E-Resources and the Privacy Paradigm Shift for Librarians

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ABSTRACT

The goal of the current study is to examine e-resource librarians' perceptions on privacy standards in the U.S. in contrast with the privacy standards of the European Union. The current privacy standards in the U.S. are lax and inconsistent in nature in comparison with the privacy standards of the European Union. As e-resource librarians provide access to library resources, certain patron data is being shared with third party businesses. In many cases, no effort is made to inform users about what information is being shared or who is collecting that information. The information from this study will be used to inform the researcher on privacy values and beliefs of e-resource librarians.

The American Library Association (ALA) has created a Code of Ethics for library professionals. Principle III of this Code of Ethics is as follows: "We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted." In light of the European Union's standard on privacy, it is questionable as to whether library professionals are meeting this ALA standard when dealing with some third-party vendors. The study seeks to examine e-resource librarians' perceptions on current practices in the management of patrons' data in regards their privacy and what influences, both internal and external, could be driving the librarian's decision about patron privacy.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

academic libraries; information ethics; information privacy; public libraries; standards

AUTHOR KEYWORDS