

A & D @ the Research Forum: Trends in arrangement and description topics over the last 10 years

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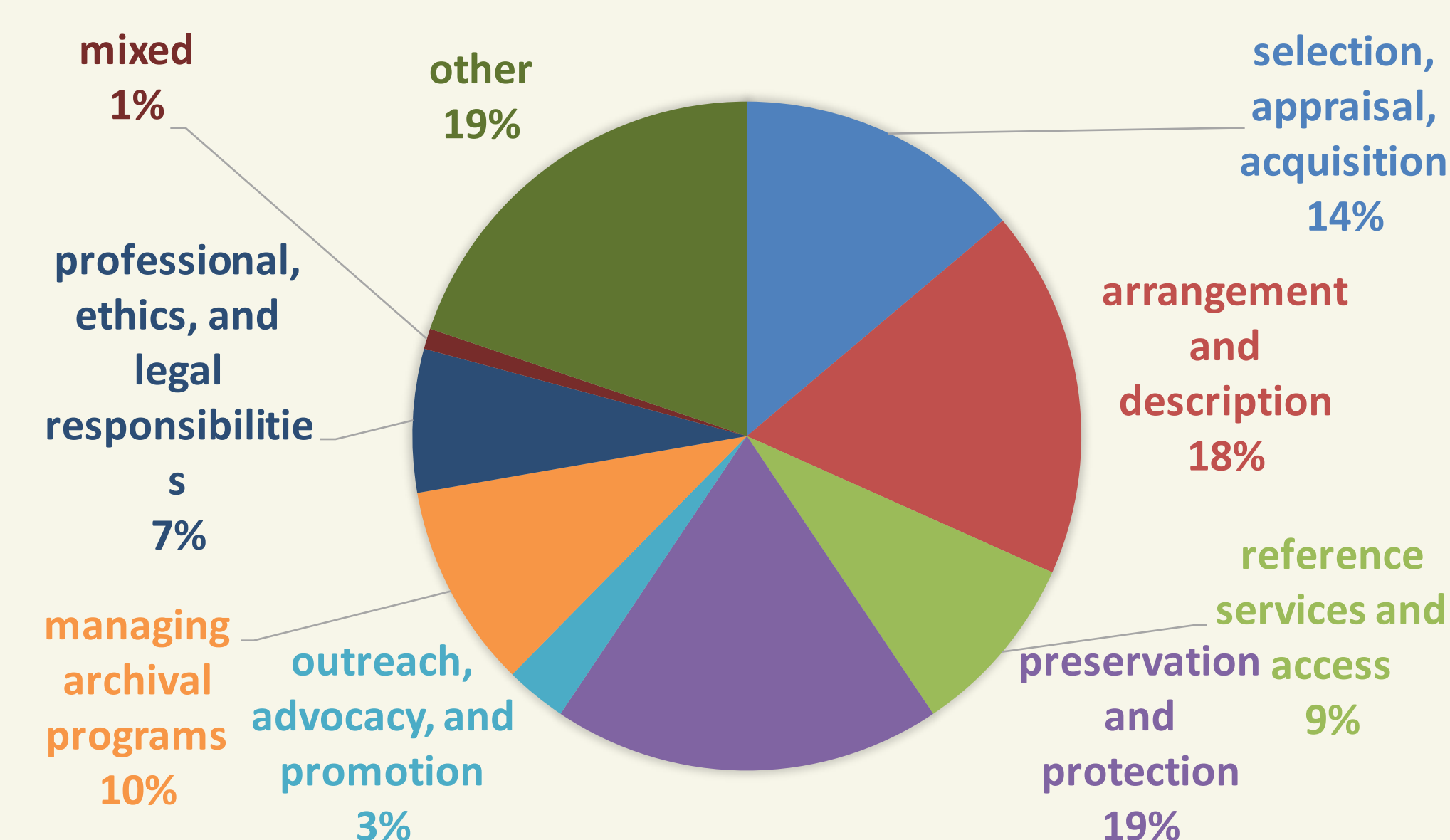
Abstract

Research constitutes a structured approach to understand and address problems in a field. An essential component to research is the ability to share the results of those efforts to the larger community in order to increase collective knowledge. The Research Forum has served this function for the past ten years. But what is being covered over those ten years? This poster represents an analysis of the overall topic distribution at the Research Forum since its beginning with a comparison to a larger research project completed five years ago and presented at the Research Forum. It also looks at topics in the Arrangement and Description category. Specific topics are identified and trends are discussed.

