libraries—and it is in this context that the impact of born-digital content is currently the most pervasive.

Digitization

Nearly all respondents have completed at least one special collections digitization project and/or have an active digitization program for special collections. One fourth have no active program, and the same number can undertake projects only with special funding.

More than one third state that they have done large-scale digitization of special collections, which we defined as a systematic effort to digitize complete collections—rather than being selective at the item level, as has been the norm—using production methods that are as streamlined as possible. Subsequent follow-up with respondents has revealed, however, that the quantities of material digitized and/or production levels achieved generally were not impressive or scalable.

> **ACTION:** Develop models for ***large-scale digitization*** of special collections, including methodologies for selection of appropriate collections, security, safe handling, sustainable metadata creation, and ambitious productivity levels.

One quarter of responding institutions have licensing contracts with commercial vendors to digitize materials and sell access. It would be useful to learn more about the existing corpus of digitized materials, particularly rare books, some important collections of which are not available via open-access repositories.

> **ACTION:** Determine the scope of the existing corpus of ***digitized rare books,*** differentiating those available as open access from those that are licensed. Identify the most important gaps and implement collaborative projects to complete the corpus.

Born-Digital Archival Materials

The data clearly reveal a widespread lack of basic infrastructure for collecting and managing born-digital materials: more than two thirds cited lack of funding as an impediment, while more than half noted lack of both expertise and time for planning. As a result, many institutions do not even know what they have, access and metadata are limited, only half of institutions have assigned responsibility for managing this content, few have collected more than a handful of formats, and virtually none have collected at scale. Clearly, this activity has yet to receive priority attention due to its cost and complexity. Community action could help break the logjam in several ways.

> **ACTION:** Define the characteristics of born-digital materials that warrant their ***management as "special collections."***

> **ACTION:** Define a reasonable set of ***basic steps*** for initiating an institutional program for responsibly managing born-digital archival materials.

> **ACTION:** Develop ***use cases and cost models*** for selection, management, and preservation of born-digital archival materials.

Staffing

The norm is no change in staff size except for in technology and digital services, which increased at nearly half of institutions. Even though more than 60% of respondents reported increased use of collections, staffing decreased in public services more frequently (23%) than any other area. Across the population, 9% of permanent special collections staff are likely to retire within the next five years.

The areas most often mentioned in which education or training are needed to fulfill the institution's needs were born-digital materials (83%), information technology (65%), intellectual property (56%), and cataloging and metadata (51%).

> ***ACTION:*** Confirm high-priority areas in which ***education and training*** opportunities are not adequate for particular segments of the professional community. Exert pressure on appropriate organizations to fill the gaps.

The gradual trend in recent decades toward integration of once-separate special collections continues; 20% of respondents have done this within the past decade. Multiple units continue to exist at one of four institutions.

Introduction

Background

In 1998 the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) conducted a survey of special collections in ARL libraries that provided an unprecedented view of 99 member libraries with regard to special collections access, use, preservation, organizational structure, budgets, and more (Panitch 2001). In 2007 the ARL Special Collections Working Group made the decision not to update the 1998 survey. This OCLC Research survey owes a debt of gratitude to ARL's transformative project, which served as both inspiration and model for our own work. The issues and questions raised in ARL's report gave us much food for thought.

Even before the survey report was published in 2001, ARL began considering a new program agenda to highlight for university library directors the role that special collections can play in bringing distinction and uniqueness to each of its member libraries, as well as to closely examine the purpose and significance of special collections. A series of conferences was launched to envision and debate the role of special collections within the academic research library, including how distinctive collections could be managed and promulgated to the greatest possible benefit of the academy. These activities, in concert with the data from the 1998 survey, led to various high-profile initiatives within ARL and beyond to "expose hidden collections"—that is, to enable online access to the massive quantities of rare and unique material unknown to the user community. Relevant reports and other documents are in the special collections section of the ARL Web site (ARL 2009).

Given the success of ARL's efforts to study and raise the profile of special collections, OCLC Research felt the time was right for a follow-up survey. We wanted to see how effective the efforts of the past decade have been, explore new issues that have emerged, and encompass a larger and more diverse population of academic and research libraries.

We recognize that libraries find themselves in very different circumstances today than in 1998. One recent influential variable has been the decline in the global economy, which has deeply

constrained the ability of both governmental and private institutions to continue with "business as usual." We are all tightening our belts and closely examining our core values and objectives in order to identify the most mission-critical needs, as well as those that must be scaled back or discontinued.

As we ponder the implications of the data generated by this survey, it is important to keep in mind that special collections and archives are not exempt from close scrutiny. We must carefully evaluate what we do, how we do it, and why it matters. The 1998 ARL report included a question that remains central:

> What are the most appropriate measures by which to evaluate and compare usage of special collections, and what are the most appropriate terms in which to convey the centrality of special collections to all levels of research and scholarship? (Panitch 2001, 9)

Definition of Special Collections

We defined special collections as library and archival materials in any format (e.g., rare books, manuscripts, photographs, institutional archives) that are generally characterized by their artifactual or monetary value, physical format, uniqueness or rarity, and/or an institutional commitment to long-term preservation and access. They generally are housed in a separate unit with specialized security and user services. Circulation of materials usually is restricted.

The term "special collections" is used throughout this report to refer to all such materials.

The definition is intended to exclude general collections characterized by format or subject specialization—such as published audiovisual materials or general library strength in Asian history—as well as materials managed as museum objects.

Project Objectives

We began with five objectives:

- Obtain current data to identify changes across ARL libraries since 1998.
- Expand ARL's survey population to include four organizations for which no such survey had been conducted.
- Enable institutions to place themselves in the context of norms across the community.
- Provide data to support decision making and priority setting.
- Make recommendations for action.

In designing the survey instrument, we identified several areas of high current interest that warranted significant attention: user services, archival collections management, and digital special collections. In order to enable longitudinal comparisons with ARL's 1998 data, we retained many of their questions, including those that focused on basic measures such as collection size, type and number of users, status of online access, and number of staff. To keep the survey as lean as possible, we excluded some ARL questions relating to facilities, preservation management, organizational structure, and fundraising. All are significant and remain of interest, but we saw limited potential in these areas for actionable outcomes.

Survey Population

We received 169 responses (61%) out of the overall survey population of 275 institutions, which encompassed the membership of each of these five overlapping academic and research library organizations in the United States and Canada:

- Association of Research Libraries (ARL)
- Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL)
- Independent Research Libraries Association (IRLA)
- Oberlin Group
- RLG Partnership (U.S. and Canada)[1]

Chapter Two consists of an overview of selected data for each of the five organizations. Appendix B lists the 169 respondents, first by organizational membership(s) and then by type of institution.

Each institution was required to submit one unified response for all special collections units. [2]

Slightly more than half of respondents (52%) are private institutions and 41% are public. Seven percent (7%) consider themselves "hybrid," with financial support coming from both private and public sources.[3] Five respondents reported having no special collections.[4]

Table 0.1. Survey respondents (n=169)

	All	ARL	CARL	IRLA	Oberlin	RLG
Population						
Total	275	124	31	19	80	85
Percent		45%	11%	7%	29%	31%
Respondents						
Total	169	86	20	15	39	55
Percent		51%	12%	9%	23%	33%

Note: Percentages total more than 100 due to some institutions' membership in two or three of the five organizations.

Two of the organizations consist principally of university libraries (ARL and CARL),[5] one solely of private liberal arts college libraries (Oberlin), and another of independent research libraries not affiliated with academic institutions (IRLA). The RLG Partnership is heterogeneous in its membership. The memberships of the five groups overlap significantly, as detailed in the organizational profiles in Chapter Two.

Table 0.2. Respondents by type of institution (n=169)

	Number of responses	Percent of responses
Universities	100	59%
Colleges	32	19%
Independent research libraries	13	8%
Museums	8	5%
Historical societies	6	3%
National institutions	5	3%
Governmental libraries	2	1%
Public libraries	2	1%
Consortium	1	1%
Total	169	100.0%

Nine institutional types are represented among the 169 respondents. Universities and colleges predominate, followed by independent research libraries and museums. Because most of the universities are members of ARL and/or CARL, and because all college libraries are members of the Oberlin Group, the overviews of those groups in Chapter Two generally express the overall norms for these two institution types. The same is true for independent research libraries, given that most are IRLA members.

The eight museum respondents are members of the RLG Partnership. Because of their special nature relative to the rest of the population, we have summarized selected data in Appendix C.

The number of responses from each of the other five types of institution is too few to warrant characterization. Nevertheless, their data enhance our overall view of the practices of research libraries. Most are RLG Partners, seven are in ARL, and one is in CARL. Brief observations follow about each of these small cadres of respondents.

The six historical societies are all at the state level (rather than county or other jurisdiction). Three are RLG Partners (California, Minnesota, and New York), and three are IRLA members (Pennsylvania, New York, and Virginia). Only the Minnesota Historical Society is a government agency; the others are private institutions.

We defined "national institutions" as those for which the primary audience is the citizenry of a nation rather than affiliates of a particular institution, city or region, or government agency. The five national institutions that responded are in the U.S.: the Library of Congress, the National Archives and Records Administration, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Library of Medicine, and the National Agricultural Library. They vary greatly in mandate, size, and scope of collections and services.

The two public libraries are those in the cities of Boston (a public institution and ARL member) and New York (supported by both private and public funds, and a member of both ARL and the RLG Partnership).

We considered "governmental" those libraries that report to and serve a governmental entity and are not national in scope. The two in our population are the Library of Parliament (Canada) and the New York State Library.

The one consortium is the Center for Research Libraries, a member of ARL that holds no special collections.

Acknowledgements

Many colleagues contributed generously of their time and expertise throughout this project. First and foremost, the Association of Research Libraries endorsed our work after making a decision not to update its 1998 survey. Liaisons to the five membership organizations facilitated communications and offered advice about methodology: Jaia Barrett and Julia Blixrud (ARL), Tom Hickerson (CARL), Ellen Dunlap (IRLA), and Bob Kieft and Sherrie Bergman (Oberlin). Judith Panitch, author of the ARL survey report, remembered far more than she expected to about methodology and significant decisions, thereby smoothing our course. Alice

Schreyer provided the valuable perspective of a founding member of ARL's special collections working group.

More than thirty colleagues from across the five organizations served as reviewers of two drafts of the survey instrument. Their comments, questions, and advice improved it greatly and ensured that it spoke to the needs of the entire population. We particularly thank Stephen Enniss, Bill Joyce, Richard Lindemann, Nina Nazionale, Sarah Pritchard, Michael Ryan, Elaine Smyth, Rob Spindler, and Laura Stalker for their incisive responses. Norman Reid and Marie-Louise Ayers offered thoughtful input that led us to realize that a single instrument would not meet the needs of RLG Partners beyond North America. Nancy Elkington authored the profiles of the five membership organizations that open each section of Chapter Two. John Cole of the University of Calgary helped us understand some key differences between Canadian and U.S. archival practice. Finally, OCLC Research colleagues Ricky Erway, Constance Malpas, Dennis Massie, Jim Michalko, Merrilee Proffitt, Jennifer Schaffner, Karen Smith-Yoshimura, Günter Waibel, and Bruce Washburn contributed immeasurably to the substance and clarity of both the report and the action items.

Notes

[1] We did not survey RLG Partners outside North America after preliminary testing revealed that significant differences in the survey instrument would be necessary in order to address the needs of those institutions.

[2] In taking this approach, we followed the precedent set by ARL in 1998. We felt that permitting individual units within an institution to report separately would inappropriately skew the results by over-representing large institutions. We did not define "unit" in recognition of the fact that departments, areas of collecting focus, branch libraries, and other organizational units could be administratively and/or physically separate. Respondents made their own determinations.

[3] Initial testing of the survey instrument revealed that some institutions feel strongly about their "hybrid" status, leading us to include this as an option. We did not, however, attempt to define it.

[4] Those having no special collections are the California Digital Library, the Center for Research Libraries, the Leo T. Kissam Library of Fordham University School of Law, the Kimbell Art Museum, and the Université de Sherbrooke. The maximum number of responses is therefore 164 for questions other than those that identify the responding institutions.

[5] ACRL and CARL each have a small percentage of non-academic members, as detailed in Chapter Two.

1. Overview of Survey Data

Chapter One has eight sections, generally following the flow of the survey instrument:

- Overall library size and budget
- Collections
- User services
- Cataloging and metadata
- Archival collections management
- Digital special collections
- Staffing
- Most challenging issues

The rate of response generally was 95% or more for multiple-choice questions and noticeably less for some of the questions that required numerical data. The latter likely means that some institutions either do not record certain statistics or do not collect them in a manner that sufficiently matched the categories we provided.

Throughout this chapter, we intermittently pose questions that the data raised for us, some of which led to formulation of the action items. Many more could be asked, and we invite readers to do so.

Full data will be published in a supplement to this report.

Overall Library Size and Budget

We asked two questions about the overall library to bring perspective to the situation of special collections within the broader institutional context: overall collection size and the effect of the current economy on funding.

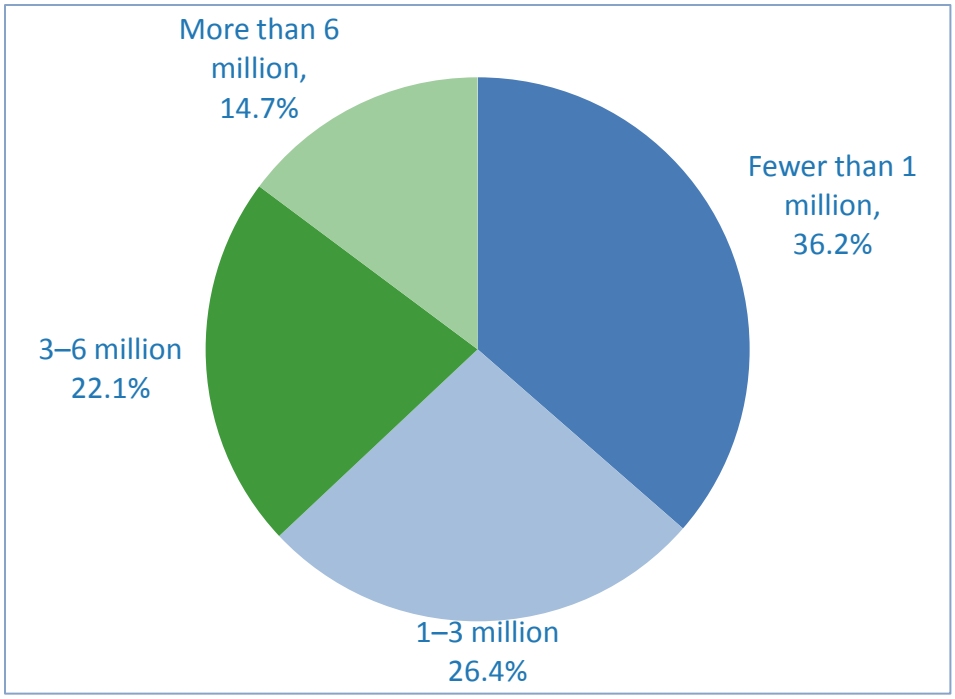

Figure 1.1. Printed volumes across overall population (Q. 7, n=163)

The diverse nature of the survey population is reflected in the distribution of libraries by collection size. Most of the respondents that hold fewer than one million volumes are members of IRLA, Oberlin, or are non-academic institutions in the RLG Partnership. At the other end of the spectrum, all 24 institutions holding more than six million volumes are ARL members (some are also members of CARL and the RLG Partnership). One institution, the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, does not collect printed volumes.

Table 1.1. Printed volumes by membership organization (Q. 7, n=163)

Volumes	All	ARL	CARL	IRLA	Oberlin	RLG
None	1	–	–	–	–	1
Fewer than 1 million	58	–	4	11	32	19
1-3 million	43	24	11	3	7	7
3-6 million	37	36	4	–	–	8
More than 6 million	24	24	2	1	–	16
Total	163	84	21	15	39	51

This broad differential in library size is meaningful in the analysis of numerical data across the five organizations, particularly for collections, funding, users, and staffing. In general,

means and medians for these differ greatly. The organizational profiles in Chapter Two highlight these variations.

On the other hand, the overall norms for the 39 multiple-choice questions, many of which focused on policy and practice issues, generally varied fairly negligibly across the survey population and were thereby revealed to be relatively independent of overall library size. Noticeable variations were more commonly based in the *type* of institution (university, independent research library, etc).

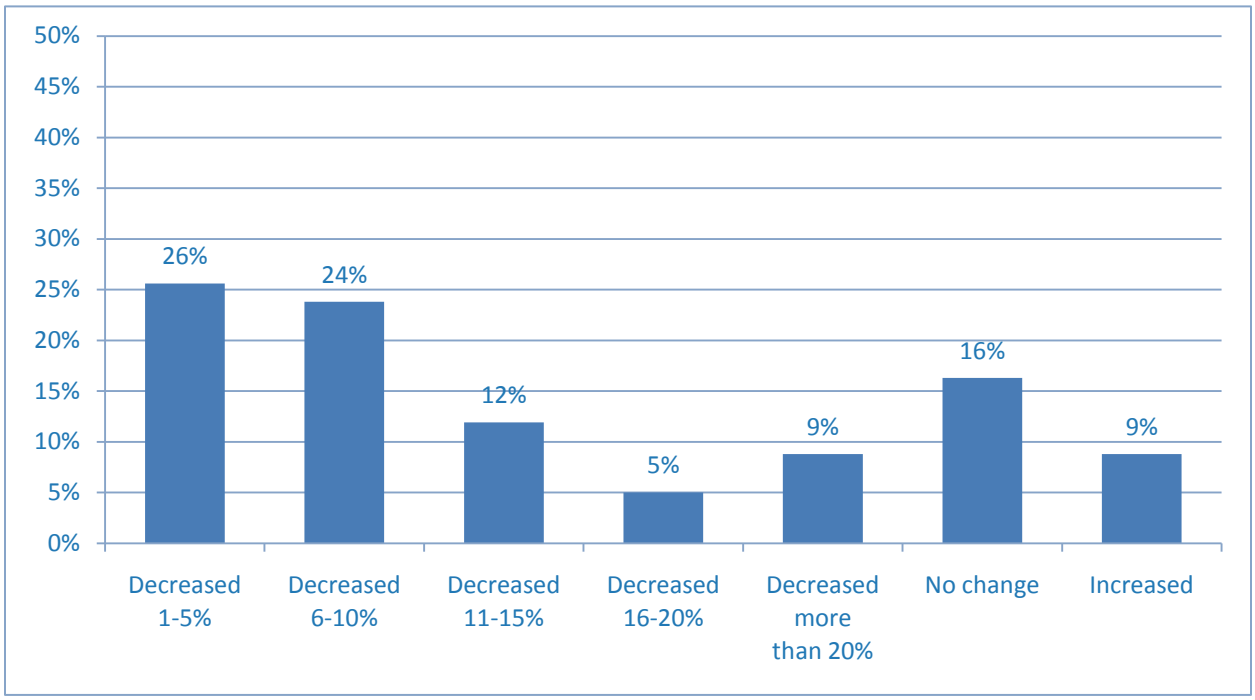

Figure 1.2. Change in overall library funding (Q. 77, n=160)

The data show that 75% of respondents saw their 2008-09 budgets drop as a result of the recent decline in the global economy. Endowments have fallen significantly in value, and governmental budgets have been severely reduced. The inevitable belt tightening is well underway. The data might be even more dire if gathered again for the 2010-11 year, during which many libraries are experiencing even deeper budget cuts.

Collections

In today's academic and research library context, special collections are increasingly seen as an element of distinction that serves to differentiate an institution from its peers. Many original primary source materials reside in special collections and serve both as basic fodder for scholarly work and as a source of inspiration to students and others who may be

undertaking their first research project. The array of disparate formats—from rare books to photographs, from large archival collections to born-digital archival records—and the myriad methods of managing collections present daunting challenges for librarians and archivists who curate and interpret these rare and unique materials.

In this section we explore size of collections, changes in collecting foci, the extent and stability of acquisitions funding, cooperative collecting, offsite storage, and preservation.

We established a context for the level of completeness of the collections data by asking respondents to state how many separate special collections units exist across their institution and for which of these data was, and was not, being reported. [1]

Data was reported for 69% of the 568 special collections units enumerated by respondents. We feel comfortable asserting that the special collections materials held by the other 31% constitute less than 31% of the extant materials, given that every institution reported data for its principal unit, which is generally the largest. Nevertheless, the overall magnitude of special collections holdings across the survey population clearly is appreciably larger than that reflected by our data.

Several institutions commented on the difficulty of compiling statistics for multiple units across large universities. This was due to a variety of factors, including different methods of keeping statistics, variation in policies, and communication challenges. Some also noted the utility of having collaborated internally to prepare a combined response; this was particularly true for those contemplating future integration of separate units.

The mean number of units reported per institution was 3.6. This would be lower but for the four institutions that have 22 or more units (39% have only one unit). The mean varied significantly across the five organizations.

Table 1.2. Branch libraries reported (Q. 8, n=161)

Type of Branch	Units Reported	Units Not Reported
Arts	10	8
Institutional archives	45	11
Law	9	12
Medicine	8	15
Museum	5	6
Music	4	4
Science	0	5
Total	82	61

The nature of the units named illustrates the general character of absent data. Some types of branch library were fairly equally split in terms of being reported or not, with the exception of university archives (80% of those named were reported) and science libraries (none of the five named were reported). Many more institutional archives were "silently" reported as an integrated part of the primary (or sole) special collections unit within an institution.

Table 1.3. Special collections size (Q. 11, n=161) [2]

	n	n as Percent of Population	Total Items Reported	Mean	Median
Printed volumes	155	95%	30,000,000	191,000	80,000
Archival and manuscript collections	151	92%	3,000,000 lf	20,100 lf	10,300 lf
Manuscripts (managed as items)	61	37%	44,000,000	717,000	950
Cartographic materials	90	55%	2,000,000	20,600	800
Visual materials (two-dimensional)	101	62%	90,000,000	880,000	171,000
Audio materials	92	56%	3,000,000	32,400	2,300
Moving-image materials[3]	84	51%	700,000	8,300	700
Born-digital materials	58	35%	85,000 GB	1,500 GB	90 GB
Microforms	78	48%	1,300,000	17,300	3,000
Artifacts	83	51%	154,000	1,850	500

Note: Archival and manuscript collections were counted in linear feet and born-digital materials in gigabytes.

The mean collection size for every format varies dramatically from the corresponding median—as expected, since the survey population includes such a wide range of library types and sizes. The largest collection of printed volumes is more than 1.3 million; the smallest is 100. The largest archival holdings are more than 200,000 linear feet; the smallest are 25. Some institutions have exceptionally large holdings in particular formats (e.g., manuscripts managed as items or visual materials), which drives up the means.

Longitudinal comparison with ARL's 1998 data (detailed in Chapter Two) is revealing: mean increases over the ensuing decade ranged from 50% (printed volumes and archival collections) to 300% (visual, audio, and moving image materials). It would be valuable to know whether such dramatic increases occurred for the other organizations in the survey population.

The number of respondents who provided data for each format varied significantly. Several factors are probably relevant: not all institutions have materials in all formats; many institutions manage special formats as part of archival and manuscript collections; and not all institutions record statistics for all formats.

Determining uniform metrics for counting special collections across institutions is not straightforward, given the multiple ways in which libraries manage these materials.[4] To ensure that all materials in a specific format were slotted consistently into one broader category, we included a supplement to the survey instrument defining the scope of each format (see Appendix A.2).

We combined all archival and manuscript materials managed as collections into one category, including institutional records such as those held by university archives, because the two are managed inseparably in many institutions. We added a category for manuscripts managed as items, since some institutions acquire, count, and describe them in this way; in fact, in some multi-unit institutions, separate departments use different approaches. The low number of responses for manuscripts managed as items reflects the fact that many institutions manage all such materials as collections. Accepted metrics of any sort are lacking in this area, with the result that we can safely draw fewer conclusions from the data than would be optimal.

The lowest rate of response was for born-digital material (58 responses, or 35%). The data reported in the Digital Special Collections section reveal, however, that 79% reported having at least some holdings. This discrepancy may exist because some respondents are not yet actively managing their holdings. For example, some have not determined the number of gigabytes of material that they have acquired, and doing so is a challenge if content is dispersed across numerous physical media and/or file servers.

It is striking that two institutions hold 51% of the 85,000 gigabytes of born-digital material reported overall, and thirteen hold 93%.[5] In general, libraries' current holdings are a drop in the bucket of the archival content that warrants long-term preservation. It is evident that this activity is in its infancy and presents a difficult challenge.

Question 12, which was optional, enabled respondents to report items in specific formats that would otherwise be reflected only within the linear-foot count of archival and manuscript collections.[6] Only 33 institutions responded, but their data reveal the tip of a metaphorical iceberg of photographs, recordings, moving-image formats, and other materials. For example, 28 institutions reported a total of 35 million visual items—adding nearly 40% to the 90 million visual items reported in question 11. This is powerful evidence of the extraordinary quantities of non-textual materials contained within archival collections.

Some questions:

- Is the dramatic growth of ARL special collections since 1998 necessarily a good thing?
- Do such growth rates extend across the entire survey population?
- Is such growth sustainable? If not, what should change?

New collecting areas have been established by 61% of respondents since 2000. Some named a single new area of interest, while others listed ten or more. The hundreds of topics described are too varied to characterize usefully in any detail (see the data supplement) and cover a wide range of topics. Documentation of contemporary social and political issues is widespread, including racial and ethnic groups, gender issues, the environment, the media, and human rights. The specific area most frequently named, however, was artists' books (ten respondents), a contemporary genre that combines characteristics of artistic creation and traditional book arts.

Table 1.4. Impetus for establishing a new collecting area (Q. 13, n=164)

Reason	Number of institutions
Gift	38
New institutional direction	28
Faculty suggestion	22
Curator's decision	15
Administrator's decision	5

Respondents cited five typical reasons for establishing a new collecting emphasis: gift, new institutional direction, faculty suggestion, curator's decision, or administrator's decision. Receipt of a gift was the most common reason given, which serves as a reminder that collectors and other donors continue to enhance library collections; many of the greatest special collections have been built largely through the generosity of private donors. It can be difficult, however, to refuse an attractive gift—particularly if it has substantial monetary value or is offered by a valued institutional supporter—even if it does not directly support institutional needs. Some respondents noted that they were unlikely to add to a particular donated collection. This can sometimes hint at gift materials that could become an expensive burden in the future—a problem that plagues some special collections as a legacy of earlier days when collection development practices often were more expansive than is now practical.

Thirty-four respondents (21%) described collecting areas for which acquisition of new materials has been discontinued. Not all explained their decisions, but several reasons were cited by more than one: transfer to general collections, a topic better collected by another institution, lack of space, insufficient funding, and tighter collection development policies. The discontinued topical areas were too diverse for detection of any pattern.

Thirty-three respondents (20%) reported having physically withdrawn collections, most of which were archival materials. While the topics of the collections revealed no particular pattern, six reasons for deaccessioning surfaced more than once:

- Transferred to a more appropriate institution (13 respondents)
- Returned to donor, usually at donor's request (5)
- Transferred publications and microforms from special to general collections (4)
- Reunited split collections (3)
- Reappraised research value of materials acquired long ago but never processed (2)
- Withdrew originals lacking value as artifacts following digitization (2)

One respondent mentioned space, and two stated that the materials were out of scope. It is likely that one or both of those factors are implicit in much deaccessioning.

Transfer to another institution where a collection will be welcomed as valuable and within scope reflects a value generally held by archivists. They strive to avoid acquiring a collection when closely related materials, such as another part of the papers of an individual, are already in another institution. Re-uniting split collections might be thought of as retroactive collaborative collection development.

Withdrawal following digitization may be another area worthy of investigation. While materials that have special features as original artifacts generally are not considered candidates for withdrawal, much material in contemporary collections lacks any such characteristics. For example, one deaccessioned collection consisted of photographic slides; many archivists would find withdrawal inappropriate, since original photographs have higher resolution that may add to their information value. In contrast, the other post-digitization withdrawal consisted of routine business records in a university archives.

Table 1.5. Acquisitions funding (Q. 75, n=140; Q. 76, n=132)[7]

	All	ARL	CARL	IRLA	Oberlin	RLG
n	105	59	14	10	25	33
Institutional funds						
Mean	$130,000	$170,000	$44,200	$347,100	$18,600	$288,800
Median	$43,700	$60,000	$14,600	$100,000	$5,400	$71,200
Special funds						
Mean	$215,400	$318,000	$248,800	$474,300	$34,100	$435,200
Median	$54,300	$140,000	$88,400	$66,500	$12,600	$197,000
Combined institutional + special funds						
Mean	$273,100	$417,000	$174,000	$652,000	$37,100	$639,600
Median	$83,000	$182,600	$37,400	$142,000	$12,500	$254,800

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of printed volumes were purchased using nearly equal percentages of institutional (29%) and special funds (28%).

In contrast, only 18% of materials in other formats were purchased. Twenty-three percent (23%) of respondents acquired 100% of non-print materials as gifts or transfers, and another third acquired more than 90% of materials in this way. These statistics do not suggest that most archival materials are unsolicited gifts—archivists very actively pursue collection donations of in their areas of emphasis. It does, however, signal that many archival collections have little or no monetary value, irrespective of the strength of their research value. Institutional records (such as those found in a university or governmental archives) are, by definition, not offered for sale.

We asked respondents to differentiate two types of funding: institutional and "special." The latter encompassed endowments, gifts, grants, and any other funding sources beyond the institutional budget.[8]

The data show that 38% of collections funds are institutional and 62% are special across the overall population. The large gaps between mean and median budgets, both across the overall population and within each membership organization, are a reflection of the diversity of institutional sizes and types.

IRLA members have the highest mean acquisitions budgets in both institutional and special funds. These libraries generally consist solely of special collections, which therefore need not compete with general collections for purchasing priority. In academic libraries, on the other hand, special collections necessarily receive a tiny percentage of the overall budget from

institutional funds. In contrast with the high mean for IRLA libraries, however, the IRLA median is well below those of ARL and RLG Partnership libraries.

The RLG Partnership has the second highest mean and median budgets in both institutional and special funds. The Partnership includes thirteen IRLA libraries and a number of the largest ARLs, which contributes to this outcome.

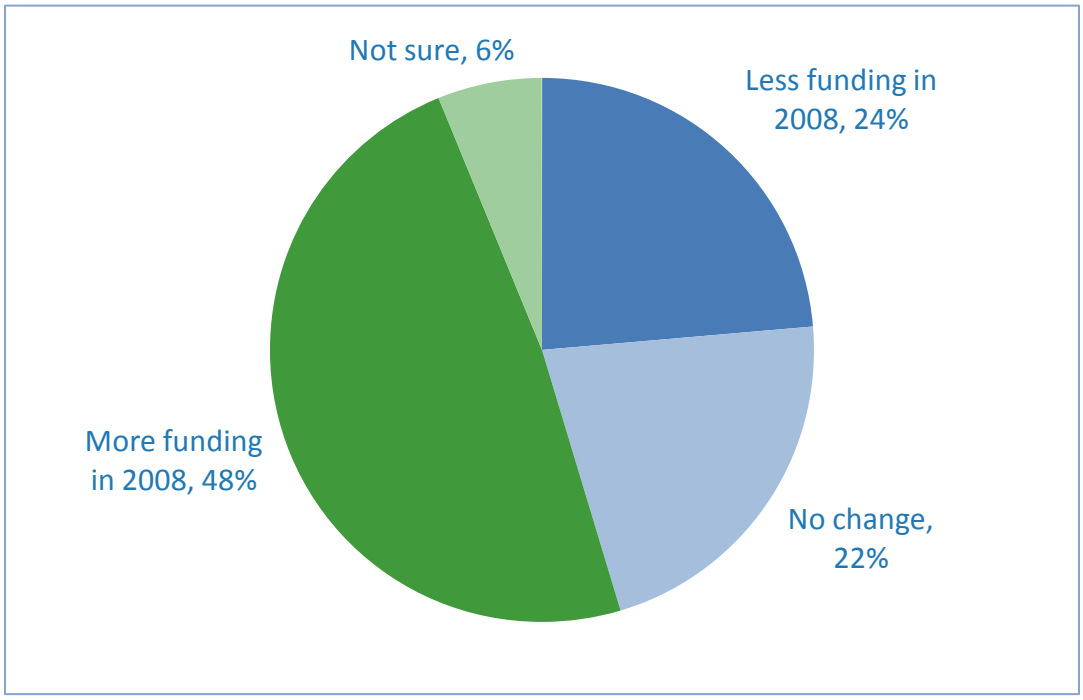

Figure 1.3. Changes in acquisitions funding (Q. 77, n=161)

Nearly half of respondents reported having more acquisitions funding in 2008-09 than in 2000, while 24% reported having less. Increased funding helps account for the dramatic increases in collection size described earlier, particularly for purchased printed volumes. In fact, the overall mean and median for ARL acquisitions funding were a remarkable three to four times higher than reported for the 1998 survey. This stands in stark contrast to general library trends.

