

**MAC/MLA 2005 ANNUAL MEETING
ROUND TABLES
DISCUSSION SUMMARIES**

The 2005 Mid-Atlantic Chapter Round Table Discussions were held during lunch on October 6, 2005. The participants covered eleven timely topics: AHIP; Best Practices for Electronic Reference; Collaboration/Consortia/Partnerships; Consumer Health; Go-Local Endeavors; Health Literacy; Informationist; Is Paper Passé?; Mobile Technology; Recruitment Issues; and Turf to Worth. Because of high interest, there were two tables each for Turf to Worth and Is Paper Passé? Below are summaries to some of the discussions.

Mobile Technology

Wallace McLendon, Facilitator

Participants: Alexandra Gomes, George Washington University; Ivonne Martinez, Georgetown University; Lynne Turman, VCU, Virginia (Ginger) Carden, Duke; Stefanie Warlick, UNC-HSL

Among the topics discussed included a summary of mobile technology trends followed by specific issues including VPN access for student PDAs, new mobile access for distance education students, the impact technology trends have on collection development, and the impact ubiquitous mobile/smart phones are having on information access. It was agreed that it would be helpful if staff could try new technologies before library users brought them into the library. It was pointed out that software for individual devices were marketed to individuals and not to libraries, thus making it a challenge for the library to stay ahead. The table discussed PDAs as a case study - what did libraries learn from users introducing technologies to library services and programs? Participants pointed out that libraries learned about the challenges of services and content bundled with PDAs and noted a tendency for some libraries to allocate more energy to the impact of PDAs than was necessary to provide good library service. The participants then explored "the next big thing" in mobile technologies. It was agreed that expanded cell phone capabilities - cell phones getting smarter - would be the next growth area in wireless end-user appliances. Wearable computers intrigued the group as a trend but it was agreed that it was too early to grasp what information access tool might be integrated into such a concept. Everyone agreed that wireless technology would continue getting smaller and increasingly multi-purpose. A participant raised a question about the slow adoption of what seemed to be a useful mobile technology platform - the tablet. While some physicians have adopted it, wide scaled use had not occurred. It was agreed that the tablet's size and weight was its downfall. The group came up with clever idea to solve the frustration with mobile device displays - the capability of a miniature device to project its visuals on a wall. The Table discussed the social and cultural implications of mobile devices including digital natives' comfort with multi-tasking and the need to stay connected. The participants touched on the challenge of identifying funding for new technologies as well as a tendency of libraries to stack or layer new technologies onto services without giving up any existing technologies. An overriding concern was expressed with both the real and perceived security issues surrounding mobile devices. It was agreed that librarians needed to monitor the personal and business use of mobile technologies to raise their awareness of and become better prepared for the next new technology that appears in the library.