Technology Committee Business Meeting

Minutes

March 31, 2001

Art Libraries Society of North America 29th Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA

Members present: Judy Dyki (incoming Chair), Liz Ginno, Paula Hardin (outgoing Chair), Claudia Hill, Roger Lawson.

Recorder: Judy Dyki, Chair

Paula Hardin began the meeting with an announcement that the AMICO representative would soon be joining the Technology Committee in an ex officio capacity and reporting to the Technology Committee Chair rather than the ARLIS/NA President. This will mirror the current relationship of the NINCH representative. A Board vote is still needed to make the change official.

A long discussion took place concerning the technology Web site which is referenced in three of the four Strategic Plan Action Items assigned to the committee. Paula clarified that ARLIS/NA committees will be allowed to have space on the ARLIS/NA Web server for official ARLIS/NA work and communication. At this time, however, divisions, sections and roundtables that would like to create their own Web sites still need to seek alternate hosting arrangements. Much debate between committee members concerning the technology Web site took place via e-mail prior to the conference. Committee members attending the business meeting echoed the reservations that had been expressed about some of the directives in the Action Items. The charges to develop a Q&A section and a list of technology experts to contact on issues of relevance to the profession were both considered to be impractical -- it was felt that ARLIS/NA members would not use the Web site in this capacity (ARLIS-L is the more likely source). It would also be difficult to identify "experts" that would be willing to serve in this role. Links to technology-related information/educational Web sites were also considered of questionable value since ARLIS/NA members already have sources for keeping current with general technology issues and information. There was also concern expressed that information on technology vendors and product information might be viewed as endorsements.

After further consideration, committee members decided that it would make the most sense to focus on technology related directly to art libraries/visual resource collections and not on the broader world of library technology. The target audience would be librarians and VR professionals new to art librarianship -- in other words, those who need a resource guide for technology in this subject specialization. Possible sections would include vendor and product information on Web/CD-ROM indexes (Art Abstracts, ArtBibliographies Modern, Design and Applied Arts Index, etc.); image databases (e.g., AMICO); related organizations (e.g., Museum Computer Network, ArtsWire); specialized software and database products (auction price guides, museum exhibition catalogue exchange tracking software); and national initiatives (e.g., NINCH). Liz Ginno offered to host the Web site at California State University-Hayward and volunteered to construct a general outline for the site. Individual committee members will then work on different sections to develop the information.

The Action Item to "develop relationships with other technology groups in related professional organizations" was briefly discussed, but there was no agreement on the purpose of the liaison when he/she has no official role. This item will go back into post-conference e-discussion with the full committee.

Committee members felt strongly that workshops and sessions were an appropriate activity for the committee and continued discussion on a session proposed by Judy Silverman before the conference. The session would explore the issue of archiving digital resources, both national initiatives and local projects. Judy Silverman and Roger Lawson will develop the proposal on behalf of the committee.

The final moments of the meeting were spent considering the committee's charge and other roles it could/should be playing. This discussion will continue electronically over the course of the year, and recommendations will be presented to the Board in the Annual Report.