Post-Conference Wrap Up

2019 Conference Evaluation Report
NASIG 34th Annual Conference
Building Bridges
June 5-8, 2019

2019 Evaluation and Assessment Committee:
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The 34th Annual NASIG Conference was held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The conference offered five pre-conference workshops, two vision sessions, one town hall, thirty concurrent sessions, one "Great Idea" showcase with six presentations, a "Student Spotlight" session with two speakers, four user group meetings, a "Snapshot Session" with six presentations, and ten "Vendor Lightning Talks." Other events included a vendor expo, fun run, dine arounds, an opening reception, first timers reception, and two late night socials.

There were 98 surveys submitted. Survey respondents could enter to win a $50 Amazon gift card. The winner of this year's gift card was Matt Jabaily from the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. Additionally, 12 $5 Starbucks gift cards were distributed randomly to survey respondents.

Respondent Demographics

Similarly to previous surveys, the majority of respondents (76%) were academic library employees. The second-largest group of respondents were employees of specialized libraries (law, government, medical, corporate, or other).
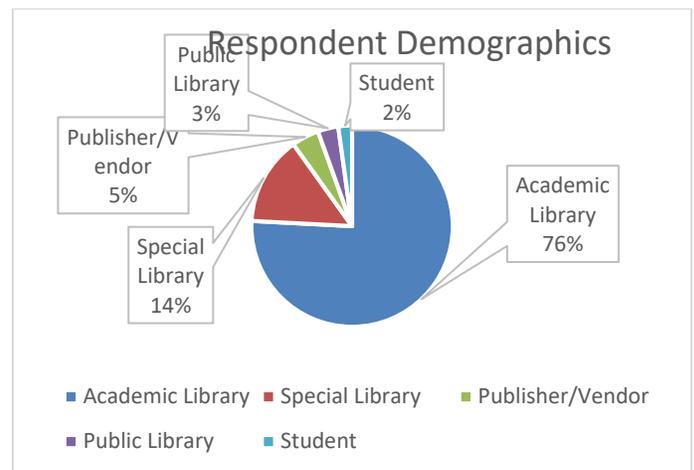

Figure 1. Respondent Demographics.

The majority (58%) of respondents had at least 11 years or more of professional experience. Respondents were asked to "describe your work" using 30 keyword checkboxes (including "other"). The top five responses were:

1. Electronic Resources Librarian (43%)
2. Serials Librarian (34%)
3. Acquisitions Librarian (24%)
4. Collection Development Librarian (24%)
5. Technical Services Manager (22%)

This was the first year in several years that "Catalog/Metadata Librarian" was not one of the top five responses.

Overall Conference Rating

Respondents were asked to give ratings on a Likert scale of one to five, with five being the highest. The overall

rating of the 2019 conference was 4.45, a slight increase from the rating of 4.33 for the 2018 conference. This reverses the trend of a decline in overall conference ratings, which began in 2017.
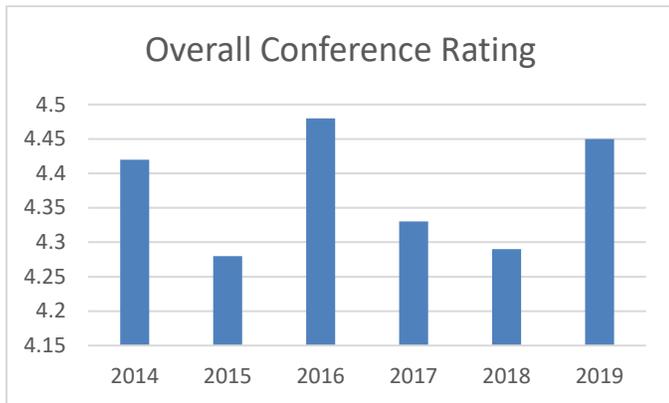

Figure 2. Overall conference rating.

The location (Pittsburgh) was rated 4.42, the same as Forth Worth (the location of the 2014 conference). This was another reversal of a trend of declining ratings for location.
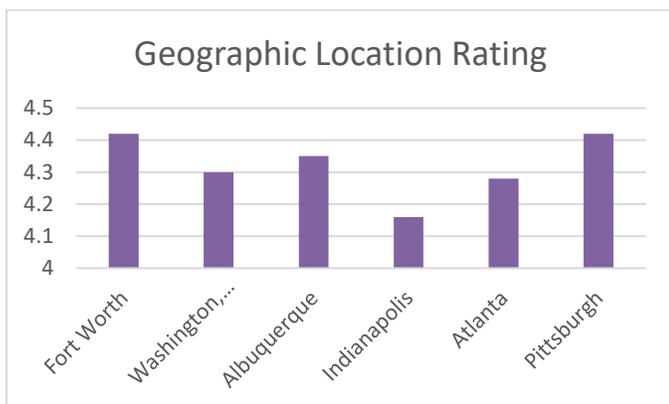

Figure 3. Geographic location rating.

