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TRLN Oxford University Press Consortial E-Books Pilot

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TRLN Oxford University Press Consortial E-Books Pilot

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Abstract

This pilot attempts to create a financially sustainable model for consortial acquisition e-books coupled with needed print copies, while moving the Triangle Research Libraries Network (TRLN) and partner publishers to a decidedly electronic environment for books that will enhance support for instruction and research across the disciplinary spectrum. Working with their shared book vendor (YBP Library Services), TRLN libraries and Oxford University Press (OUP) hope to evolve a vending model for e-books that other consortia and their partner publishers would find useful.

Context and Philosophy

- TRLN has a long history of cooperative collection development policies going back several decades that distribute subject and language responsibilities among member libraries to minimize overlap and maximize breadth of coverage.

- TRLN sees this project within the larger mosaic of a hierarchical e-books strategy that begins by spending the time and effort to develop deep partnerships with major content providers.

- Full gestation actually goes back a few years earlier when OUP and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) University Library began conversations on what libraries needed publishers to do for them to move from print to e-books for university press monographs and what would constitute a mutually acceptable cost model.

- The first step was sharing information that publishers and libraries rarely do on library purchasing by having UNC's global English-language books vendor (YBP Library Services) provide this data:

  o OUP remarked that it had never had access to this information; and

  o UNC Library acquisitions staff noted that releasing this financial data had never been done.

- UNC and OUP kept the conversation going and developed a trust relationship, leading to OUP being invited to participate in the TRLN Beyond Print seminar in 2011.

- This gathering, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, provided the general background to develop new business models and licensing terms for the cooperative acquisition of e-books.

Strategy and Matrix

- UNC has developed and TRLN has followed a comprehensive e-books strategy, because e-books are often available from more than one source and librarians need to be aware of which options generally would result in greater value and utility to the library and its patrons.

- The strategy looks at various indications of value, which go beyond price to analyze such issues as default to unlimited simultaneous uses, level of discoverability, DRM restrictions, conditions of use (including downloading, saving, and e-mailing), technical aspects of the platform, and e-archiving arrangements.

- The strategy begins with recommended "publisher aggregators" and individual publishers specifically listed as the optimal e-book platform options—and OUP is at the top—with general commercial aggregators as the least desirable option.

- In identifying consortial publisher partners, TRLN considers the level of overlap in acquisitions, both within the consortium and on individual campuses, relying on purchasing data from their common global English-language book vendor (in this case YBP Library Services).

- While the large-scale acquisitions overlap identified in the link to the Power Point slides below made OUP the top candidate for a consortial e-books pilot, on the other hand, TRLN recently rejected considering a consortial Demand Driven Acquisitions (DDA) pilot precisely because of low overlap in collective acquisitions.

Guiding Principles

Overarching goals:

- Move TRLN libraries and partner publishers to a decidedly electronic environment for books that will improve support for instruction and research;

- Work with innovative and flexible publishers to expand library collections cooperation from print to e-books within a win-win context;

- Create financially sustainable model(s) for both publishers selling and libraries acquiring e-books consortially, integrated with needed shared print acquisitions in the humanities and social sciences so that faculty and students will accept the shift to e-books;

- Partner publishers are not out to increase sales and revenues, while TRLN is not out to reduce global monographic expenditures with partner publishers;

- Create vending model(s) that can be applied to other TRLN consortial e-books acquisitions and that partner publishers would find useful in applying to other consortia;

- Devise new assessment methodologies and corresponding metrics that measure what constitutes cooperative success for these resources from both library and publisher perspectives;

  o Nota bene, although the ethos of TRLN cooperative collection development continues to be replicating same breadth and depth of collections across the consortium, how it does so and the concomitant metrics for assessing success with regard to e-resources may be inverted from that for tangible media;

    ▪ Within the universe of tangible media, TRLN measures success in terms of maximizing the number of unique titles within the consortium through minimizing duplication, with the latter being part and parcel of how each library frees up collections dollars to achieve the former; and TRLN operationalizes this model through expedited interlibrary borrowing among its members;

    ▪ Within the world of e-resources, this same result would be achieved and assessed by how well TRLN leverages available financial resources to make sure each institution offers its users these same digital products in terms of immediate and un-mediated access; while even if permitted interlibrary borrowing of e-books within TRLN would be too slow and costly in terms of staff to be the desideratum, and, in any case, such options undermine the fundamental advantages of instant patron access inherent in the nature of e-resources.

