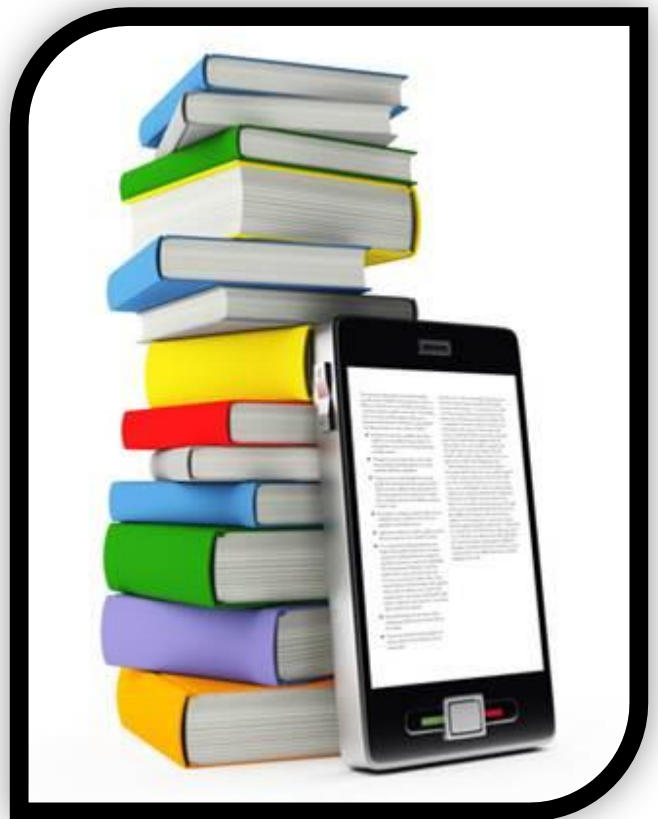# E-Book Program Development Study: Quarterly Report
September 1 – November 30, 2013

Melissa Goertzen, E-Book Program Development Librarian
Columbia University Libraries
August 31, 2013
mjg2227@columbia.edu

Executive Summary

The E-Book Program Development Study is an ambitious assessment project aimed at gathering essential data to drive the development of policies related to e-book development programs. It aligns with CUL's mission to support the development and delivery of high-quality services that facilitate research, teaching, and learning across campus and within the wider scholarly community. The results will provide a set of recommendations and policies for internal and external stakeholders as they collaborate on the development and implementation of e-book projects and programs.

The objective of the second quarter was to establish the research design and methodology for the study. Also, decisions were made regarding what types of data provide evidence for how the e-book collection is discovered, accessed and used. After discussions with Assessment Librarian Nisa Bakkalbasi, data sets will be collected through 1) statistical analysis, 2) focus groups, 3) end-to-end tests and 4) surveys. In November 2013, the first round of financial and usage statistics were collected from Serial Solutions and vendor websites.

At the same time, documentation of the e-book landscape at CUL continued. Much of this work involved meeting with members of the Selectors' Group and reviewing Collection Development policies. A review of the external landscape also got underway. This involved discussions with members of consortia (i.e., MaRLI, 2CUL, TRLN and VIVA), librarians at peer and local institutions (i.e., Cornell, NYU, CUNY and Barnard College), and e-book providers (i.e., Random House, Wiley, Harvard Business Review, Elsevier, YBP, ProQuest and EBL). A priority was also placed on disseminating first quarter results to the professional community in order to solicit feedback.

In summary, the results of the second quarter provide an assessment framework that informs all data collection and analysis activities. Together, the selected research methods will create a body of quantitative and qualitative data that documents the e-book landscape at CUL and serves as a baseline for future evaluation. The data will also suggest what e-book services the Libraries' can reasonably provide to stakeholders, and target areas where CUL can provide leadership in the academic community through advocacy.

The reality that the e-book landscape is currently unstable was also factored into decisions regarding the assessment framework. The research design was created so that it can be replicated regardless of how e-books evolve in the coming years. Because the design is flexible and adaptive in nature, it promotes continued assessment, evaluation, and strategic planning as a regular component of e-book programs.

Contents

Introduction

The E-Book Program Development Study is an ambitious assessment project aimed at gathering essential data to drive the development of policies related to e-book development programs. It aligns with Columbia University Libraries' (CUL) mission to support the development and delivery of high-quality services that facilitate research, teaching, and learning across campus and within the wider scholarly community. The results will provide a set of recommendations and policies for stakeholders as they collaborate on the development and implementation of e-book programs.

Summary of the First Quarter

The objective of the first quarter was to review the e-book landscape at CUL and understand how needs and challenges across campus fit into the larger context of e-book management and collection development within the academic community. To accomplish this objective, the following five tasks were completed:

1. Reviewed the CUL/IS Strategic Plan 2010-2013;
2. Researched and wrote a literature review to examine e-book trends within the academic community and publishing industry;
3. Conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis of CUL;
4. Conducted informational interviews with the University Librarian, Associate University Librarians, and Library Directors at CUL to discuss e-book challenges and needs.

