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# E-Books for All: Working to Establish an E-Book DDA Program within USMAI

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## **E-Books for All: Working to Establish an E-Book DDA Program within USMAI**

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### **Background of USMAI**

The USMAI is the University System of Maryland and Affiliated Institutions. We are a consortium of 16 libraries at public universities and colleges in the State of Maryland. Our mission is to provide unified, cost effective and creative approaches to the acquisition and sharing of information and knowledge resources across the 16 libraries. We have a state mandate to share resources and offer broad access to materials to the students at these public universities and colleges and to the citizens of Maryland as walk-in users.

The 16 libraries represent a diverse group of institutions with respect to the programs offered and size of the institutions as well as the diversity of the student populations. The 16 member institutions include professional schools, liberal arts colleges, a research university, and HBCU institutions.

The USMAI maximizes resources for members with a very active patron-initiated borrowing program, shared interlibrary loan platform, shared integrated library system, and several of the campuses are working to bring up a new discovery layer. The consortium works with Lyrasis for many of the consortial purchases, but also has several database and e-resources licenses which were previously negotiated within the USMAI offices.

Our consortium is governed by the Council of Library Directors, which consists of Directors from each member library. The daily management of the consortium is directed out of the Information Technology Division, located on the University of Maryland, College Park campus. Each member library financially contributes to the costs of the Information Technology Division services. There are a multitude of consortial committees, populated by representatives from the various campuses to make recommendations and plan for future consortial developments.

The USMAI services well over 140,000 students both on the campus and via distance education. One campus, University of Maryland University College, is primarily distance education. The libraries in the consortium are also members of the Maryland Digital Library and will often share in cost savings via share purchasing negotiations.

### **Genesis of an Idea and Time Frame**

Many of the USMAI institutions currently provide access to e-books using various platforms, and several have independent demand driven acquisitions (DDA) programs. However, after experiencing the issues of serious restrictions on ILL and intercampus access to e-book programs, it was natural that there would be interest in a consortial e-book program. All of the libraries had access to EBSCO's eBook Collection (formerly NetLibrary) titles that were part of the original Maryland Digital Libraries Collection. However, beyond that, we had no consortium wide e-book collection or access. Each campus was purchasing their own titles or collections with little, if any, ability to offer consortial access to titles.

After attending an ACRL conference, our Library Director at UMBC expressed a desire to begin investigating the possibility of a shared e-book program in Maryland and specifically within USMAI. Because we did not have enough information to make any formal proposal to the other institutions in USMAI, the Librarians of the Albin O. Kuhn Library and Gallery began gathering information on consortial e-book programs, but again, not specifically information about DDA plans.

The Librarians at UMBC began by contacting other consortia to see what consortial e-book models existed. These included, but were not limited to: OhioLink, the Orbis Cascade Alliance, and the Florida Libraries. These consortia seemed to be the most active in consortial e-book investigations

and/or implementations. We were able to speak with colleagues within these organizations who were extremely helpful and generous in sharing as much information as possible. Initially, we approached this as if we might model it after what we understood the approach by the Florida Libraries to be. This was in the spring of 2011, and they (the Florida Libraries) were investigating at least different multi-institutional e-book plans but not necessarily DDA plans; OhioLink was working on several proposals; and the Alliance was working with one of the e-book vendors. Many of our questions were related to cost sharing, selected PDA candidates, and triggers.

Beginning in the spring and summer of 2011 at UMBC, we were investigating and moving ahead with our plans to invest more in e-book purchases and to provide access to more e-book collections. We eventually wanted to move forward with a local DDA pilot program or maybe more than one. This was similar to what was happening at other USMAI Libraries. They were also investing more in e-books and beginning local DDA programs.

By the winter of 2012, UMBC had one DDA pilot project underway and was working to set up our second program. As we talked with vendors, including EBL, for this second pilot project, we began including more and more about consortium wide DDA programs. Locally, our conversations and reading had centered on the idea that we needed to know what multiplier we would be required to pay for our DDA e-books. Based on what we understood, we had an idea of what that multiplier might be but soon learned it was likely to be much higher. Because one of the strengths of our consortium is a very strong commitment to share materials among the institutions, there was no need to collect multiple copies of materials, so we were open to other options.