The survey data for acquisitions funding might be very different if re-acquired for the 2010-11 year, during which many libraries are seeing even deeper budget cuts than those reflected by our data.

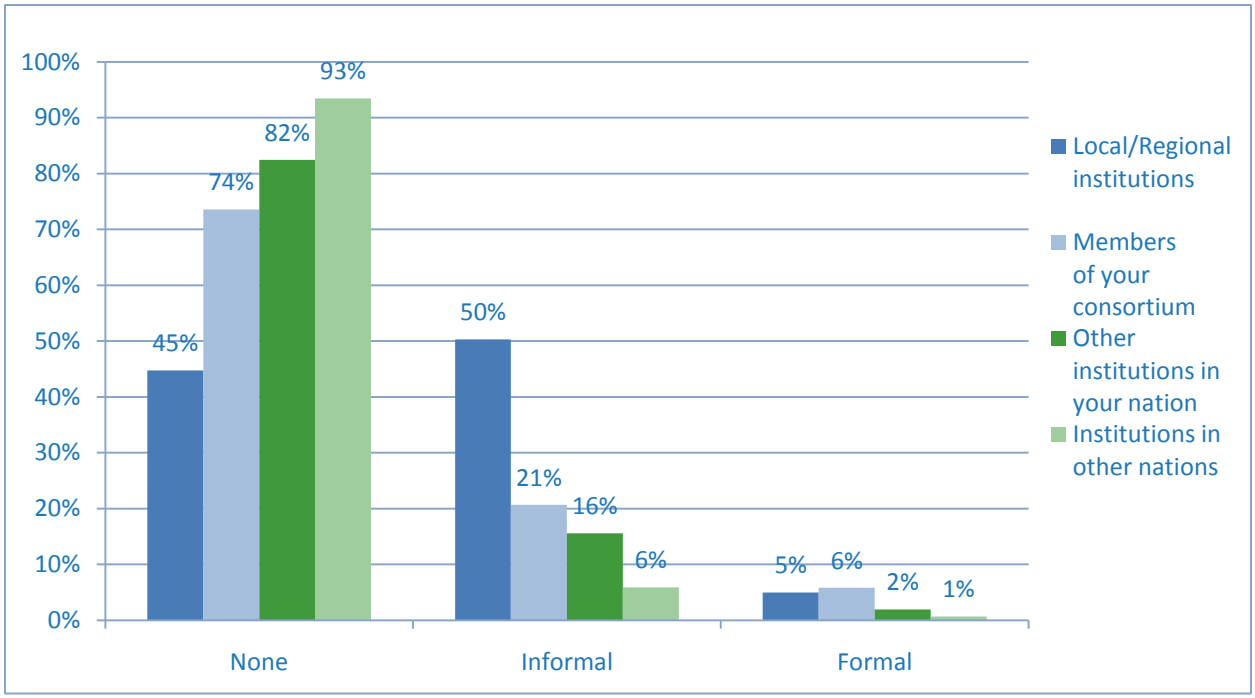

Figure 1.4. Cooperative collection development (Q. 20, n=163)

Most cooperative collection development arrangements reported are informal and with local or regional partners; 50% of respondents have such arrangements. Formal collaborations, on the other hand, are rare: 5% collaborate formally locally or regionally, 6% with consortial partners, and 2% with national partners. Even fewer international collaborations were reported.

In her report of ARL's 1998 survey, Panitch (2001, 48) cited a similar low percentage (11%) of formal arrangements. While our population is different, it appears that this is an area in which little progress has been made.

Some questions:

- Are meaningful collecting collaborations feasible for special collections?
- How would an effective formal collaboration be defined?
- Are special collections librarians sufficiently familiar with the techniques used in collaborations focused on general materials? Would those techniques be relevant?
- How will the gradual shift to "shared print" for general collections affect special collections?

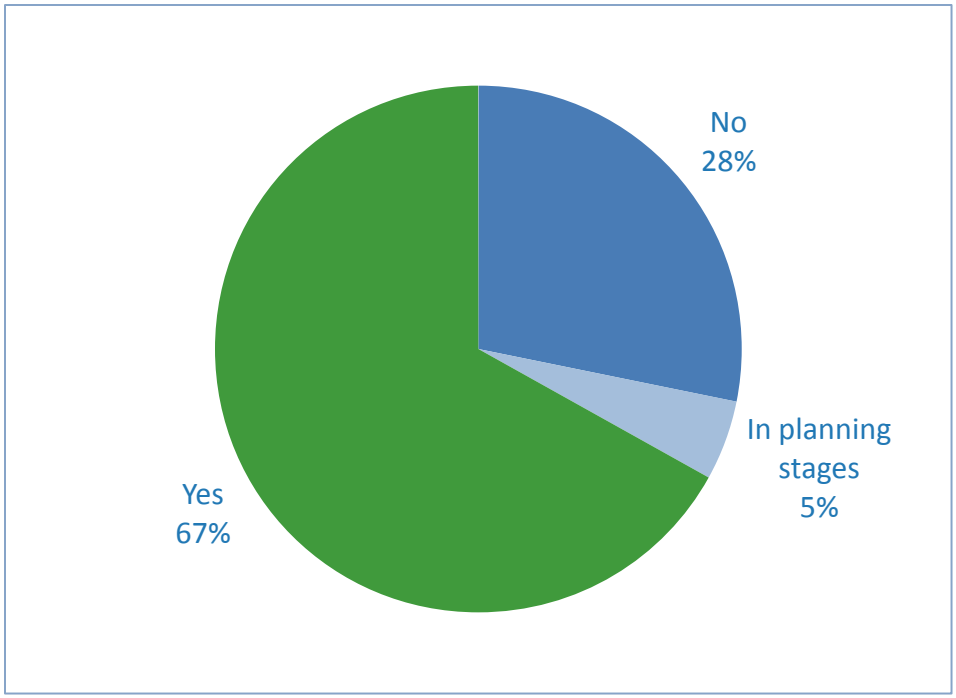

Figure 1.5. Special collections in secondary storage (Q. 21, n=163)

Special collections materials are housed in offsite or other remote storage at two-thirds of responding institutions—and space was by far the most frequently cited "most challenging issue" in response to question 79. The data described earlier that reveal enormous growth of ARL special collections carries a corollary implication that space needs for special collections will continue to grow, perhaps dramatically. As print general collections stabilize, a need for more stacks space for special collections will become all the more conspicuous. The arguments to justify it will have to be powerful.

Some questions:

- If special collections growth continues at a strong pace, will institutions be able to satisfy the ensuing need for more shelf space?
- Will libraries have to become more cautious about acquiring large archival collections and/or weed them more aggressively during processing?
- Will deaccessioning of general print collections that are available digitally become the norm and free existing space for growth of special collections?
- Will deaccessioning or transfer of special collections materials of minimal or out-of-scope research value become more common and accepted?

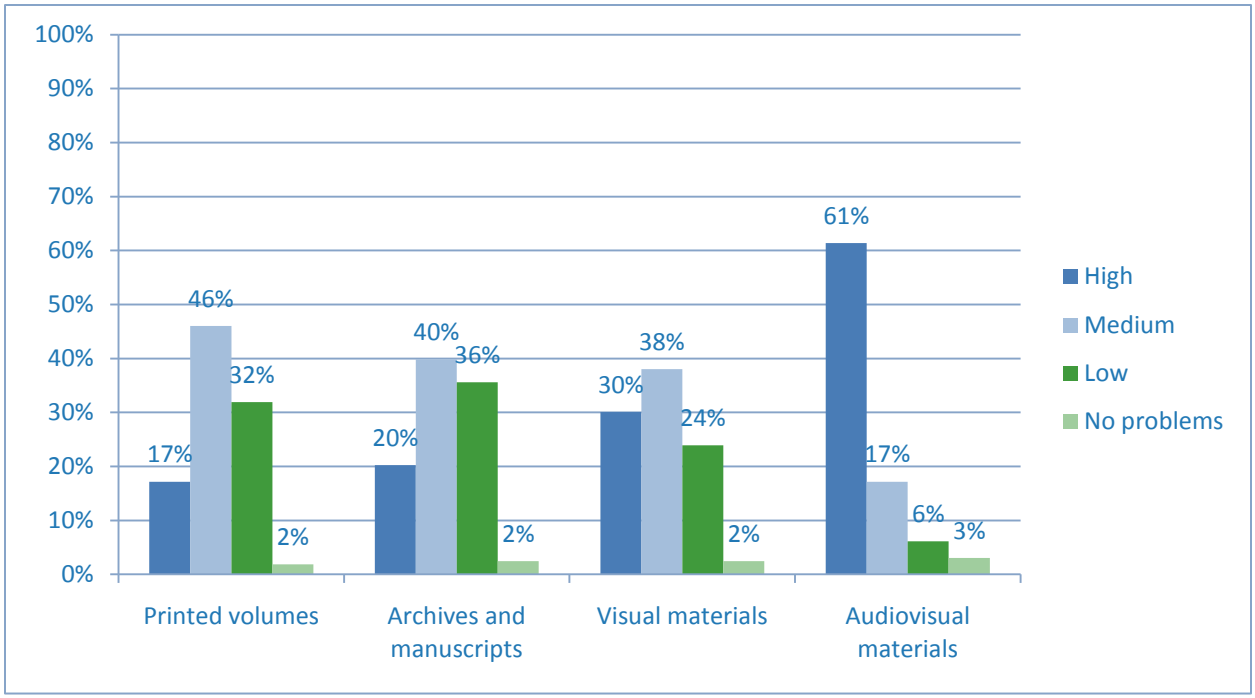

Figure 1.6. Preservation needs (Q. 22, n=163)

We asked respondents to characterize the relative extent of preservation needs across their special collections. We chose a non-numerical approach in the belief that few institutions collect data on the percentage of materials by format that have particular levels of preservation need.

A majority of institutions ranked the preservation needs of visual and audiovisual materials much higher than those of other materials. This reflects the inherent instability of materials such as photographic prints and negatives; audio recordings on analog media such as wax cylinder, reel-to-reel tape, and cassette tape; and moving images recorded on either film or video.

Such materials inherently must be duplicated if they are to survive more than a few decades, and best practices dictate that use copies be made in order not to further threaten the stability of originals. A high percentage of these materials in special collections is archival in nature, and the content may therefore exist only as one unique original. If that original deteriorates beyond recovery, its content will be lost forever.

These formats present costly needs for preservation solutions for which funding rarely is sufficient. Given economic realities, this situation is unlikely to improve in the foreseeable future. Stringent appraisal and prioritization—particularly if done collaboratively—would help

ensure that scarce preservation resources are dedicated to the most important content. For some collections, transfer to another institution at which the content would merit high preservation priority may be the best solution.

Some questions:

- Can means of collaboration be developed to achieve cost-effective preservation of the highest-priority audiovisual materials?
- What should an institution do if it holds material of high importance that it is unlikely to be able to preserve before major deterioration occurs?
- Should we recognize that much analog audiovisual material simply will not survive?

User Services

User services are particularly rich in issues of current interest, including levels of use, effective communication with users, accessibility of materials in backlogs, cost-effective delivery of both originals and reproductions, and new methods of outreach to foster widespread and meaningful use.

We highlight the difficulty of obtaining consistent statistics across responding institutions multiple times in this section. Panitch (2001, 61) called out the same issue in her 1998 ARL report when she noted the lack of appropriate measures by which to evaluate and compare usage.

Nearly 575,000 visits were made to the special collections and archives units of the 140 responding institutions in 2008-09. This finding demonstrates that many rare and unique materials are serving their purpose. Both library directors and special collections librarians may want to dispassionately evaluate, however, to what extent this level of activity justifies the resources being expended, as well as what additional programmatic metrics add strength to the special collections value proposition.

Table 1.6. Onsite visits (Q. 24, n=140)

	n	Onsite Visits	Percentage of Total Visits	Mean	Median
Faculty and staff	92	52,523	9%	571	139
Graduate students	49	28,847	5%	589	184
Undergraduates	81	69,773	12%	861	456
Visiting researchers	89	138,352	24%	1,555	146
Local community	58	38,298	7%	660	211
Other	74	245,839	43%	3,300	660
Total		573,632	100%	4,218	1,571

We asked respondents to report the number of onsite visits to special collections rather than individual users or all user contacts. We had several reasons for this approach: statistics for onsite visits commonly exist, the number of visits best reflects reading room workloads, special collections libraries remain very interested in onsite use of original materials, and inclusion of off-site users would make it difficult to distinguish between reference transactions and use of materials. This said, it would be valuable also to have data about all reference transactions, as well as virtual use of digitized collections.

Twenty-four (24%) percent of respondents reported all user visits as "other" rather than using any of the categories provided. In fact, "other" visits comprise 43% of the overall total reported. Respondents who commented revealed two reasons: either their local categories did not sufficiently mesh with those we used, or they routinely tabulate only one aggregate number. We had refined our categories based on feedback from reviewers of the draft survey and therefore knew that we could not satisfy all needs. We learned, for example, that some IRLA libraries would report all users as "visiting scholars and researchers" because their categories are too granular to be appropriate across our broader population.

These results convey how difficult it is to evaluate data usefully without standard metrics in use across the special collections community. More granular comparisons should be feasible, at minimum, across relatively homogenous populations such as universities or colleges. We cannot demonstrate the level of value delivered to primary constituencies unless we can reliably characterize our users.

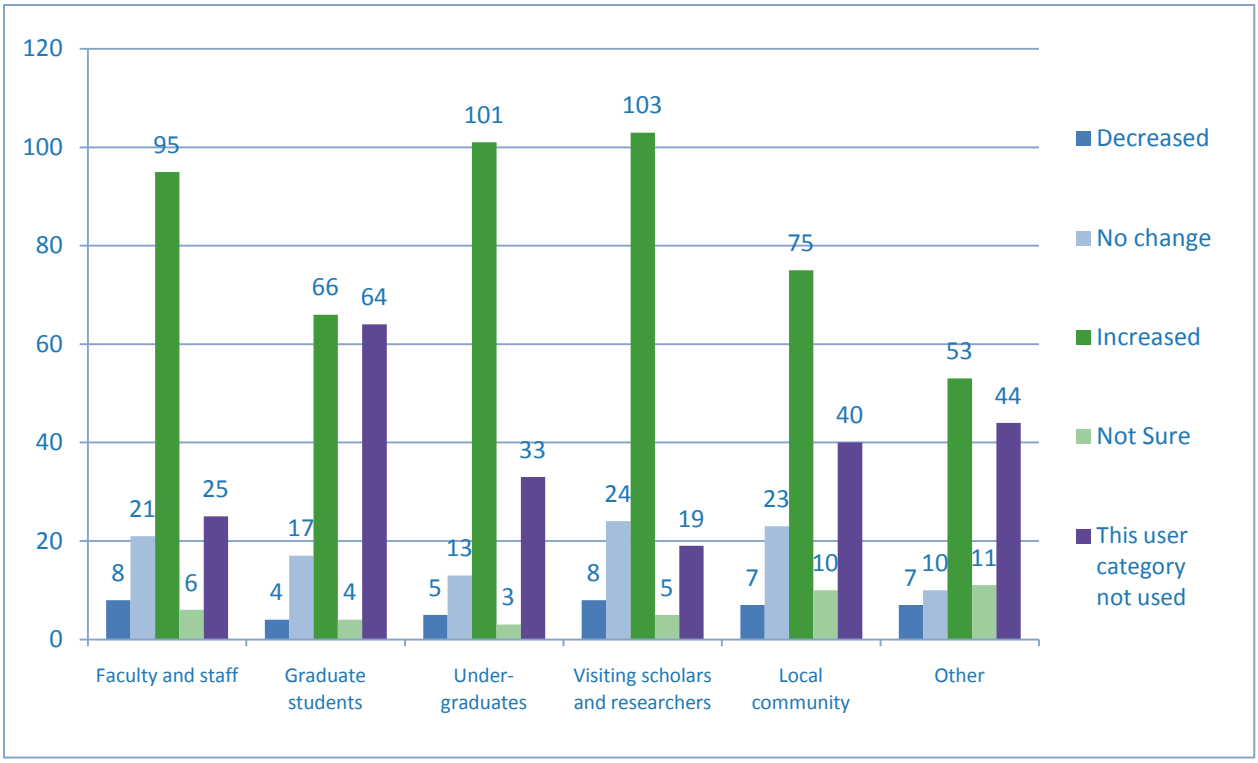

Figure 1.7. Changes in level of use (Q. 25, n=162)

The percentage of respondents who reported increased use of collections is dramatically higher than those who reported no change or decreased use. Depending on the user category, 43% to 65% of respondents reported increased use; in contrast, only 3% to 6% reported decreased use in any category. Use by faculty and staff, undergraduates, and visiting scholars and researchers increased at more than 60% of responding institutions.[9]

These results may be traceable both to the high priority that many special collections librarians and archivists place on education and outreach activities and to the discoverability of increasing quantities of material.[10]

Some questions:

- Does the level of onsite use of special collections justify the resources being expended?
- What are the most appropriate measures by which to evaluate use?
- What additional values can we ascribe to special collections to convey their importance for all levels of study, scholarship, research, and the role of the library overall?

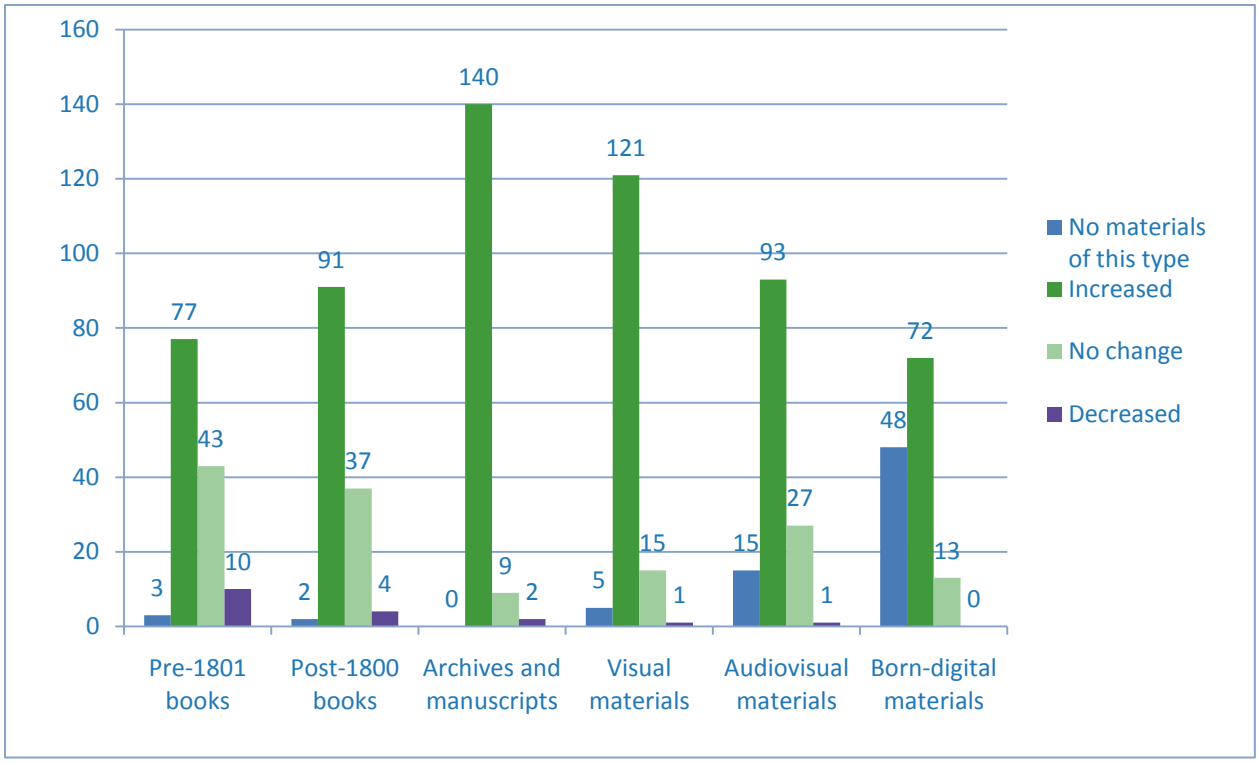

Figure 1.8. Changes in use by format (Q. 27, n=161)

Increased use of materials in all formats is the norm across the survey population. Depending on the format, increased use was reported by 45% to 88% of respondents. The most dramatic increases were for archives and manuscripts (88%) and visual materials (76%).

Thirty percent (30%) of respondents to question 27 reported that they have no born-digital materials. This is one third more than the 21% who gave the same in response to question 62 on current holdings. As mentioned earlier, this discrepancy may reflect that few institutions are actively managing their born-digital materials and therefore do not yet have an accurate sense of their holdings. Also, it is likely that no born-digital materials are yet available for public use in some libraries.

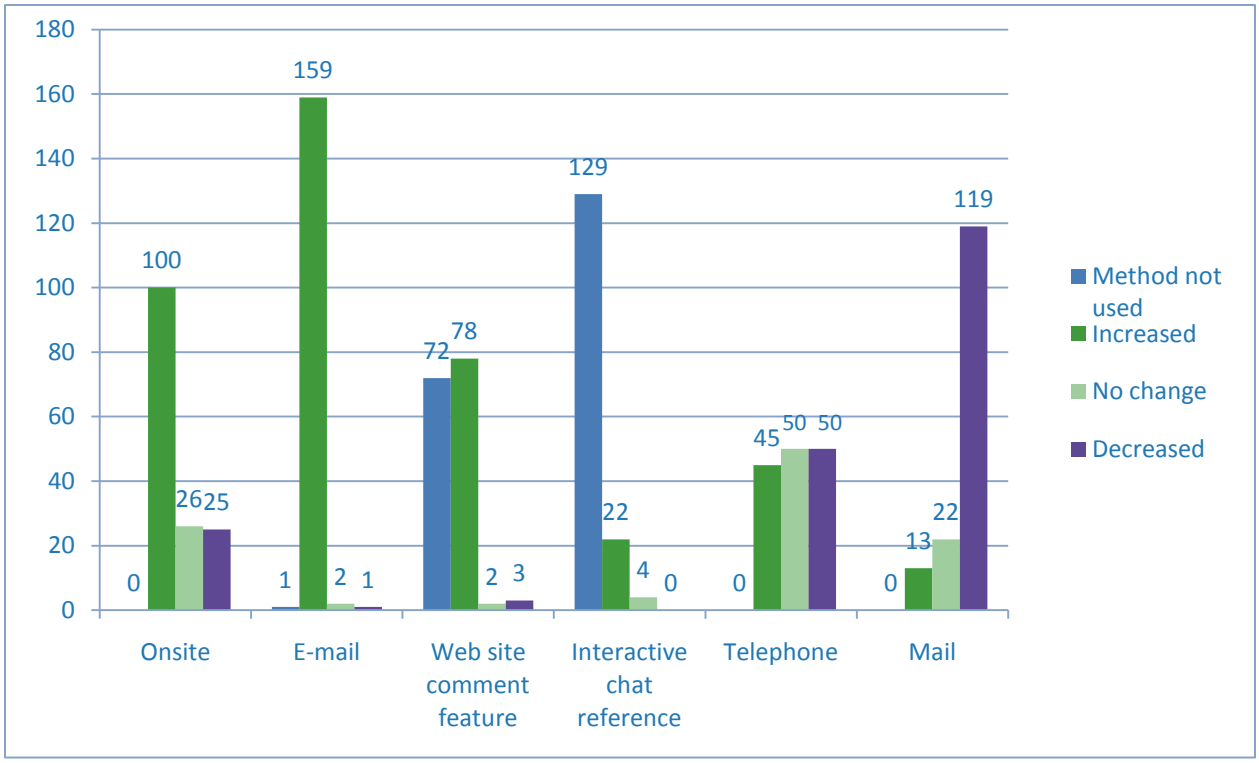

Figure 1.9. Changes in users' methods of contact (Q. 26, n=164)

Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents noted an increase in onsite use over the past decade. It is no surprise that e-mail transactions increased, while telephone and mail decreased.

Of all the methods of contact listed as response options, the one used by the fewest respondents is interactive chat reference (18%). An ARL report published in 2008 sets this finding in the broader library context: *Social Software in Libraries* showed that 94% of ARL respondents (64 members) offered central interactive reference services, which perhaps suggests that only a small minority of special collections units participate in a service that their parent library has implemented (Bejune and Ronan 2008).

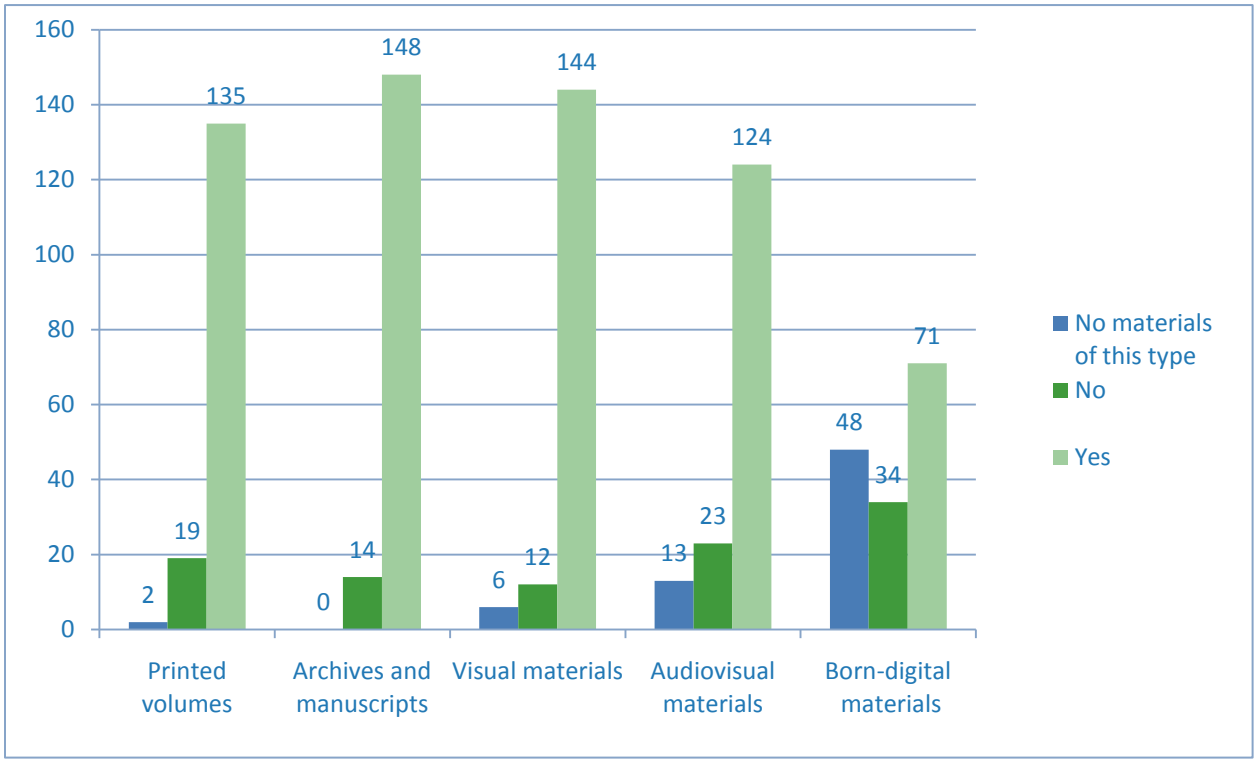

Figure 1.10. Access to uncataloged/unprocessed materials (Q. 28, n=164)

Materials that lack online metadata are effectively "hidden." It is therefore encouraging that 90% of respondents permit use of uncataloged and/or unprocessed materials, at least selectively.[11] But how selectively? The results of one recent user study showed that 50% of nearly 500 respondents had been denied use of a collection, though 63% had used one or more (Greene 2010).

As general practice, special collections staff review requests for use of unprocessed materials and then make a decision based on a variety of considerations. The principal reasons stated for disallowing use (question 29) of unprocessed archival materials are readily understandable: a collection may have been acquired in such disorder that use is virtually impossible; lack of physical processing may mean that handling would endanger fragile materials; access copies may not yet exist for unstable or fragile originals; or items that must be restricted for reasons of privacy and confidentiality may not yet have been identified and isolated.[12]

The rationale is not as self-evident, however, for withholding materials from use because catalog records or finding aids are incomplete or below standards. Ten institutions do not permit printed volumes to be used for this reason, and fifteen withhold books due to concerns about security. We know anecdotally that lack of copy-specific notes for unambiguous identification of particular copies is a reason sometimes given, but practitioners may want to

consider whether a properly supervised and secure reading room sufficiently mitigates concerns about potential theft. Or are there other reasons that legitimately justify withholding books from use?

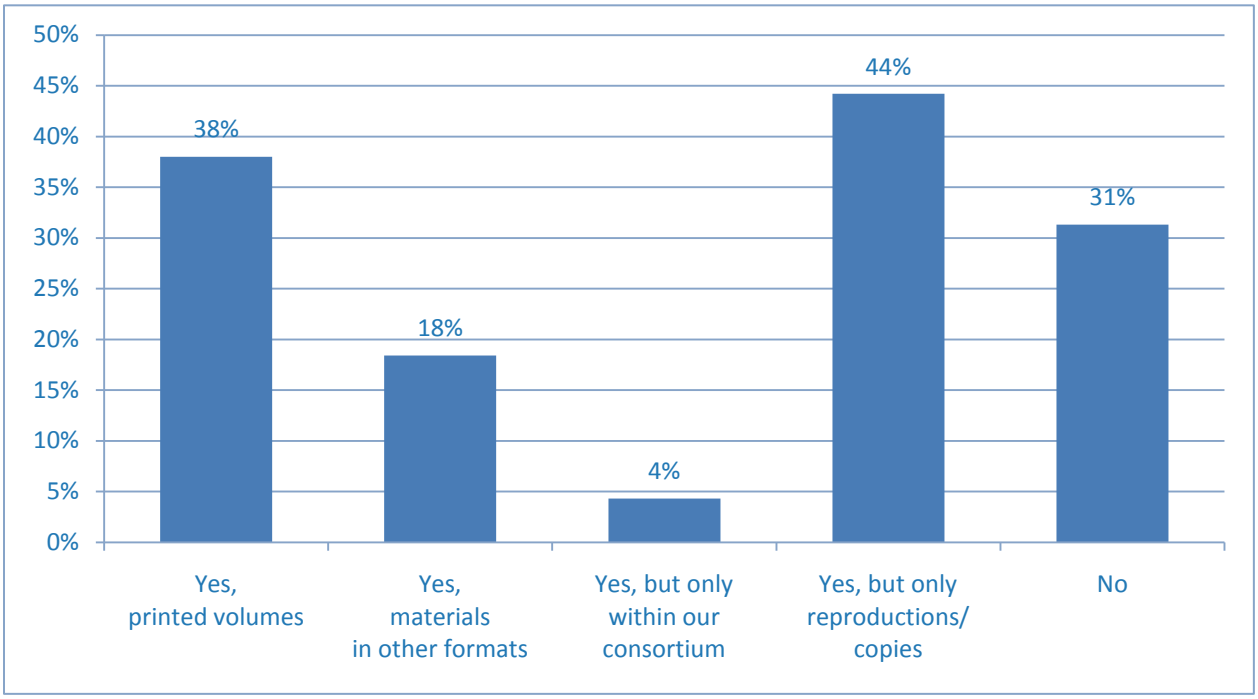

Figure 1.11. Interlibrary loan (Q. 30, n=163)

More respondents (44%) loan reproductions of special collections items than original materials: 38% loan original printed volumes and 18% loan materials in other formats. Loan of rare and unique material is fraught with legitimate risks for security and safe handling; nevertheless, the special collections community would earn political capital by developing—and generously implementing—best practices to facilitate more widespread participation in resource sharing. The ensuing benefits for scholars and students for whom travel is not possible are obvious. The current emphasis on exploring "shared print" initiatives across the research library community bolsters this imperative.[13]

Some questions:

- How selective is approval of requests for use of unprocessed collections and/or interlibrary loan?
- Are instances of non-approval generally reasonable, or are decision makers overly cautious?
- Do libraries have policies for justifying non-approval, or are decisions often ad hoc?

