Opening the Door to the Future: A Summary of the State Depository Libraries Survey

Presented by Christy Allen
Digital State Documents Librarian
State Library of North Carolina
Purpose of Survey

- Purpose:
  - Understand needs of Depository Libraries
  - Evaluate current Clearinghouse services
  - Plan future of Depository System
  - Guide efforts to manage digital state publications

- Conducted survey in Fall of 2005

- Surveyed 37 library staff at 24 Depository Libraries
Successes

♦ 84% indicated that being a state depository library added value to their collection and services

♦ The most valuable services provided by the Clearinghouse are:
  – distribution of publications
  – cataloging publications
  – customized shipping lists
  – maintaining a permanent depository for all state publications
Shortcomings

♦ Does not distribute all state government publications

♦ Does not identify, track, catalog or distribute digital publications

♦ Needs to be more proactive with State Agencies to represent the needs of the Depository Libraries

♦ No orientation for new Depository Library staff
Scope of Publications Distributed Through the Clearinghouse

- Few depository libraries have a policy defining the content of their state documents collection
- Health and Legal information are the most-used and most important government publications
- On average, ephemera is rarely kept by Depository Libraries
- More than ¼ of libraries no longer wish to receive ephemera.
Identifying State Government Publications

- $\frac{3}{4}$ said the State Library should be responsible for pro-actively tracking and identifying state publications
- $\frac{1}{4}$ said the State Library should track fugitive documents on-demand only
- 80% were willing to develop criteria for identifying state government publications
- $\frac{1}{2}$ were willing to help identify and track state publications
Distribution of State Government Publications

- 43% would not want to receive microfiche through the Clearinghouse if that information was readily available and accessible online.

- Several Depository Libraries expressed interest in storing digital information as part of a distributed Repository System.
Cataloging State Government Publications

- The cataloging service was rated as “Extremely Useful” by Depository Libraries.

- 83% feel that digital publications should be catalogued like print publications.

- Several Depository Libraries expressed interest in helping the State Library to catalog and/or create metadata for state publications.
Accessing State Government Publications

♦ 61% have difficulty locating state government information online

♦ ¾ have created online reference guides to digital state government information

♦ Nearly half prefer to access digital state government information via the Library’s Catalog
Improving Communication within the Depository System

- 22% do not communicate with the Clearinghouse
- ¼ did not find the Clearinghouse website useful

- Nearly 90% could possibly participate in a Consortium of Depository Libraries to:
  - Develop criteria for selecting/identifying digital publications
  - Identify track digital resources for a specific agency or topic
Vision for the Future

♦ 83% felt the Clearinghouse should
  – Develop and maintain an accessible online digital repository
  – Catalog digital publications like print publications

♦ 24% described their vision of the Clearinghouse as:
  “Identifying, cataloging and providing reliable access to
digital state publications”

♦ State Library and Depository Libraries now have the
  opportunity to work together to make this vision a
  reality!