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TERMS: Techniques for electronic resource management

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There has been a lot of discussion about the implementation of ERM systems in recent years, however, use of these systems is still far from ubiquitous and many academic libraries have yet to implement or even purchase a system. The result is that two decades after the advent of electronic journals and databases, librarians are still grappling with ways to best manage these resources in conjunction with their print resources.

In addition, budgetary constraints and staffing reductions mean that we are now working our electronic resources harder than ever in order to extract maximum value for money from them. These issues are now coupled with e-books becoming another stream of purchasing and management with the added complexity of Patron Driven Acquisitions. All this results in the need to look more closely at all of our electronic resources through all steps of the e-resource life cycle.

Furthermore, recent research has shown that over a third of academic libraries put workflow management at the top of their prioritisation list. This area has also been highlighted as a gap by the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) ERM Data Standards and Best Practices Review, and in the UK, two projects, the SCONUL shared ERM requirements project and the Managing Electronic Resource Issues (MERI) project at the University of Salford, have looked in depth at workflows.

We have launched TERMS to look at each of the stages in the e-resources cycle. We will post a new TERM every two weeks on our blog and we invite you to review and comment on each of them. If you have any suggestions and tips from your workplace, please feel free to add your experiences. In this way we hope to crowd source TERMS through open peer commentary with a view to providing a first definitive draft in early 2012.
The six TERMS we will be covering are:

- Investigating new content for purchase/addition
- Acquire new content
- Implement
- Evaluation and ongoing access
- Annual review
- Cancellation and replacement

Since the launch of TERMS in mid September we have already had a lot of interest from the US and UK with over 100 followers on Twitter (http://twitter.com/#!/6terms), just under 140 members in our FaceBook group (Group: TERMS) members and 11 direct followers of the blog. We look forward to hearing from you.
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