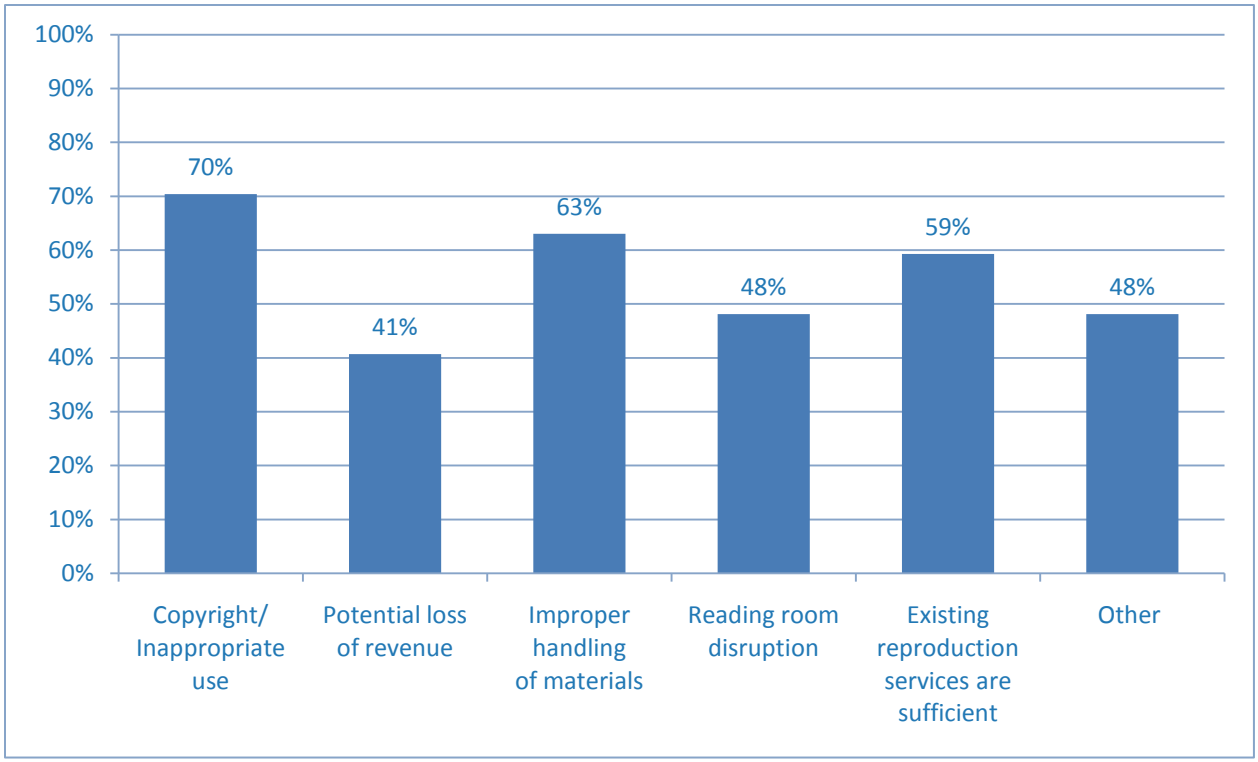

Figure 1.12. Reasons to disallow use of digital cameras (Q. 33, n=27)

Many of today's special collections users would prefer to use personal digital cameras rather than place orders for reproductions for later fulfillment by the library. Because providing reproductions is a key service in most special collections reading rooms, enabling use of cameras increases user convenience and lessens staff intervention.

It is therefore good news that 87% of respondents permit users to employ digital cameras.[14] Enabling this service has been controversial within the special collections community, but user convenience clearly is taking precedence. The reasons most often stated for not permitting digital cameras include perceived potential for inappropriate re-use (generally meaning copyright infringement), damage to fragile materials, and disruption to a quiet reading room environment. Inappropriate re-use was the concern most frequently reported.[15] It is debatable, however, whether this is actually a significant risk, given that most libraries and archives have long provided publication-quality photographs for sale with little or no ill effect. Standard practice mitigates against misuse by requiring the user's signature on a permission form to accept responsibility for honoring copyrights, and this practice remains the norm in the digital context.[16]

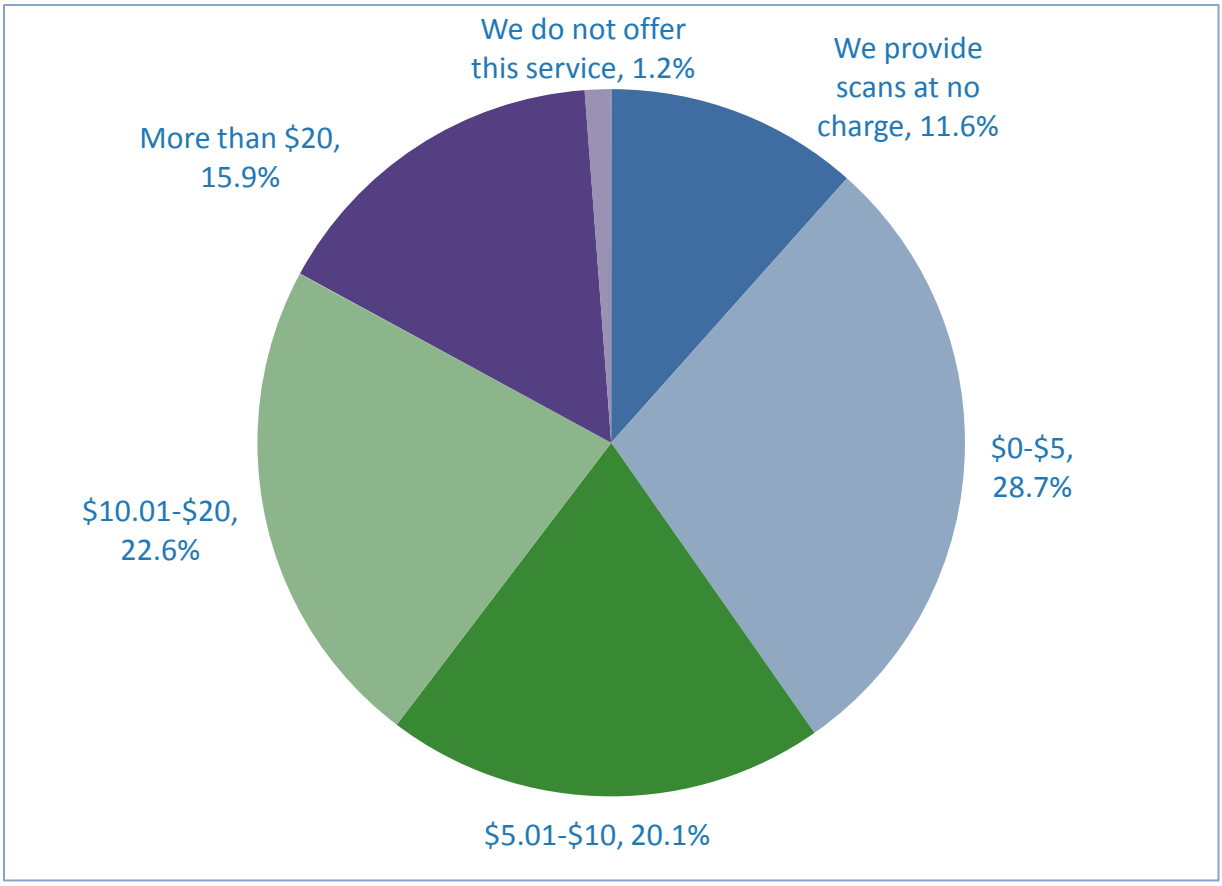

Figure 1.13. Average charge for a digital scan (Q. 34, n=164)

Users who need publication-quality reproductions or cannot consult materials on site often order digital scans to be made by library staff. Forty percent (40%) of respondents have an average charge $10 or less, including 12% that provide scans at no cost.[17]

Two further outcomes are sometimes desirable once a scan of a collection item has been made for a user: 1) avoid rescanning the item when repeat requests are received, and 2) make the image publicly available online after a copy has been delivered to the user. Our data indicate that 96% of respondents retain scans made by and/or for users for potential inclusion in a digital library (36% always, 59% sometimes).

We did not ask about status of deployment to a public site, but anecdotal evidence suggests that many institutions have large "backlogs" of digital files that are not yet discoverable; this may be because they are not yet actively managed internally (e.g., not stored on a dedicated server, no metadata), or the library does not yet have the technical infrastructure for making digital content available to users.

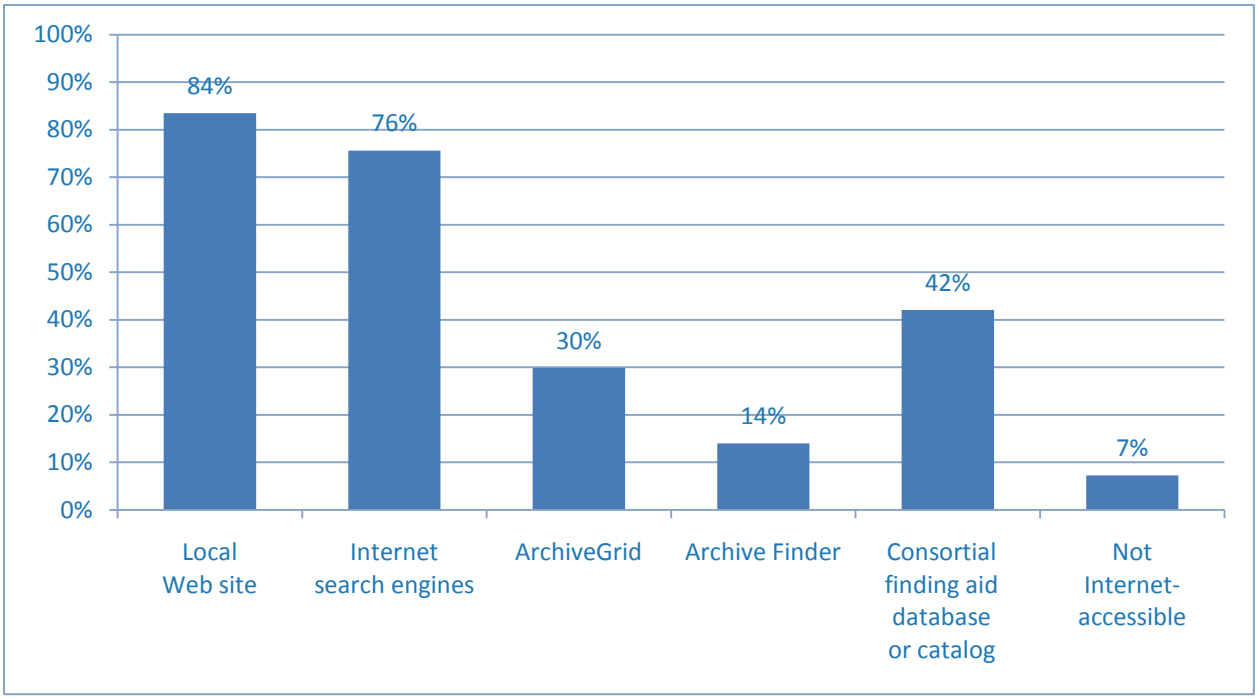

Figure 1.14. Internet access to finding aids (Q. 36, n=164)

Most respondents make their archival finding aids accessible on the Internet both on a local Web site (84%) and via a Web server (76%) that can be crawled by search engines such as Google. In addition, nearly half (42%) contribute to a consortial database, and 30% contribute to ArchiveGrid, which is the largest aggregation of finding aids in existence.[18] All told, these multiple avenues expand users' opportunities to discover unique primary research materials.

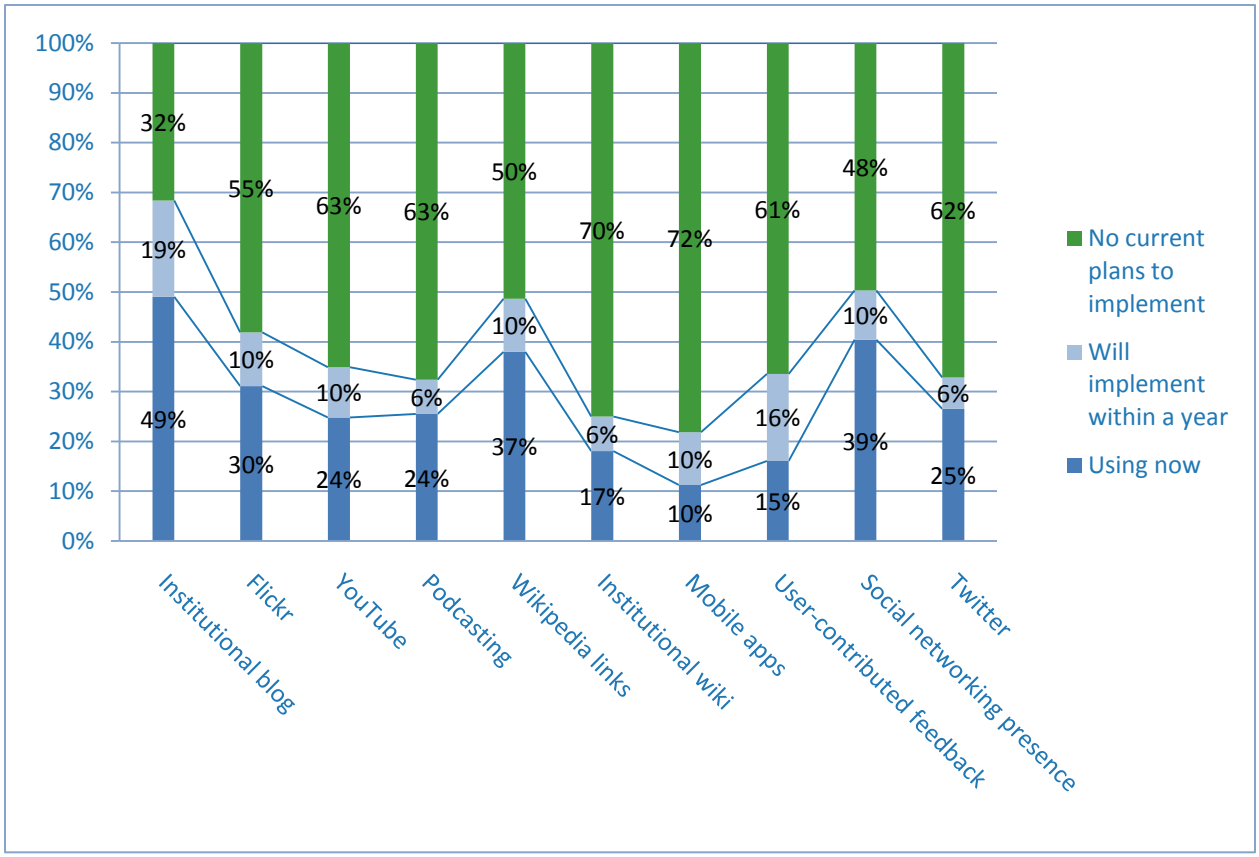

Figure 1.15. Web-based communication methods (Q. 37, n=162)

We explored the extent to which respondents have implemented "Web 2.0" social media for outreach or feedback. Half of respondents have implemented an institutional blog, and 40% have a social networking presence such as a Facebook page.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that linking from Wikipedia articles to a library's Web site (used by 38% of respondents) can draw measurable use of archival collections.[19] Visual and audiovisual materials are posted to Flickr (31%) and YouTube (25%) and disseminated via podcasts (26%); the popular appeal of visual content may cause these percentages to rise over time. On the other hand, the majority have no current plans to implement any other Web 2.0 methods other than blogs.

Table 1.7. Presentations (Q. 38, n=154)

	n	Number of Presentations	Percent of Total	Mean	Median
College/University courses	143	8,366	52%	59	28
Others affiliated with responding institution	127	2,634	16%	21	6
Local community	125	3,358	21%	27	8
Other visitors	108	1,749	11%	16	5
Total		16,107	100%	105	47

A library's capacity to make presentations is inherently limited by the size of its staff, and the organization-specific tables in Chapter Two reflect wide variation in the means and medians of the five organizations. The RLG Partnership mean is 194, IRLA is 164, and ARL is 156; the means for CARL and Oberlin libraries are far lower, as are their mean numbers of staff.

RLG Partnership libraries also have the highest mean (103) for presentations to college and university courses. The ARL mean is 91, and that for IRLA is 72.

The mean number of presentations for ARL libraries has increased by two thirds since 1998. Given the strong emphasis placed on instructional use of special collections, it would be interesting to know whether such increases have occurred across the other organizations as well.

Some questions:

- To what extent do presentations of various types result in use of collections?
- To what extent do presentations to primary user groups such as students improve the quality of the work they produce?
- To what extent do presentations and instruction sessions given by non-special collections staff add to measures of overall impact?
- To what extent do public presentations to non-users add to the overall value delivered by special collections?

More than one third (37%) of respondents have a fellowship or grant program to enable on-site user visits—a major aid to scholars, especially in an era of decreased funding for research

travel. Such programs are far more common at private institutions than public, and above all at independent research libraries that do not have a permanently-affiliated user group.

Cataloging and Metadata

The question that looms the largest for many readers of this report may be: To what extent have we succeeded in "exposing hidden collections" in the decade since ARL's benchmark survey in 1998? The short answer: far from enough. Some progress has been made, but vast quantities of special collections material are not yet discoverable online. (See the ARL section of Chapter Two for comparison with the 1998 data.)

In this section we examine the extent to which special collections materials in all formats have online access.

Table 1.8. Catalog records (Q. 41-47)[20]

Format	n	Online	Offline	No Records	Described within Archival Collections
Printed volumes	154	**85%**	7%	8%	n/a
Archival collections	153	**56%**	14%	30%	n/a
Manuscripts (items)	96	**51%**	23%	26%	n/a
Cartographic materials	129	**42%**	16%	23%	24%
Visual materials	136	**21%**	13%	35%	35%
Audiovisual materials	128	**25%**	7%	36%	36%
Born-digital materials	89	**29%**	1%	34%	40%

The current state of online catalog records can be summarized briefly:

- Printed volumes: 15% are not in online catalogs.
- Archives and manuscripts: 44% are not in online catalogs.
- Cartographic materials: 58% are not in online catalogs.
- Visual and audiovisual materials: Barely 25% were reported as having records in online catalogs. Because 35% are managed within archival collections, however, more may be accessible at the collection level.
- Born-digital materials: 71% are not in online catalogs, but more of these materials (40%) are managed within archival collections than any other format.

We did not ask respondents to distinguish between full and less-than-full catalog records. Online data therefore could be at any level of detail, from skeletal to highly detailed. This can include brief records made at time of acquisition, which many libraries later expand upon for special collections materials. Detailed records have justifiable value when descriptive information and access points beyond the norms of general cataloging practice reveal special characteristics of rare and unique materials. On the other hand, detailed editing of existing cataloging copy may not always be justified; community consensus about appropriate circumstances for streamlining would be valuable.

We asked whether non-print materials were cataloged within archival and manuscript collections, since standard practice is that only a collection-level record is then made in lieu of an individual record. Depending on the format, 24% to 40% of non-print materials are managed within collections.[21]

Some questions:

- Under what circumstances can detailed item-level cataloging be justified?
- Should more non-print materials such as maps and published visual materials be managed archivally to enable collection-level rather than item-level cataloging?

An Internet-accessible finding aid exists for 44% of archival collections. This percentage would rise to 74% if the 30% of finding aids that are "hidden"—i.e., those available only locally—were converted for Internet accessibility. Much retrospective conversion already has been done, particularly as institutions have implemented Encoded Archival Description (discussed in the Archival Collections Management section). It therefore seems possible that those not yet converted are the furthest from meeting contemporary standards and may present various challenges; for example, the physical arrangement of the corresponding collection may no longer match the finding aid, or the structure and content of the data may be far below current standards.

Nevertheless, imperfect metadata is preferable to none at all. It is the rare potential user who does not want to know, above all, that materials exist, and where they are located.

Some questions:

- Are the reasons *not* to convert finding aid data more powerful than the reasons to do so?

- If a finding aid's structure is problematic for conversion to EAD, would cost-effective conversion to a format such as PDF be preferable to no online access?
- Where legacy finding aids exist in quantity, have libraries given sufficient priority to conversion, as they did for library card catalogs in decades past?

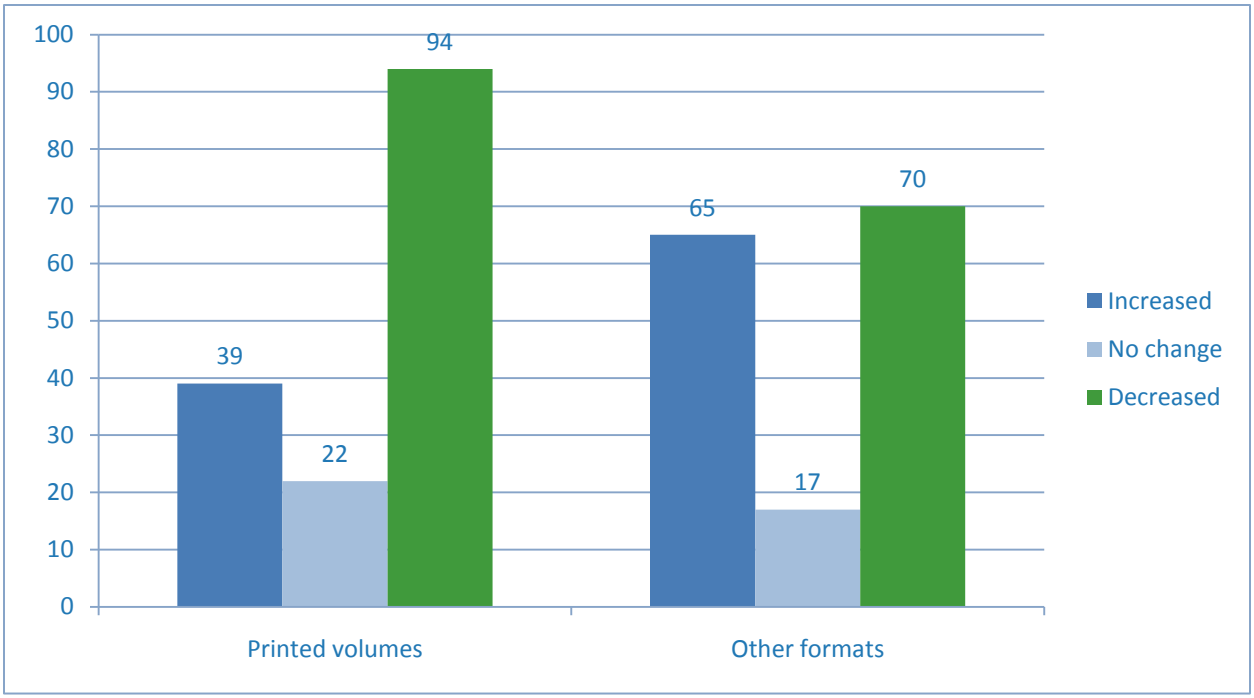

Figure 1.16. Change in size of backlogs (Q. 49, n=161)

It is encouraging that 59% of respondents reported a decrease in their backlogs of printed volumes since 2000, and 44% reported decreased backlogs for materials in other formats. On the other hand, 25% and 41% of backlogs, respectively, have increased. Efficient cataloging and processing methodologies may be in use, yet challenges clearly remain to balance collection growth with the need for backlog reduction.

We did not gather data about the actual size of backlogs, but another research team surveyed rare book catalogers in 2010 regarding backlog size, awareness of the discourse about "hidden collections," and any changes in rare book cataloging practices in response. Their data indicate that 72% of respondents believe their efforts have been "successful," and 65% believe their approach is sustainable for preventing further backlog growth (Myers 2010).

More such research would help us better understand the reasons behind the rise and fall of special collections backlogs.

Some questions:

- Why are so many backlogs continuing to increase?
- Why hasn't the increased emphasis on sustainable metadata methodologies had more payoff?

Archival Collections Management

In recent years, archival and manuscript materials have earned a much higher profile within libraries and across the teaching and research communities, due at least in part to promulgation of Internet-accessible finding aids and increased visibility of collections via digital libraries. Relevant issues are discussed throughout this report.[22] This section presents several topics that pertain only to archival materials.

For purposes of this survey, we defined archival and manuscript collections as materials in any format that are managed as collections, including those within institutional archives (see Appendix A.2). In contrast, we defined "manuscripts" as textual materials managed and cataloged at the item level.[23] Throughout this section, the phrase "archival materials" is used to encompass all of these.

In 2005, Mark Greene and Dennis Meissner published the seminal article "More product, less process," which proved catalytic in raising archivists' consciousness of the need to reduce the vast backlogs languishing in libraries and archives.[24] To address this dilemma, "MPLP" (the acronym by which the article has become known) articulates the steps in processing that can most productively be eliminated in order to improve efficiencies, emphasizing a continuum of possible approaches to processing based on the nature and expected use of particular materials.

The Greene/Meissner recommendations have been controversial, in part because less detailed processing can lead to difficulty using collections that have not been physically arranged to facilitate research, while less granular finding aids can reduce discoverability. Given these factors, public services staff in some institutions are experiencing increased workloads that may offset savings in processing time (Greene 2010).

The data show that 75% of respondents use an MPLP-style approach, either sometimes (57%) or always (18%). It is likely, however, that one respondent's practice is more generally true: "While we apply MPLP to all processing, that does not mean that every collection is minimally processed." In other words, "applying" MPLP can sometimes result in a decision that the materials warrant full processing.

When correlated with the responses to question 49 regarding changes in backlog size—44% of non-print backlogs have decreased—we can posit that widespread adoption of simplified methods has had positive results in terms of exposing hidden collections.

Some questions:

- To what extent is use of MPLP-style simplified processing responsible for decreases in archival backlogs?
- Can we establish processing metrics across the archival community?
- Are the increased public service challenges that can arise in using minimally processed collections being used appropriately to justify more detailed processing?

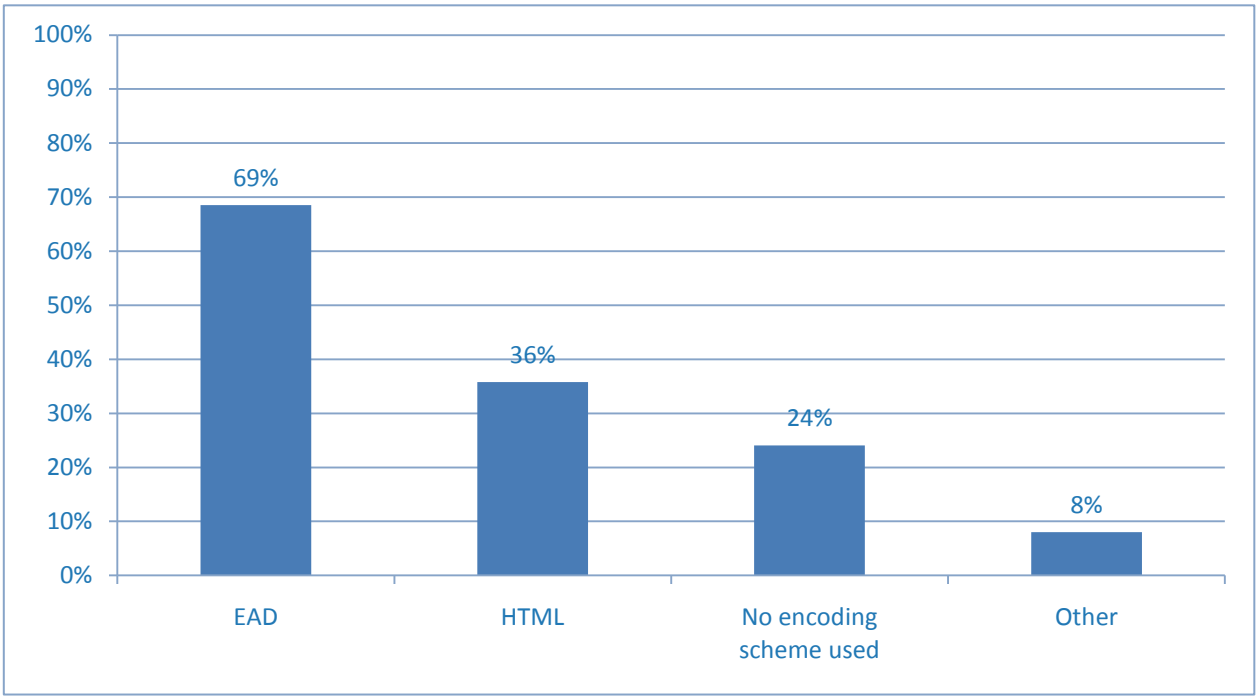

Figure 1.17. Encoding of archival finding aids (Q. 52, n=162)

Encoded Archival Description, first released in 1998, is the first standard to define the data elements used in archival finding aids and the relationships among them.[25] EAD has led to improved standardization of finding aids in structure and appearance, easier migration of data across platforms, and design of user interfaces that are both navigable and flexible.

