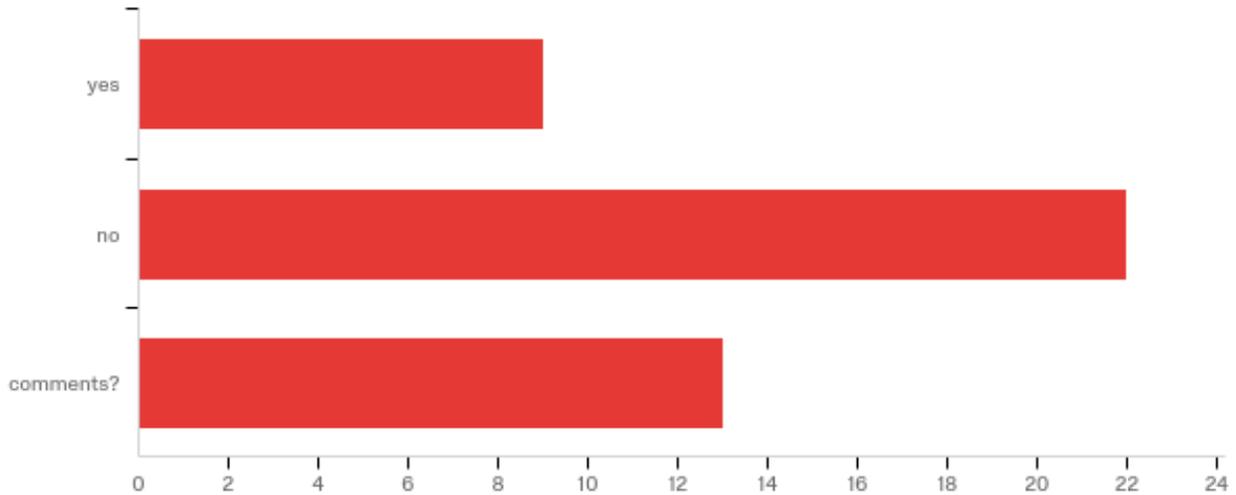


# Default Report (Copy)

Montana Library Association's Future Leadership Direction Survey

October 13th 2019, 11:54 am MDT

## Q3 - Should MLA go with an individual to take over the Executive Director/Conference Planner position? (i.e., continue with same model that Deb Kramer has filled)



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Should MLA go with an individual to take over the Executive Director/Conference Planner position? (i.e., continue with same model that Deb Kramer has filled) - Selected Choice	1.00	3.00	2.09	0.70	0.49	44

#	Answer	%	Count
1	yes	20.45%	9
2	no	50.00%	22
3	comments?	29.55%	13
	Total	100%	44

### Q3\_3\_TEXT - comments?

comments? - Text

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It works well. No reason to change something that works.

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No, it seemed to create some conflicts of interest occasionally, and there was no real recourse for issues

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I think it might be challenging to find one person who is highly skilled at both. I've seen it done successfully at the state level with other orgs, but not sure that's been the case with MLA for the last few years.

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It depends. If this is the only job for the person hired, that could work. If this is supposed to be done on hours away from their regular job, 2 people would be best. Then, they would have support from one another.

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If we have the resources, it is much better to spread those roles around.

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I can see either way working, but if you could find someone as capable and as easy to work with as Deb Kramer, that would be my preference.

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No. It was lovely of Deb to take that on, but we've professional conference planners before, who were good to work with.

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If someone is willing to do it, sure.

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Depends on who applies. See my comments on a question farther down. (I worked bottom to top.)

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I really like the idea of having one person to be able to contact with questions, concerns, suggestions, well wishes.

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No, there are experts that can do conference planning. Let them handle it!