There were 33 comments left regarding the facilities and local arrangements. Many of the commenters noted the lack of breakfast options at the hotel for various dietary needs and food allergies, particularly dairy-free, gluten-free and low sugar. Many commenters remarked about the charm of the historic Omni Hotel, while others noted that the temperature in many of the meeting rooms was not comfortable.

Almost all (92%) survey respondents used a mobile device during the conference. The most common uses were for accessing the conference schedule and room locations, taking photos, and accessing hotel or transportation information.

Opening Reception

The opening reception was rated 4.54, which was higher than the previous two conferences. There were several positive comments about the speaker and the food. Two suggestions included providing food to meet dietary restrictions and providing enough tables for everyone to sit.

Program Descriptions, Online Conference Information, and Schedule

Nearly all (93%) respondents rated the ease of understanding the layout and explanation of programs at a 4 or higher. Similarly, 88% rated the usefulness of the online conference information at a 4 or higher. Several respondents commented that the full schedule, including pre-conferences, needs to be available when registration opens. Additionally, several commented that the online schedule needed to include more details, such as whether or not refreshments would be available at breaks.

In general the overall scheduling of the conference was rated positively. A majority agreed or strongly agreed that the right amount of time were allowed for breaks (87%), the programs/sessions were an appropriate length (89%), and the conference maintained a good pace without feeling too rushed nor too unstructured. Many commented positively about the length of breaks and overall pace of the conference.

Pre-Conference Workshops

In general the five pre-conference workshops were well-received. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with statements, with 1 being "Strongly Disagree" and 5 being "Strongly Agree." The ratings for the statement "The workshop provided valuable information and/or skills" ranged from 4.25 to 4.83 and

the ratings for "I would be interested in future sessions or a webinar on this topic" ranged from 4 to 4.83.

Vision Sessions and Town Hall

The 2019 conference included two vision sessions and one town hall meeting. Like for the pre-conference workshops, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with statements based on a five point scale. The ratings for the statement "The workshop provided valuable information and/or skills" ranged from 4 to 4.68 and the ratings for "I would be interested in future sessions or a webinar on this topic" ranged from 4.04 to 4.43. Many respondents left comments praising DeEtta Jones' presentation as "inspirational" and "fantastic." Although comments regarding the Town Hall session focused on logistical problems inherent to conducting participatory sessions with large groups, overall comments seemed to indicate that respondents enjoyed this type of participatory session and want to see it again in some form at future conferences. There were several positive comments regarding Philip Schreur's presentation, while others commented that less marketing and more detailed information (such as Stanford's involvement in the project) would have improved the presentation.

Other Sessions

NASIG 2019 offered 30 concurrent sessions. Like the pre-conference workshops and vision sessions, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with statements based on a five point scale. For 86% of sessions (26), respondents agreed or agreed strongly to the statement "The session provided valuable information and/or skills." For 90% of sessions (27), respondents agreed or agreed strongly to the statement "I would be interested in future sessions or a webinar on this topic."

There were ten "Vendor Lightning Talks," which were rated on a 5-point Likert scale of one to five, with five being the highest. These talks were rated 4.09, and 78% of respondents said that they would like to see this type of session continued at future conferences. One

logistical suggestion focused on the timing of the talks in relation to the Vendor Expo, suggesting that if the talks occurred before the Expo then it would allow attendees to follow-up with questions for vendors at the Expo.

The "Great Idea Showcase" was comprised of six posters. Several commenters were surprised at the number of posters (the 2018 conference had 13) and several also noted that the hallway where the posters were displayed was too narrow.

Although three "Student Spotlight" session proposals were accepted, only two presenters were able to attend the conference. Both sessions had average ratings of 4.67, and received several positive comments. One commenter noted that it was inconvenient to have to choose between these sessions and the "Great Idea Showcase" posters.

There were six "Snapshot" sessions at this year's conference. These sessions were rated on a 5 point Likert scale of one to five, with five being the highest. All of the sessions received a 4 or higher.

Events

The "First Timers Reception" received a rating of 4.07. Almost all (95%) of respondents would like to see the event offered in the future. One suggestion that many commenters made was to allow for more time to mingle and fewer presentations during the reception. The "Members Forum" received a rating of 4.37. Several respondents commented positively about the discussion at this forum.

The "User/Discussion Group Meetings" were a new feature at the 2019 conference. They were positively received, with an average rating of 4.5. The majority (82%) of respondents indicated that they would like to see these meetings at future conferences. One commenter suggested that it would be helpful to have the topics for these meetings decided early enough so that attendees can decide if they want to arrive in time to attend them.

The "Vendor Expo" was rated 4.07, and the majority (84%) of respondents would like to see this included at future conferences. Several respondents commented that locating the Expo in the same room as lunch was not ideal and made for a noisy and crowded event.

Future Conferences

The survey requested that respondents rate and comment on ideas for future programming. 61 respondents provided ratings and 27 submitted comments. Several respondents suggested including more interactive sessions.