Our data reveal that 69% of respondents use EAD. As with minimal processing, implementation has met with resistance in some quarters: staff must be trained, software evaluated and

implemented, workflow re-examined, and a public interface designed. It is generally accepted across the library community, however, that the benefits of using standards justify the affiliated expenses.[26]

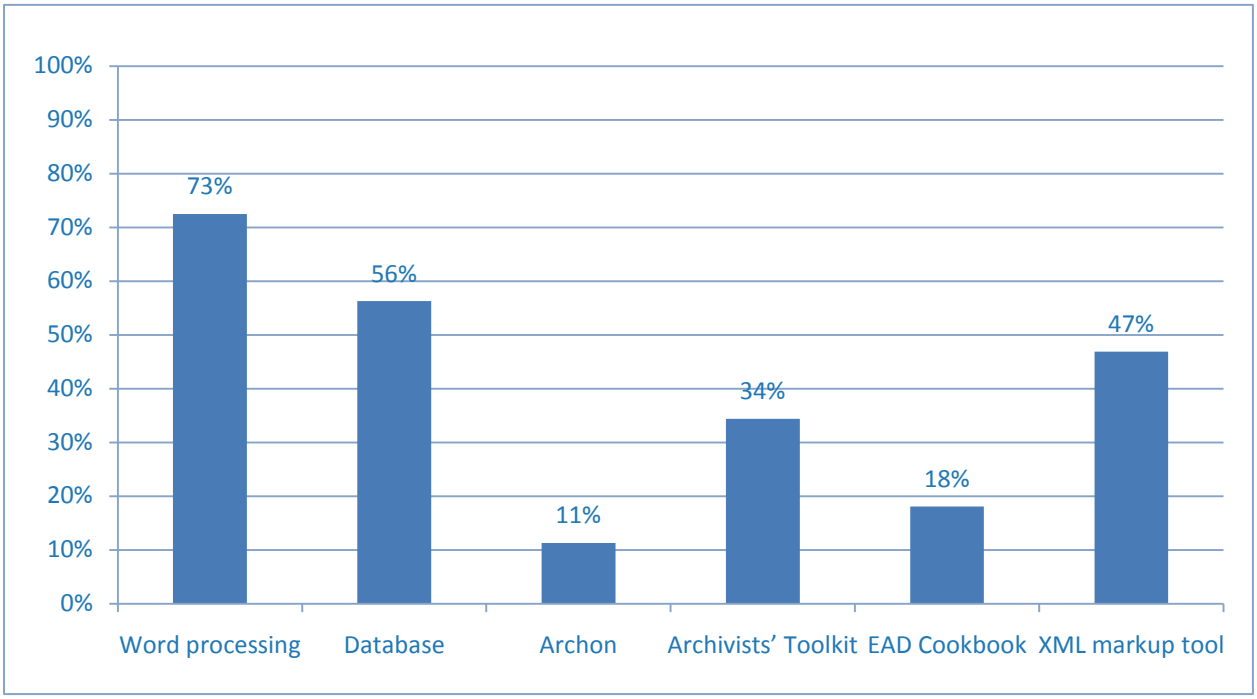

Figure 1.18. Software for creating finding aids (Q. 53, n=160)

Respondents use an array of software tools for creating and encoding finding aid data, and some institutions use four or more.[27] Word-processing software is the most widely used, likely because virtually any new staff member arrives knowing how to use it, including part-time and temporary employees. It would be useful to know the extent to which respondents find the existing array of available tools satisfactory.[28]

Many institutions mandate the existence of an institutional archives ("university archives" in academic institutions) and designate the responsible organizational unit. The nature of these collections is very different from other archival holdings of special collections libraries, presenting an overlapping but somewhat different set of issues. Collection development, types of material, and the primary user base (often the institution's administration and staff) all differ. In addition, born-digital materials are far more prevalent in institutional archives than in most other types of collecting, at least at present.

The institutional archives reports within the library at 87% of responding institutions. The above issues therefore loom large for our survey population.

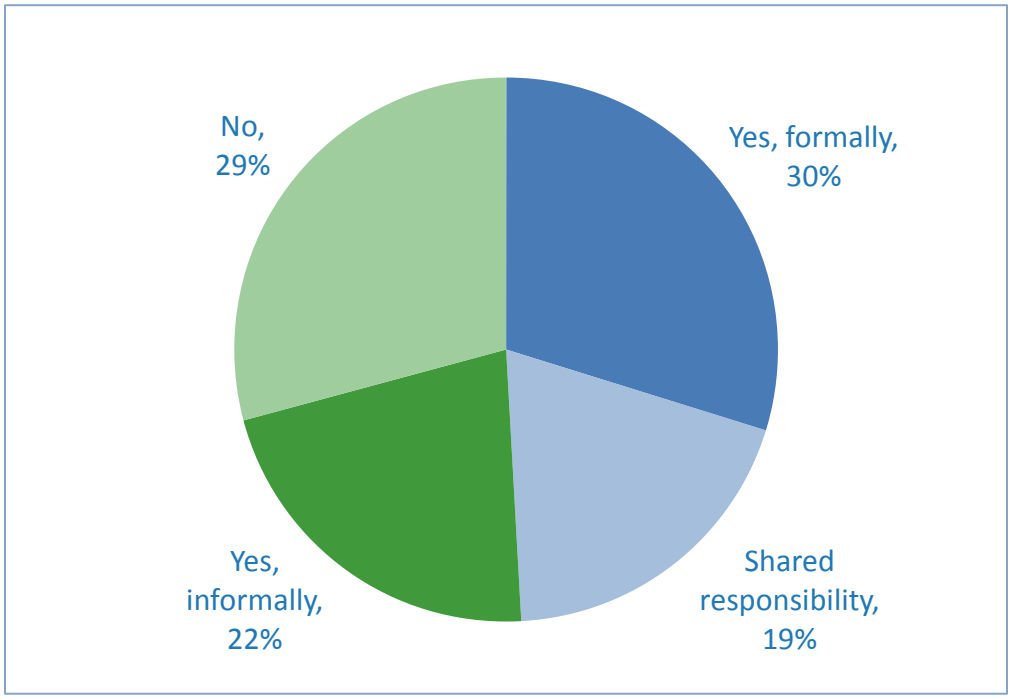

Figure 1.19. Responsibility for records management (Q. 55, n=162)

Managing the institutional archives requires close coordination with the unit responsible for the parent institution's records management program to ensure that materials of permanent value are not discarded before being evaluated for transfer to the archives.[29] Accomplishing this is straightforward when both functions reside in a single organizational unit; it is more challenging when the records management function reports elsewhere.

A library or archives is responsible for records management in 71% of responding institutions—sometimes independently (30%), sometimes with shared responsibility (19%), and sometimes informally (22%) because the parent institution has no formal records management program. The latter circumstance is fraught with difficulty, since archivists are faced with seeking cooperation from offices throughout the institution that may not recognize the importance of saving their business records. The sad reality is that no formal records management program exists in many academic and research institutions.

Some questions:

- What arguments would help libraries obtain both the authority and the necessary resources in order to formalize records management programs in institutions that have none?
- How many special collections and archives have staff qualified to do records management?

Digital Special Collections

The increasing availability of special collections materials in digital form over the past decade has been nothing sort of revolutionary for both users of special collections and the professionals who manage them. User expectations typically are high: how many of us have *not* been asked why everything is not yet online? At the same time, the advent of born-digital archival materials has presented a new challenge that has proven daunting, given the need for complex technical skills and challenging new types of intra-institutional collaboration.

This section covers these two topics, which emerged as two of the three top challenges faced today in the special collections context.[30]

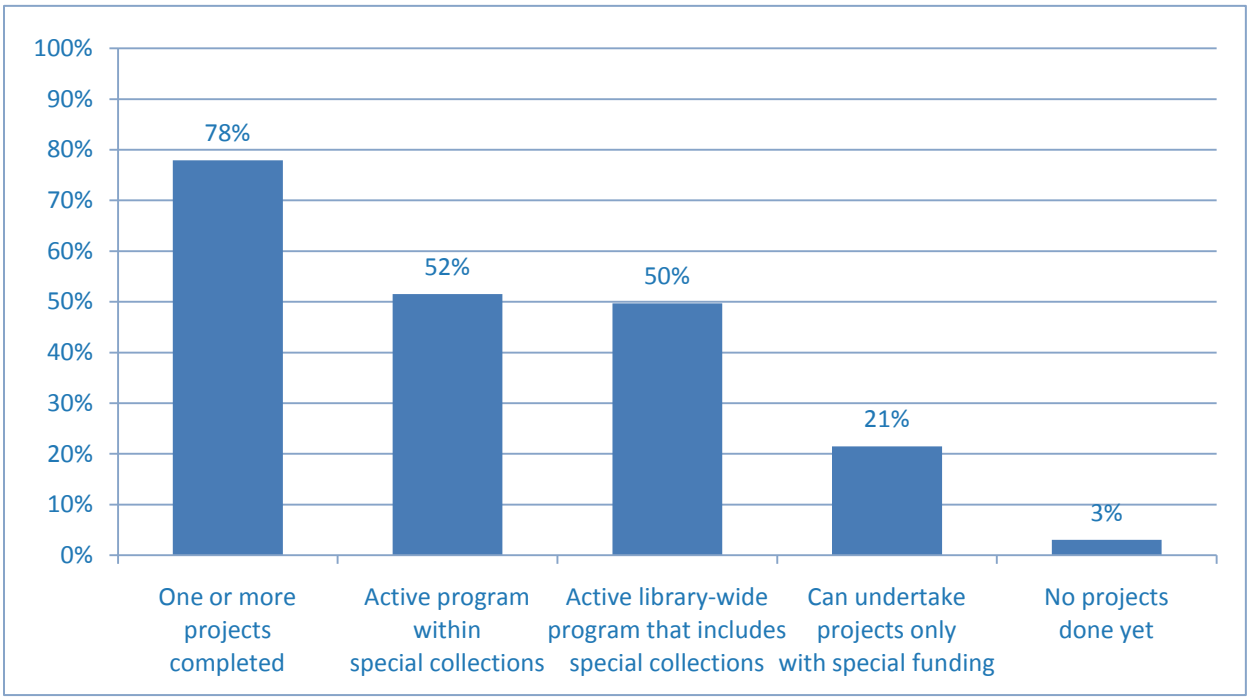

Figure 1.20. Digitization activity (Q. 57, n=163)

The organizational placement of digitization programs for special collections materials varies.[31] Respondents could select multiple responses as appropriate to their circumstances.

Half have a program based in special collections and half have a library-wide program; the two groups overlap, and 25% have both. This leaves 25% of respondents that do not have an active program.

Ninety-seven percent (97%) have completed one or more digitization projects and/or have an active program. This statistic is fairly constant across the entire population, regardless of library size or institutional type. Twenty-two percent (22%) can undertake projects only with special funding, suggesting that these libraries have not prioritized digitization of primary sources as an integral element of their programs and services.

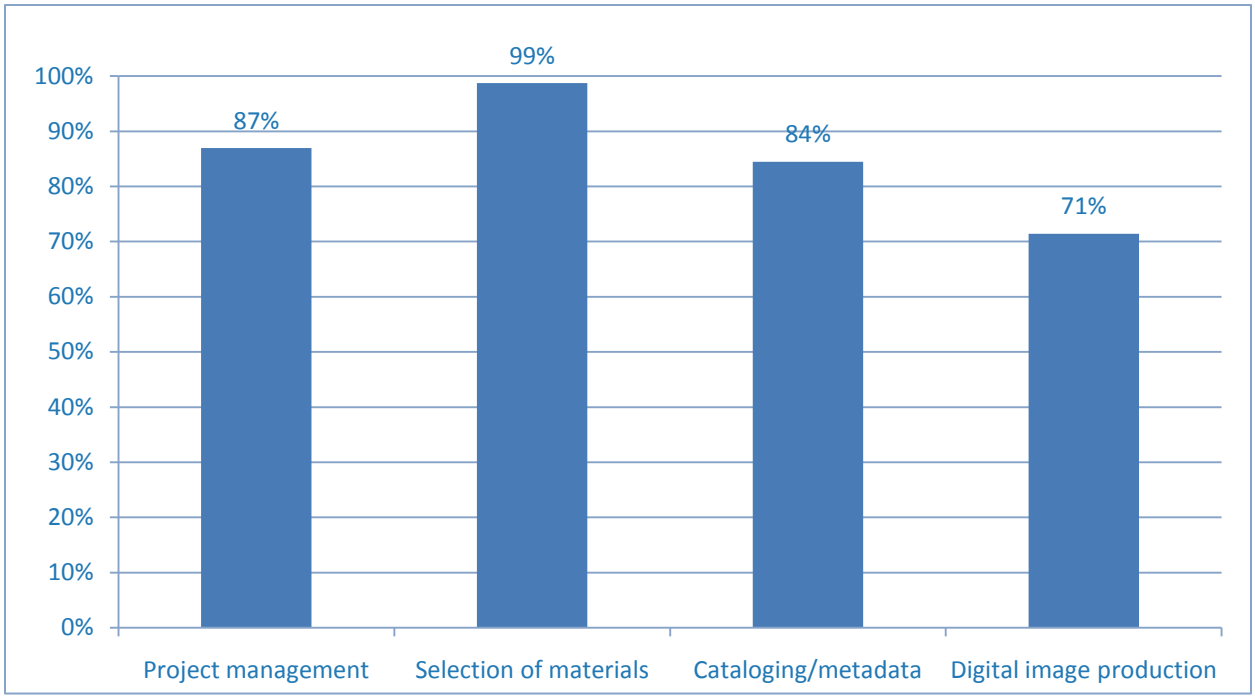

Figure 1.21. Involvement in digitization projects (Q. 58, n-161)

Special collections staff in more than 75% of institutions perform three or four of the digitization activities given as options (project management, selection of materials, cataloging/metadata creation, and digital image production). For the 15% that are involved in only one activity, selection of materials was invariably that one.

Twenty-four institutions reported additional activities: Web design (5 responses), grant writing (5), information technology (5), administration (3), and scanning on demand for users (2). It is likely that others would have selected one or more of these had we included them among the multiple-choice options.

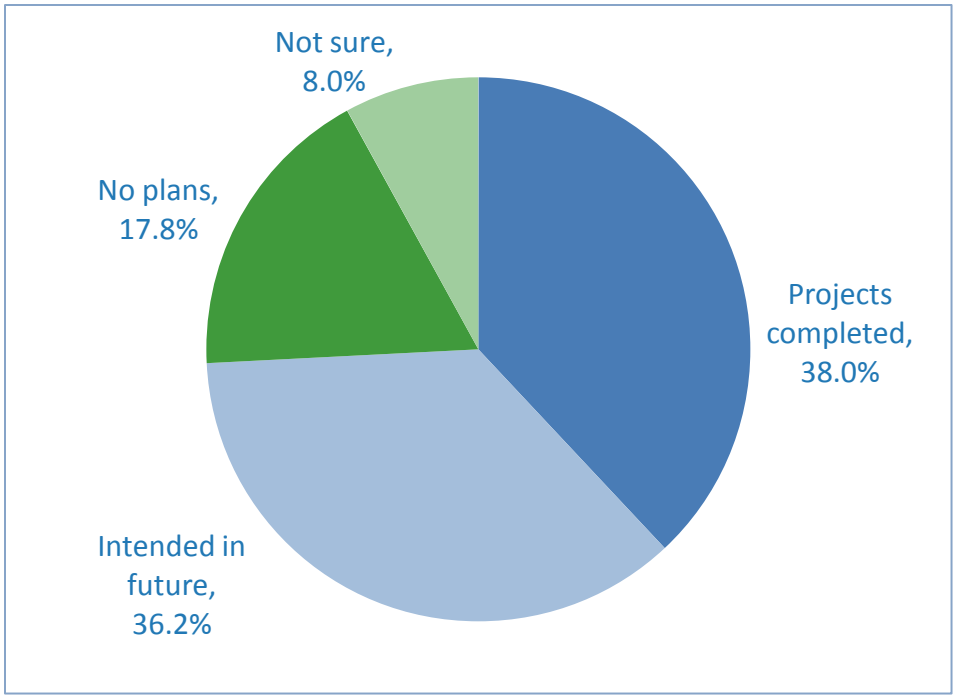

Figure 1.22. Large-scale digitization (Q. 59, n=163)

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of respondents stated that they have already done large-scale digitization of special collections. This result was unexpected, given that special collections have been excluded from some high-profile mass digitization projects for reasons of efficiency. Subsequent follow-up with respondents has revealed, however, that the quantities of material digitized and/or production levels achieved generally were not impressive or scalable[32].

We used the term "large-scale" to distinguish special collections activity from "mass digitization." The latter generally is understood to mean conversion of library holdings at "industrial scale" without selecting individual items, limited human intervention in the capture process, and achievement of exceptionally high productivity (Coyle 2006). Digitization of special collections, on the other hand, often requires a measure of selectivity to ensure that certain materials receive special handling to prevent damage or, if necessary, be excluded. We therefore defined "large-scale" digitization as a systematic effort to consider complete collections—rather than being selective at the item level, as has been the norm for many projects—and using production methods that are as streamlined as possible while also accounting for the needs of special materials.

Some "large-scale" projects may be among those done under contract with commercial vendors, particularly those that digitize collections of exceptional depth. A better overall understanding of the nature and scope of large-scale digitization of special collections would be valuable.

Some questions:

- To what extent have libraries switched from doing highly selective "boutique" projects to digitization of entire collections?
- What methodologies are being used for large-scale projects? What production levels are achievable? Scalable?
- Can we develop replicable methodologies for large-scale projects that include metrics for efficiency and effectiveness?

The incidence of licensing contracts with commercial firms for digitization of special collections and subsequent sale of digitized special collections content varies enormously across the five organizations surveyed. The overall mean is 26%, while the percentages for the organizations surveyed are 11% (CARL), 13% (Oberlin), 27% (ARL), 39% (RLG Partnership), and, most notably, 73% of IRLA libraries. The exceptional depth and distinction of IRLA collections in specialized areas is likely a key factor. In addition, the fact that some IRLAs rely in part on earned income to support their programs, unlike governmental libraries or those affiliated with universities, offers added incentive.

Some questions:

- To what extent are key segments of the corpus of digitized rare books not available online and/or as open-access digital content?
- For how long are libraries that license their content likely to maintain contracts that result in access being available to subscribers only?

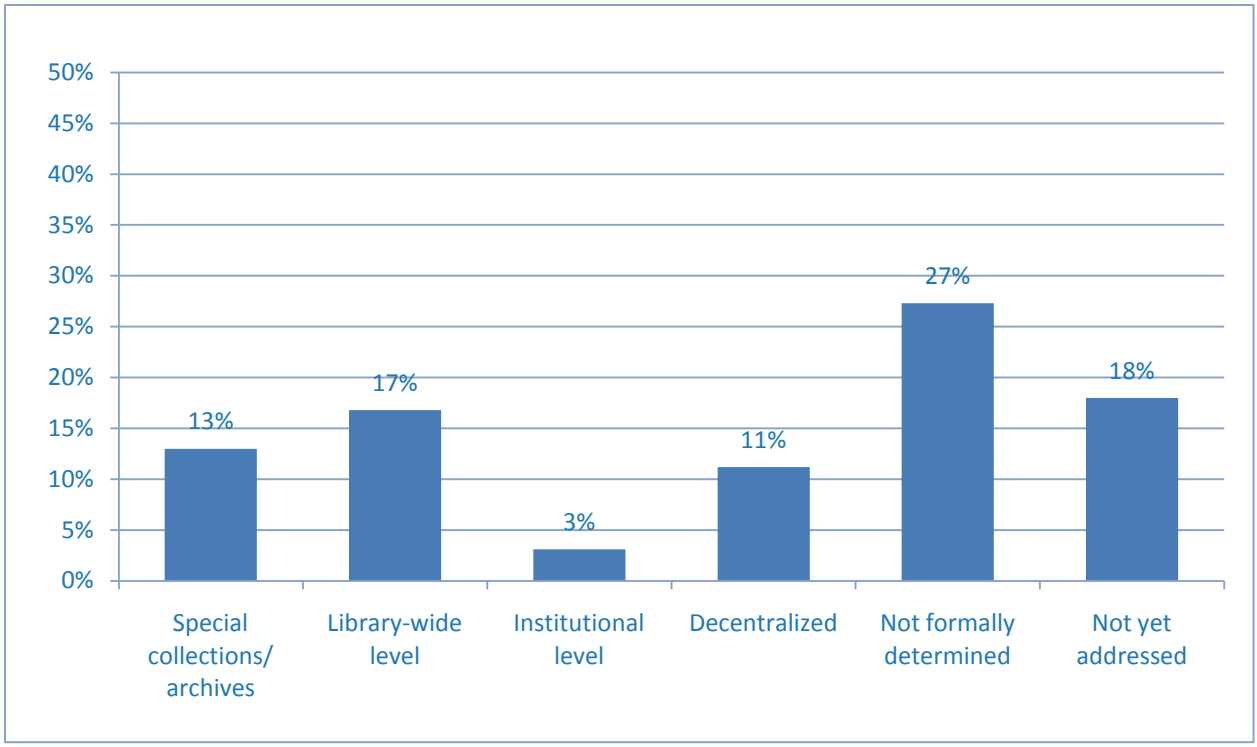

Figure 1.23. Responsibility for born-digital archival materials (Q. 61, n=161)

In addition to the challenges associated with digitization, the daunting requirements of born-digital archival materials have begun to loom large among the concerns of academic and research libraries, as our data reveal in multiple ways.

What is the intersection between born-digital content and special collections? Some born-digital materials, such as scholarly e-journals that have no print version, and reference databases, are easily disregarded in the special collections context; print originals of such materials were never located in special collections. In contrast, original archival and manuscript materials such as institutional office records, authors' drafts that exist only on floppy discs, and digital photographs are the born-digital equivalents of materials traditionally collected by special collections. Other types of exclusively digital content, such as Web sites and scholars' data sets, have characteristics that may or may not warrant special collections involvement.

Various types of expertise held by special collections librarians and archivists are relevant for developing the context of a digital collection and interpreting its content. Such skills include selecting materials of permanent rather than temporary value, negotiating ownership, resolving legal issues, determining and enforcing any restrictions, ensuring authenticity, determining file arrangement, and creating collective metadata.

Addressing such considerations would be valuable in planning for the management of born-digital materials in an academic or research library. Anecdotal evidence shows that in some institutions special collections is assigned responsibility for all born-digital materials; in others, special collections has no role. A more nuanced approach is necessary.

Only 55% of responding institutions have assigned responsibility for managing born-digital materials to one or more organizational units—10% more than was reported by ARL in 1998. Of these, 30% have given this responsibility to the library, within either special collections, the institutional archives, or at the library-wide level. Only 3% have consciously assigned responsibility elsewhere. Time will tell whether this pattern will continue as the undecided 45% move forward.

Organizations rarely assign responsibility for such a complex activity until a need has been defined and accepted—or, in some cases, in response to a precipitating crisis. Initial actions include development of infrastructure, shared planning and communication, and assignment of resources (both financial and human). The 2010 report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Sustainable Digital Preservation and Access emphasizes that a variety of players have a stake in born-digital preservation and management (BRTF 2010). Even so, only librarians and archivists are likely to assert the use case for preserving archival materials of permanent historical or evidentiary value.

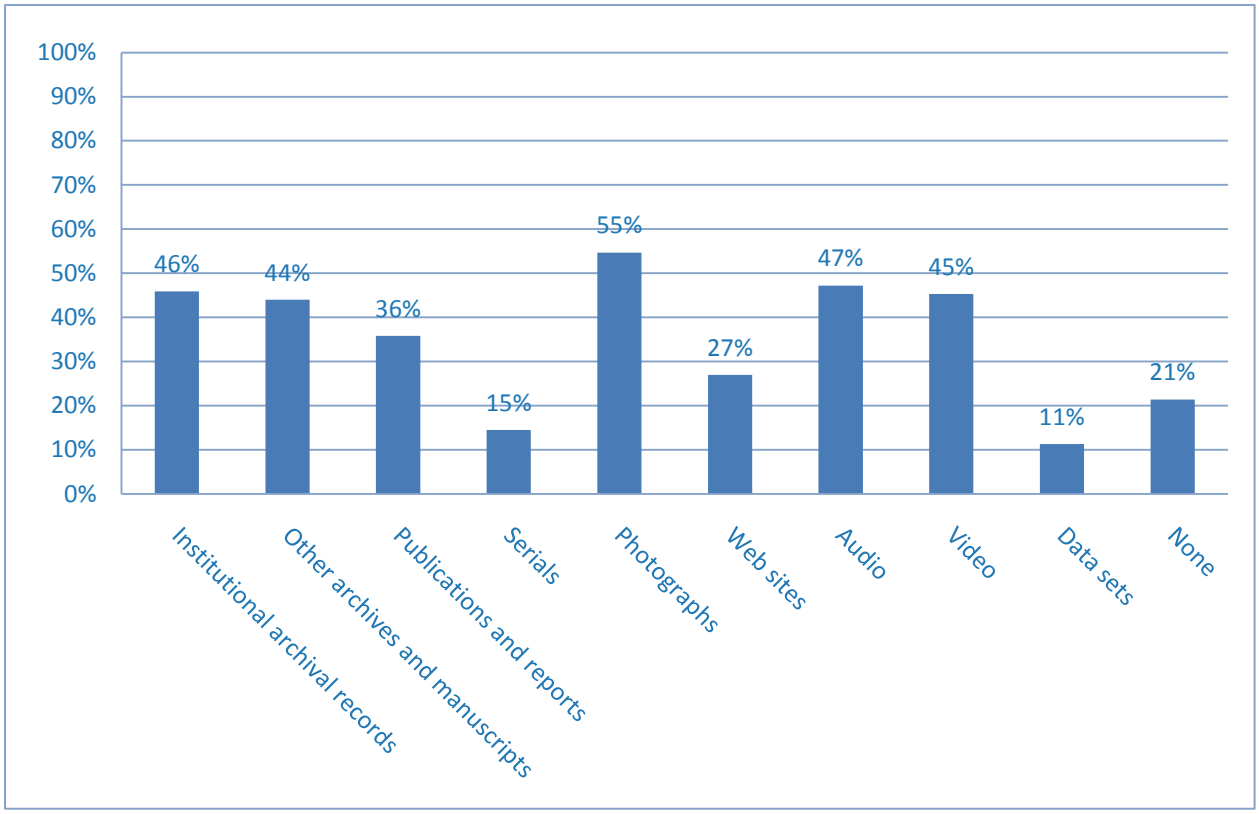

Figure 1.24. Born-digital archival materials already held (Q. 62, n=159)

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of respondents reported having collected born-digital materials in one or more formats; these data are in stark contrast to the 35% who reported the size of their born-digital holdings in response to question 11. Visual and audiovisual materials (such as photographs, audio, and video) are the most frequently collected born-digital formats, closely followed by institutional records and other archives and manuscripts.

Two respondents expressed the ad-hoc nature of their collecting in a way that may apply more generally across the survey population:

> "We have and manage some born-digital materials in all or most of these categories, but these are all ad hoc items or groups of items—not something we set out to "collect" or manage. We seem to be moving toward a model in which SC and UA share responsibility for setting policy, perhaps for making decisions in specific cases, but where the materials themselves are folded into Digital Library Services/institutional repository."

> "Can't really answer this collection because our "collecting" is so sporadic."

A few respondents reported having collected formats not listed in the survey: e-mail, electronic theses and dissertations, cartographic materials, oral histories, undergraduate honors papers, digital arts, scholarly output of various types, and blogs.

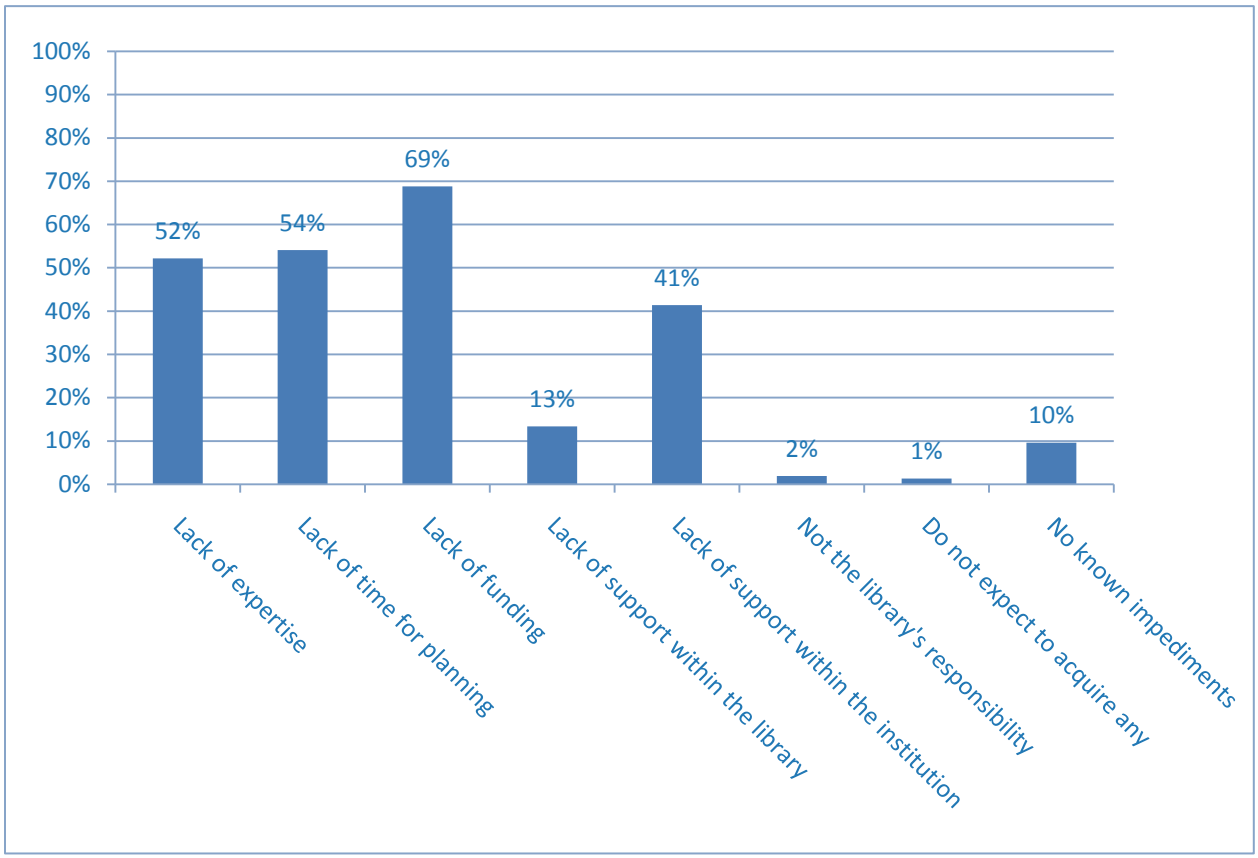

Figure 1.25. Impediments to born-digital management (Q. 63, n=157)

Lack of funding was the impediment to implementation of born-digital materials management most often cited (69%), followed by lack of time for planning (54%) and lack of expertise (52%). All three are essential to any program; until they are in place, most collecting that takes place is likely to be reactive. Active management of digital files is also unlikely, since substantial resources are necessary for metadata creation, computer server space, and much more.

The 52% of respondents that cited lack of expertise as an impediment stands in contrast to the 83% needing education or training in this area (question 71).