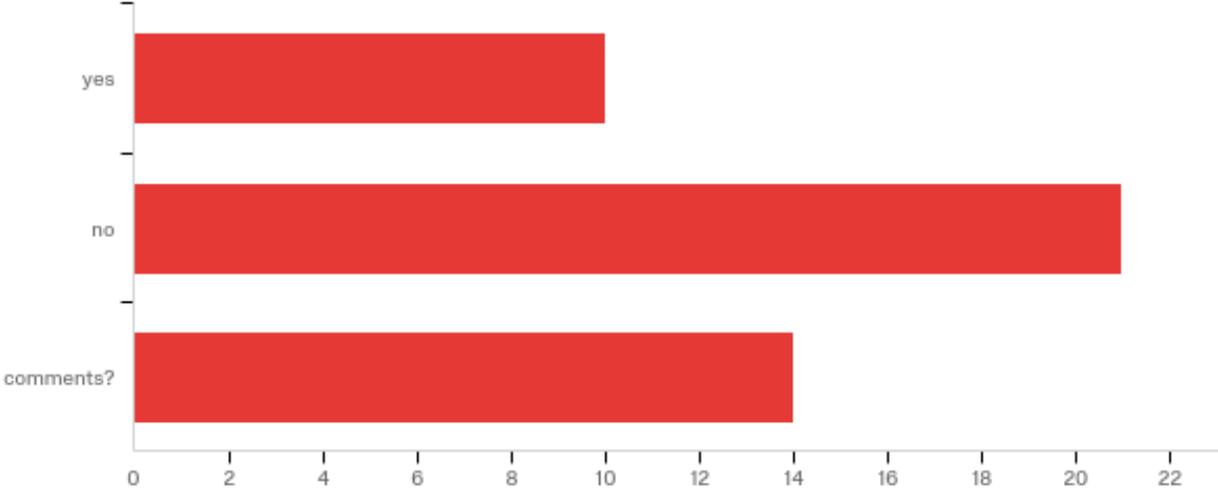
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There is value in having an executive director, but a firm that manages these kinds of things can free up our time.

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If there is a person who is interested and able to do this, have a bio of that person(s) presented, and then do a membership vote between these candidates; right now I don't know of anyone very interested in this opportunity, so I'm inclined to say "no" to this question. I would rather be asked this question after a revealing of potential candidates having been interviewed.

**Q4 - Should MLA go with a firm to handle all the ED/Conference planner duties? We're considering Smith & McGowan, our lobbying firm, to take on additional responsibilities for an additional fee, i.e., redirect Deb's current salary to additional duties that Smith & McGowan would handle. Smith & McGowan acts as Executive Directors for many large associations in Montana, including the MT Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association, Association of Montana Public Health Officers, and the Montana County Attorneys Association. As such, they have experience in Executive Board development, member recruitment, communication and engagement, financial management, public relations, and conference planning.**



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#	Answer	%	Count
1	yes	22.22%	10
2	no	46.67%	21
3	comments?	31.11%	14
	Total	100%	45

### Q4\_3\_TEXT - comments?

comments? - Text

I like the idea of having a professional firm handle both of these things, will help both the position and helping us have the best possible conference as well as providing recourse if there are problems

Hard to vote without knowing the cost differences. Also would like to know which conferences Smith & McGowan have planned and how they were structured.

Using a professional firm could make planning so much easier. If there is enough money, this would be great.

This would be a good option if no one else wanted to do such.

I can see either way working, but if you could find someone as capable and as easy to work with as Deb Kramer, that would be my preference.

No. Qualified as they seem, I want a librarian overseeing the organization.

Yes, if costs would be about the same.

What would this cost?

has there been input from these groups? How satisfied are they? Are ED and conference planning split within the firm? Or is one person dedicated to an organization to do both functions?