Research Forum Topic Distribution

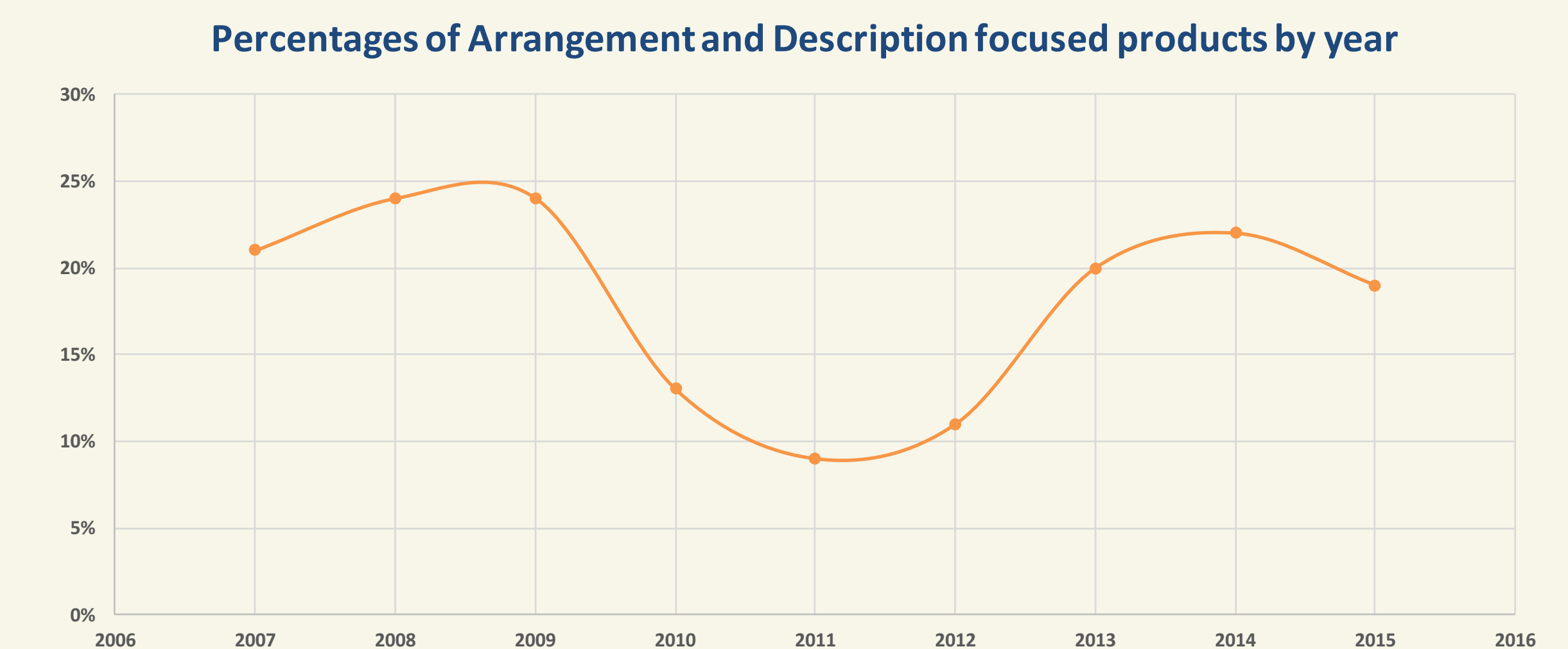
Using the categories created by Melissa Gottwald in her poster on trends in conference presentation topics (2011), a broad analysis of the posters, presentations, and research reports from the Research Forum was conducted.

- Selection, appraisal and acquisition
- Arrangement and description
- Reference services and access
- Preservation and protection
- Outreach, advocacy and promotion
- Managing archival programs
- Professional, ethics and legal responsibilities
- Mixed
- Other



Arrangement and Description 2007-2015: Topics, formats and trends

Year	Poster	Presentation	Combo	Other	Total
2007	2	0	2	0	4
2008	6	1	1	0	8
2009	4	7	0	0	11
2010	4	2	0	0	6
2011	0	4	0	0	4
2012	1	3	0	0	4
2013	4	4	1	0	9
2014	3	6	0	1	10
2015	3	5	0	0	8
Total	27	32	4	1	64



Topics

- Digital/electronic records
- Large scale collections
- MPLP
- Localized standards for special formats or specific topics
- Social media as a tool to enhance descriptive efforts
- New standards implementation
- Linked open data
- Digital surrogates integrated with description
- Creating, manipulating, exporting descriptions
- Alternative models for description and the interplay with core principles

Conclusion

The Research Forum provides a fertile environment for research. Arrangement and description remains an active area for research and experimentation. Some challenges addressed over the past 10 years include the challenges of digital, electronic records and large-scale collections. But localized standards, the implementation and experimentation with new standards and the linked open data movement were also popular topics.

References

1. Melissa Gottwald, "The Archives Conference as a venue for professional communication: trends and opportunities in session topics" SAA Research Forum 2011, <http://files.archivists.org/researchforum/2011/Slides-Handouts-Posters/Gottwald-ResearchForumPoster11.pdf>

Trends

Arrangement and description topics have appeared in each year of the Research Forum. Early explorations focused on the efficiency of record creation and ways to serve up description in various environments. The digital or electronic record dominated format considerations although other formats also presented challenges to be addressed.

Comparison to Gottwald (2011) findings