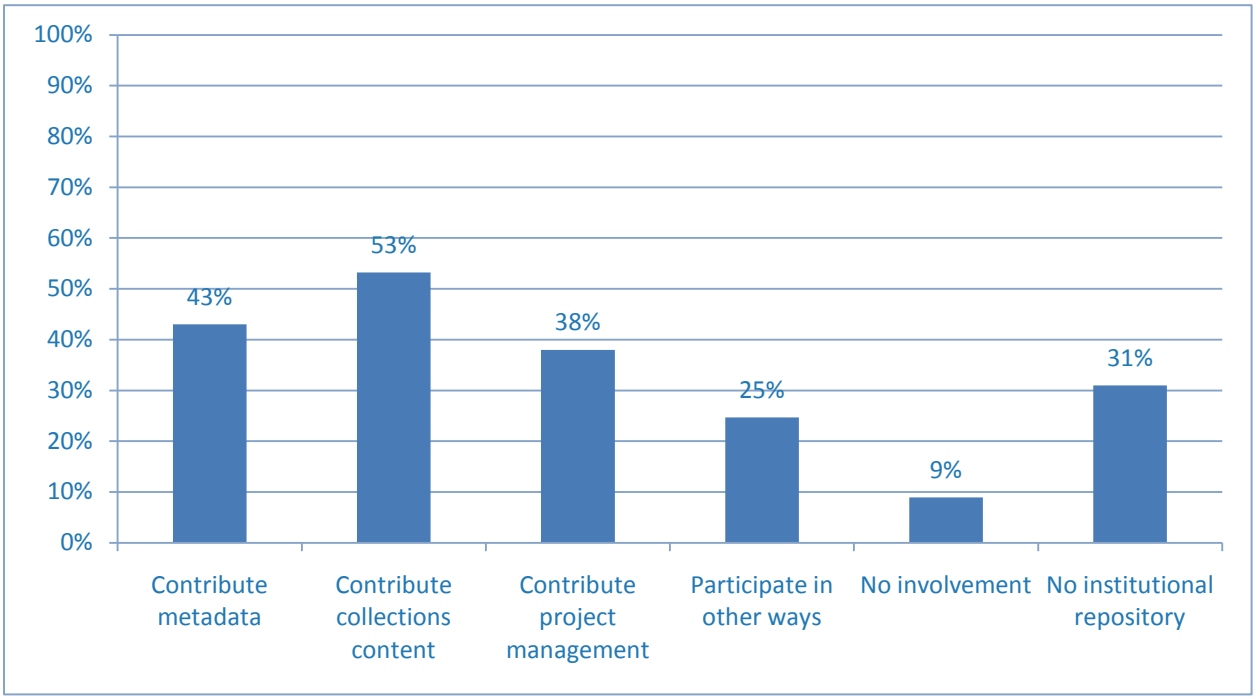

Figure 1.26. Institutional repositories (Q. 64, n=158)

Sixty-nine percent (69%) of respondents have an institutional repository (IR). Half of all respondents reported that special collections units contribute collections content, which reflects the varying scope of IRs: some focus principally on the scholarly output of faculty and other researchers, while others include institutional records and other materials typically collected by special collections or archives.

The 2007 report of the MIRACLE project, a census of IRs in U.S. academic institutions, explored the involvement of archivists and archives. The MIRACLE data indicate that both participation and contribution of content by archivists have been minimal. For example, the report states (Markey 2007, Section 9.3), "[We] have no census data that would help explain the marginalization of the archivist with respect to IRs. There may be merit to Crow's ([2002]) observation that the IR competes with the university archives." We can think of no legitimate reason for an IR project management team to allow competition to enter the picture. Collaboration, not competition.

Some questions:

- Under what circumstances should special collections staff play a role in management of born-digital materials?
- Which skills and knowledge held by special collections librarians and archivists are essential for managing born-digital materials of any kind?
- What are the basic steps an institution should take to jump start progress on managing born-digital archival materials?
- What are the elements of an effective use case for born-digital materials?
- Are any institutions assigning a role to special collections staff in curation of large data sets?
- Who should be responsible for institutional Web sites that have almost completely replaced countless physical brochures, newsletters, and other publications, but which, in physical form, were the responsibility of the university archives?
- What role should special collections play in the context of an institutional repository?

Staffing

In many academic and research libraries special collections staff are responsible for the full array of functional duties, including selection and interpretation of materials in any format, public services, teaching, specialized cataloging, archival processing, preservation, public outreach, exhibits, publications, digitization projects, born-digital management, fundraising, and more.

We explored a variety of staffing issues of interest in the special collections context. These include number of staff, expected retirements, demographic diversity, and education and training needs. We also examined the extent to which separate special collections units have been integrated, which can lead to increased efficiencies and lower costs.

Table 1.9. Mean number of staff FTE[33]

	All	ARL	CARL	IRLA	Oberlin	RLG
n	158	80	19	15	39	50
Permanent (Q. 66, n=161)						
FTE	13	20	8	32	3	25
Professional	8	12	4	21	2	15
Paraprofessional	5	8	4	11	1	10
Temporary (Q. 67, n=142)						
FTE	2	3	2	4	0	5
Professional	1	2	1	2	0	3
Paraprofessional	1	1	1	2	0	2
Total						
FTE	15	23	10	36	3	30
Professional	9	14	5	23	2	18
Paraprofessional	6	9	5	13	1	12

We solicited staffing statistics in FTE (full-time equivalents), either whole or decimal numbers. Positions to be reported were those "focused on special collections-related functions" rather than only those located within a special collections unit.[34]

The data reveal that IRLA special collections have, in the aggregate, far more staff (the IRLA mean is 32 FTE) than the members of the other four organizations. The next highest mean, that of RLG Partnership libraries (25 FTE), is positively influenced by the thirteen IRLAs that are also RLG Partners.

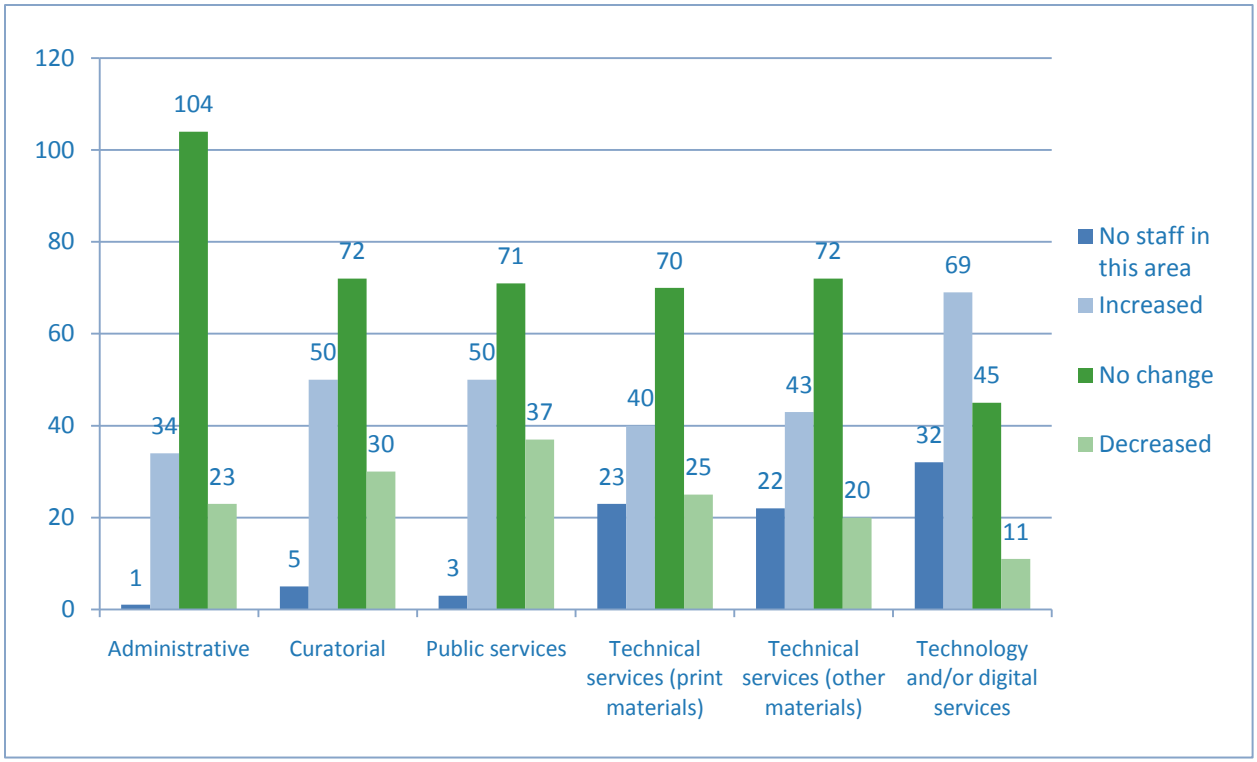

Figure 1.27. Changes in staffing levels (Q. 70, n=163)

The norm across the survey population is that staff size within special collections generally has remained stable since 2000. The predominant response was "No change" in all functional areas of responsibility, with the exception of technology and digital services, for which 44% of respondents reported an increase.

That said, stable staffing was not universal; decreases by functional area ranged from 7% (technology) to 23% (public services), and increases ranged from 21% (administration) to 32% (curatorial). Decreased public services staffing may be of particular concern, given that a majority of respondents reported increased use across most user categories and formats.

Increased staffing in technology and digital services may be related in some way to the fact that education and training needs in technology-related areas are higher than any other area, as described under Most Challenging Issues. Some respondents commented on staffing challenges relative to activities such as digitization, management of born-digital materials, and conversion of in-house databases.

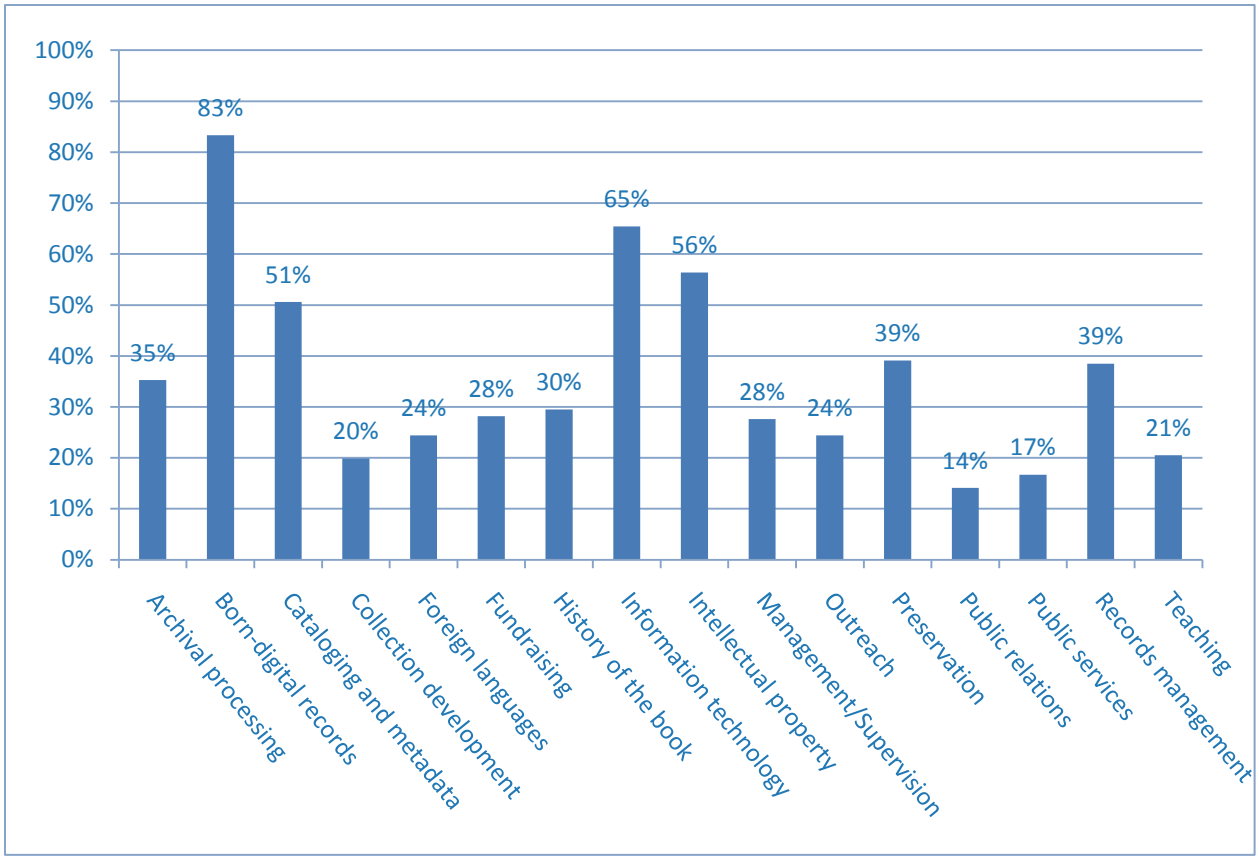

Figure 1.28. Education and training needs (Q. 71, n=156)

The survey instrument listed sixteen areas in which staff may need development in order to meet the institution's needs. We selected these areas based on review of education and core competency guidelines issued by the two principal U.S. professional societies for special collections librarians and archivists (ACRL 2008; SAA 2002, 2006).

The two most frequently named areas of need were born-digital materials (83%) and information technology (65%). Intellectual property was third (56%), perhaps reflecting that many institutions struggle to determine the risks and legal responsibilities associated with digitizing materials that have not gone out of copyright.[35] Training in born-digital management and intellectual property are widely available at archival conferences and in continuing education programs, but less so in programs that target the broader special collections population.[36] This may be a fruitful area in which organizations such as the ACRL Rare Books and Manuscripts Section could direct members toward more opportunities.

Half of respondents cited a need for staff development in cataloging and metadata. This may relate in part to the desire to employ non-MARC metadata for digitization projects, since special collections staff often does this work, and original cataloging is often necessary for

lack of existing cataloging copy.[37] Also, about one third need greater expertise in archival processing or records management. Taken together, these data suggest that placing a higher priority on such training could help institutions more efficiently expose hidden collections.

Based on respondents' estimates, 9% of special collections staff across the survey population are likely to retire in the next five years. Percentages varied somewhat by organization: ARL (10%), CARL (16%), IRLA (8%), Oberlin (7%), and the RLG Partnership (8%).

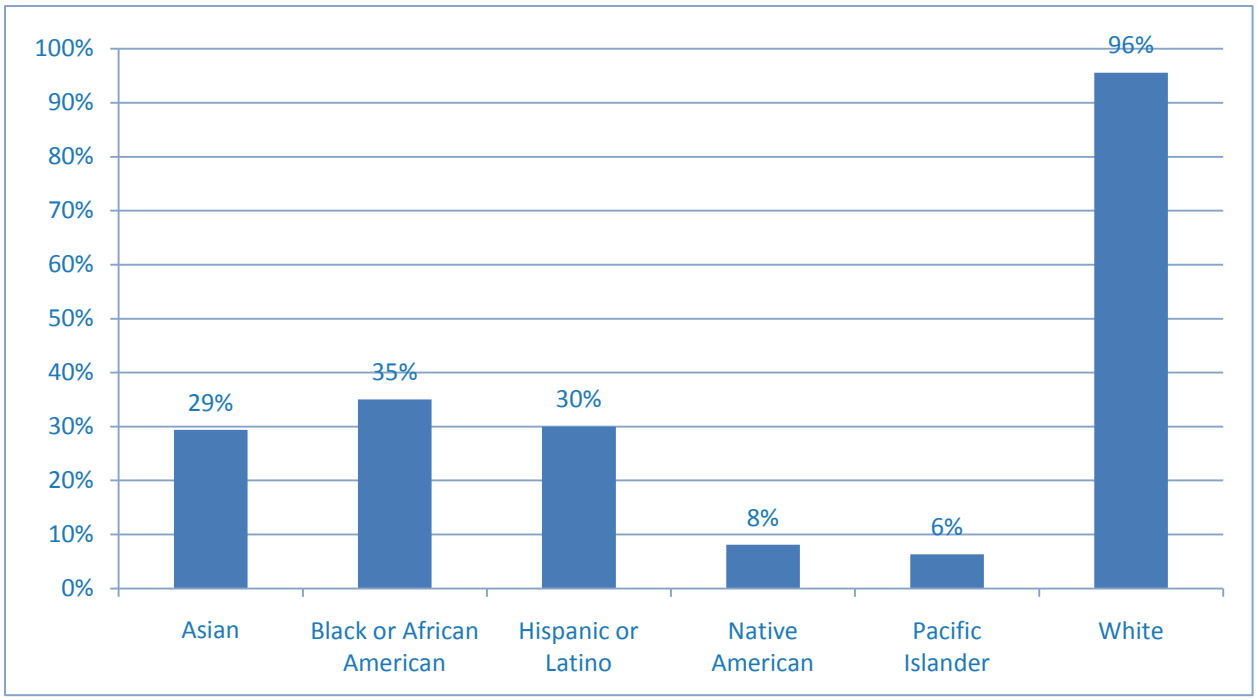

Figure 1.29. Demographic diversity (Q. 69, n=160)

We asked which demographic groups are represented among the special collections staff of each institution.[38] The data show that slightly more than one third have Black/African American staff members, while slightly fewer have Asians or Hispanics/Latinos on staff.[39] Note that these percentages reflect the percentage of *institutions* that have special collections staff in each of these population groups, not the percentage of individual staff.[40]

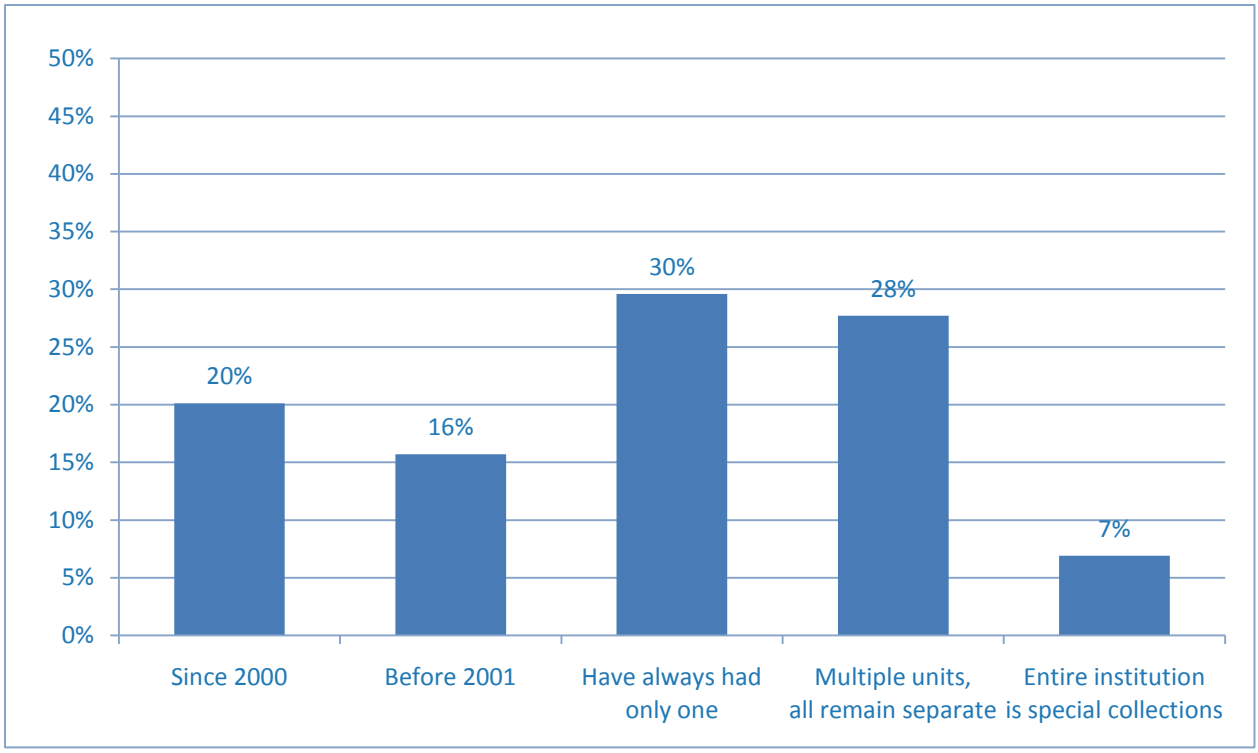

Figure 1.30. Integration of separate units (Q. 72, n=159)

Until recent decades, it was common for multiple special collections and archives units to exist within one institution. These tended to be departments or branch libraries segregated by type of material (e.g., rare books, manuscripts, institutional archives, oral history) or collecting focus (e.g., local history or other topical areas).

While autonomy has its virtues, supporting multiple independent units often results in added expense and inefficiency, such as the need to staff multiple facilities and public service desks, uneven expertise in specialized skills such as cataloging or archival processing, and variable policies and practices across the institution. In recent decades, the prevalence of separate units has diminished: more than one third of respondents have integrated all formerly separate units, while 28% continue to maintain separate units and do not plan to change this.

Some questions:

- Is the *total* number of staff in special collections remaining stable?
- Why is public services staff decreasing at the same time that use is increasing?
- How can a library determine the appropriate level of staffing for special collections in the context of both the library's overall goals and the areas in which special collections is expected to help fulfill those goals?
- Why are educational needs in several areas so widely unmet?

Most Challenging Issues

We asked respondents to name their "three most challenging issues" in open-ended comments. (We disallowed staffing and funding, since they can serve to mask more specific challenges.) The data give an interesting overview of what respondents see as their most significant pain points. Some answered in a few words; others at considerable length. (See the data supplement for complete data.) We slotted the stated challenges into thirteen categories.

Table 1.10 Most challenging issues (Q. 79, n=158)

Issue	Number of responses
Space and facilities	105
Born-digital materials	60
Digitization	57
Meeting user needs	48
Cataloging and archival processing	47
Preservation	36
Information technology	30
Administration and institutional relations	20
Collection development	19
Staff development	9
Rights and permissions	7
Fundraising	5
Records management	2

Note: The total equals far more than the number of respondents because each could name up to three challenges.

Space was cited nearly twice as often as any other issue. Some respondents stated space as a problem in general terms, while others focused on collections, staff, and/or public services space as being inadequate in size or configuration. About 25 institutions described the need for improved environmental conditions (temperature and humidity controls) or security. A few were in the midst of renovation projects.

The second most frequently named challenge was **born-digital materials**. This echoes the wide range of other contexts (collecting, access, preservation, management, training, etc.) in which it rose to the top as an area of concern.

Digitization was also widely seen as a continuing challenge. Some respondents couched this in terms of an implicit mandate to put as much material as possible online, and as soon as possible. Some conveyed a sense that, short of digitizing everything in special collections, libraries can never do enough.

Respondents expressed a wide variety of challenges relating to meeting **user needs**, such as how to understand the changing needs and nature of users, attract new users, improve insufficiently discoverable metadata, integrate special collections materials into academic courses, maintain a strong web presence, expand outreach programs, and implement social networking tools.

Cataloging and archival processing ranked no higher than fifth despite the fact that "hidden" materials remain numerous. This may suggest that gradual success in making more materials available has led libraries and archives to focus on the many other challenges that have been lying in wait. Some respondents mentioned a need for cataloging to facilitate digitization, including determining what constitutes adequate metadata in that context.

Preservation of physical materials also remains an important issue. Most respondents who voiced concern about preserving originals emphasized that audiovisual materials are the problem. This matches the data for question 22, for which 62% of respondents stated that audiovisual materials have a high level of need.

Thirty-three respondents added a final comment (question 80); those of potential interest beyond the responding institution are transcribed in the data supplement. While these varied greatly in both substance and length, several issues were raised by multiple respondents:

- The difficulty of compiling some of the data requested for this survey, particularly at institutions that amalgamated data for multiple units
- The inherent challenges that exist when one individual is responsible for a disparate variety of basic functions within a very small department
- For how long can we keep doing more with less?

Our recommendations for action in Chapter Three offer some possible concrete steps for moving forward.

Notes

[1] The survey instructions asked that all known units be reported and named whether or not they report administratively to a library system rather than to an academic school or other organizational unit. Some institutions nevertheless reported only those special collections that are part of a library system.

[2] Data for the two largest U.S. respondents were excluded to avoid skewing the overall means: the Library of Congress and the National Archives and Records Administration. Numbers rounded in this table. See the data supplement for exact figures.

[3] This total does not include the two largest film and television archives in the United States: the Library of Congress and UCLA. LC collection statistics were excluded, as noted earlier. UCLA did not include its Film & Television Archive in its response.

[4] The 1998 ARL data revealed this in various ways. Judith Panitch elaborated on this and other collections issues in a phone conversation on June 15, 2009.

[5] The two largest born-digital holdings reported were 26,000 and 17,000 gigabytes. The range for the other eleven institutions in the top thirteen is much smaller, from 7,500GB down to 1,500GB.

[6] ARL did not include such a question in the 1998 survey; per Judith Panitch, some respondents would have welcomed one.

[7] Data for the two largest U.S. respondents were excluded to avoid skewing the overall means: the Library of Congress, which has an exceptionally large materials budget, and the National Archives and Records Administration, which has no acquisitions funds because it acquires all materials by transfer from government agencies. Note that the combined figures are not simple combinations of "institutional" and "special" because it is not statistically valid to sum means or medians across subgroups; they were therefore recalculated from the combined data.

[8] We collected statistics in three funding categories—collections, staff, and other expenses—but found that only the collections data warranted analysis. Data submitted for staff and other expenses are detailed in the data supplement, Tables 75-76.

[9] We asked for a relative indication of change, not specific statistics, since we felt that the latter would have been far too time consuming, if not impossible, for many respondents to provide. This approach was validated by the data from question 24. The same is true for questions 26 and 27.

[10] ARL recently published a report that focuses on various forms of special collections outreach (Berenbak et al. 2010).

[11] This finding correlates closely with the findings of a 2009 ARL SPEC Kit in which 92% of respondents reported that they permit access to minimally or unprocessed collections (Hackbart-Dean and Slomba 2009).

[12] Only 59 respondents answered question 29, perhaps because the wording implied that it could be skipped if the response to question 28 was "yes."

[13] The Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of ACRL has long actively encouraged interlibrary loan via promulgation of a set of guidelines, currently undergoing scheduled review as of 2010 (ACRL 2004).

[14] We did not explicitly ask whether camera use is approved selectively, but a review of numerous policies by an RLG Partnership working group suggests that this is generally the case. See Miller, Galbraith, and RLG (2010).

[15] Only 27 respondents answered question 33, perhaps because the wording implied that it could be skipped if the response to question 32 was "yes."

[16] The document, *Well-intentioned practice for digitizing collections of unpublished materials,* seeks to define reasonable community practice to minimize the risk of copyright violations (OCLC Research 2010c). It was issued as an outcome of the RLG Partnership symposium *Undue Diligence:*

Low-Risk Strategies for Making Collections of Unpublished Materials More Accessible held on March 11, 2010 (OCLC Research 2010b).

[17] Many respondents charge a variety of prices for scans based on factors such as size and format of the original and the required image resolution. Some have differential pricing based on the user's status (e.g., lower cost for students) or affiliation (e.g., higher cost for unaffiliated users).

[18] ArchiveGrid is available without charge to all OCLC FirstSearch subscribers and by subscription to others (OCLC 2006-2010).

[19] Such links were initially disallowed under Wikipedia's conflict-of-interest policy, but after significant lobbying by the archival community, this ban was lifted in September 2009. See, for example, Theimer (2009).

[20] Percentages for each row sometimes add up to slightly more than 100% because we allowed a margin of error of up to +10% in each response. Individual responses totaling more than 110% were dropped from all calculations.

[21] We did not ask respondents to indicate the extent to which the relevant archival collections themselves have catalog records. This would have added a level of complexity that would have been difficult to convey in the survey and likely would have been impossible for most respondents to determine.

[22] Archival issues are discussed under these topics: preservation (question 22), levels of use and access policies (questions 27-30), access to finding aids (question 36), catalog records (42-43), existence of finding aids (question 48), size of backlogs (question 49), born-digital materials (questions 61-63), and training needs (question 71). The 1998 ARL survey addressed archival materials only in terms of collection size, level of access, and preservation of electronic (a.k.a. born-digital) records.

[23] The two categories of material used in the ARL survey were "manuscripts" and "university archives."

[24] Roughly 20% of archival materials were reported as unprocessed or uncataloged in the 1998 ARL survey; the combination of "unprocessed" and "uncataloged" leaves unclear whether respondents were referring to absence of any catalog record, as opposed to lack of physical processing and creation of a finding aid. Eighty-four percent (84%) had no Internet-accessible finding aid.

[25] The EAD DTD and XML schema, tag library, and other documentation are hosted by the Library of Congress (LC 2010).

[26] The EAD Help Pages include extensive examples of EAD implementations and much more (SAA 2010b).

[27] We did not ask respondents to name the specific tools that they use (e.g., which database software or which XML markup tool); had we done so, responses almost certainly would have varied widely. Those who added other information mentioned use of spreadsheets (principally Microsoft Excel), web authoring tools (such as Dreamweaver), and particular commercial database products.

[28] The current plan to integrate the Archivists' Toolkit and Archon, two Mellon-funded archival management systems, as ArchivesSpace, offers the latest promise for a tool that is sophisticated, while not requiring sophisticated technological resources to manage it (ArchivesSpace 2010).

[29] Records management is concerned with the disposition of "active" records—i.e., those needed by the office of origin in order to conduct its daily business. Only those records deemed of permanent value should be sent to the institutional archives.

[30] The number one challenge was space (question 79).

[31] We did not attempt to define the nature of an active program; respondents made their own determination.

[32] Determined as an outcome of interviews conducted for the Rapid Capture project (OCLC Research 2010a).

[33] We excluded the Library of Congress and the National Archives and Records Administration, both of which have hundreds of special collections and archives staff, from our calculations to avoid inappropriate skew in the data.

[34] We did not ask respondents to differentiate in this regard, nor did we ask whether an FTE was filled or vacant.

[35] See the discussion of this issue in the User Services section of this report.

[36] The Society of American Archivists is particularly active in this area. See, for example, the course description for *Copyright: The archivist and the law* (SAA 2010a). As of 2010, the Rare Book School at the University of Virginia is offering a course on born-digital archival records (RBS 2010).

[37] This is true for 85% of the 161 respondents to question 58 on participation in digitization projects.

[38] We used a subset of the categories in the 2000 U.S. Census; see U.S. Department of Commerce n.d.

[39] Several respondents noted that they either included or excluded student employees in their reporting; we do not know whether one or the other approach was prevalent. Several Canadian institutions noted that such statistics are not kept in Canada, though most CARL members did provide data.

[40] ARL tracks the number of staff by demographic group in its *ARL Annual Salary Survey, 2009-2010* (ARL 2010a, Graph 1).

2. Overviews of Membership Organizations

Chapter Two presents a partial profile of each of the five membership organizations surveyed. Each begins with an overview of the organization and then highlights selected results that differ noticeably from the overall norms detailed in Chapter One. Where an issue covered in Chapter One is *not* addressed here, it is because either the organization's data roughly matched that of the overall population, or we judged the significance of the particular issue to be not particularly noteworthy.

Chapter Two therefore supplements rather than replaces Chapter One for a complete view of each organization.

Brief tables summarize data for overall library size and budget, collection size, onsite visits, presentations, and catalog records. Note that three tables in Chapter One also include data for each organization: those for number of respondents, acquisitions funding, and number of staff.

Association of Research Libraries

http://www.arl.org/

The rate of response by ARL members was 69% (86 of 124 members), or 51% of survey respondents overall. This includes all 24 ARL members that hold more than six million volumes.

When ARL's 1998 survey was conducted there were 110 members, of which 99 responded (90%), including all 18 members that had more than five million volumes at that time. [1] Seventy-one of the 99 ARLs that participated in 1998 also did so in 2010, comprising 84% of our ARL respondents. Some that responded in 2010 were not yet ARL members in 1998. Throughout this section, we highlight comparisons between our data and that from 1998.

Organizational profile

The Association of Research Libraries was founded in 1932 and had 124 members in the United States and Canada at the time our survey was being conducted.[2] The classic ARL member is a comprehensive, research-intensive university. Member libraries come in all sizes, however, ranging from Kent State and Guelph at the smaller end of the spectrum to the Library of Congress and Toronto as two of the largest. Additionally, ten non-academic institutions are members (seven of which responded to the survey): Library and Archives Canada, the Library of Congress, the National Agricultural Library, the National Library of Medicine, the Smithsonian Institution Libraries, the Center for Research Libraries, the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (CISTI), the New York Public Library, the New York State Library, and the Boston Public Library.

ARL is a non-profit organization with an agile agenda that focuses on strategic directions, currently these: Influencing Public Policies, Reshaping Scholarly Communication, and Transforming Research Libraries. ARL collects and maintains detailed annual statistics about physical and digital library holdings, finances, human resources, and selected special issues (some of which are published in the ongoing SPEC Kit series). Active publication and training programs also are important aspects of ARL's services to members. ARL works with other organizations to lobby the U.S. Congress on behalf of research libraries. The ARL offices are located in Washington, D.C. The directors meet twice annually.