Split the position, or outsource

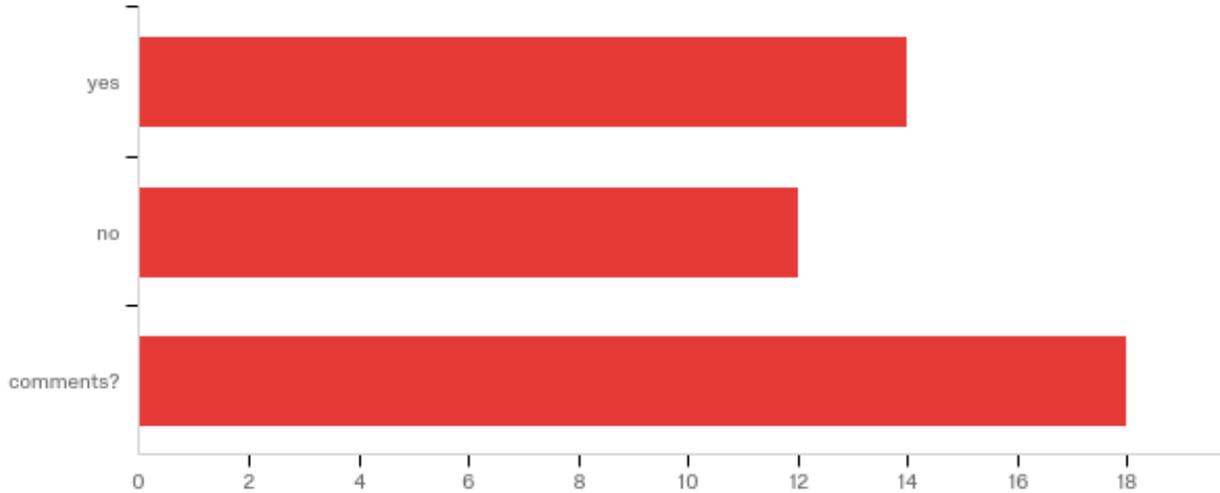
Don't know enough to voice an opinion

I don't want to have to deal with multiple people who may or may not know what is going on with our particular association. I really don't like the idea of outsourcing this position. It feels like MLA would be very impersonal.

Maybe, would we then lose control of our association? Has the board spoken to people within the mentioned associations for referrals and reviews of Smith & McGowan's ED/Conference Planning work?

See response to first question. There may be someone interested in this opportunity having their own ideas which may be better than what's currently being presented.

**Q5 - Should MLA go with a separate Executive Director and Conference Planner positions? This would be a hybrid approach to Deb's current position: hire a new ED after Deb retires, but use part of her current salary to hire a separate conference planning entity.**



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Should MLA go with a separate Executive Director and Conference Planner positions? This would be a hybrid approach to Deb's current position: hire a new ED after Deb retires, but use part of her current salary to hire a separate conference planning entity. - Selected Choice	1.00	3.00	2.09	0.85	0.72	44

#	Answer	%	Count
1	yes	31.82%	14
2	no	27.27%	12
3	comments?	40.91%	18
	Total	100%	44

Q5\_3\_TEXT - comments?

comments? - Text

---

It's logical to have the same person so both jobs.

---

are both positions needed? huge expense to MLA

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this might work, it is definitely a better plan than having both positions filled by a single person

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Hard to vote without knowing the cost differences, but this seems like an ideal arrangement.

---

I like this approach if there is enough money.

---

While it has worked well with Debbi, I think it would serve the organization better to have these positions separated.

---

I can see either way working, but if you could find someone as capable and as easy to work with as Deb Kramer, that would be my preference.

---

Yes, if costs would be about the same.

---

Splitting the duties provides a bit of "checks and balances" so less would be overlooked, and less chance of any conflict of interest (don't know if that was an issue but better to avoid any possibility)

---

split the position, or outsource

---

Whatever the leadership thinks is the most fiscally responsible decision

---

Yes. The Executive Director should be a librarian who is familiar with MLA. A conference planning firm could handle the conference planning stuff.

---

I think this is the best approach, to keep the organization in the members' hands. Between the ED & the conference planning stipends, it appears that the organization spends \$30,000. That seems a sufficient amount to hire both. I am on the board of another state organization & we do not receive stipends, yet we still host an annual conference each summer...I think this is a very do-able job with the amount of money we are looking at spending...

---

This depends on who is interested in one or both positions. If the next ED is working full time, maybe splitting is better. A retired ED may be able to handle both portions.

