The ARL Position Description Bank: A Collaborative Model

A collection of Position Descriptions from major academic and research libraries throughout Canada and the United States fosters the sharing of information through a searchable database and demonstrates the concept of a sustainable, shared, user-centric infrastructure developed to meet the needs of a community of practitioners.

OPPORTUNITY

Library Human Resources (HR) managers spend a considerable amount of effort managing (archiving, locating, and retrieving) and distributing position descriptions. These documents serve as important elements of effective HR management, but they are only useful if maintained, organized, and accessible.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Launched in February 2013
- Continuously supported by UI Team for onboarding of peer institutions
- Outreach to ARL members (and subsequently ARL members)
- Live online demonstration and Q&A sessions
- Ongoing customer service via email and telephone
- Extensive help documentation and orientation tutorials and videos
- Presentations and training tools archived in the UF Institutional Repository

STRATEGY

The institutional level return on investment comes from the improved document findability, access, and archiving which enhances position description (PD) usefulness and maintenance.

The resulting use of the system by institutions to manage their PDs can result in better maintenance of the data and documents. Use will result in a better, and sustained industry level collective collection of position descriptions which better informs us about our industry and benefits libraries.

TWO TYPES OF DATA

Web application featuring:
- secure, restricted, credential-based access
- remote back up and encryption of data and documents
- Simple, intuitive, easy to use interface for a variety of potential users
- Varying access levels
- Highly effective keyword searchability
- An ongoing resource — not simply a one-time effort to collect documents

RESULTING DESIGN

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Expansion to non-ARL libraries

Leveraging the web of collaborative relationships

In 2014, the PD Bank was offered to academic library consortia in which there is an ARL library willing to take responsibility for the non-ARL consortia members’ onboarding and training in use of the system. This model is not Fee-based but rather Community and Service-based.

Onboarding costs are borne as professional service based on existing collaborative relationships within consortia.

Model at opportunity to add libraries, build community, share content, and build on existing relationships while distributing the required overhead and effort.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For more information, scan here:

www.arl.org/pdbank

ASSESSMENT

In 2013, the ARL PD Bank Working Group was established and charged to assess the system. A survey of users was conducted. 17 users responded (a 38% response rate) and overwhelmingly, the responses were positive.

Functions respondents rated highly:
- Ability to store position descriptions from the home institution
- Ability to look at position descriptions from other institutions
- Ability to compare across organizations
- Ability to borrow language from descriptions

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