One third of ARL members are also in the RLG Partnership and 18 are in CARL.

Overall library size and budget

Table 2.1. ARL overall library size (Q. 7, n=84)

Number of Volumes	Number of ARLs	Percent of ARLs
< 1,000,000 volumes	-	-
1-3 million volumes	24	29%
3-6 million volumes	36	43%
> 6,000,000 volumes	24	29%

Every ARL library has more than one million volumes, reflecting the organization's membership consisting principally of research-intensive universities.

Table 2.2. ARL change in overall library funding (Q. 77, n=81)

Change Reported	Percent of Responses
Decreased 1-5%	24%
Decreased 6-10%	29%
Decreased 11-16%	8%
Decreased 16-20%	10%
Decreased more than 20%	14%
No change	10%
Increased	6%

The pattern of change in overall library funding for ARL libraries is fairly similar to respondents overall.

Collections

Table 2.3. ARL special collections size (Q. 11, n=79)[3]

	n	Mean	Median
Printed volumes	79	285,000	202,000
Archives and manuscripts (collections)	79	32,200 l.f.	23,500 l.f.
Manuscripts (managed as items)	34	1,100,000	974
Cartographic materials	54	23,600	1,800
Visual materials	57	1,350,000	372,000
Audio materials	54	53,000	6,300
Moving-image materials	47	14,000	3,400
Born-digital materials	35	2,000 GB	50 GB
Microforms	45	15,000	3,100
Artifacts	46	2,500	500

Note: Archival and manuscript collections were counted in linear feet (l.f.) and born-digital materials in gigabytes (GB).

A comparison of the data from the 1998 and 2010 surveys indicates that growth of collections in some formats across ARL libraries has been extraordinary over the past decade.[4] The mean number of printed volumes and archival collections has increased by slightly more than 50%, audio materials by 240%, and visual and moving-image materials both by around 300%. The mean number of microforms, on the other hand, decreased by 80%, perhaps due to transfers to general collections or deaccessioning of microform sets that have been digitized.

What factors explain this rapid growth? In recent years many institutions have focused intensively on building archival and manuscript holdings, and these collections sometimes grow significantly with a single large acquisition; this is particularly true for certain types of collections such as political papers and institutional records. It is also possible that some apparent growth is actually the result of increased collections processing that has revealed non-print materials in far greater numbers than were previously thought to exist.

Increased acquisitions funding also likely accounts for some growth, particularly for printed volumes, half of which are acquired by purchase: 58% of ARLs reported having more funding for special collections than in 2000. In fact, the means and medians were remarkably higher: in 1998, mean funding was $210,000, and in 2010, it was $417,000. Median acquisitions funding increased from $59,000 to $182,600.

Table 2.4. ARL acquisitions funding, 2010 and 1998 (Q. 75, n=54; Q. 76, n=59)[5]

	2010		1998	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
Institutional	$170,000	$60,000	$46,000	$19,000
Special	$318,000	$140,000	$149,000	$13,000
Total	$417,000	$182,600	$210,000	$59,000

A very high percentage of total collection materials across the entire survey population are held by ARL libraries, ranging by format from 97% of audio materials and 95% of moving-image materials down to 65% of cartographic materials and 51% of microforms. ARLs hold 75% of the printed volumes.

Table 2.5. Percentage of all survey holdings held by ARL libraries

Format	Total items across survey population	Total items in ARL	Percent in ARL
Printed volumes	30,000,000	22,500,000	75%
Archival and manuscript collections	3,000,000 l.f.	2,500,000 l.f.	83%
Manuscripts (managed as items)	44,000,000	37,400,000[6]	85%
Cartographic materials	2,000,000	1,300,000	65%
Visual materials (two-dimensional)	90,000,000	77,000,000	86%
Audio materials	3,000,000	2,900,000	97%
Moving-image materials	700,000	666,000	95%
Born-digital materials	85,000 GB	70,000 GB	82%
Microforms	1,300,000	666,000	51%
Artifacts	154,000	113,000	73%

Note: Archival and manuscript collections were counted in linear feet (l.f.) and born-digital materials in gigabytes (GB).

The percent of ARLs that have special collections materials in storage has risen minimally since 1998, from 73% to 80%.

Formal arrangements for collaborative collection development remain rare, as they were in 1998. At that time, about 6% of ARLs had formal collaborations; as of 2010, about 10% do.

ARL libraries rank preservation problems for several formats noticeably higher than the overall means: archives and manuscripts (51% of respondents reported having a medium level of need), visual materials (44% expressed high level of need), and audiovisual materials (73% stated a high level of need).

User services

Table 2.6. ARL onsite visits (Q. 24, n=66)

	n	Number of Visits	Percent of Total	Mean	Median
Faculty and staff	40	32,121	8%	803	410
Graduate students	38	28,245	7%	743	361
Undergraduates	39	42,810	10%	1,098	662
Visiting researchers	38	93,592	23%	2,463	413
Local community	25	13,532	3%	541	403
Other	44	199,551	49%	4,535	1,677
Total		**409,851**	100%	**6,210**	**3,088**

Only 77% of ARL respondents provided data on onsite visits, and nearly half of the visits reported were categorized as "Other." As noted in Chapter One, these two outcomes suggest that nearly one-fourth of ARL respondents do not record statistics in a way that is compatible with our approach. The relative percentage of use by each type of user for those that did break down their statistics is, however, at least somewhat indicative of norms across ARL libraries. In this regard it is striking that unaffiliated scholars and researchers were by far the most numerous across the specific user types—only slightly less numerous than *all* users who are affiliated with their institution (faculty, staff, and students).

The mean and median numbers of onsite users in ARL's 1998 survey data were 3,696 and 2,280, respectively. In comparison with our data, the data reveal that the mean has risen by nearly 70% and the median by one third. On the other hand, the means for each type of user are very different in 2010 than in 1998. For example, the mean for undergraduates was 943 in 1998; in 2010, it was 743 (Panitch 2001, 99). The degree to which partial reporting and use of "Other" may explain this decrease is unknown.

ARLs reported 71% of the overall onsite visits across the survey population.

The level of use by graduate students (64%) and undergraduates (74%) increased in noticeably more ARL institutions than across the overall population. In terms of use by type of material, audiovisual use increased in markedly more ARLs (73%) than the overall mean (58%).

Table 2.7. ARL presentations (Q. 38, n=80)

	n	Number of Presentations	Percent of Total	Mean	Median
College/University courses	76	6,946	56%	91	57
Others affiliated with responding institution	65	1,890	15%	22	12
Local community	68	2,400	19%	35	14
Other visitors	60	1,215	10%	20	10
Total		**12,451**	**100%**	**156**	**87**

ARL members reported 75% of the presentations across the overall population, yet the ARL mean is somewhat less than those for IRLA and RLG Partners. It is, however, encouraging to note that the mean has increased by 88% since 1998, when it was 88.

Somewhat more ARLs permit interlibrary loan of original printed volumes (45%) and other materials (27%) than the overall means (38% and 18%, respectively).

Of the 17 ARLs that gave reasons for not permitting cameras in the reading room, 65% cited concern about loss of revenue from reproduction services.

ARLs noticeably exceeded the overall means in their implementation of blogs (57%) and Wikipedia links (49%).

Forty-seven percent (47%) have a fellowship or grant program for visiting researchers.

Cataloging and metadata

Table 2.8. ARL catalog records (Q. 41-47)[7]

Format	n	Online	Offline	No Record	Described within Archival Collections
Printed volumes	76	**84%**	9%	7%	n/a
Archival collections	77	**63%**	13%	25%	n/a
Manuscripts (items)	47	**55%**	26%	20%	n/a
Cartographic materials	68	**46%**	13%	18%	28%
Visual materials	68	**21%**	13%	25%	45%
Audiovisual materials	65	**25%**	7%	27%	48%
Born-digital materials	51	**30%**	1%	28%	46%

The 2010 ARL data for online catalog records is nearly identical to that of the overall population.

Table 2.9. ARL online catalog records (2010 and 1998)

Format	2010	1998	Percent Change
Printed volumes	**84%**	73%	12%
Manuscripts		46%	
University archives		29%	
Archives & mss. (collections)	**63%**		
Manuscripts (items)	**55%**		
Cartographic materials	**46%**	36%	6%
Visual materials	**21%**	33%	-12%
Audio materials		37%	
Video and film		43%	
Audiovisual materials	**25%**		
Born-digital materials	**30%**		
Computer files		43%	

Note: Blank cells indicate formats for which ARL and OCLC used different format categories and for which relative percentages therefore cannot be calculated.

A comparison of our data with that from the 1998 survey reveals relatively modest improvements overall in the percent of online catalog records:[8]

- Printed volumes: 12% increase, from 73% to 85%.
- Archives and manuscripts: The use of different categories in the two surveys obviates clean comparison. Combining each pair, however, we see an increase in online records of ca. 15%. Regardless, 37%-45% of these unique materials are not yet in online catalogs.
- Cartographic materials: 6% increase, from 40% to 46%.
- Visual, audio, and moving image materials: Online records for these formats *decreased*. A variety of factors may be in play, including dramatic growth in collection sizes and the possibility that recent inventories of holdings have revealed that more materials were extant in 1998 than had been known to exist at that time. On the other hand, given that close to 50% of these materials are managed with archival collections, the percentage of materials accessible online could be much higher if all collections were cataloged.
- Born-digital materials: Comparison is not feasible due to completely different format definitions.

The data for born-digital materials warrants particular mention because ARL's metric changed radically in the past decade. The 1998–99 statistical methodology counted "computer files" as physical media (e.g., disks, tapes, CDs), the content of which was not necessarily either born-digital or "archival" in nature (Kyrillidou and O'Connor 2000). The mean number of items held was 288, and the largest collection was 2,782 physical items. How this compares with current holdings in gigabytes (85,000 GB across the entire population) cannot be determined. Cataloging of physical media is more straightforward than are aggregations of born-digital archival files; this may explain the higher percentage of material with online records reported in 1998 (43%) relative to 2010 (29%). Regardless, 29% is promising, considering that it is still early days for providing access to these materials. Some online records probably describe discrete documents held in institutional repositories rather than digital content that has not been "published" in such fashion. It is important that we learn more about born-digital archival materials and the extent to which public access exists.

Table 2.10. ARL archival finding aids (1998 and 2010)

	n	Internet Finding Aid	Non-Internet Finding Aid	Machine-readable Finding Aid	No Finding Aid
Archival and manuscript collections (OCLC 2010)	81	52%	30%		19%
Manuscripts (ARL 1998)	82	16%		31%	
University archives (ARL 1998)	71	16%		36%	

Note: Blank cells indicate where ARL and OCLC used different format categories.

The increase in online finding aids since 1998 is dramatic: from 16% to 52%. This is in part because thousands of legacy finding aids that had existed for years were converted to EAD or HTML in the past decade. As with catalog records, however, only an imperfect comparison is feasible, since the two surveys used different definitions for formats of material and types of access.

ARL collected data on "machine-readable" finding aids in addition to "Internet" finding aids. Although the first term was not defined, we assume it was intended for data created digitally but not available on the Internet; this would include finding aids stored in local databases or word processing files and available only locally. In addition, ARL combined "uncataloged" and "unprocessed" rather than clearly separating processing status and existence of finding aids from that of library catalog records. Based on ARL's finding aid statistics, however, we surmise that about 50% of collections had either no finding aid or only one on paper.

Regardless, our data clearly show that far more finding aids are online now than in 1998. Ten years of effort to make descriptions of archival collections accessible have been successful—but ARL libraries are only halfway there.

Archival collections management

EAD is used by 85% of ARLs, noticeably above the overall mean of 69%. Forty-two percent (42%) use the Archivists' Toolkit.

Two thirds of ARL libraries have responsibility for records management at some level.

Digital special collections

An active library-wide digitization program is in place at 72% of ARLs, and 47% report having done large-scale digitization of special collections.

Slightly more than half of ARL institutions have assigned responsibility for management of born-digital archival materials (52%, up from 45% in 1998), whether to the library or

elsewhere in the institution. This minimal increase over twelve years is not encouraging. In addition, more ARLs have collected *every* born-digital format listed in the survey than the overall mean, while 13% have collected none.

Eighty-six percent (86%) of ARLs have an institutional repository, and special collections staff within ARLs are more often involved in all aspects of IR implementation than the overall mean. The most striking difference is in contribution of collections content (69%, overall mean of 53%).

Staffing

The mean number of permanent FTE for ARL respondents is twenty (twelve professionals and eight paraprofessionals). The median is twelve (seven professionals and five paraprofessionals).

Considerably more ARL respondents have Black/African American staff in special collections (52%, overall mean is 35%) than the members of the other four organizations. As mentioned in Chapter One, our data measure the number of *institutions*, not the number of staff.[9]

We focused on changes in staffing by functional responsibilities, whereas in 1998 ARL asked whether the overall number of permanent special collections staff had changed in the previous ten years. It is noteworthy in the context of the current difficult economic times that 48% of respondents in 1998 reported that staffing had increased in the prior decade, whereas ARL staffing in most areas has been stable since 2000. The one exception is technology and digital services, in which 54% of ARL respondents reported increased staffing.

The areas in which the largest percentage of ARLs reported a need for education or training are born-digital records (88%), information technology (72%), intellectual property (65%), cataloging and metadata (48%), preservation (43%), and management/supervision (40%).

More ARL libraries have integrated formerly separate special collections units (45%) than the overall mean, presumably because ARLs are larger and have the potential for more units (only 18% have always had a single unit). Nevertheless, 37% continue to have multiple separate units.

Canadian Academic and Research Libraries

http://www.carl-abrc.ca/about/about-e.html

The rate of response by CARL members was 68% (20 of 31 members), comprising 12% of respondents overall.

Eleven CARL members responded to ARL's 1998 survey; seven of the eleven also participated in 2010. Given that only one third of our 2010 CARL respondents participated in both surveys, comparisons between the two sets of CARL data seemed unlikely to be meaningful. Indeed, our examination of the data on several issues revealed illogical patterns; we therefore opted not to report on similarities or differences (other than one comment under special collections size).

The ARL report included a chapter focused on the Canadian responses in which it was reported that means were far below U.S. norms for collection size, staffing levels, and expenditures. This is still the case.

Organizational profile

The Canadian Association of Research Libraries was founded in 1976. The membership currently consists of 28 universities and three national institutions: Library and Archives Canada, the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (CISTI), and the Library of Parliament. [10] CARL strives to enhance the capacity of member libraries to partner in research and higher education, and to seek effective and sustainable scholarly communication and public policy encouraging of research and broad access to scholarly information.

CARL considers the collective human and physical resources of its members a strategic national information resource. Activities include a wide array of initiatives in support of the mission, including enhancing skills in data management, reciprocal interlibrary lending and document supply, construction and use of the Digital Collection Builder[11] and development of open repositories.

Eighteen (58%) members of CARL are also members of the Association of Research Libraries, and four are in the RLG Partnership (Alberta, British Columbia, Calgary, and Toronto).

Overall library size and budget

Table 2.11. CARL overall library size (Q. 7, n=19)

Number of Volumes	Number of CARLs	Percent of CARLs
< 1,000,000 volumes	2	11%
1-3 million volumes	11	58%
3-6 million volumes	4	21%
> 6,000,000 volumes	2	11%

CARL is unique among the five organizations in having a majority of libraries in the mid-size range. Two, both of which are ARL members, have more than six million volumes.

Table 2.12. CARL change in overall library funding (Q. 77, n=18)

Change Reported	Percent of Responses
Decreased 1-5%	24%
Decreased 6-10%	29%
Decreased 11-16%	8%
Decreased 16-20%	10%
Decreased more than 20%	14%
No change	10%
Increased	6%

The budget data show that 84% of CARL members have seen their overall funding drop due to the current global economy. The pattern of change in overall library funding is somewhat more negative for CARL libraries than respondents overall.

Collections

Table 2.13. CARL special collections size (Q. 11, n=16)[12]

	n	Total Items	Mean	Median
Printed volumes	16	1,700,000	107,000	72,000
Archives and manuscripts (collections)	16	150,000 l.f.	9,200 l.f.	5,100 l.f.
Manuscripts (managed as items)	5	2,400	500	200
Cartographic materials	9	44,000	4,900	1,200
Visual materials	8	1,300,000	165,000	130,000
Audio materials	11	66,000	6,000	1,100
Moving-image materials	8	14,000	1,700	700
Born-digital materials	6	2,100 GB	359 GB	150 GB
Microforms	7	27,000	3,900	1,700
Artifacts	6	1,035	173	100

Note: Archival and manuscript collections were counted in linear feet (l.f.) and born-digital materials in gigabytes (GB).

It seems that few CARLs manage manuscripts as items; only five libraries provided data, and the holdings are tiny. Moving-image collections across the CARL libraries also are very limited in size.

We sought to measure changes in mean and median collection sizes between 1998 and 2010 for CARL respondents, as we did for the ARLs. Recalling that two thirds of our respondents did not participate in 1998, however, we hypothesized that any comparison would be meaningless. We believe this was confirmed by the fact that while two means increased greatly (archival collections and audio materials), most others either stayed the same or dropped significantly. The mean for printed volumes, for example, dropped by 80%. We therefore disregarded collection size comparisons, considering them invalid.

Far more CARLS (37%) reported stable funding for collections than the overall mean (6%). Concomitantly, fewer had increased funding (32%, compared to 48%). The CARL mean for institutional acquisition funds is $44,000, which is 25% that of ARL libraries.

Somewhat more (25%) have informal collaborative collection development arrangements with other non-regional institutions in their nation than the overall mean (16%). No CARL institution has a formal collaboration in any category, nor do any collaborate internationally.

Some special collections are in offsite storage in 58% of CARL libraries.

More CARL libraries reported lower levels of preservation needs for some formats than the overall population: archives and manuscripts (50% of CARLs had low needs, compared to 40% medium) and audiovisual materials (44% had high needs, compared to 62% high overall).

User services

Table 2.14. CARL onsite visits (Q. 24, n=16)

	n	Number of visits	Percent of total	Mean	Median
Faculty and staff	9	11,295	9%	1,255	188
Graduate students	6	2,769	5%	2,769	462
Undergraduates	7	15,283	12%	2,183	753
Visiting researchers	8	3,975	24%	497	99
Local community	6	5,721	7%	954	355
Other	10	29,121	43%	2,912	1,603
Total		**68,164**	100%	**4,869**	**2,341**

While many CARLs reported increased use by faculty/staff (41% of respondents), undergraduates (47%), visiting scholars (35%), and the local community (35%), the percentage of libraries was well below the overall mean. In addition, onsite use has increased at fewer CARLs (44%) than the overall mean (62%). In terms of use by type of material, use of books has increased in a higher percentage of CARL libraries (ca. 65%) than across the rest of the population.

Table 2.15. CARL presentations (Q. 38, n=16)

	n	Number of Presentations	Percent of Total	Mean	Median
College/University courses	16	441	61%	28	20
Others affiliated with responding institution	12	67	9%	6	5
Local community	12	113	16%	9	5
Other visitors	9	103	14%	11	5
Total		**724**	**100%**	**45**	**35**

The mean number of presentations across CARL libraries is less than 30% that of ARL, IRLA, and RLG Partners.

Noticeably fewer CARLs permit use of unprocessed/cataloged materials (ca. 63%) than the overall mean (ca. 80%). On the other hand, far more CARLs permit interlibrary loan of original printed volumes (63%, the overall mean is 38%).

Of the five CARLs that gave reasons for not permitting cameras in the reading room, none cited concern about loss of revenue from reproduction services (overall mean is 41%), and only one cited potential disruption in the reading room. On the other hand, four of the five were concerned about improper handling of materials.

CARL libraries' average fees for a digital scan are similar to the overall means across the population, with one exception: a far lower percentage of CARLs (5%) charge more than $20. Two libraries do not offer scanning as a service.

Far fewer contribute finding aids to ArchiveGrid (5%) than the overall mean (30%), but more CARLs (53%) contribute to a consortial database than the overall mean.

Only 18% have implemented a blog (overall mean is 49%), but another 47% intend to do so within a year. Very few CARLs have adopted any other web 2.0 communication methods, with the exception of Wikipedia links (43%).

Only 17% have a fellowship or grant program for visiting researchers.

Cataloging and metadata

Table 2.16. CARL catalog records (Q. 41-47)[13]

Format	n	Online	Offline	No Record	Described within Archival Collections
Printed volumes	18	**79%**	10%	13%	n/a
Archival collections	17	**63%**	8%	28%	n/a
Manuscripts (items)	8	**52%**	27%	21%	n/a
Cartographic materials	14	**58%**	16%	15%	24%
Visual materials	13	**21%**	9%	31%	47%
Audiovisual materials	12	**31%**	11%	19%	55%
Born-digital materials	8	**57%**	0%	.1%	44%

While catalog record statistics for CARL libraries are very similar to the overall norms for some formats, they differ in several respects. Significantly more cartographic materials (58%, compared to 42%) have online records, as do born-digital materials (57%, compared to 29%). In addition, substantially more visual and audiovisual materials are managed within archival collections, rather than as individual items, than the overall mean.

Backlogs of both printed volumes and other materials have increased in 60% of Canadian institutions. Only 17% reported a decrease in backlogs of either type (compared to overall means of 59% and 44%, respectively).

CARL members have 52% of finding aids online, which is 8% more than across the full survey population.

Archival collections management

Some archival management practices are quite different in Canada than in the United States, as the data show in several ways. Only 28% do minimal collections processing, the complete reverse of the overall population, across which 75% do at least some minimal processing. Twenty-eight percent (28%) use EAD, far below the overall mean of 69%. Most use word processing and/or database software for finding aid preparation; few use the Archivists' Toolkit or XML markup tools.

The institutional archives reports to 78% of libraries, and the same percent of libaries have some level of responsibility for institution-wide records management.

Digital special collections

Ninety percent (90%) of CARLs have completed at least one digitization project. On the other hand, 32% cannot undertake projects unless they have special funding. Large-scale digitization of special collections has been more common in Canada than across the overall population (47%, overall mean is 33%). Few CARLs (11%) have licensing contracts with commercial vendors.

Far more CARL institutions have assigned sole responsibility for management of born-digital materials to libraries or archives (48%) than across the overall population (30%). Born-digital materials have been collected by far fewer CARL libraries, however, than the overall mean for every format, while 33% have collected none whatsoever (overall mean is 21%). In contrast, lack of funding is an impediment to born-digital management in far fewer institutions (44%) than the overall mean (69%). The same is true for lack of administrative support outside the library (22%, overall mean is 41%).

A higher percentage of CARL members have an institutional repository (89%) than any of the other four organizations, but special collections departments in CARL libraries are somewhat less involved with the IR than the overall mean.

Staffing

The mean number of permanent FTE for CARL respondents is eight (four professionals and four paraprofessionals), and the median is six (three professionals and three paraprofessionals).

Demographic diversity in special collections is low in CARL libraries: 17% of respondents have Asian staff, 6% Black/African American, 6% Pacific Islander, and none have Native American or Hispanic/Latino staff. Several noted that in Canada such data typically is not tracked, though most provided data.

Staffing in curatorial and public services areas decreased more than the overall means. Staffing for technology and digital services increased, but less than the overall mean.

The areas in which the highest percentage of CARLs reported a need for education or training are born-digital records (84%), information technology (74%), cataloging and metadata (68%), intellectual property (63%), history of the book (47%), preservation (47%) and archival processing (47%).

One third of CARL respondents maintain separate special collections units (the same as ARL), and another third have always had only one unit.

Independent Research Libraries Association

http://irla.lindahall.org/

The rate of response by IRLA members was 79% (15 of 19 members), comprising 9% of respondents overall.

Organizational profile

The Independent Research Libraries Association (IRLA) was established in 1972 and currently includes 19 U.S. libraries and one European institution as a Foreign Corresponding Member.[14] IRLA is an informal confederation intended to address the future of independent, privately-supported research libraries, including issues such as preserving collections, serving both the public and the world of scholarship, and financing these costly private institutions that lack the stability of public or university support.

Together, IRLA members could be said to comprise a "who's who" of American private research libraries. Some have the most comprehensive collection in the world in their particular area of focus; examples include the Folger Shakespeare Library and the American Antiquarian Society. Many IRLA institutions have a museum in addition to library and archival

resources. IRLAs tend to have strong outreach and public programming components, including research fellowships for visiting scholars. Many IRLAs hold only special collections, in contrast with the other organizations in which general collections have the vast majority of both holdings and users.

IRLA directors meet annually at a member institution and communicate informally throughout the year. The librarians and research directors of four of the largest members (Folger, Antiquarian Society, Huntington, and Newberry, known as FAHN) also meet annually.

Thirteen of the 19 regular members (68%) are also in the RLG Partnership, one of which (the New York Public Library) is also an ARL member.

Overall library size and budget

Table 2.17. IRLA overall library size (Q.7, n=15)

Number of Volumes	Number of IRLAs	Percent of IRLAs
< 1,000,000 volumes	11	73%
1-3 million volumes	3	20%
3-6 million volumes	—	—
> 6,000,000 volumes	1	7%

Nearly three quarters of IRLA respondents have fewer than one million volumes overall. As noted above, many IRLAs have minimal non-rare holdings.

Table 2.18. IRLA change in overall library funding (Q. 77, n=15)

Change Reported	Percent of Responses
Decreased 1-5%	13%
Decreased 6-10%	53%
Decreased 11-16%	—
Decreased 16-20%	13%
Decreased more than 20%	20%
No change	—
Increased	—

The budget data show that 100% of IRLA members have seen their budgets drop as a result of the current global economy, as compared to the overall mean of 75% across the population.

Collections

Table 2.19. IRLA special collections size (Q. 11, n=15)[15]

	n	Total Items	Mean	Median
Printed volumes	15	4,800,000	320,000	250,000
Archives and manuscripts (collections)	14	246,000 l.f.	17,500 l.f.	16,500 l.f.
Manuscripts (managed as items)	5	6,100,000	1,220,000	35,000
Cartographic materials	11	970,000	88,100	4,000
Visual materials	11	11,500,000	1,000,000	425,000
Audio materials	5	690,000	138,000	100
Moving-image materials	4	62,000	15,600	300
Born-digital materials	3	3,200 GB	1,100 GB	163 GB
Microforms	10	374,000	38,000	26,000
Artifacts	6	12,000	2,000	950

Note: Archival and manuscript collections were counted in linear feet (l.f.) and born-digital materials in gigabytes (GB).

Most IRLA members reported printed volume holdings in special collections of 200,000 to 900,000, while three that principally have non-rare collections reported between 10,000 and 33,000 printed volumes in special collections.

The mean and median holdings of printed volume, manuscript item, cartographic, and microform holdings are higher across the IRLA libraries than any of the other four organizations surveyed. About 45% of the aggregate cartographic holdings are in IRLAs.

Forty-seven percent (47%) of IRLAs had less funding for collections in 2008–09 than in 2000, while 40% had more funding.

Significantly more IRLA libraries have informal collaborative collection development arrangements with other non-regional institutions in their nation (27%) than the overall mean (16%). Only one IRLA institution has a formal collaboration in any category; that same relationship is the only international one undertaken by any IRLA.

Twenty-seven percent (27%) have special collections housed in offsite storage, far below the overall mean (67%).

IRLAs generally rank their preservation needs somewhat lower than the overall means. This is particularly true for audiovisual materials (only 40% of IRLA respondents reported having a high level of need, compared to 62% high across the population). Given both the collection

size statistics and the nature of IRLA collecting priorities, it seems likely that they hold far fewer unstable visual media such as photographs than is the case across the overall population, and overall IRLA holdings of audio and moving-image materials are small.

User services

Table 2.20. IRLA onsite visits (Q. 24, n=14)

	n	Number of Visits	Percent of Total	Mean	Median
Faculty and staff	2	1,575	1%	788	788
Graduate students	0	–	–	–	–
Undergraduates	0	–	–	–	–
Visiting researchers	10	76,838	66%	7,683	2,432
Local community	4	4,402	4%	1,100	751
Other	5	33,673	29%	6,735	5,043
Total		**116,488**	100%	**8,321**	**4,386**

IRLA respondents have the highest mean number of onsite users across the overall population: 33% more than ARL members and 10% more than RLGs. The level of use speaks to the high profile of IRLA libraries' strengths within their collecting foci.

Most IRLA libraries reported user statistics only for staff and visiting researchers, since they have no affiliated students. Four members provided counts of local community users, while 29% of the total users reported were ambiguously categorized as "Other." IRLA libraries share some user categories that were too granular for use in this survey, such as research fellows funded by the library.

Onsite use has increased at a smaller percentage of IRLAs (40%) than the overall mean (62%). Use of books has increased at some (36%), but less than the overall mean (52%).

Table 2.21. IRLA presentations (Q. 38, n=12)

	n	Number of Presentations	Percent of Total	Mean	Median
College/University courses	12	723	37%	72	21
Others affiliated with responding institution	10	354	18%	35	23
Local community	12	611	31%	51	28
Other visitors	11	285	14%	26	10
Total		**1,973**	**100%**	**164**	**78**

Given that IRLA institutions have no affiliated students, the mean number (72) of college or university course presentations is impressive relative to the academic library respondents. It is, for example, 80% of the ARL mean.

No IRLA libraries permit interlibrary loan of original materials, while 33% loan reproductions.

IRLAs generally charge more for digital scans than the rest of the survey population: 40% charge $10-$20, and 40% charge more than $20.

Fewer contribute finding aids to a consortial database (33%) than the overall mean (42%).

IRLAs are far above the overall means in implementation of nearly all web 2.0 communication methods, including YouTube (50% vs. 25% overall), podcasting (57% vs. 26%), applications for mobile devices (23% vs. 11%), a social networking presence such as Facebook (79% vs. 40%), and Twitter (57% vs. 40%). This suggests that external publicity and marketing are a high priority.

Eighty-six percent (86%) have a fellowship or grant program for visiting researchers (overall mean is 37%).

Cataloging and metadata

Table 2.22. IRLA catalog records[16]

Format	n	Online	Offline	No Record	Described within Archival Collections
Printed volumes	15	**87%**	6%	8%	n/a
Archival collections	14	**35%**	18%	51%	n/a
Manuscripts (items)	10	**35%**	19%	48%	n/a
Cartographic materials	15	**38%**	38%	20%	8%
Visual materials	13	**21%**	28%	28%	23%
Audiovisual materials	11	**31%**	5%	39%	17%
Born-digital materials	5	**5%**	0%	70%	25%

Percentages of online catalog records at IRLA libraries are similar to the overall means, with three exceptions, for each of which IRLAs have a much lower percentage online: archival collections (35%), manuscript items (35%), and born-digital materials (5%).

A much lower percentage of finding aids (25%) is online at IRLA libraries than the overall mean (44%).

Archival collections management

Some minimal archival processing is done by 60% of IRLAs. EAD is used by 87%, at the same level as ARL and far above the overall mean (69%). Few IRLAs use database software for finding aid creation, while more than the overall average use Archivists' Toolkit and XML markup tools.

The institutional archives reports to the library in 80% of IRLA libraries, and 80% are responsible, at some level, for institution-wide records management.

Digital special collections

Nearly half (47%) of IRLAS must have special funding in order to undertake digitization projects, more than double the overall mean (22%).

An exceptionally high 73% have licensing contracts with commercial vendors, nearly triple the mean of 26%. The fact that IRLAs attract so much interest from vendors is another indication of the world-class depth of collections in IRLA libraries' areas of emphasis, as well as the necessity of earned income as a factor in ensuring financial stability.

Only 21% of IRLA members have assigned responsibility for management of born-digital materials to any unit. Regardless, roughly the same percent of members have collected most born-digital formats at roughly the overall mean levels, with the exception of Web sites (collected by only 7%). Thirty-six percent (36%) have collected no born-digital materials of any kind. Lack of funding is an impediment to implementing born-digital management for 79%, and a higher percentage of IRLAs than the overall norm also report that lack of expertise is a major impediment (64%). Few (14%) cite lack of administrative support as a barrier.