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I would be ok with this option as long as the ED position was a single person that could be contacted.

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If it helps you hire a good person, there is value in having the position be a full-time position.

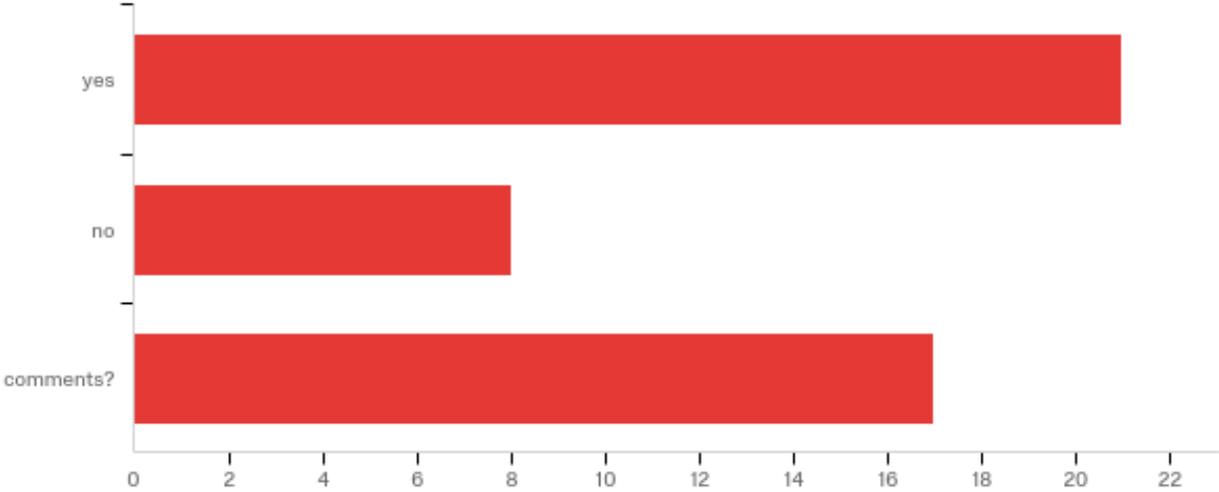
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See previous responses. There may be a candidate with an idea to assist with creating this position.

---

I think that there a lot of ways to enhance the MLA conference and bringing in someone with conference planning experience might be a good approach.

**Q6 - Should MLA purchase software to manage membership and event registrations? We're considering Star Chapter and Wild Apricot, both of which are used by many non-profits throughout the US. This could be a hybrid model: replace Deb with a new Conference Planner, but contract with a company/content management system that manages membership/renewals, provides event registrations, etc.**



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Should MLA purchase software to manage membership and event registrations? We're considering Star Chapter and Wild Apricot, both of which are used by many non-profits throughout the US. This could be a hybrid model: replace Deb with a new Conference Planner, but contract with a company/content management system that manages membership/renewals, provides event registrations, etc. - Selected Choice	1.00	3.00	1.91	0.90	0.82	46

#	Answer	%	Count
1	yes	45.65%	21
2	no	17.39%	8
3	comments?	36.96%	17
	Total	100%	46

## Q6\_3\_TEXT - comments?

comments? - Text

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this is a good start

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maybe, the current registration methods are pretty antiquated and/or barely functional

---

Again, more accurate cost figures would be helpful. Generally, well-designed software has been shown to be a positive asset to streamlining workflows and helping EDs do more efficient and innovative work.

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Why not automate what can easily be automated?

---

Again, this would be great if the price is right.

---

The ED is very important for other reasons, such as budgeting and logistics. How would such work be accomplished using this software?

---

It is much, much easier for me to purchase items on invoice and pay by check. Often online software requires payment by credit card, which means I have to use a personal card and then request reimbursement. If the online software can allow for invoicing and payment by check, that is fine with me.

---

This could streamline processes so that MLA can have funding for both the ED and a planner in future.

---

Yes, if costs would be about the same.

