

Cataloging in Transformation: New Trends and Future Outlook

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Introduction

With rapidly changing technology, more and more libraries are building digital collections and shifting focus to online discovery environment. More and more resources are published in electronic format, which leaves libraries with less and less physical material to catalog and process. Cataloging practice is experiencing big changes as we respond to the new trends of digitization, multiple metadata standards, outsourcing, batch processing, next-generation catalogs, and new standards and concepts for information organization. This research intends to explore new trends and future outlooks and plans in the cataloging practice of libraries of all kinds.

Research Questions:

- What are the current new trends/functions in cataloging?
- What actions have catalogers taken to respond to the new trends?
- What new skills and competencies do catalogers need in a likely future?

Methodology

A research survey composed of 25 questions on the research topic was issued to four cataloging listservs in March of 2012. 218 catalogers and technical services librarians from different types of libraries responded to the survey. 39% of the people who responded to the survey are cataloging department heads or managers. 26% are cataloging librarians or catalogers. 7% are metadata librarians. Others are librarians or staff from systems, technical services and other areas.

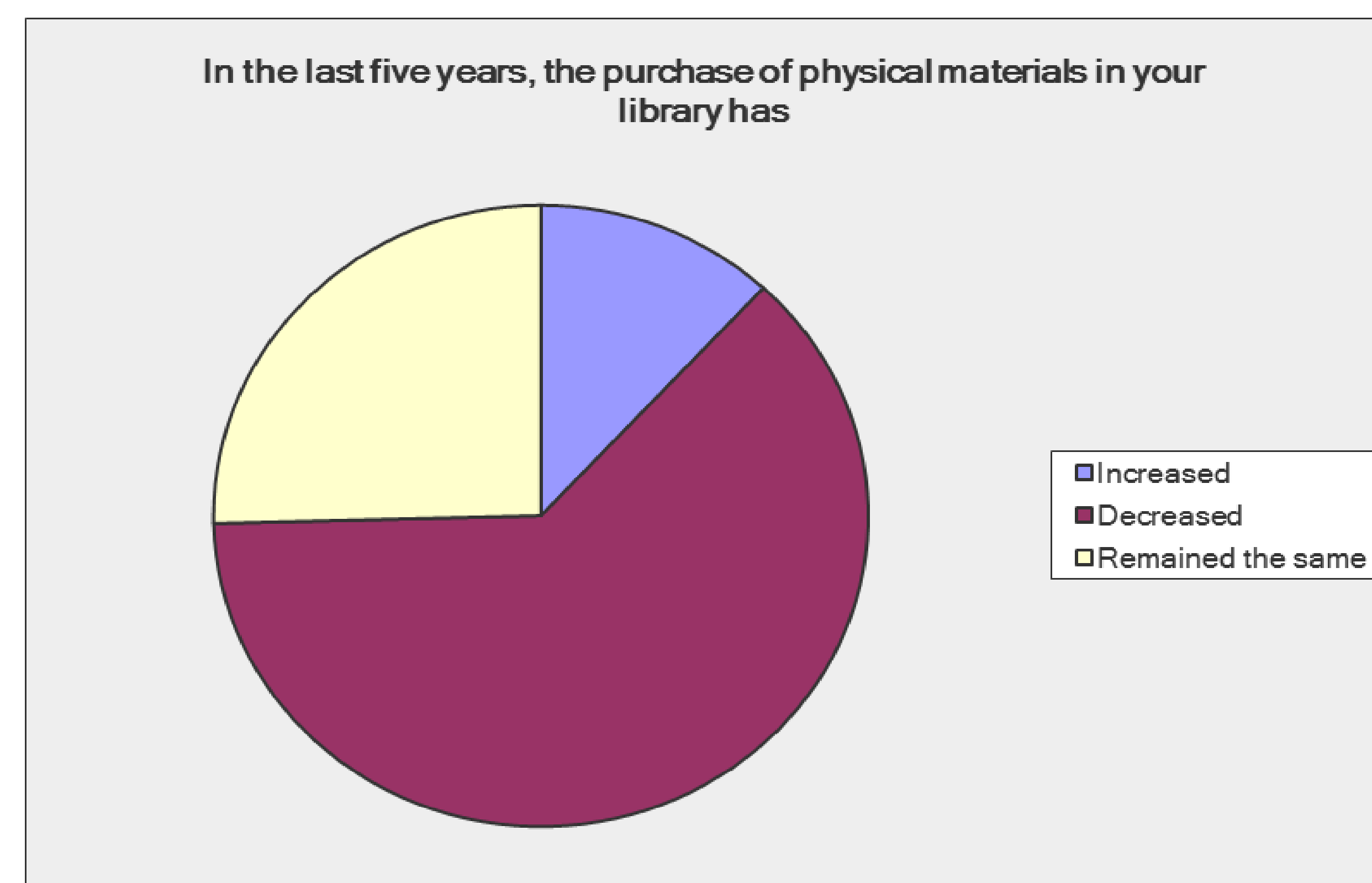
Data Analysis:

Collected data from the survey results were downloaded as a summary report into an Excel Spreadsheet. The report provides analyzed results to multiple choice questions. Text data to open ended questions were analyzed manually with MS Excel Spreadsheet

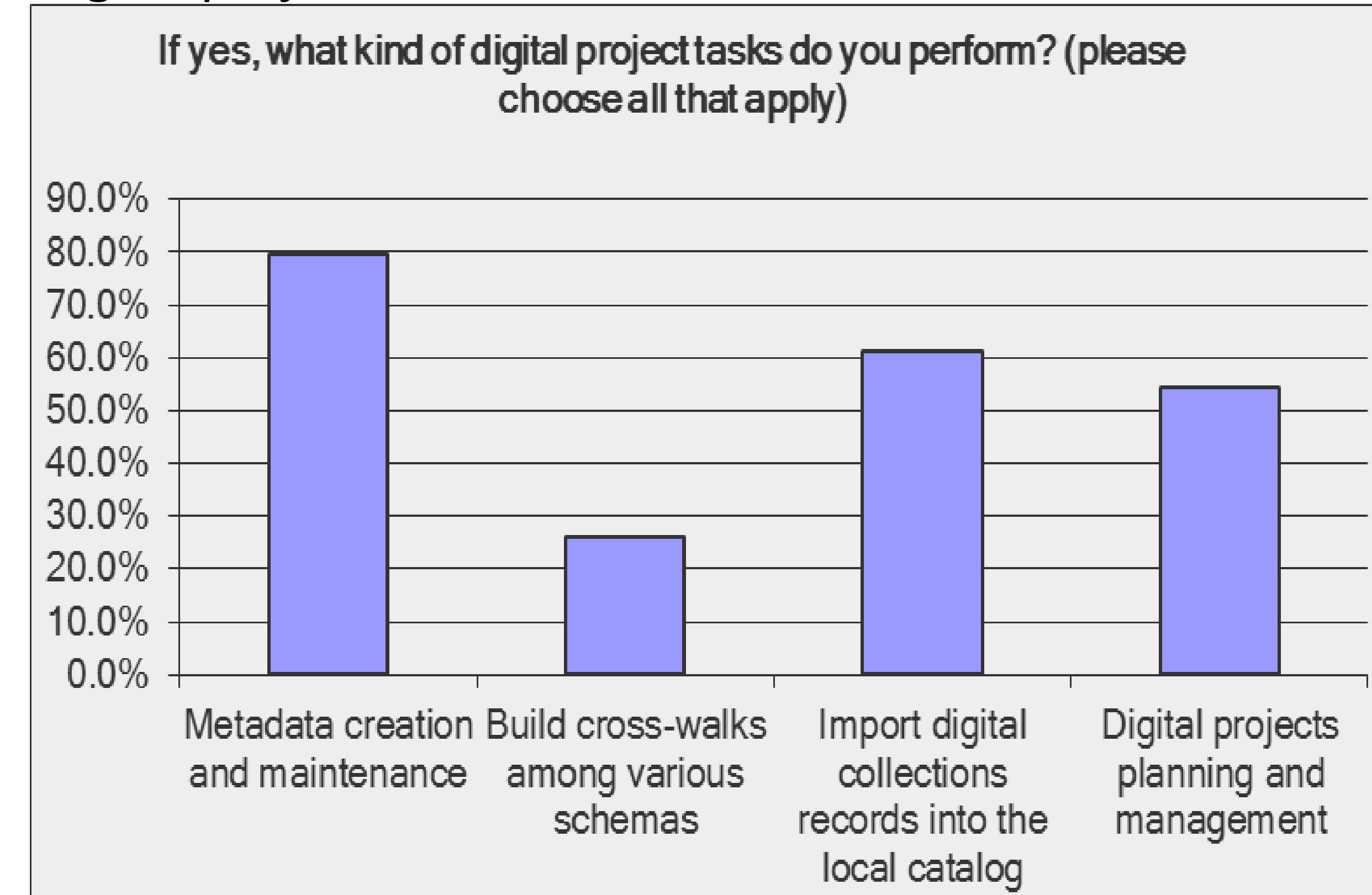
Selected Top Survey Findings

- **Involvement in new technology projects/tasks:**
58.5% are involved in digital projects.
39.2% started to use non-MARC metadata schema in resource description
37.4% Adopted next Gen cat or discovery systems
30.2% involved in Institutional Repository work
9.5% started to use linked data concepts in projects