Only 36% of IRLAs have an institutional repository.

Staffing

The mean number of permanent FTE for IRLA respondents is 32 (21 professionals and eleven paraprofessionals). The median is 29 (20 professionals and nine paraprofessionals). This is by far the highest mean across the overall population.

Demographic diversity exists in more IRLA libraries than the overall means: 60% of respondents have Asian American staff in special collections, 40% have Black/African American, and 47% have Hispanic/Latino.

The areas in which the highest percentage of IRLAs reported a need for education or training are born-digital records (80%), information technology (80%), records management (67%), archival processing (67%), cataloging and metadata (60%), foreign languages (53%), intellectual property (53%), and history of the book (40%).

Oberlin Group
http://www.oberlingroup.org/

The rate of response by Oberlin members was 49% (39 of 80 members), comprising 23% of respondents overall.

Organizational profile

The Oberlin Group is an unincorporated, informal confederation of 80 liberal arts colleges, many of whose directors have been meeting annually since 1986. Sixteen members are universities rather than colleges (e.g., Wesleyan University).

The principal areas of focus for the organization are library issues of common concern, best practices in library operations and services, licensing of electronic resources of interest to member institutions, cooperative resource sharing, and establishing communities of practice. Named for the site of the group's first conference, Oberlin College, the Group is successful

not only at hosting discussions of, but also implementing solutions to, the challenges faced by liberal arts college libraries today.

The group's activities include reciprocal interlibrary loan, annual statistical surveys, other in-year surveys, and a small number of consortial contracts for electronic journals and reference services subscriptions brokered by one member on behalf of any who wish to participate. Subsets of the group engage in other cooperative projects such as advocacy for open access and new forms of scholarly communication, collaborative collecting, digital access agreements, and a digital repository. The library directors meet annually at a member institution.

Swarthmore College is also a member of the RLG Partnership.

Overall library size and budget

Table 2.23. Oberlin overall library size (Q. 7, n=39)

Number of Volumes	Number of Oberlins	Percent of Oberlins
< 1,000,000 volumes	32	82%
1-3 million volumes	7	18%
3-6 million volumes	-	0%
> 6,000,000 volumes	-	0%

The relatively small size of Oberlin libraries' overall collections reflects their support of campuses that principally educate undergraduates and therefore do not require the intensive research collections needed to support doctoral courses and research.

Table 2.24. Oberlin change in overall library funding (Q. 77, n=39)

Change Reported	Percent of Responses
Decreased 1-5%	36%
Decreased 6-10%	8%
Decreased 11-16%	18%
Decreased 16-20%	—
Decreased more than 20%	5%
No change	23%
Increased	10%

The pattern of change in overall library funding is fairly similar for Oberlin libraries as for respondents overall.

Collections

Table 2.25. Oberlin special collections size (Q. 11, n=39)[17]

	n	Total Items	Mean	Median
Printed volumes	39	1,100,000	28,600	15,000
Archives and manuscripts (collections)	37	114,000 l.f.	3,100 l.f.	2,750 l.f.
Manuscripts (managed as items)	12	37,000	3,100	1,000
Cartographic materials	17	6,300	373	168
Visual materials	18	1,140,000	64,000	22,500
Audio materials	21	36,000	1,700	450
Moving-image materials	19	17,500	919	300
Born-digital materials	11	2,200 GB	200 GB	70 GB
Microforms	12	99,000	6,300	400
Artifacts	20	17,500	875	175

Note: Archival and manuscript collections were counted in linear feet (l.f.) and born-digital materials in gigabytes (GB).

The aggregate Oberlin special collections form a very small percentage of all materials reported across the population. For example, Oberlin libraries hold 4% of the printed volumes. Again, this follows readily from the fact that Oberlin colleges focus on undergraduate education rather than postgraduate-level research.

Table 2.26. Range of Oberlin special collections sizes (Q. 11, n=139)

	Number of Oberlins	Percent of Oberlins
174,000 to 190,000 volumes	2	5%
50,000-86,000 volumes	3	7%
25,000-50,000 volumes	8	21%
10,000-25,000 volumes	12	31%
2,000-10,000 volumes	12	31%
< 250 volumes	2	5%

Two Oberlin libraries hold 33% of the printed volumes in special collections across the 39 responding libraries. Other Oberlins' special collections holdings are far smaller than these two.

Somewhat more Oberlins have informal collaborative collection development arrangements with other regional or local institutions (54%) than the overall mean (45%). Only one Oberlin institution has a formal collaboration in any category, and none collaborate internationally.

User services

Table 2.27. Oberlin onsite visits (Q. 24, n=37)

	n	Number of Visits	Percent of Total	Mean	Median
Faculty and staff	34	5,717	20%	168	85
Graduate students	3	71	.2%	24	25
Undergraduates	33	13,649	47%	414	337
Visiting researchers	27	2,929	10%	108	62
Local community	18	1,804	6%	100	37
Other	15	4,996	17%	333	77
Total		**29,166**	**100%**	**788**	**731**

The data for onsite visits to Oberlin special collections show that undergraduates comprise nearly half of all users. Given the core mission of these colleges, it is intriguing that the percentage is not even higher. Only 17% of users were reported as "Other" (overall mean is 43%).

More Oberlin libraries reported increased use by affiliated faculty/staff (77% of respondents) and undergraduates (82%) when compared to the other four organizations surveyed.

Ten percent (10%) of users are visiting researchers, which indicates that at least some Oberlins hold special collections of research caliber and serve a population beyond their primary, college-affiliated users. In fact, 15% have a fellowship or grant program for visiting researchers.

Table 2.28. Oberlin presentations (Q. 38, n=39)

	n	Number of Presentations	Percent of Total	Mean	Median
College/University courses	38	788	59%	21	16
Others affiliated with responding institution	32	185	14%	6	4
Local community	27	181	13%	7	3
Other visitors	24	187	14%	8	3
Total		**1,341**	**100%**	**34**	**27**

The mean number of staff in Oberlin special collections is three (median is two), and many individuals therefore have a wide range of responsibilities. This is meaningful in evaluating the low numbers of presentations.

Ninety percent (90%) of Oberlins permit digital cameras in the reading room. Four gave reasons for not permitting their use: the concern most commonly cited (by three of the four) was the potential for inappropriate use of the digital files (such as violation of copyright).

Most Oberlin libraries charge much less for digital scans than the rest of the survey population: 31% provide scans at no charge, 39% charge less than $5, and only 5% charge more than $10.

Ten percent (10%) contribute archival finding aids to ArchiveGrid, while 13% have no finding aids online.

Far fewer Oberlins have implemented Web 2.0 communication methodologies than the norms across the survey population.

Cataloging and metadata

Table 2.29. Oberlin catalog records (Q. 41-47)[18]

Format	n	Online	Offline	No Record	Described within Archival Collections
Printed volumes	39	**87%**	6%	8%	n/a
Archival collections	38	**35%**	18%	51%	n/a
Manuscripts (items)	28	**35%**	19%	48%	n/a
Cartographic materials	31	**32%**	10%	36%	26%
Visual materials	34	**10%**	10%	58%	24%
Audiovisual materials	34	**18%**	9%	46%	28%
Born-digital materials	23	**18%**	4%	50%	32%

The Oberlin statistics for online catalog records differ markedly from—and are much lower than—the overall means in two areas: only 35% of archival collections and manuscript items have an online record, as do only 1% of born-digital materials.

Oberlin respondents have 31% of their finding aids online (overall mean is 44%).

Archival collections management

EAD is used at 44% of Oberlins (overall mean is 69%).

The institutional archives reports to the library at every responding institution. Formal responsibility for records management is assigned to 31% of the libraries, while informal responsibility falls to 36% of libraries because no other institutional unit is responsible.

Digital special collections

While nearly half have a digitization program within special collections, only 26% have such a program library-wide. Noticeably more Oberlins do digital image production within special collections (82%) than the overall mean (71%).

Thirteen percent (13%) of Oberlins have licensing contracts with commercial vendors, far fewer than the overall mean.

Only 21% of Oberlin respondents have assigned responsibility for management of born-digital materials to any unit. Few have collected born-digital materials in private archival and manuscript collections (16%), and only one has collected data sets. A striking 74% state that lack of administrative support outside the library is an impediment to implementation of born-digital management.

Fifty-six percent (56%) of Oberlins have an institutional repository. Special collections staff are involved with its implementation at all those that have an IR.

Staffing

The mean number of permanent FTE for Oberlin respondents is three (two professionals and one paraprofessional). The median is two (one professional and one paraprofessional).

Demographic diversity is much lower across the Oberlin libraries than the overall means for two population groups: Black/African American (10% of respondents, overall mean is 35%) and Hispanic/Latino (10% of respondents, overall mean is 30%).

Staff size has generally been stable in all functional areas of special collections across Oberlin libraries, including for technology and digital services (an increase of 44% is the overall mean for the latter).

The top areas in which Oberlin libraries reported a need for education or training are born-digital records (80%), records management (49%), cataloging and metadata (43%), information technology (40%), intellectual property (40%), and preservation (40%).

Sixty-two percent (62%) have always had only one special collections unit—not surprising, since most of the member libraries are relatively small. Of the others, 23% have integrated formerly separate units, and 15% remain separate.

RLG Partnership

www.oclc.org/research/partnership/

The rate of response by members of the RLG Partnership was 65% (55 of 85 U.S. and Canadian partners), comprising 33% of respondents overall.

Organizational profile

Approximately 100 institutions are currently affiliated with the RLG Partnership. Unlike the other four organizations surveyed, the Partnership is heterogeneous with regard to the types of affiliated institutions, which include universities, independent research libraries, public and national libraries, museum libraries and archives, historical societies, public libraries, and other archival institutions (including the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration). The Partnership also has members beyond North America; the largest group is located in the United Kingdom, while others are in continental Europe, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. Members outside North America were not included in the survey population due to variations in practice across nations.

The Partnership is most beneficial to libraries and other research institutions that want to invest in collaboratively designing future services. It is a global alliance of like-minded institutions that focuses on making operational processes more efficient and shaping new scholarly services by directly engaging senior managers. The Partnership is supported by the full capacities of OCLC Research, informed by an international, system-wide perspective, and connected to the broad array of OCLC products and services. Activities include, among others, reciprocal interlibrary lending and document supply through the SHARES program, applied research into challenges and questions facing research libraries and museums, numerous projects focused on the concerns of special collections and archives, and active programs of

webinars and publications. All partners are invited to an annual meeting and topical symposium.

The RLG Partnership traces its development to the founding of the Research Libraries Group in 1974. In 2006, RLG combined with OCLC, and the programmatic staff and activities were integrated into OCLC Research, which has long been one of the world's leading centers devoted exclusively to the challenges facing libraries in a rapidly changing information technology environment. Since being founded in 1978, the office has investigated trends in technology and library practice with a view to enhancing the value of library services. The RLG Committee of the OCLC Board of Trustees is entrusted with governance of the Partnership. OCLC is an international not-for-profit library cooperative whose members work together to improve access to the information held in libraries around the globe.

Approximately one third of RLG Partners are also members of ARL. Thirteen of the 19 members of IRLA are also in the RLG Partnership, as are four CARL members. Swarthmore College is a member of the Oberlin Group.

Overall library size and budget

Table 2.30. RLG Partnership overall library size (Q. 7, n=51)

Number of Volumes	Number of RLGs	Percent of RLGs
No printed volumes[19]	1	2%
< 1,000,000 volumes	19	37%
1-3 million volumes	7	14%
3-6 million volumes	8	16%
> 6,000,000 volumes	16	31%

The distribution of library sizes reflects the wide range of institution types across the Partnership. For example, many of the libraries holding less than one million volumes are also IRLA members, while most of the largest are also in ARL.

Table 2.31. RLG Partnership change in overall library funding (Q. 77, n=51)

Type of Change Reported	Percent of Responses
Decreased 1-5%	24%
Decreased 6-10%	29%
Decreased 11-16%	8%
Decreased 16-20%	10%
Decreased more than 20%	14%
No change	10%
Increased	6%

The pattern of change in overall library funding is fairly similar for RLG Partnership libraries as for respondents overall.

Collections

Table 2.32. RLG Partnership special collections size (Q. 11, n=48)[20]

	n	Total Items	Mean	Median
Printed volumes	47	13,500,000	287,000	202,000
Archives and manuscripts (collections)	48	1,510,000 l.f.	31,400 l.f.	18,000 l.f.
Manuscripts (managed as items)	28	6,400,000	228,000	958
Cartographic materials	32	1,400,000	44,400	3,100
Visual materials	37	45,500,000	1,230,000	400,000
Audio materials	26	1,600,000	61,500	4,700
Moving-image materials	26	206,000	7,900	1,500
Born-digital materials	19	50,000 GB	2,600 GB	114 GB
Microforms	31	700,000	22,500	5,000
Artifacts	25	76,000	465	2,000

Note: Archival and manuscript collections were counted in linear feet (l.f.) and born-digital materials in gigabytes (GB).

Fifty-eight percent (58%) of RLG Partner respondents had more funding for collections in 2008–09 than in 2000.

The percentage of holdings across the survey population that are held in RLG Partnership libraries ranges from 70% of cartographic materials down to 29% of moving image materials and 15% of manuscripts managed as items. RLG Partners hold roughly half of the aggregate total of each of the other formats.

Table 2.33. Percentage of all survey holdings held by RLG Partnership libraries (Q.11, n=48)

Format	Total items across survey population	Total items in RLG	Percent in RLG
Printed volumes	30,000,000	13,500,000	45%
Archival and manuscript collections	3,000,000 l.f.	1,510,000 l.f.	50%
Manuscripts (managed as items)	44,000,000	6,400,000	15%
Cartographic materials	2,000,000	1,400,000	70%
Visual materials (two-dimensional)	90,000,000	45,500,000	51%
Audio materials	3,000,000	1,600,000	53%
Moving-image materials	700,000	206,000	29%
Born-digital materials	85,000 GB	50,000 GB	59%
Microforms	1,300,000	700,000	54%
Artifacts	154,000	76,000	49%

Note: Archival and manuscript collections were counted in linear feet (l.f.) and born-digital materials in gigabytes (GB).

Somewhat more RLG Partnership libraries have informal collaborative collection development arrangements with other non-regional institutions in their nation (24%) than is the case across the overall population. Seven RLG Partner institutions have formal collaborations, and two have formal international arrangements.

User services

Table 2.34. RLG Partnership onsite visits (Q. 24, n=43)

	n	Number of Visits	Percent of Total	Mean	Median
Faculty and staff	26	27,569	8%	1,060	612
Graduate students	18	16,867	5%	957	423
Undergraduates	18	15,526	5%	863	550
Visiting researchers	30	110,996	34%	3,700	863
Local community	17	22,625	7%	1,331	435
Other	22	129,879	40%	5,904	1,854
Total		**323,462**	**100%**	**7,522**	**4,482**

The mean number of onsite users at RLG Partnership libraries is the second highest across the overall population (IRLAs are 10% higher). The medians for RLG Partners and IRLA libraries are very similar.

Onsite use has increased across noticeably more RLG Partnership libraries (75%) than across the rest of the population. In particular, use by visiting researchers has more often increased (78% of RLG Partnership respondents).

Table 2.35. RLG Partnership presentations (Q. 38, n=48)

	n	Number of Presentations	Percent of Total	Mean	Median
College/University courses	43	4,417	47%	103	59
Others affiliated with responding institution	42	1,601	17%	38	18
Local community	40	2,282	24%	57	20
Other visitors	38	1,009	11%	27	16
Total		**9,309**	**100%**	**194**	**101**

The RLG Partnership means for all types of presentation audiences except local community members are noticeably higher than those of ARL libraries.

Of the twelve RLGs that gave reasons for not permitting cameras in the reading room, 83% cited concerns about both copyright and improper handling of materials. Loss of revenue from reproduction services was of concern to 58%, and 67% cited potential disruption in the reading room. These three concerns were expressed by far fewer respondents across the other organizations surveyed.

RLG Partnership libraries generally charge more for digital scans than the overall population: although 35% charge less than $10, 25% charge more than $20.

Far more contribute finding aids to ArchiveGrid (48%) than the overall mean (30%), reflecting this database's origins within the Research Libraries Group.

Significantly more RLGs have implemented web 2.0 communication methods than the overall population: 61% have a blog, 46% create podcasts, 30% use an institutional Wiki, and 54% have a social networking presence such as a Facebook page.

A fellowship or grant program for visiting researchers is in place at 57% of RLG Partnership libraries.

Cataloging and metadata

Table 2.36. RLG Partnership catalog records (Q41-47)[21]

Format	n	Online	Offline	No Record	Described within Archival Collections
Printed volumes	47	**86%**	6%	9%	n/a
Archival collections	47	**64%**	12%	26%	n/a
Manuscripts (items)	34	**64%**	22%	13%	n/a
Cartographic materials	39	**45%**	24%	21%	16%
Visual materials	44	**33%**	10%	24%	37%
Audiovisual materials	38	**27%**	8%	34%	36%
Born-digital materials	30	**28%**	1%	32%	39%

The 2010 RLG Partnership data for online catalog records is nearly identical to that of the overall population, with one exception: about 10% more archival and manuscript holdings have online records.

RLG Partners have 49% of their finding aids online.

Archival collections management

The institutional archives reports to the library at 75% of RLGs. Fifty percent (50%) have formal responsibility for records management, far above the overall mean (30%), and a total of 87% have some level of responsibility for this activity.

Digital special collections

Most RLG Partners either have already done large-scale digitization of special collections (46%) or plan to do so (42%); both figures are well above the overall means.

More RLGs have licensing contracts with commercial vendors (39%) than the overall mean.

RLG Partnership libraries have collected every born-digital format listed in the survey at a somewhat higher rate than the overall means: 71% have collected digital photographs, which is the highest percentage for any born-digital format across the survey population. A lower percentage of RLGs report various impediments to born-digital management than members of the other organizations; in particular, lack of administrative support is far less often an issue (28%, compared to 41%).

Staffing

The mean number of permanent FTE for RLG Partnership respondents is 25 (fifteen professionals and ten paraprofessionals). The median is twelve (eight professionals and four paraprofessionals).

Every demographic group listed in the survey is represented among special collections staff in up to 15% more RLG Partnership libraries than the overall means.

Staff size decreased in public services at a higher percentage of RLGs (39%) than the overall mean decrease across the population (23%).

The areas in which the highest percentage of RLG Partners cited a need for education or training are born-digital materials (84%), information technology (77%), intellectual property (57%), cataloging and metadata (55%), records management (45%), and archival processing (41%).

Thirty-six percent (36%) of RLG Partnership libraries maintain separate special collections units, 10% have always had only one, and 16% consist entirely of special collections (the latter generally are IRLA members that also belong to the RLG Partnership).

Notes

1. Two additional ARL members that hold more than six million volumes were not members in 1998: the National Library of Medicine and the New York Public Library.
2. ARL added its 125th member, the University of Ottawa, in the spring of 2010 after we had closed data collection.
3. Numbers were rounded in this and other collections tables. See the data supplement for exact figures.
4. This comparison is imperfect due to differences in the respondent population, yet we feel it can reasonably be made because 84% of our ARL respondents also responded to the 1998 survey.
5. Data for the two largest U.S. respondents were excluded to avoid skewing the overall means: the Library of Congress, which has an exceptionally large materials budget, and the National Archives and Records Administration, which has no acquisitions funds because it acquires all materials by transfer from government agencies. Note that the Total figures are not simple combinations of "institutional" and "special" because it is not statistically valid to sum means or medians across subgroups; they were therefore recalculated from the combined data.
6. One ARL respondent reported 20 million manuscript items, which dramatically skews the mean upward.
7. Percentages for each row sometimes add up to slightly more than 100%, because we allowed a margin of error of +10% in each response. Data from an individual respondent totaling more than 110% for a particular format were omitted from all calculations.
8. ARL used "uncataloged," "card catalog," and "MARC record" as the three possible categories for status of access; in contrast, we used "no record of any kind," "print-only," and "online." We intended that each of our terms be roughly equivalent to the corresponding ARL term, but some respondents may have interpreted them somewhat differently.

[9] In contrast, in its annual salary survey, ARL counts the percentage of staff in each demographic group. ARL's 2009–10 data shows these percentages: 85.7% Caucasian/Other, 6.4% Asian or Pacific Islander, 4.6% Black, 2.8% Hispanic, and 0.5% American Indian or Native Alaskan.

[10] CARL added its 32nd member, Ryerson University, in 2010 after we had closed data collection.

[11] See Canadiana.org n.d.

[12] Numbers were rounded in this and other collections tables. See the data supplement for exact figures.

[13] Percentages for each row sometimes add up to slightly more than 100%, because we allowed a margin of error of +10% in each response. Data from an individual respondent totaling more than 110% for a particular format were omitted from all calculations.

[14] The foreign member is the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, Germany, which was not surveyed.

[15] Numbers were rounded in this and other collections tables. See the data supplement for exact figures.

[16] Percentages for each row sometimes add up to slightly more than 100%, because we allowed a margin of error of +10% in each response. Data from an individual respondent totaling more than 110% for a particular format were omitted from all calculations.

[17] Numbers were rounded in this and other collections tables. See the data supplement for exact figures.

[18] Percentages for each row sometimes add up to slightly more than 100%, because we allowed a margin of error of +10% in each response. Data from an individual respondent totaling more than 110% for a particular format were omitted from all calculations.

[19] The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration does not collect printed volumes.

[20] Numbers were rounded in this and other collections tables. See the data supplement for exact figures.

[21] Percentages for each row sometimes add up to slightly more than 100%, because we allowed a margin of error of +10% in each response. Data from an individual respondent totaling more than 110% for a particular format were omitted from all calculations.

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

The 1998 ARL report (Panitch 2001) concluded with a chapter titled "Areas of concern" in which observations were framed around five questions, three of which are of particular interest in the context of our work:

- Will ARL institutions be able to continue collecting the special collections materials needed for teaching and scholarship?
- Is adequate intellectual access being provided for special collections materials?
- Are staff levels and available skills appropriate to support the growing size and scope of special collections?

These are big issues, not easily addressed, and more than a decade later, they remain outstanding.

To ARL's unanswered questions, we add some of our own that we see as among the most central of those that we posed throughout this report:

- Is dramatic **growth of collections** sustainable? If not, what should change?
- Why are formal **collaborative collection development** partnerships so rare?
- Why are so many **backlogs** continuing to increase?
- Why hasn't the emphasis on **sustainable metadata methodologies** had more payoff?
- Does the **level of use** of special collections justify the resources being expended?
- What constitutes an effective **large-scale digitization** project?
- Can we collaborate to complete the corpus of **digitized rare books**?
- What would best help us jump-start progress on managing **born-digital** archival materials?

The proposed recommendations for action that follow echo many of these questions and suggest concrete steps for moving forward.

Action Items

A core goal of this research is to incite change to transform special collections. In that spirit, we present a set of recommended action items (also threaded throughout the Executive Summary). We focused on issues that warrant shared action, but individual institutions could take immediate steps to effect change locally. Regardless, responsibility for accomplishing change must necessarily be distributed. All concerned must take ownership.

Assessment

- Develop and promulgate ***metrics*** that enable standardized measurement of key aspects of special collections use and management.

Collections

- Identify barriers that limit ***collaborative collection development.*** Define key characteristics and desired outcomes of effective collaboration.
- Take collective action to share resources for cost-effective ***preservation of at-risk audiovisual materials.***

User Services

- Develop and liberally implement exemplary policies to ***facilitate*** rather than inhibit ***access*** to and ***interlibrary loan*** of rare and unique materials.

Cataloging and Metadata

- Compile, disseminate, and adopt a slate of ***replicable, sustainable methodologies*** for cataloging and processing to facilitate continued exposure of materials that remain hidden and ***stop the growth of backlogs.***
- Develop ***shared capacities to*** create metadata for published materials such as maps and printed graphics for which cataloging resources appear to be scarce.
- ***Convert legacy finding aids*** using affordable methodologies to enable Internet access. Resist the urge to upgrade or expand the data prior to conversion of print-only finding aids. Develop tools to facilitate conversion from local databases.

Digitization

- Develop models for ***large-scale digitization*** of special collections, including methodologies for selection of appropriate collections, security, safe handling, sustainable metadata creation, and ambitious productivity levels.
- Determine the scope of the existing corpus of ***digitized rare books,*** differentiating those that are available as open access from those that are licensed. Identify the most important gaps and implement collaborative projects to complete the corpus.

Born-Digital Archival Materials

- Define the characteristics of born-digital materials that warrant their ***management as "special collections."***
- Define a reasonable set of ***basic steps*** for initiating an institutional program for managing born-digital archival materials.
- Develop ***use cases and cost models*** for selection, management, and preservation of born-digital archival materials.

Staffing

- Confirm high-priority areas in which ***education and training*** opportunities are not adequate for particular segments of the professional community. Exert pressure on appropriate organizations to fill the gaps.

Next Steps

We invite readers to challenge themselves, their parent institutions, the membership organizations to which their institutions belong, and their professional societies to engage with the issues raised by this report. Which recommended actions warrant high priority is open to debate, and we look forward to participating in the conversation.

In some cases, relevant projects are already underway. Examples include these:

- The Council on Library and Information Resources is in the third year of its Hidden Collections initiative, which encourages grantees to devise sustainable methodologies for cataloging or processing. We look to CLIR (2010) to promulgate actively the best of these approaches.

- ARL is a leader in the development of metrics. The Statistics and Assessment Committee is beginning to revisit the value of some statistics and how best to take into consideration issues such as collective collecting, digital libraries, and special collections.[1]

- The ARL Transforming Special Collections in the Digital Age Working Group is studying four broad areas as its 2010-11 agenda: digitization, born-digital, legal issues, and collections (ARL 2010b).

- Professional associations generally promote and support the educational needs of their members. Within the special collections and archives realm, ACRL's Rare Books and Manuscripts Section and the Society of American Archivists play leading roles.

- OCLC Research has projects underway in two areas: streamlining workflows for interlibrary loan of special collections (2009) and identifying successful approaches to large-scale digital capture (2010a).

Note

[1] E-mail exchange with Sue Baughman, Associate Deputy Executive Director of ARL, 5 July 2010.

Appendix A. Survey Instrument

Survey questions

A facsimile of the survey instrument is provided on the following pages.

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

Introduction

This OCLC Research survey explores the state of special collections and archives in academic and research libraries in the United States and Canada. We seek to identify norms across the community and thereby help define needs for community action and research.

Only one response per institution is permitted. If you have more than one special collections or archives unit, *please combine data from all units*. We recognize that surveying all units may not be feasible for some respondents. Supplying the broadest possible data will, however, make clear your institution's overall level of distinction and add to our view of the rare and unique materials held across the community.

The survey may take from one to several hours to complete depending on the availability of statistical data and/or whether or not you'll be combining data from multiple units. You may wish to print the PDF version as a working copy for data gathering.

Your responses on a particular page are saved each time you click on a "forward" or "back" button. Do not use your browser's navigation arrows. You need not complete the survey in one sitting; you can re - enter to update or correct your data at any time until the survey closes on December 18th. Always enter using the URL in the survey invitation that we sent to your director by email.

If your institution has no special collections, please provide your contact information and respond to the yes/no question that follows. Your response will help complete our overall view of academic and research library collections.

Please submit your completed response by December 18, 2009.

OCLC Research will publish the survey results in mid -2010. Participating institutions will be identified, but no data will be associated with individual respondents. Contact information will be held confidential.

Address questions to Jackie Dooley, Consulting Archivist, OCLC Research (dooleyj@oclc.org or 949.492.5060).

For technical problems of any kind, contact Jeanette McNicol (mcnicolj@oclc.org or 650.287.2133).

Respondent Information

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

* 1. Contact Information

Name

Title

Institution

Country

E-mail

Telephone

* 2. How would you prefer to be contacted if we have any follow-up questions?

- E-mail
- I prefer not to be contacted
- Telephone

* 3. Consortial memberships (check all that apply)

- ARL
- CARL (Canada)
- IRLA
- Oberlin
- RLG Partnership

* 4. Type of institution

- University
- College
- Independent research library
- Museum
- Other (please specify)
- National library
- Historical society
- Governmental library
- Public library

* 5. Public or private institution

- Public (base funding source is governmental)
- Private (base funding is from a non-governmental source)
- Both/Hybrid

Definition of Special Collections

Special collections are library and archival materials in any format (e.g., rare books, manuscripts,

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

photographs, institutional archives) that are generally characterized by their artifactual or monetary value, physical format, uniqueness or rarity, and/or an institutional commitment to long -term preservation and access. They generally are housed in a separate unit with specialized security and user services. Circulation of materials usually is restricted.

The term "special collections" is used throughout to refer to all such types of materials.

This definition excludes general collections characterized by format or subject specialization (e.g., published audiovisual materials, general library strength in Asian history), as well as materials managed as museum objects.

* 6. Does your institution have special collections?

- Yes
- No

Instructions

Please respond with regard to materials held in special collections and archives units only. If your library consists primarily of special collections (i.e., you have no "general" collections or reading room), respond with regard to the entire library. Exclude other organizational units (e.g., museum curatorial units; research or fellowship programs) that do not report under a library or archives in your institution.

Use your institution's latest twelve-month "statistical year" that ended prior to July 1, 2009 for statistical questions. (In cases where you do not have formal statistics, we encourage reasonable estimates to minimize the time you will spend.) Respond to all other questions based on your current practices.

Practices vary across institutions, which may render some questions ambiguous for a particular respondent. Use your best judgment to interpret each question for your circumstances.

Text boxes have no word limit; you may exceed the size of any box. Each page concludes with an open comment box for any additional thoughts or details.

Please submit the survey online to avoid inadvertent data input errors on our part. If you prefer to respond on paper, please print the PDF version, clearly enter all data, and mail to:

Special Collections and Archives Survey
OCLC Research
777 Mariners Island Blvd., Suite 550
San Mateo, CA 94404
USA

Collections

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7. Indicate the total number of *printed volumes* (refer to Appendix A for definition of scope) in your institution's overall library collections, both general and special. (For libraries that report annual statistics to ARL, this is your total "Volumes in library.")

- No printed volumes
- Fewer than 1 million volumes
- 1 to 3 million volumes
- 3 to 6 million volumes
- More than 6 million volumes

8. Information about your institution's separate special collections libraries and archives will help us understand the scope of your data. Units may be separate administratively and/or physically.

Total separate units across the institution

Number of separate units included in your response

9. Name the special collections unit(s) for which you *are* reporting data.

10. Name any special collections units for which you are *not* reporting data.

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11. Estimate the size of your special collections by physical unit (except where indicated below) for each format of material as of 2008/2009.

Important: Consult Appendix A to determine in which category to report formats more specific than those listed below (e.g., count pamphlets as volumes, postcards as visual materials).

Special collections and archives often manage materials in certain formats as integral parts of archival or manuscript collections. When this is the case, 1) include them in the linear foot count for archival and manuscript collections, *and* 2) enter "0" on the line for the specific format (you may optionally report item counts for such formats in Question 12).

Conversely, enter below the counts for any special formats that you manage as items.

Printed volumes	
Archives and manuscripts (managed as collections--count linear ft.)	
Manuscripts (managed as items--count physical units)	
Cartographic materials	
Visual materials	
Audio materials	
Moving image materials	
Born-digital materials (gigabytes)	
Microforms	
Artifacts	

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12. This *optional* question is for item-level counts of materials included within archival and manuscript collections (counted in Question 11)--for example, to report how many photographs your institution manages within archival collections. Leave blank for any formats already counted as *items* in Question 11.