Eventually, UMBC selected EBL as the vendor for our second DDA pilot project. Then two things happened in March 2012 that moved our consortium wide DDA investigation along: 1) David Swords, who is with EBL, mentioned he was visiting libraries in the area and offered to speak to USMAI Librarians about a consortial DDA

program and 2) the Council of Library Directors (CLD), the group of all USMAI Library Directors, was planning its annual retreat, and the Director from UMBC would be leading the discussion about a consortium wide e-book DDA program. When he came to talk with Librarians from USMAI, we assumed that David would share how we might model a consortial DDA program on what Orbis Cascade was doing. However, he indicated that he knew a good deal about what Orbis was doing, but that EBL was also working with other consortia, and of those, at least one was trying an approach that was unlike the Orbis Cascade model.

## Two Novel Approaches

When David visited, he shared ideas about moving away from the multiplier approach. EBL has worked with other consortia, and we were willing to take a few chances to explore other options.

### *Model A*

- Each library is treated separately and is responsible for purchases. This allows libraries to buy what they need and no multiplier paid for books their users will not use.
- There is no sharing of titles among the members of the consortium.
- A benefit is that the first library to purchase a title buys at list price, but subsequent copies are bought at a discount (i.e., first copy at list, second at 25% discount, third at a 35% discount).

### *Model B*

- Libraries set the auto-purchase price where they want (i.e., after the third STL or fourth STL, etc.).
- Purchases are at list price, second copy is at list price.
- Owned books are loaned for 7 days or longer.
- For each title, the consortium has 14 one-week loans per year on owned books and access for all libraries in the consortium.

- Only when the 14 loans are expended in a year, the next use automatically triggers the purchase of a second copy at list price.

As part of the CLD retreat, our director was able to share information about these new approaches. The CLD group approved moving forward and was supportive of investigating establishing a USMAI DDA pilot program.

Beginning June 2012, the USMAI E-books working group/task group began with pre-work and planning for our first meeting. While not every school was able to send someone, we had a good representation of the variety of libraries that are members of USMAI, and the group was interested in moving fairly quickly. After additional discussion with EBL, we were ready to ask for a contract to review. One of the terms that the consortium wanted was that after the purchase of a second copy, we wanted the third through nth copies to be purchased with a discount. In the end, this was not possible, and instead of holding up the pilot, David suggested we move forward and gather data to see if we purchased many copies beyond the second copy, and that could be used to negotiate a discount with the publishers.

#### *USMAI Proposed Model*

- Would be based on the Model B that David shared with us when he visited.
- We would have a single fund that would be managed by the USMAI Central Services.
- We would have one profile for the consortium.
- Libraries could opt out after the initial pilot.
- Usage statistics are very important to the members of the consortia, and those would be available to use through the administrative module.

#### **Where We Are Now**

After meeting with David the USMAI E-books Group was officially formed and had our first

implementation meeting in July 2012. While not every school was able to send someone, we had a good representation of the variety of libraries that are members of USMAI and the group was interested in moving fairly quickly. After some additional discussion with EBL, we were ready to ask for a contract to review. One of the terms that the consortium had wanted was that after the purchase of a second copy, we wanted the third through nth copies to be purchased with a discount. In the end, this was not possible and instead of holding up the pilot, David suggested we move forward and gather data to see if we purchased many copies beyond the second copy and that could be used to negotiate a discount with the publishers.

We are moving into the set-up phase with EBL which will include among other things, creating our profile and getting MARC records for those who want them. For the profile, the USMAI E-books group agreed that we would have one profile for the consortium. We have not begun those conversations so it will be interesting to see how they go. Regarding cataloging records and access, our libraries have diverse needs and there is no consortium wide mandate that access must be provided via the catalog. The consortium is currently in a unique position in that we have 3 different options for discovery tools that are being used at various campuses. We also have different methods of providing access to the titles, some libraries want the records in our Aleph catalog and others only want to make them available via their discovery tool knowledge base and only provide a cataloging record once a purchase is made. Additionally, several of the librarians in USMAI are already looking ahead and discussing how we will gather statistics and how we will use that information to evaluate the consortial DDA project.

We are very excited not just for the consortium but there are other conversations within Maryland among different groups so hopefully, this might lay the group work for those groups to invest in DDA programs or e-book sharing programs.

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