The results indicated that e-book challenges and needs across campus are similar to those within the academic community as a whole. For instance, there is a need for standardized strategies, policies, and workflows in the areas of selection, acquisition, discovery, access, and preservation. There is also a strong interest in collaborative collection development and how e-books can best be acquired, maintained, and preserved through consortiums. Finally, there is discussion regarding up-and-coming methods of e-book creation and dissemination, including self-publishing and open access, and how these trends will impact e-book collection development and management practices within the academic community.

In summary, the results of the first quarter provide a structure and context for the E-Book Program Development Study. They suggest how the study can support productivity at CUL in terms of strengthening communication between departments, raising levels of discovery, and increasing accessibility for the user community. They also point to opportunities for leadership within the professional community by identifying ways to strengthen partnerships between academic institutions, vendors, and publishers. Finally, they provide opportunities for innovation by identifying up-and-coming trends in e-book creation and dissemination that may impact current e-book workflows within the academic community.

Second Quarter: Objectives

In the research process, "data stands in place of the reality we wish to study. We cannot simply know a phenomenon, but we can attempt to capture it as data which represents the reality we have experienced, observed…and are trying to explain" (Matthews & Ross, 2010, p. 43). The objective of the second quarter was to determine what types of data provide evidence for how the e-book collection is discovered, accessed and used. This work also involved establishing a research design that will inform strategies and recommendations about e-book collection development at CUL.

At the same time, documentation of the e-book landscape at CUL continued. Much of this work involved meeting with members of the Selectors' Group and reviewing Collection Development policies. In tandem with these activities, a review of the external landscape began. This involved discussions with members of consortia (i.e., MaRLI, 2CUL, TRLN and VIVA), librarians at peer and local institutions (i.e., Cornell, NYU, CUNY and Barnard College), and e-book providers (i.e., Random House, Wiley, Harvard Business Review, Elsevier, YBP, ProQuest and EBL). A priority was also placed on disseminating first quarter results to the professional community in order to solicit feedback.

To accomplish these objectives, the following 5 tasks were completed:

1. Research Design and Methodology
    a. Developed the study objective and research questions that will guide all assessment activities;
    b. Met with the Assessment Librarian, Nisa Bakkalbasi, throughout the quarter to discuss assessment protocol at CUL;
    c. Developed research tools that will be used to harvest data;
    d. Completed an online training course in human subject research as required by the Columbia University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

2. Data Collection (Statistics and Case Studies)
    a. Collected the first round of financial and usage statistics from Serial Solutions;
    b. Worked with Jonas Timson, a professional intern from Waseda University, to develop a case study of the e-book landscape in Japan and how it compares to trends in North America.

3. Internal review of the e-book landscape at CUL
    a. Reviewed Collection Development policies;
    b. Reviewed workflows and documentation compiled by CERM;
    c. Met with thirty members of the Selectors' Group to discuss e-book challenges;
    d. Met with Principal Serials Cataloger, Robert Rendall, to discuss Serial Solutions e-book metadata.

4. External review of the e-book landscape in the academic community and publishing industry
    a. Discussed the e-book landscape with vendors from YBP, ProQuest, and EBL;

    b. Spoke with nine members of MaRLI, 2CUL, TRLN, and VIVA to discuss and document challenges surrounding e-book consortia;

    c. Met with six librarians at Cornell, NYU, CUNY, and Barnard College to discuss e-book initiatives and policies;

    d. Discussed e-book challenges facing the publishing industry with editors from Random House, Wiley, Harvard Business Review, and Elsevier;

    e. Examined assessments of DDA pilot projects completed at academic libraries in North America, the United Kingdom, and Australia;

    f. Attended 5 conferences (i.e., Digital Book World, Ithaka Conference, Library 2.013 Worldwide Virtual Conference, Charleston Conference, and ACRL/NY Symposium) to connect with professionals and learn about e-book initiatives taking place in the academic community.

5. Dissemination of first quarter results
    a. Presented findings at Management Committee and Selectors' Group meetings;
    b. Created an internal e-book site available through the CUL Wiki;
    c. Presented an hour lecture at the Library 2.013 Worldwide Virtual Conference in October 2013;
    d. Presented a poster at the Charleston Conference in November 2013;
    e. Created a study website to disseminate research findings to internal and external stakeholders and engage e-book professionals in discussions about the e-book landscape (www.academicebookstudy.com). The site was launched at the Charleston Conference in November 2013. In the six weeks following the conference, the site was viewed 400 times.