Core shared objectives:

- Change the mix of book formats TRLN libraries collectively acquire and partner publishers sell to reflect an overall shift to e-books;

- Increase the scope of partner publishers' e-books available to patrons on each campus, with each TRLN institution individually and separately owning each electronic title in perpetuity;

- Minimize partner publishers' print book sales to TRLN and TRLN print acquisitions absolutely, including reducing their duplication on each campus and within the consortium;

- Move to shared ownership of needed corresponding print copies within TRLN at a discounted price because the libraries already own and have paid for the e-book;

- Guarantee partner publishers will not experience a net loss of revenue from changes in the numbers and kinds of books are sold to TRLN collectively;

- Reassure partner publishers financially by formally committing TRLN to spend a fixed aggregate sum annually on their combined print and e-books acquisitions for the duration of the contract, with TRLN responsible for internally apportioning the collective costs among its members;

- As an added benefit to patrons TRLN will request that partner publishers allow for alumni access at no additional cost while guaranteeing to restrict access to this population as it does with other categories of authorized users who must be authenticated to access the libraries' e-resources;

- Extend TRLN collections cooperation beyond the resources themselves to realize efficiencies in technical processing through use of publisher-supplied MARC records and metadata as well as vendor-supplied bibliographical and (for print copies) shelf-ready physical processing services, resulting in reduced global TRLN staff costs and saved shelving space because of shared print copies and reduced print acquisitions overall;

- Understand how to incorporate book vendors such as YBP Library Services as critical and necessary links between partner publishers and consortial libraries in this publishing universe that includes both electronic and print:

  o YBP defines the universe of relevant partner publishers' monographic output in terms of its book profiling capabilities, including those titles not available as e-books so as to ensure complete monographic output coverage and keep unintended duplication to a minimum;

  o YBP provides the best indication to library customers of what is owned and in what format (including numbers of simultaneous users for e-books and specific platforms on which titles are available) as well as what is not owned (especially those titles not in packages) that need to be acquired separately via its GOBI database;

  o YBP works with partner publishers and TRLN libraries to coordinate acquisition of print and e-books within the consortium and manage corresponding invoicing between TRLN and partner publishers;

  o YBP is responsible for shipping appropriate print copies to TRLN libraries and managing their discount pricing;

  o YBP serves as the trusted, neutral, third party in providing title and financial data on partner publishers' sales to TRLN and TRLN expenditures on partner publishers' print and e-books;

  o YBP manages the invoicing for both the partner publishers and TRLN, including any financial reconciliations stipulated in the contract;

  o YBP provides TRLN libraries with relevant technical services processing and manages their collective billing via TRLN, with TRLN responsible for internally apportioning the collective costs among its members.

Evaluation and Future

Although TRLN and OUP intend for this project to continue, given its scale and complexity, they will work together to conduct a comprehensive evaluation in spring 2013.

Among the elements to be assessed are:
- Is this pilot financially sustainable?

- Can it be expanded to include other UPSO publishers and, if so, at what price?

- Is the pilot meeting users' needs?

- Is one shared print copy sufficient for the humanities and social sciences?

- Can the subjects requiring print copies be reduced, especially once the UPSO platform is able to release e-books simultaneously with print or at least on a monthly basis?

- What is the level of e-book usage both globally and at the subject-specific level?

- What can OUP do to make the process faster and more efficient?

- How can YBP improve/enhance information of the print and e-books being consortially acquired, particularly in terms of moving to full and real-time integration?

- How is the shared cataloging and access working, including the acceptability of publisher and vendor MARC records?

- How can library internal processes be improved to make them more efficient and the books available sooner?

PowerPoint Slides Highlighting Key Aspects

https://www.dropbox.com/s/jzlgjueiyoc32wx/OUP-TRLN.pdf