

Marquerite Nel. Harnessing information resources: collection management at the Veterinary Science Library, University of Pretoria

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The Veterinary Science Library of the University of Pretoria serves the only veterinary faculty in South Africa. Collection development is therefore not only important for giving optimum support to the Library's primary client group, such as lecturers, students and researchers, but also to support the secondary market, such as private practitioners and pharmaceutical companies throughout the country. Information support is also given to veterinary faculties and institutions in other countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

The focus of this poster is on collection management in the virtual library environment. The goals of collection development in academic libraries are still the same, namely to meet the information needs of users and to serve the research and teaching missions of the university. Today's e-environment together with the expansion of distance learning programs has led to higher user demands for fast and relevant information on the user's personal desktop.

In an environment where budgets for acquisitions decrease, but user expectations and demands increase, the collection manager is forced to take on new collection development challenges. There are also the issues of access versus ownership and library cooperation and resource sharing as well as the role of consortia.

The effect of digitisation on library function areas such as interlibrary loans, the use of information databases, e-journal collections and circulation of printed library material are clearly seen in user statistics.

This poster will emphasise how access to full-text electronic journals and databases at the Veterinary Science Library of the University of Pretoria, influenced these library functions and services over a period of five years.

The importance of training users to optimise use of these resources will also be highlighted.