62.7% of the libraries have decreased purchase of physical materials

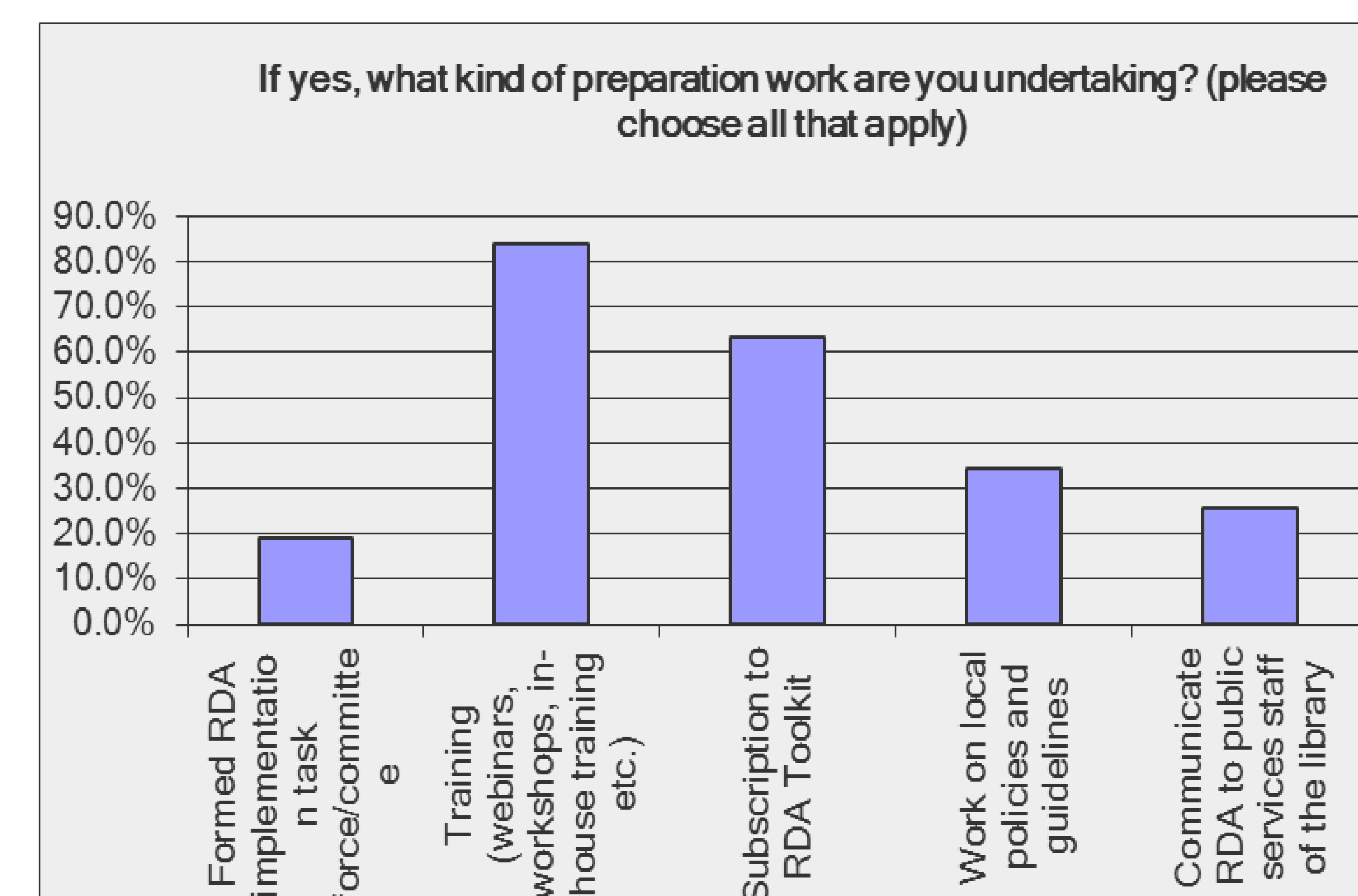


58.5% of the cataloging departments are involved in digital project tasks

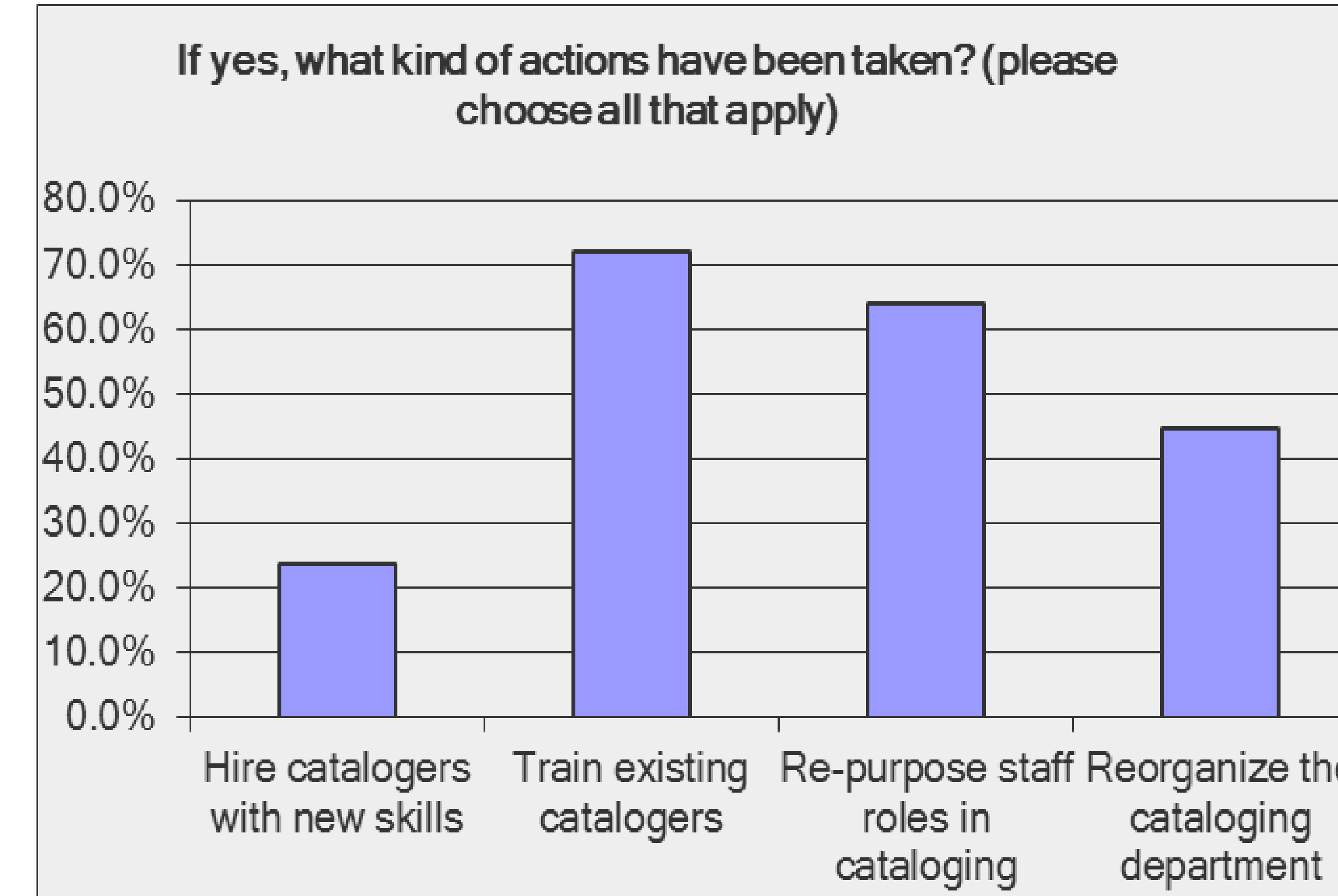


- **Other new trends and practices:**
58.9% use batch processing for some of the cataloging work
32% conduct cooperative cataloging
17% conduct programming/scripting work such as macro, cross walking, perl, load table, xml, xslt

63% of the libraries have started working on implementation of RDA



68.9% of the cataloging departments have taken actions to respond to the new trends



Findings Continued

- **Next Gen catalog/discovery Systems:** WorldCat Local, Primo, Summon, Encore, Vu-Find, EDS
- **Top Non-MARC Metadata Schemas Used:** DC, EAD, MODS, METS, PREMIS
- **Changed Department Names:** Cataloging and Metadata, Discovery Enhancement Services, Metadata Services, Collection Services, Description Services, Resource Access Services, Bibliographic Services, Resource Management, Description and Discovery
- **Top Competencies for Future Catalogers:** metadata creation, knowledge of RDA and FRBR, digitization and preservation, programming/scripting and application, linked data, batch processing, E-resources description, data management, project management, collaboration, Spec Coll/Archival unique/hidden collections cataloging

Conclusions

Library cataloging is under rapid change as tremendous cultural and technological transformations impact libraries and library work. Cataloging staff will need an expanded set of competencies and skills to respond to the swift changes today and tomorrow, to improve cataloging processes and efficiency, and to enhance bibliographic access. Library schools will need to develop new curricula to prepare next-generation cataloging/metadata librarians in the library profession.

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