**Why Librarians Should Be Concerned about   
Vendor Privacy Policies?: An FAQ**

**Q. Why should libraries care about patron privacy around the use of electronic resources?**A. As part of the Library Bill of Rights, libraries and librarians have a duty to safeguard the privacy of patrons’ library use. This use includes their access of electronic resources that the library subscribes to on their behalf.

**Q. What are the concerns around library vendors gathering information about library patrons?**A. With any gathered personal data, libraries don’t know to what purpose that information will be put or who that information will be shared with. Libraries are opposed to marketing to patrons based on their library use which could have a chilling impact on the types of information patrons are while to search for through the library. The information could also be shared with entities or organization patrons may not feel comfortable sharing their data with.

**Q. Should libraries be the intermediaries around privacy issues between vendors and library patrons?**A. Library institutions are our vendors’ customers, not the library patrons. Because vendors are entering into a financial relationship with libraries, vendors must meet the privacy requirements of their customer the library. Libraries prefer that vendors only sell them the advertised service and do not use their relationships with libraries to gather data on third parties (library patrons).

**Q. What about the potential benefits to library patrons of specialized tool and services provided by the vendor?**A. While vendors offer tools and services to customize user experience, those services should be strictly opt-in. And in choosing to not opt-in, patrons should not be limited in their access to the content that the library has bought or subscribed to.

**Q. What should libraries do if they encounter push back from patrons around a lack of access to specialized features within a resource or no access to a resource at all?**A. These encounters provide an opportunity for patron education around libraries historic and continued protections of patrons’ privacy. Patrons can be educated about the inability of the library to provide access to these resources while also assuring the patron’s privacy.