---

I don't know enough about what the software would handle to offer an opinion about its purchase, whether it is necessary

---

I like this idea but wonder how much training would be involved in learning the software.

---

Whatever the leadership thinks is the most fiscally responsible decision

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Yes. It's hard to believe that MLA is not already using such a product. I'm confused by the wording in this question, though; surely a membership management program would not REPLACE an executive director.

---

Sounds promising; don't know enough to say yes or no

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I don't have a strong opinion on this as I am not familiar with the current process or how these products would change that.

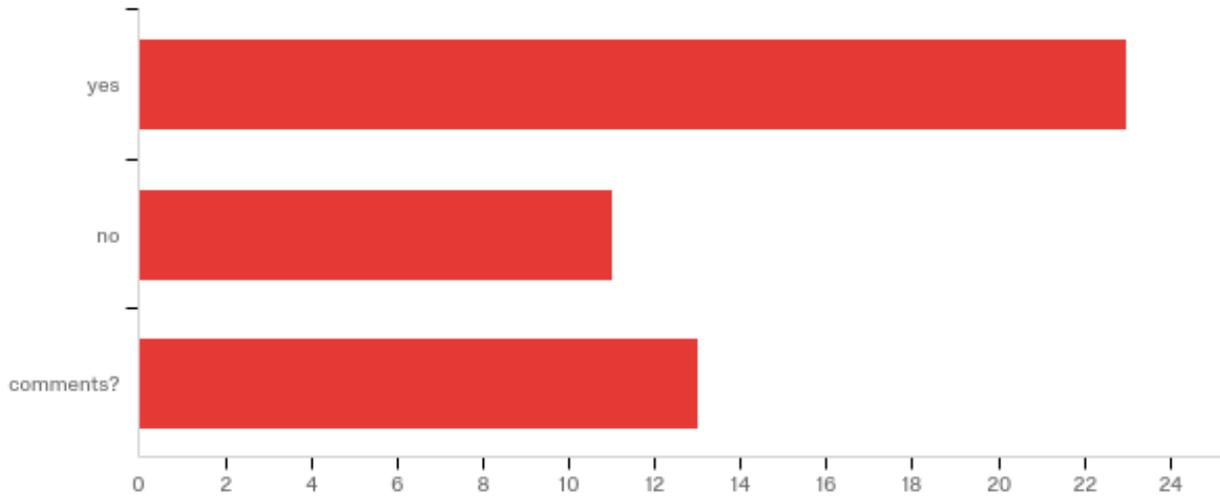
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YES - this would help so much, especially if it could handle submissions for talk topics.

---

I don't know how this would fit into the budget but perhaps the board will also consider using tools like Sched and moving to a system where conference attendees can track their schedule online rather than using a paper based model.

**Q8 - Is it important to you that our MLA Executive Director and/or Conference Planner be a librarian or have library experience?**



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Is it important to you that our MLA Executive Director and/or Conference Planner be a librarian or have library experience? - Selected Choice	1.00	3.00	1.79	0.85	0.72	47

#	Answer	%	Count
1	yes	48.94%	23
2	no	23.40%	11
3	comments?	27.66%	13
	Total	100%	47

**Q8\_3\_TEXT - comments?**

comments? - Text

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This is important for understanding all the issues required by membership maintenance and conference planning.

---

Yes for the Exec Director, not necessarily for the Conference Planner

As long as they are good listeners and respect our perspectives and needs, I would not be opposed to hiring someone in either role who has relevant, but not necessarily actual library experience.

---

If we're going to have an ED, it's good to have one with library experience. CP not so much.

---

Let's make sure we continue to make amazing roles for those with library experience and to also have planners/directors that know what it's like to work within the system.

---

I think it's very important for those individuals to understand librarian work and culture....

---

Yes, it really is. I think it absolutely makes a difference in the kind of service we receive. Librarians tend to be professional, friendly, competent, frugal but accommodating. These are all excellent qualities for anyone in the MLA ED and/or Conference Planner position. Not to mention that the library world is full of lingo that would be challenging for someone without professional or educational background in the library world.