Cartographic materials	
Visual materials	
Audio materials	
Moving image materials	
Born-digital materials (gigabytes)	
Microforms	
Artifacts	

13. Have you *established* any significant new collecting areas within special collections since 2000?

- No
- Yes (Describe briefly and note impetus; e.g., a major gift, curator's decision, faculty suggestion, new institutional direction.)

14. Have you *discontinued new acquisitions* in any collecting areas within special collections since 2000?

- No
- Yes (Describe briefly and note impetus as above.)

15. Have you *deaccessioned* any significant bodies of special collections materials since 2000? (Deaccessioning is physical withdrawal of cataloged or processed materials. It does not include weeding during processing.)

- No
- Yes (Describe briefly and note impetus as above.)

16. Any additional comments about this page?

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Collections (continued)

17. Estimate the *percentage of printed volumes* in special collections acquired by each of the following methods during 2008/2009. Enter "0" where appropriate.

Purchase (Institutional funds) ____

Purchase (Special funds) ____

Gifts-in-kind ____

Transfer from elsewhere in your institution ____

18. Estimate the *percentage of materials other than printed volumes* (e.g., archives and manuscripts, visual materials) in special collections acquired by each of the following methods during 2008/2009. Enter "0" where appropriate.

Purchase (Institutional funds) ____

Purchase (Special funds) ____

Gifts-in-kind ____

Transfer from elsewhere in your institution ____

19. Did the amount of acquisitions funding that you had for purchasing special collections materials in 2008/2009 differ relative to that you had in 2000?

- ( ) Less funding in 2008
- ( ) More funding in 2008
- ( ) No change
- ( ) Not sure

20. Do special collections units participate in any cooperative collection development arrangements?

	No arrangements	Informal arrangements	Formal arrangements
Local/Regional institutions	( )	( )	( )
Members of your consortium	( )	( )	( )
Other institutions in your nation	( )	( )	( )
Institutions in other nations	( )	( )	( )

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

21. Are any special collections materials housed in off-site or other secondary storage?

- No
- In planning stages
- Yes

22. Indicate the relative extent of preservation needs across your special collections in the following formats.

	No problems	Low	Medium	High	Not Sure	No materials of this type
Printed volumes						
Archives and manuscripts						
Visual materials						
Audiovisual materials						

23. Any additional comments about this page?

User Services

24. State the number of onsite visits (the "gate count" or "reader days") by special collections users during 2008/2009. If you do not use a category, leave it blank.

Affiliated faculty and staff	
Affiliated graduate students	
Affiliated undergraduate students	
Visiting scholars and researchers	
Local community	
Other	

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25. Has the level of use of your special collections changed since 2000?

	Decreased	No change	Increased	Not Sure	This user category not used
Affiliated faculty and staff					
Affiliated graduate students					
Affiliated undergraduate students					
Visiting scholars and researchers					
Local community					
Other					

26. Have users' methods of contacting your special collections changed since 2000?

	Decreased	No change	Increased	Not Sure	This method not used
Onsite					
E-mail					
Website comment feature					
Interactive chat reference					
Telephone					
Mail					

27. Has use of the following types of special collections materials changed since 2000?

	Decreased	No change	Increased	Not Sure	No materials of this type
Books printed before 1801					
Books printed 1801 or later					
Archives and manuscripts					
Visual materials					
Audiovisual materials					
Born-digital materials					

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28. Does special collections permit use of uncataloged and/or unprocessed materials? Select "yes" even if requests are approved selectively.

	Yes	No	No uncat/unproc materials of this type	No materials of this type
Printed volumes	○	○	○	○
Archives and manuscripts	○	○	○	○
Visual materials	○	○	○	○
Audiovisual materials	○	○	○	○
Born-digital materials	○	○	○	○

29. If special collections does not permit use of uncataloged and/or unprocessed materials in certain formats, why not? Check all that apply.

	Descriptions incomplete	Descriptions below standards	Insufficiently processed to be usable	Preservation	Security	Privacy and confidentiality
Printed volumes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Archives and manuscripts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Visual materials	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Audiovisual materials	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Born-digital materials	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other reason(s):

30. Do you permit interlibrary loan of original special collections materials? Answer "yes" even if requests are approved selectively. Check all that apply.

- ☐ Yes, printed volumes
- ☐ Yes, materials in other formats
- ☐ Yes, only to institutions within our parent institution or consortium
- ☐ Yes, but only reproductions/copies
- ☐ No

31. Any additional comments about this page?

User services (continued)

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

32. Does special collections allow the use of digital cameras in the reading room by users for copying collection materials?

- Yes
- Considering it
- No

33. If you do not permit use of digital cameras in the reading room, please state your reasons.

- Concern about inappropriate use of the digital files (e.g., copyright violations)
- Concern about potential loss of revenue from reproduction services
- Concern about improper handling of materials
- Concern about disruption in the reading room
- Existing reproductive services (e.g., photocopying, microfilming, scanning done by staff) are sufficient
- Other (please describe)

34. How much does special collections charge, on average, for a digital scan of a collection item?

- We provide scans at no charge
- $0-$5
- $5.01-$10
- $10.01-$20
- More than $20
- We do not offer this service

35. Does special collections retain copies of images scanned by and/or for users for potential inclusion in your digital library? (This does not include retention for internal purposes only.)

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

36. By which method(s) do you make archival finding aids Internet-accessible? Check all that apply.

- On a local website
- Available to web crawlers for use by search engines (files are available on a local web server)
- Contributed to ArchiveGrid (formerly RLG Archival Resources)
- Contributed to Archive Finder (formerly ArchivesUSA)
- Contributed to a consortial database or catalog (e.g., Online Archive of California)
- Our finding aids are not Internet-accessible
- Other method (please describe)

37. Indicate which web-based communication methods special collections uses for outreach or to gather feedback. Limit your response to communications intended to promote or raise awareness of your institution's activities and collections; do not include uses by individuals, such as via personal blogs or Twitter accounts.

	Using now	Will implement within a year	No current plans to implement
Institutional blog			
Flickr			
YouTube			
Podcasting			
Wikipedia links			
Institutional wiki			
Applications for mobile devices			
User-contributed feedback (e.g., social tagging)			
Social networking presence (e.g., Facebook page)			
Twitter			

Other (please describe)

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

38. Estimate how many presentations (e.g., course sessions, public lectures, tours) special collections staff made during the 2008-2009 year.

College/university courses

Non-course groups affiliated with your institution

Visitors from your local community

Visitors from elsewhere

39. Do you have a program (e.g., fellowships or grants) for awarding funds to users to visit your special collections?

- Yes
- No

40. Any additional comments about this page?

Cataloging and Metadata

Estimate the *percentage* of special collections material that has each type of library catalog record (e.g., MARC records) for materials in the following formats. Refer to Appendix A for the scope of materials within each format.

41. Printed volumes

No catalog record of any kind

Print catalog record only

Online catalog record

42. Archives and manuscripts (managed as collections)

No catalog record of any kind

Print catalog record only

Online catalog record

43. Manuscripts (managed as items)

No catalog record of any kind

Print catalog record only

Online catalog record

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

44. Cartographic materials

No catalog record of any kind

Print catalog record only

Online catalog record

Cataloged as part of archival and manuscript collections

45. Visual materials

No catalog record of any kind

Print catalog record only

Online catalog record

Cataloged as part of archival and manuscript collections

46. Audiovisual materials

No catalog record of any kind

Print catalog record only

Online catalog record

Cataloged as part of archival and manuscript collections

47. Born-digital materials

No catalog record of any kind

Print catalog record only

Online catalog record

Cataloged as part of archival and manuscript collections

48. Estimate the percentage of archival and manuscript collections for which each type of archival finding aid exists.

No finding aid

Not Internet-accessible finding aid

Internet-accessible finding aid

49. Has the size of your special collections uncataloged/unprocessed backlogs changed since 2000?

	Decreased	No change	Increased	Not sure	No materials of this type
Printed volumes					
Materials in other formats					

50. Any additional comments about this page?

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

Archival Collections Management

51. Have you implemented a simplified approach to archival processing, such as that advocated in Greene and Meissner's article "More product, less process," in *The American Archivist,* to facilitate backlog reduction, higher rates of production, and/or more timely access to collections?

- Yes, for all processing
- Yes, for some processing
- No

52. Do you create and/or maintain archival finding aids using an encoding scheme? Check all that apply.

- EAD
- HTML
- Other (please describe)
- No encoding scheme used

53. Indicate which of the following software tools you currently use, or plan to use in the near future, for creating archival finding aids. Check all that apply.

- Word processing software (of any type)
- Database software (of any type)
- Archon
- Other (please describe)
- Archivists' Toolkit
- EAD Cookbook
- XML markup tool (e.g., XMetal)

54. Does your institutional archives report within the library or to another administrative unit?

- Library
- Chief executive officer (e.g., president, chancellor)
- Other (describe below)
- Chief information officer
- We have no institutional archives

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

55. Is a library or archives unit responsible for records management for your institution?

- Yes, sole responsibility
- Yes, responsibility is shared with other institutional unit(s)
- Yes, informally, because no other unit takes responsibility
- No

56. Any additional comments about this page?

Digital Special Collections

57. Describe the nature of your digitization program (i.e., digital reproduction of original physical materials) for special collections materials. Check all that apply.

- We have completed one or more projects
- We have an active digitization program within special collections
- We have an active library-wide digitization program that includes special collections materials
- We can undertake projects only when we secure special funding
- We have not yet undertaken any projects

58. In which ways are special collections staff involved in digitization projects? Check all that apply.

- Project management
- Selection of materials
- Other (please describe)
- Cataloging/metadata creation
- Digital image production

59. Indicate whether you are considering large-scale digitization of special collections materials. (This generally involves a systematic effort to convert entire collections--rather than being selective at the item level--using streamlined digitization methods.)

- We have already done such projects
- We intend to do this in future
- We have no plans to do this
- Not sure

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

60. Do you have any licensing contracts in place, or being negotiated, to give commercial firms the right to digitize materials from your special collections and sell access?

- Yes
- No

61. Where within your institution is responsibility assigned for management and preservation of born-digital archival materials?

- Responsibility is assigned to special collections and/or the institutional archives
- Responsibility is at the library-wide level
- Responsibility is at the institutional level
- Other (please describe)
- Responsibility is decentralized
- Responsibility has not been formally determined
- This issue has not yet been addressed

62. Which types of born-digital archival material does your special collections and/or institutional archives *currently* "collect" or manage? Check all that apply.

- Institutional archival records
- Other archives and manuscripts
- Publications and reports
- Serials
- Photographs
- Other (please describe)
- Websites
- Audio
- Video
- Data sets
- None

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

63. Which of the following are impediments to implementing management and preservation of born-digital archival materials in your institution? Check all that apply.

- Lack of expertise
- Lack of time for planning
- Lack of funding
- Lack of administrative support within the library
- Lack of administrative support elsewhere in the institution
- This is not the library's responsibility
- We do not expect to acquire any such materials
- No known impediments
- Other (please describe)

64. How is special collections involved in implementation of your library's institutional repository? Check all that apply.

- We contribute metadata
- We contribute collections content
- We contribute to project management
- We participate in other ways
- We are not involved with the repository
- We have no institutional repository

65. Any additional comments about this page?

Staffing

66. How many *permanent* staff positions were focused on special collections-related functions during 2008/2009? Use your local job classifications to differentiate categories. Report in FTE (full-time equivalents), either whole or decimal numbers.

Professional/Exempt

ParaprofessionalNon-exempt

Student/Volunteer/Intern

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

67. How many *temporary* staff positions (e.g., grant funded) were focused on special collections-related functions during 2008/2009? Use your local job classifications to differentiate categories. Report in FTE (full-time equivalents), either whole or decimal numbers.

Professional/Exempt

Paraprofessional/Non-exempt

Student/Volunteer/Intern

68. How many special collections staff are likely to retire in the next five years?

69. Improving the demographic diversity of staff has been a key focus of the special collections and archives communities in recent years. Which population groups currently are represented among your special collections staff? Check all that apply.

- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Other (please state)
- Native American
- Pacific Islander
- White

70. Have your staffing levels changed for the following activities in special collections since 2000?

	Decreased	No change	Increased	No staff in this area
Administrative				
Curatorial				
Public services				
Technical services (print materials)				
Technical services (other materials)				
Technology and/or digital services				

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

71. In which areas do special collections staff particularly need education or training in order to meet the institution's needs? Check all that apply.

- Archival processing
- Born-digital records
- Cataloging and metadata
- Collection development
- Foreign languages
- Fundraising
- History of the book
- Information technology
- Intellectual property
- Management/supervision
- Outreach
- Preservation
- Public relations
- Public services
- Records management
- Teaching
- Other (please describe)

72. Have any separate special collections units within your institution been integrated since 2000?

- Yes
- All units were integrated before 2000
- We have always had only one special collections unit
- We have multiple special collections units and all remain separate
- Our entire institution is solely or primarily special collections

73. Any additional comments about this page?

Funding

Please estimate your library's expenditures for special collections during 2008/2009.

74. Indicate the monetary unit in which you are reporting.

- U.S. dollars
- Canadian dollars

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

75. Institutional funds

Collection materials

Salaries/wages

Other

76. Special funds (e.g., endowments, gifts, grants)

Collection materials

Salaries/wages

Other

77. Has overall funding for your library and/or archives changed in the context of the current global economic crisis?

- Decreased 1-5%
- Decreased 6-10%
- Decreased 11-15%
- Decreased 16-20%
- Decreased more than 20%
- No change
- Increased

78. Any additional comments about this page?

Reflections

79. Please state what you consider the three most challenging issues currently facing your special collections, *not including staffing or funding.*

1.

2.

3.

80. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

End of Survey

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

Thank you!!

We appreciate your participation in this survey.

Counting specific formats

Several survey questions ask for data by format of material. Use the lists below to map specific formats to the categories used in the survey to ensure consistency across institutions. *These are not necessarily comprehensive lists.*

Printed volumes: Count each physical volume or other physical item

- Books
- E-books
- Serials
- Codex manuscripts (bound volumes)
- Atlases
- Government documents
- Newspapers
- Pamphlets
- Theses and dissertations

Archives and manuscripts (managed as collections): Count in linear feet

- Archival and manuscript materials in any format that are described and managed as collections
- Materials managed as collections as part of the institutional archives

Manuscripts (managed as items)

- Manuscripts, generally textual, managed and cataloged at the item level

Cartographic materials: Count each physical item

- Two-dimensional maps
- Globes

Visual materials: Count each physical item

- Architectural materials
- Drawings
- Ephemera
- Paintings
- Photographs
- Postcards

- Posters
- Prints
- Slides and transparencies

Audiovisual materials: Count each physical item

- Audio materials
    - Music recordings
    - Spoken word recordings
- Moving image materials
    - Film
    - Video

Microforms: Count each physical item

Born-digital archival materials: Count the number of gigabytes of data

- Data files
- Digital audio, film and video
- Digital cartographic materials
- Digital personal papers or organizational records
- Digital photographs
- Digital reports or publications
- E-mail
- Web sites

Artifacts: Count each physical item

- Three-dimensional objects other than globes
- Realia
- Architectural models
- Scrolls
- Papyri

Appendix B. Responding institutions

Respondents by Membership Organization

Association of Research Libraries (ARL)

86 respondents (of 124 members)

Note: Seventy-one ARL members responded to both the 1998 and 2010 surveys, as indicated by asterisks (*).

*Arizona State University
*Auburn University
Boston College
*Boston Public Library
*Brigham Young University
*Brown University
Center for Research Libraries
*Columbia University
*Cornell University
*Dartmouth College
*Duke University
*Emory University
*Florida State University
George Washington University
*Georgia Institute of Technology
*Harvard University
*Indiana University
*Iowa State University
*Johns Hopkins University
*Library of Congress
*Louisiana State University
*McMaster University
*Michigan State University
National Agricultural Library
National Library of Medicine
New York Public Library
New York State Library
*New York University
*North Carolina State University
*Northwestern University
*The Ohio State University
Pennsylvania State University
*Princeton University
*Purdue University
*Rice University
*Rutgers University
Smithsonian Institution
*Southern Illinois University
*Syracuse University
*Temple University
*Texas A&M University
*Tulane University
*Université de Montréal
*University at Buffalo
*University of Alberta
*University of Arizona
*University of British Columbia
University of Calgary

*University of California, Berkeley
*University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, San Diego
*University of California, Riverside
*University of California, Santa Barbara
*University of Chicago
*University of Colorado
*University of Connecticut
*University of Georgia
*University of Hawaii
*University of Illinois, Chicago
*University of Illinois, Urbana
*University of Iowa
*University of Kansas
*University of Kentucky
University of Louisville
*University of Manitoba
*University of Miami
*University of Michigan
*University of Minnesota
University of Nebraska
*University of New Mexico
*University of North Carolina
University of Oregon
*University of Pennsylvania
*University of Southern California
*University of Tennessee
*University of Texas
*University of Toronto
University of Utah
*University of Virginia
*University of Washington
*University of Waterloo
*University of Wisconsin
*Vanderbilt University
*Washington University, St. Louis
*Yale University
*York University

Canadian Academic and Research Libraries (CARL)

20 respondents (of 31 members)

Note: Seven CARL members responded to both the 1998 and 2010 surveys, as indicated by asterisks (*).

Brock University
Carleton University
Dalhousie University
Library of Parliament
*McMaster University
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Université de Montréal
Université de Sherbrooke
*University of Alberta
*University of British Columbia
University of Calgary
*University of Manitoba
University of New Brunswick
University of Ottawa
University of Saskatchewan
*University of Toronto
University of Victoria
*University of Waterloo
University of Windsor
*York University

Independent Research Libraries Association (IRLA)

15 respondents (of 19 members)

American Antiquarian Society
Folger Shakespeare Library
Getty Research Institute
Hagley Museum and Library
Historical Society of Pennsylvania
Huntington Library
John Carter Brown Library

Library Company of Philadelphia
Linda Hall Library
Massachusetts Historical Society
New York Academy of Medicine Library
New York Public Library
New-York Historical Society
Newberry Library
Virginia Historical Society

Oberlin Group

39 respondents (of 80 members)

Agnes Scott College
Amherst College
Augustana College
Austin College
Bates College
Beloit College
Berea College
Bowdoin College
Bucknell University
Carleton College
Coe College
Colby College
College of Wooster
Colorado College
Connecticut College
Denison University
DePauw University
Dickinson College
Franklin and Marshall College
Gettysburg College
Grinnell College
Gustavus Adolphus College
Haverford College
Kalamazoo College
Kenyon College
Macalester College
Mills College
Occidental College
Reed College
Rollins College
Saint John's University
Skidmore College
Smith College
Trinity College
Vassar College
Washington and Lee University
Wesleyan University
Whitman College
Willamette University

RLG Partnership

55 respondents (of 85 U.S. and Canadian members)

Amon Carter Museum
Art Institute of Chicago
Athenaeum of Philadelphia
Brigham Young University
Brooklyn Museum
California Digital Library
California Historical Society
Chemical Heritage Foundation
Columbia University
Cornell University
Emory University
Fordham University School of Law
George Washington University, Jacob Burns Law Library
Getty Research Institute
Hagley Museum and Library
Huntington Library
Indiana University
Institute for Advanced Study
John Carter Brown Library
Kimbell Art Museum
Library Company of Philadelphia

Library of Congress
Linda Hall Library
Minnesota Historical Society
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
National Archives and Records Administration
National Gallery of Art
Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
New York Public Library
New York University
New-York Historical Society
Newberry Library
Oregon State University
Philadelphia Museum of Art
Princeton University
Rice University
Rutgers University
Smithsonian Institution
Temple University
Pennsylvania State University
University of Alberta
University of Arizona
University of Calgary
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Chicago
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of Ottawa
University of Texas
University of Toronto
University of Washington
Yale University
Yeshiva University

Respondents by Type of Institution

Colleges (32)

Agnes Scott College
Amherst College
Augustana College
Austin College
Bates College
Beloit College
Berea College
Bowdoin College
Carleton College
Coe College
Colby College
College of Wooster
Colorado College
Connecticut College
Dickinson College
Franklin and Marshall College
Gettysburg College
Grinnell College
Gustavus Adolphus College
Haverford College
Kalamazoo College
Kenyon College
Macalester College
Mills College
Occidental College
Reed College
Rollins College
Skidmore College
Smith College
Trinity College
Vassar College
Whitman College

Consortium (1)

Center for Research Libraries

Governmental Libraries (2)

Library of Parliament
New York State Library

Historical Societies (6)

California Historical Society
Historical Society of Pennsylvania
Massachusetts Historical Society
Minnesota Historical Society
New-York Historical Society
Virginia Historical Society

Independent Research Libraries (13)

American Antiquarian Society
Athenaeum of Philadelphia
Chemical Heritage Foundation
Folger Shakespeare Library
Getty Research Institute
Hagley Museum and Library
Huntington Library
Institute for Advanced Study
John Carter Brown Library
Library Company of Philadelphia
Linda Hall Library for Science, Engineering, and Technology
New York Academy of Medicine Library
Newberry Library

Museums (8)

Amon Carter Museum
Art Institute of Chicago
Brooklyn Museum
Kimbell Art Museum
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
National Gallery of Art
Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
Philadelphia Museum of Art

National Institutions (5)

Library of Congress
National Agricultural Library
National Archives and Records Administration
National Library of Medicine
Smithsonian Institution

Public Libraries (2)

Boston Public Library
New York Public Library

Universities (100)

Arizona State University
Auburn University
Boston College
Brigham Young University
Brock University
Brown University
Bucknell University
California Digital Library
Carleton University
Columbia University
Cornell University
Dalhousie University
Dartmouth College
Denison University
DePauw University
Duke University
Emory University
Florida State University
Fordham University School of Law
George Washington University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Harvard University
Indiana University

Iowa State University
Johns Hopkins University
Louisiana State University
McMaster University
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Michigan State University
New York University
North Carolina State University
Northwestern University
The Ohio State University
Oregon State University
Pennsylvania State University
Princeton University
Purdue University
Rice University
Rutgers University
Saint John's University
Southern Illinois University
Syracuse University
Temple University
Texas A&M University
Tulane University
Université de Montréal
Université de Sherbrooke
University at Buffalo
University of Alberta
University of Arizona
University of British Columbia
University of Calgary
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, Riverside
University of California, San Diego
University of California, Santa Barbara
University of Chicago
University of Colorado
University of Connecticut
University of Georgia
University of Hawaii
University of Illinois, Chicago
University of Illinois, Urbana
University of Iowa
University of Kansas
University of Kentucky
University of Louisville
University of Manitoba
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of Nebraska
University of New Brunswick
University of New Mexico
University of North Carolina
University of Oregon
University of Ottawa
University of Pennsylvania
University of Saskatchewan
University of Southern California
University of Tennessee
University of Texas
University of Toronto
University of Utah
University of Victoria
University of Virginia
University of Washington
University of Waterloo
University of Windsor
University of Wisconsin
Vanderbilt University
Washington and Lee University
Washington University, St. Louis
Wesleyan University
Willamette University
Yale University
Yeshiva University
York University

Appendix C. Overview of Museum Data

Eight museums from the RLG Partnership responded to the survey regarding the special collections they hold in libraries and archives. Such a small number of respondents cannot conclusively represent the broader population; regardless, this selective overview may hint at the shared nature of these institutions.

Overall library size and budget

All eight respondents have fewer than one million volumes in their overall libraries.

Budgets decreased at six institutions, more or less equally distributed across the range of decrease from 1%-5% to more than 20%.

Collections

Special collections of printed volumes range in size from fewer than 1,500 volumes up to 200,000; the mean is 41,000, while the median is 9,000. Archival collections range in size from negligible to 3,400 linear feet. Visual materials are the most common other format: five institutions reported holdings ranging from 50,000 to 200,000 items.

Responses regarding acquisition of special collections printed volumes by purchase or gift were widely disparate, such that a mean or median would be meaningless. Regardless, several things stand out: only one museum acquires more than 10% of printed volumes by purchase using institutional funds; only one acquires more than 25% using special funds; and a far higher percentage of printed volumes overall are received as gifts than as purchases.

Institutional funding for special collections and archives acquisitions is minimal: the three figures reported ranged from $10,000 to $33,000. Special funds are also in very short supply, with the exception of one museum that reported $600,000.

Materials other than printed volumes were acquired almost exclusively by gift or transfer from within the institution: only one respondent reported making any purchases.

Five reported having less funding for special collections and archives acquisitions than in 2000.

Four have established new collecting areas since 2000, while none have discontinued any areas. With regard to deaccessioned materials, one noted that the slide collection is gradually being withdrawn as items are digitized.

Six have informal collaborative collection development arrangements for special collections and archives with local or regional institutions, and three with members of their consortium. None have formal collecting collaborations.

As is the case across the overall population, audiovisual materials have the highest level of preservation need at more than half of institutions.

User services

Five respondents reported statistics for onsite visits by affiliated staff, visiting researchers, and local community users. Staff visits ranged in number from 25 to 3,218, visiting researchers from 30 to 250, and community users from 20 to 55.

Six reported that onsite visits by visiting scholars and researchers and members of the local community have increased. Five stated that use has increased for books printed both before and after 1800, archives and manuscripts, and visual materials.

The number of public presentations ranged from five to 100; the mean was 30 and the median 15. One museum gave 85 presentations to local community visitors; with that exception, college and university courses were the most frequent audiences.

Four respondents permit use of uncataloged/unprocessed materials. Four do not permit interlibrary loan. Six allow researchers to use digital cameras in the reading room.

Three charge more than $20 for a digital scan of a collections item, while one provides scans at no charge. Six retain scans made for users for addition to the digital library.

Finding aids are most often made available either via a local Web site or contributed to ArchiveGrid. Only one respondent has no finding aids accessible.

Three respondents have an institutional blog, while use of all other Web 2.0 communication methodologies is almost nonexistent.

One museum has a fellowship program for researchers.

Cataloging and metadata

Ninety-six (96%) of printed volumes have an online catalog record, well above the overall mean (85%). The percentage of archival collections that are Internet-accessible is 74%, which is impressive relative to the overall mean of 44%. Statistics for materials in other formats are too few and disparate to be meaningful.

More backlogs decreased than increased: printed volume backlogs decreased at four institutions, and backlogs of other materials decreased at three. (Each of the other possible choices was given by only one respondent.)

Archival collections management

Three museum respondents sometimes use minimal archival processing. Four use EAD for encoding of finding aids.

Five respondents use word processing and/or database software for creating archival finding aids. None use Archon, the Archivists' Toolkit, or the EAD cookbook. Two use XML markup tools.

The institutional archives reports to the library or archives at five museums. Records management responsibility is held by the library or archives at every responding institution.

Digital special collections

Three respondents have completed digitization projects, one has an active digitization program, two can undertake projects only with special funding, and three have had no activity at all. One museum respondent has done large-scale digitization, and four more intend to do so in future.

One has licensing agreements with commercial vendors for digitization.

Three respondents have assigned institutional responsibility for managing born-digital materials. Institutional archival records, photographs, and video are the most often-held born-digital formats. None have collected Web sites. Only one respondent reported having no born-digital materials. As is the case across the overall population, lack of time for planning and lack of funding are the two most frequently cited impediments to born-digital management.

Two museums have an institutional repository.

Staffing

The mean number of special collections staff is 2.9 professionals and 1.3 paraprofessionals for a total of 4.2 FTE. The median for professionals is two and for paraprofessionals is one. When compared to the overall population relative to the size of the museums' collections, this number of staff is strong.

Demographic diversity is limited: all of respondents' staff members in special collections are white/Caucasian except for two museums that have Asian staff.

Stable staffing was the norm, with the exception of public services. For the latter, three reported a decrease, two no change, and two an increase. Respondents reported very few increases or decreases in staffing in other functional areas.

Five topics emerged in which education and training are needed by more than two respondents: born-digital materials (needed by all), archival processing, metadata creation, information technology, and records management.

Two have more than one special collections unit.

Most challenging issues

Responses were disparate. The only two issues reported more than once were space and digitization.

Appendix D. Methodology

Survey Design

The instrument includes a total of 80 questions of the following five types:

- Respondent identification (5 questions)
- Multiple-choice (39)
- Numeric (20)
- Open-ended (6)
- Optional comments (10)

The instructions encouraged respondents to use informed estimates where they lacked formal data; we felt this was preferable to receiving few responses to particular questions, while also recognizing that estimating gives the data a lesser guarantee of accuracy. We would have been able to frame some questions more precisely and have a higher level of confidence in the data if meaningful metrics were used across the special collections community.

We formulated questions in accordance with how we believe institutions most commonly record statistics. For example, we felt it more likely that respondents would tally onsite visitors than all users and transactions. We knew, however, that it would not be possible to include the many user categories that are employed in various institutions; we thus added "Other" as a catchall option, and it was the only user category utilized by 24% of respondents.

We requested numerical data from the 2008-09 year, defined as the institution's latest twelve-month "statistical year" that ended prior to 1 July 2009. For other questions, respondents were to answer based on current circumstances at the time of their response.

We included an optional comment box at the end of every page to facilitate comments. These were used extensively and, in some cases, led to correction of respondents' initial data based on comments that clarified intent.

We conducted two rounds of testing our draft instrument with two groups of reviewers—a total of about 30 individuals from across the five organizations. In addition to helping us focus on the most important issues and make each question as clear and unambiguous as possible, reviewers identified differing nuances of understanding due to factors such as multiple meanings of terminology and varying methods of recording statistics. We therefore took care to employ nomenclature that is as ecumenical as possible to bridge such differences; examples include the use of "institutional archives" instead of "university archives," and clarification that both "gate count" and "reader days" are terms used to refer to onsite visits.

We guaranteed to respondents that their data would be kept confidential.

Survey Dissemination

We used a Web-based survey tool (SurveyMonkey)[1] to send invitations and to gather responses. The official invitation was sent by e-mail on 6 November 2009 to the director (or designate) of each of the 275 libraries represented in the survey population. Responses were permitted either online or on a printout of a PDF file; OCLC Research staff input those received on paper. The initial closing date of 17 December 2009 was extended to 29 January 2010 to accommodate requests from numerous respondents.

A single request was sent to each institution in the population, including those known to have multiple special collections units. This matched the methodology used by ARL in the 1998 survey. The purpose was to avoid potential overrepresentation of particular large institutions based on the nature of their organizational structures. All special collections and archives units were eligible for inclusion, whether or not they report to a broader library system or another organizational entity. Other types of collecting units such as museum curatorial units or research institutes were excluded.

Data Analysis

After the data collection period closed, we exported all data to Microsoft Excel for computation and analysis and normalized it in several ways:

- Corrected clear errors of fact, such as inaccurate organizational membership or type of institution
- Enabled calculations on numeric data by dropping alpha characters (l.f., vols., etc.) and made a decision for each numerical question about how to deal with blanks vs. zeroes to render the data consistent.

- Deleted numeric data that could not be normalized, such as counts of artifacts given in linear feet rather than items
- Entered the appropriate response when it was revealed by an open-ended comment
- Discarded data that were clearly in error, such as numeric data that added up to more than 110% for questions 41-47
- For Canadian respondents, we converted linear meters to linear feet and Canadian dollars to U.S. dollars (at the rate valid on the day that data collection was closed)

We selectively contacted respondents individually, as necessary, to give them an opportunity to correct data that revealed a misunderstanding of the instructions, as well as to clarify inconsistent or unclear responses. We did not, however, seek completion of data for questions that were skipped under the assumption that respondents were aware of their omissions and had decided for some reason not to provide data for those questions.

We excluded from our data analysis the statistics for special collections size, funding, onsite visits, and staff reported by the Library of Congress and the National Archives and Records Administration, the two largest institutions by far in the survey population, in order to avoid inappropriate skew in the data overall.

Notes

[1] http://www.surveymonkey.com

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