FOCUSED DISCUSSION

In the Public Eye: Increasing Federal Depository Library Relevance

Tuesday, December 10
2:00-2:45 PM (Eastern Time)

FRAMING THE DISCUSSION

Since the beginning of the transition to a more electronic depository library program we have been asked, "Why do we need to be a depository library when everything is on the Internet?" or "With everything online, can't any library be a depository library?" The FDLP Forecast Study was undertaken to inform planning for the future of the FDLP. A couple of open-ended questions from the FDLP Forecast tangentially get to the heart of the value and relevance of being a Federal depository library in the online Government information environment

Library Forecast Questions:
- **Question 31**: *What would an ideal FDLP look like that met all of your current and anticipated needs for Federal government information?*
- **Question 32:** *Thinking about the next five years, what specific things would you like GPO to do to help you and your library improve public access to Federal government information?*

State Forecast Questions:
- **Question 18:** *"What would an ideal FDLP look like that met all of your current and anticipated needs for Federal Government information?"*
- **Question 19:** *"Thinking about the next five years, what specific things would you like GPO to do to help FDLP libraries in your state improve public access to Federal Government information?"*

The Discovery & Access and Digital Collections themes ranked among the top five response frequencies in these questions. An abundance of responses indicated the need for digitization of the historical tangible collection of Government publications and user-friendly tools for discovery of digital and tangible collections content. This permits greater access to the corpus of Federal Government publications while at the same time, allowing the creation of more focused local collections to satisfy community user needs. Widespread findability and access to these collections were viewed as necessary for a vibrant, relevant future for the FDLP.

Responses provided excellent feedback such as this one from Library Forecast Question 31, "Easy to use online site aggregating all Government, legal and agency information," but more specifics and clarification are necessary for actions or objectives to be defined.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Suggested actions for GPO and Federal depository libraries to undertake that will increase the relevance of Federal depository libraries and Government documents collections that are dispersed.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How can GPO provide organization for electronic resources, beyond what FDsys currently does?

- What can depository libraries do to assist in the organization of electronic resources for discoverability and accessibility?

- Describe the features of an "easy to use" interface?

- Besides cataloging and creating the Catalog of U.S .Government Publications, what other discovery roles do you envision for GPO?

- Does a search for Government information originating in a popular search engine retrieve results that link   back to your online catalog? (Poll)

- In what third party activities that enhance discovery and accessibility of Government information are depositories currently engaged?

- What partnerships, if any, do you envision for depository libraries and GPO that will increase discovery of Government information?