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Yes for the ED. No for a Conference planner.

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I don't think it's necessary, but they should be open to input from the board.

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I think it is important that the conference planner has library experience or is a librarian, but I think it would be best if many of the administrative duties were handled by an outside firm and/or membership management software.

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yes for the conference planner; not necessarily for the ED position.

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Yes. The ED should be a librarian who is familiar with MLA. I don't think it matters as much if the conference planner is a librarian or not.

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I think this is especially important for the ED position. Less so for the conference planner. If we want to be taken seriously as a profession we should be run by someone who is a librarian.

## Q7 - Any additional comments, questions, concerns for the MLA Executive Board?

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Job description for Ed/Conference Planner has never been posted. If posted, you would very probably get good candidates. A librarian would do the best job. Why not pay them, rather than an outside entity that doesn't care about MLA.

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will there be discussion about the necessity of both positions?

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It's difficult to compare options and make recommendations without cost comparisons.

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The ED and/or Conference Planner should have a wide range of library experience.

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S&M would be too many eggs in one basket. Keeping jobs separate would provide oversight for conference planning and allow a variety of payment options for planners. Conference planner hired may already have software. Would be helpful to understand libraries, esp. for conference planners, but not necessary.

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Please consider additional funding for these positions.

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I know this is a difficult decision to make but I think we've been served well by having our own ED.

---

I recall the years we had professional conference organizers as fine. They were professional and slick in certain ways but I can't remember much. Alternatively, I have many specific memories of seeing Deb behind the registration table, emailing her for assistance, etc. She added a personal touch in addition to being professional. All that said, it is about finding the right person for the job and being able to justify the costs. I trust the MLA Executive Board's judgement but appreciate the opportunity to share my personal experience.

---

Absolutely purchase the software to manage membership, renewals and event registrations. I think a hybrid model is better. I do think the firm could handle Executive Director's duties. I don't believe that library experience in the Director is as important as experience would be to the Conference Planner.

---

Please do what is the easiest and most cost effective!

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Learn from the past not just the last five years.

---

I think a group will succeed because of the belief and support of its members. Hiring outside organizations to run MLA seems like an unnecessary use of funds. I am not sure what roles Deb carries out as Executive Director, but feel like the conference planning may fall under her umbrella, not as a separate assignment. Without knowing exactly what her roles are, I can't give my best opinion on what I think should be done for hiring, but feel like it can be done within MLA.

---

Thanks for all you guys for for MLA and Montana libraries! It is much appreciated.

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I couldn't actually select an answer for most of these - adding comments eliminated the response. But if it's affordable I prefer splitting the duties with the understanding the ED and conference planner would collaborate on all events. Would they also take on planning the smaller conferences?

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Thanks for seeking input! :)

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I am opposed to paying an agency outside of MLA to manage our organization. It seems the voice of the members would be lost and I do think we can find enough passionate people to fill the voids left.

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FOCUS Co-Editor here - I would recommend Star Chapter or Smith & McGowan for FOCUS purposes. That would save us \$79 per year because we wouldn't be paying for the SMORE account, and it looks like it's better integrated into the website.

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So in order to leave comments I was unable to vote on the initiative. Hopefully the comments will make clear my votes.

Would any of these options impact the cost of MLA membership?

