

Ideas for CLA conference planning
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Issues:

1. cost - I think we overestimate the financial capacity of members with respect to conference costs. While members can have some control over their travel costs (including flights and hotel), the \$500+ registration fee is often the 'make or break' factor when members are deciding on whether or not they should attend. At this cost, we may only be attracting members from CULC and large academic libraries. The decision members from rural and small libraries are often faced with is whether they should use already stretched budgets (often at the expense of collections), if they should pay out of their own pockets, or if they can find a less expensive option, such as a provincial or regional conference.
2. content - With a relatively short conference format and a small number of concurrent time slots, many sessions have become 'watered down' and superficial in recent years. Anecdotally, I've heard members feel the quality of the sessions they attend is not what they expected and have left with little positive gain from their attendance.

Ideas:

1. Consider the overall CLA budget and the items the conference income subsidizes. The conference is a revenue generator, so it seems to me registration fees are based on the overall CLA budget. Are there other ways to balance those activities needing subsidy with revenue generators?
2. Sessions shouldn't compete with those delivered at other conferences and should be expertly delivered. Examples of topics most closely aligned with CLA activities (as opposed to regional, provincial or American associations) include copyright issues, IELA, federal policy issues, 8Rs, foreign credentials, etc. They should be long enough to cover issues in some depth without conflicting with the overall conference schedule.