



Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche
Association of European Research Libraries

EB0118.3.1

LIBER QUARTERLY ANNUAL REPORT 2017

The Journal

In the past year *LIBER Quarterly* published the following issues:

- Special issue 26-4: published on 12-05-2017 with 7 historical notes, 3 articles, 1 case study, 1 review paper and an extensive editorial. This issue had as title “Emergent digital practices: Essays in honour of Patricia Manson”. Pat contributed over many years to the development of library and information science through her various positions in the European Commission. From the very beginnings of library projects from the early nineties within successive framework programmes she played a key role in promoting, defining, managing and evaluating research and development projects. This special issue was edited by guest editors Derek Law and Seamus Ross. This issue contained 7 historical notes, 3 articles, 1 case study and 1 review paper. It counts 196 pages.
- Volume 27, single issue, published continuously with 5 articles, 5 case studies, 2 review papers and 1 book review. This volume contains 232 pages.

We continued adding in the **Special collections** of papers from the Annual General Conferences of LIBER links to the published papers that emanated from those conferences. In the same way, the Special collection for the 2017 Patras Conference was set up.

During the calendar year 2017 we received 30 submissions, with the following results:

- 8 accepted
- 13 rejected or retracted
- 9 under revision or still in review

The **reviewing process** is an important part of the publication activity, but it is often hard to find qualified reviewers who are willing to accept this task. The normal procedure is that the managing editor performs a first screening, in which submissions that clearly are out of scope of the journal (or of too poor quality) are immediately rejected. After that, 2 reviewers are invited to perform the reviewing task, and a third one is sought whenever one of them does not accept. In several occasions, however, we had to limit ourselves to a single review, when this seemed to be of sufficiently high quality. We can summarize the result of the reviewing of the 30 submitted papers in 2017 as follows:

- 9 papers were rejected by the manager upon arrival. Most of them were poor quality papers from Africa or Asia, with little or no relevance for the European research libraries.
- 2 were accepted by the manager without peer review (the editorial for the special issue, and the book review).
- 10 papers were reviewed by 2 reviewers.
- 6 papers got only a single review report.
- 2 papers are still in review, 1 was retracted for reworking before the peer review started.

11 review reports were written by members of our Editorial Board, the rest came from individually invited experts from Europe or North America. Mel Collier, as chairman of the Editorial Board, acted a couple of times as adjudicator in case of conflicting advices from the two reviewers.

Impact metrics

One way to have an idea of the impact of the journal is to look at the article level metrics, which are automatically registered by the Uopen software. In the table below we reproduce the number of views and downloads per article, as registered on 10-1-2018. Since the papers were published on different days of the year, we also mention the number of days since their publication date.

Type of paper	Views	Downloads	Days
Review 1	372	72	162

Review 2	317	44	106
Case study 1	595	127	334
Case study 2	277	27	278
Case study 3	368	107	257
Case study 4	355	61	120
Case study 5	95	25	54
Article 1	1395	421	330
Article 2	350	70	320
Article 3	440	106	131
Article 4	160	44	117
Article 5	199	22	117
Book review	776	110	240

The corresponding usage numbers for the special issue 26-4 were somewhat lower, with the exception of the paper by Lorcan Dempsey (4785 views, 813 downloads during 456 days).

Google Analytics, on the other hand, provides a detailed analysis (if required even day by day) of all user activities on the journal website, and thus for all our available journal issues together. If we select as period of analysis all days of 2017, and group the results by the continent of the users, we find the following results for the total number of sessions, downloads and pages consulted:

Continent	Sessies	Downloads	Pages
Africa	12.105	466	15.134
Americas	11.875	1.174	15.686
Asia	19.185	1.262	25.380
Europe	16.422	1.839	28.387
Oceania	2.777	362	3.597
(not set)	138	12	171
TOTAL	62.502	5.115	88.355

We can get an idea about the international interest for the journal from the top 10 countries (with respective session numbers): USA (8901), India (7495), Nigeria (5709), UK (5045). Besides the UK, the top European numbers came from Germany (1381), The Netherlands (1272), France (835) and Spain (704).

The Editorial Board

The Editorial Board met in Patras on the occasion of LIBER's Annual Conference, attended by 6 members. The main items discussed during this meeting were:

- Finding appropriate reviewers for each paper is one of the difficult steps in the publication scheme. At present, everybody can register in OJS as a reviewer, but this does not provide qualitative criteria. It is proposed that the editor should construct his own database, with adequate information about the reviewers and their fields of interest. An open vacancy through LIBER can be considered, where we can look for people with the appropriate profile (not necessarily with a PhD, but with proof that they are active in innovational library activities). If such database is kept private, there should be no problems with privacy law.
- The present situation, where only the managing editor is accustomed to the full work process of the publication, contains a high risk for the continuity of LQ, in case he would become unavailable. It is

therefore proposed that an ‘adjunct editor’ should be appointed, who could become used to this process by occasionally taking over some tasks, and succeed the managing editor whenever required. In order to prepare this, a detailed task description for the managing editor will be written down and distributed among the board members. In a first round, the present board members could volunteer for this position. If nobody is available, we may have to recur in a second round to a vacancy through LIBER. An incentive for candidates could be that they receive expenses for attendance at the annual conference (if their own institution will not pay). This will be checked with the LIBER Board.

- Membership of the Editorial Board: We received resignation from Ulf Göranson. Wilhelm Widmark was accepted as a new member. Since the composition of our board is rather unbalanced with respect to gender, it was noted that we should look for some new female members.

Further Activities

- The managing editor of LQ had, as a member of the Conference Programme Committee, early access to the submitted conference contributions. He contacted well in advance of the conference the accepted speakers by e-mail, discussing with them the possibility of publishing a paper in the journal. He participated in the Patras Conference, trying to make personal contact with the speakers, in order to follow up on their eventual publication. After the conference, he has been contacting again those speakers by e-mail, reminding them about their promises.

(This is not an easy task, since most of the speakers are librarians with a heavy task load, who do not fall under the ‘publish or perish’ threat. Transforming an oral talk with a PowerPoint presentation into an acceptable journal paper is quite demanding...)

- In order to mark the publication of the special issue of LQ in honour of Pat Manson, a small gathering of about a dozen colleagues, contributors and well-wishers came together in Luxembourg on December 14 2017. Derek Law and Seamus Ross, co-editors of the special issue presented her with a bound copy and spoke some well-chosen words to which Pat replied during which she indicated her pleasure at the initiative and the occasion and particularly expressed her thanks to LIBER. Mel Collier as chairman of LQ represented LIBER at the event. In the evening a small group of Pat, Derek, Seamus, Mel and David Warlock, one of the contributors, had a dinner together to round off a pleasant day.

Raf Dekeyser
Managing Editor
LIBER Quarterly

Mel Collier
Chair of the Editorial Board

January 12, 2018