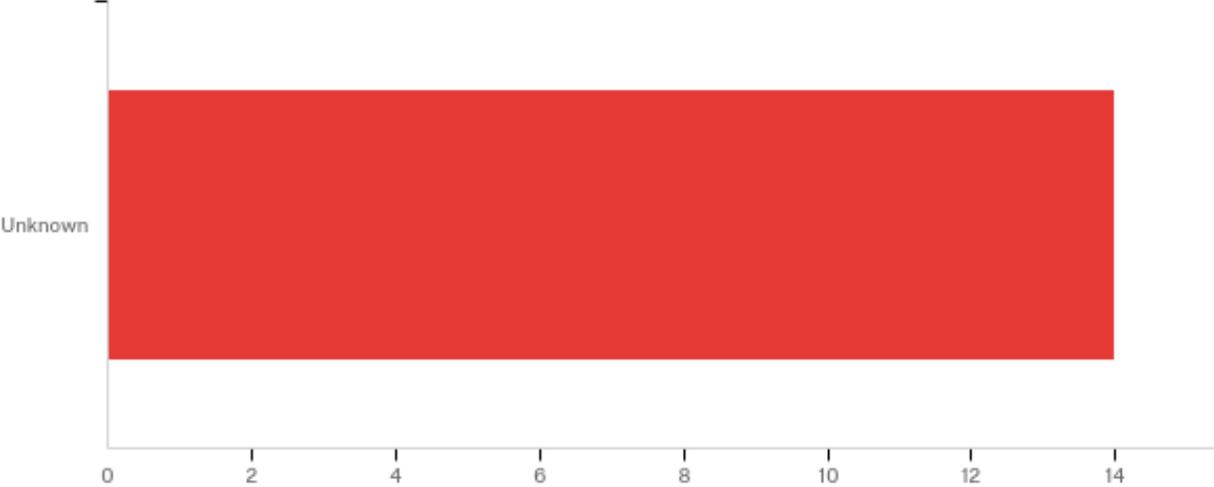
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Would you consider creating an "RFP" for this position, to get an idea of those interested in fulfilling this role submitting proposals which may include ideas of their own, subject to membership voting, to assist with fulfilling this vacancy?

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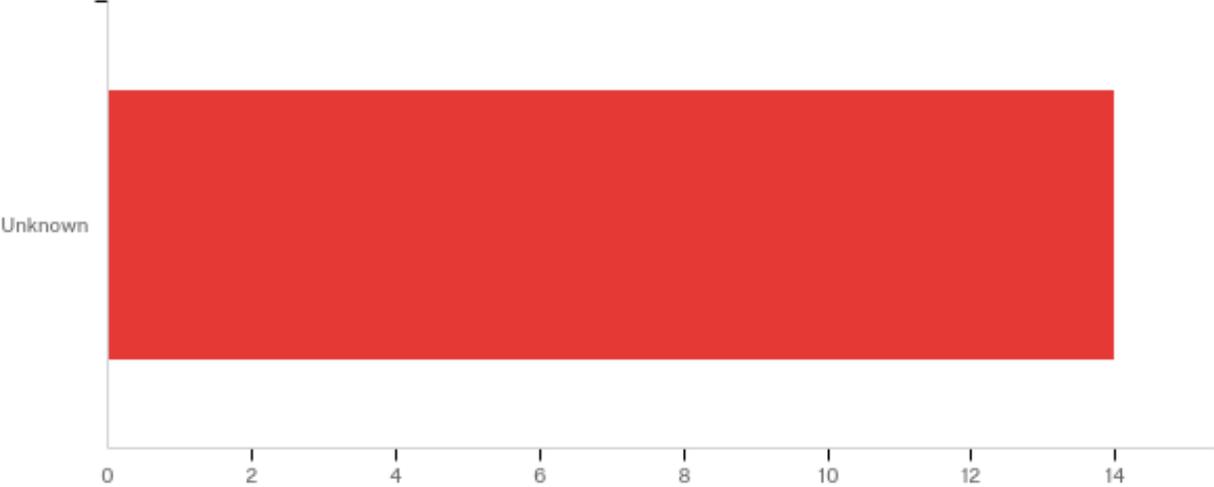
Hiring these big companies who are not familiar with library world and would not be beneficial to our needs, especially small libraries. Replacing people with software once again is Definatly no. Especially with new Directors, new librarians etc. they need that one on one to help them understand what is going on. Replacing people with software and companies that are unfamiliar with library world hurts our organization.

Q4\_3\_TEXT - Topics



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Unknown	100.00%	14
	Total	100%	14

Q4\_3\_TEXT - Parent Topics



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Unknown	100.00%	14
	Total	100%	14