



ADVISOR INTRODUCTIONS

From Your Managing Editor

Twentieth Annual Readers' Choice Awards

doi:10.5260/chara.24.2.3

George Machovec (*Managing Editor, The Charleston Advisor*)

<george@coalliance.org>

The Charleston Advisor (TCA) is now in Volume 24, and this is the twentieth year the journal is sponsoring a series of awards for products and services of interest to libraries. The number of new products and services being released are still below prepandemic levels but are beginning to pick up as the economy recovers. The awards are not necessarily limited to items reviewed by TCA, but TCA reviews (if available) were consulted in the final consideration. Members of the editorial board made the final selections in a September 2022 virtual meeting. Awards were given in a group of standard categories, with occasional special one-time categories added as needed.

Several major trends have greatly influenced the library marketplace over the last few years. The move to open is increasing for both open-access publishing models and open-source software platforms. A variety of open-access publishing models have made this trend interesting and complex. A second major focus in the library community has been its embracing of DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) initiatives on campuses and its acquisition of library materials both digitally and in print. This has been supported by the vendor/publisher community with excellent new products and services. Accessibility issues have also been at the forefront in library decision making for online resources. Recent lawsuits have forced librarians, vendors, and publishers to take accessibility seriously, with improvements in user interfaces and librarians insisting on compliance in contracts.

On the negative side, litigation has increased as various players have tried to protect their business models pushing against areas of significant importance to libraries, such as freely available cataloging records and controlled digital lending (CDL).

Best New Product/Service

ProQuest Black Studies. In February 2022, ProQuest released an excellent reconceptualized database that covers a broad range of Black history. This database includes both primary and secondary sources such as Black newspapers, archival materials, government documents, videos, journal articles, essays, timelines, and bibliographies. The database is being rapidly expanded as ProQuest pulls together much of the extant ProQuest content in a single place as well as new material, making it one of the best in class. See <<https://about.proquest.com/en/products-services/proquest-black-studies/>>.

Best Continuing End-User Products

Zotero. Although Zotero has been around for many years, it is a favorite among many researchers and students. This citation manager supports the ability to collect, organize, cite, annotate, and share bibliographic information and is being regularly improved with new enhancements, which keeps the product relevant and

fresh. It has a solid dedicated user base, and its feedback is incorporated back into the product. See <<https://www.zotero.org/>>.

Google Knowledge Graph. Google's ability to use AI and machine learning is used to build answers to questions from the vast knowledge base of Google and some of its key partners. This knowledge base provides relevant information in a box next to Google search results, allowing users to get quick answers to questions on people, places, events, businesses, and more. It has been around for almost a decade, but its continued expansion and improvement have made it a fundamental part of Web searching we take for granted. See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Knowledge_Graph>.

Most Improved Product

South Asia Archive. South Asia Archive is one of the largest collections of books, journals, reports, government documents, and other types of materials covering the Indian subcontinent from 1700 to 1953. The database was originally built by the South Asian Research Foundation (SARF) and was offered by Taylor & Francis, but it is now being published by Coherent Digital, using its excellent platform with new functionality and tools. If your library has a need for materials in this important part of the world, this offering is a must have for a one-time purchase with perpetual rights. See <<https://coherentdigital.net/southasiacommons>>.

EBSCOhost Collection Manager. Librarians are raving about the improvements made to EBSCOhost Collection Manager, an important tool for building and managing a libraries digital book collection. This staff tool allows librarians to order ebooks and audiobooks, build DDA collections, browse curated subject collections, obtain usage reports, and provide other functionality. It is very intuitive and easy to use. Well done, EBSCO. See <<https://www.ebsco.com/products/ebscohost-collection-manager>>.

Best Interface

Embodied Labs. Immersive experiences accessible through virtual reality (VR) headsets are making inroads into many different aspects of our world. Embodied Labs has used this technology to provide a better understanding of geriatric patients and their health problems. It will help users better understand the perspective of older adults and their medical conditions. This tool is aimed primarily at health care professionals, nursing, and other related professions. Although this excellent set of labs works best in 3D, it is also usable with a standard Web browser to provide maximum flexibility. Immersive training platforms are arriving and will be the future. See <<https://www.embodiedlabs.com/>>.

Article continues on page 10.