

SPEAKER *Spotlight*

We interviewed **Sam Brooks**, Executive Vice President of EBSCO and **Computers in Libraries** speaker about his experience with research and innovation in libraries. To learn more about what stimulates Sam's imagination, read below!



Sam Brooks
Executive Vice President
EBSCO

Our theme this year is Library Labs: Research, Innovation & Imagination. Have you seen some recent research that has had an impact on libraries or initiating changes in their procedures/processes?

When I see the words "library labs", "research", "innovation" and "imagination", I immediately think of the work being done at some leading-edge libraries in the area of user research. These libraries have partnered with EBSCO to conduct joint research to study how their users access and make use of their electronic resources. EBSCO has a large, skilled, dedicated user research department that does extensive collaborative research with many different types of libraries, most often universities and their various library types (e.g., undergrad libraries, medical school libraries, law school libraries, business school libraries, etc.) and their diverse users (undergrad students, graduate students, PhD candidates, researchers, faculty, etc.). Through this research, we learn about the digital ecosystems of today's users, and libraries typically use the results to make adjustments to their websites and the profiles of some of their e-resources. Meanwhile, EBSCO uses this information to make evidence-based decisions that improve our products and services. Some of the results of these efforts have had a transformative impact on library technology.

What are the most exciting or interesting innovations you have seen in libraries recently? Can you point to some specific libraries and the initiatives/changes they made?

Stanford University Libraries has been working with a Silicon Valley company called Yewno on a product called HARI, which is a completely new way to expose users to information. I would call this exciting, interesting and innovative. The system employs complex systems theory and machine learning, and needs to be seen to be believed. It is complementary to EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS) and will allow libraries to present users with a different way to build searches and view results, unlocking the potential of human understanding.

What stimulates your imagination?

Thinking about the future of the library community genuinely stimulates my imagination. I imagine a future where library vendors partner more with customers to fulfill the needs of end users; where library vendors partner more with one another, meeting each other half way to satisfy the needs of the customer; where library vendors take a substantial portion of their profits and return them to the library community in cooperative ways (e.g., open source projects, open access, etc.); and where those who are able work together to bridge the digital divide between the "industrialized" world and developing nations. I truly believe all of these things are possible.

Hear more from Sam at **Computers in Libraries** during his session:

Keynote Panel: Executive Perspectives of the Library Tech Industry
Wednesday, March 9
8:45 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.

Get detailed descriptions on all of our sessions at Computers in Libraries!



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