

Title:

What to do about data: An overview of guidelines and policies for dataset collection development

Objective:

Datasets are increasingly emerging as a 'new currency' in collection development. While purchasing models may in some ways mirror more traditional forms of electronic information, there are many unique considerations in the collection and acquisition of datasets. The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which academic libraries have formalized dataset collection development policies and to highlight some of the key considerations in the development of such policies. The focus here is on commercially available datasets, rather than datasets produced at home institutions.

Methods:

Currently existing dataset collection development policies and guidelines will be gathered from web searches of academic library websites, calls to listservs and personal communications. Based on these existing practices, as well as a brief literature review, key considerations will be identified. Ongoing discussions at our own institution will also inform this work.

Results:

Some existing policies have already been identified highlighting several important considerations in the development of dataset collection development policies. Those considerations include cost, individual vs. institutional access, long-term value of the data, storage and preservation, access and discoverability, licensing restrictions, among others.

Conclusions:

While several institutions have formalized collection development policies in regards to datasets, this remains a relatively underdeveloped area of collection development. Given the growing importance of datasets as a currency of research, libraries should strive to identify their roles in dataset collection and consider guidelines for selectors, liaisons, and other librarians involved in supporting academic research.

Keywords: Collection development, Dataset, Guidelines, Policy