E-Book Program Development Librarian Work Plan	Jun-13	Jul-13	Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15
Literature Search	█																							
Initial Overview (Depts)	█																							
Review Strategic Plan	█	█																						
Data Gathering	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█				
Quarterly Reviews			█		█		█		█		█		█		█		█							
Internal Review				█	█	█																		
Collection Development Policy Review				█	█	█	█	█	█															
Iterative Process for E-Book Package Offers					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█		
Collaborative Collection Development					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█		
External Review					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█				
Discoverability (In CLIO, MARC Record quality, etc.)				█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█										
Review Order Workflow				█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█									
Material that cannot be purchased by libraries				█	█	█	█	█	█	█														
Analyze Subscription vs. Purchase					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█										
Evaluate PDA/DDA					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█										
Functionality					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█		
Focus Groups					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█										
Usability Studies					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█										
User Experience					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█										
Archive/Preservation					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█										
Standards Review				█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█										
Publisher Review					█	█	█																	
Annual Review																		█						
Setting Policy																				█	█	█	█	█
Summary and Recommendations																				█	█	█		
Wrap up																							█	█

Table 1. E-Book Program Development Work Plan

Second Quarter: Results

Below is the assessment plan outline for the E-Book Program Development Study. It was built around the following four principles outlined in the CUL/IS Strategic Plan 2010 – 2013:

1. User-focused design;
2. Data-driven decision making;
3. Continuous assessment of results;
4. Flexible and adaptive response to user needs.
   (CUL/IS Strategic Plan 2010-2013, p. 8)

Research Objective and Questions

The objective of this study is to document and assess the e-book landscape at Columbia University Libraries a) internally, b) within the context of the academic community and c) within the context of the e-book publishing industry. The data collected will be used to develop recommendations that support the Libraries' effort at acquiring e-books and making them available to patrons. The objective will be achieved by examining existing Collection Development policies and procedures, observing how the e-book collection is used by stakeholders, and determining whether usage aligns with current collection goals.

The following five research questions guide the assessment:

1. **How is the e-book collection defined and described at Columbia University Libraries?**
   a. Which items fall under e-book Collection Development policies at CUL?
   b. How many items are in the e-book collection?
   c. What e-book packages does CUL purchase/subscribe to?
   d. What materials in the e-book collection cannot be purchased by libraries? (e.g. free e-books, born digital content, government documents, etc.)
      i. What criteria must free/born digital items meet in order to be acquired, discovered and accessed at CUL?

2. **What are the existing e-book policies, procedures and workflows at Columbia University Libraries?**
   a. What are the existing e-book collection development policies and procedures?
      i. What are the current e-book collection development goals?
      ii. How are funds allocated to build e-book collections?
      iii. How does information related to collection development, management, policies and/or procedures flow between stakeholders (including the Collection Development department)? Who is responsible for communicating/disseminating information to stakeholders?
   b. What policies and procedures are currently in place for selectors?
   c. What policies and procedures are currently in place for acquisitions?
      i. How are procedures different for frontlists and backlists?
   d. What policies and procedures are currently in place for the creation and distribution of MARC records?
      i. Who creates and/or supplies records for e-books at CUL?

        1. Do procedures differ for e-book packages, titles and born digital items?

      ii. What level of quality do we need to insist on?

   e. What policies and procedures are in place for long-term access/preservation?

   f. When/how are titles and/or packages weeded from the e-book collection?

   g. When/how are e-book policies and procedures evaluated? What is the evaluation procedure?

3. How are e-books discovered by patrons at Columbia University?

   a. How do patrons learn about e-book collections and services at Columbia? (e.g., CLIO, university writing programs, course reading lists, etc.)

   b. What are the top five e-book discovery tools? Where does CLIO rank in this list?

   c. What is needed for discovery?

4. How are e-books accessed and used by patrons at Columbia University?

   a. What are the top ten e-book packages in terms of use? Why?

      i. Where are CUL's e-book funds directed? Are resources directed towards titles and/or packages that are widely used? (Relates to question 2a).

   b. How do e-book usage rates compare across disciplines? Why?

   c. How do e-book usage rates compare between undergraduates, graduates, PhD candidates, and faculty? Why?

   d. Where do patrons access e-books? (e.g., library, home, public transportation)

   e. What are patrons' expectations regarding e-book access?

   f. What are patrons' expectations regarding e-book functionality?

   g. When do patrons use print books and/or e-books for research activities? Why?

   h. When do patrons use print books and/or e-books for teaching activities? Why?

   i. When do patrons use print books and/or e-books for learning activities? Why?

   j. Is there a correlation between print and e-book usage rates?

   k. When are e-books used as course reserves materials?

   l. When are e-books requested through ILL?

   m. What devices are used to access e-books? (e.g. library computer, personal laptop, e-reader, mobile device)

      i. How do e-books function on different devices?

5. What are the existing policies and workflows related to consortial e-book collection development?

   a. What e-book related consortia does CUL belong to?

      i. What is the business model/workflow for e-books purchased through consortia?

      ii. What are the advantages, disadvantages, and limitations of these partnerships?

   b. What are examples of other e-book consortia that exist within the academic community?

      i.   What are the business models/workflows?

      ii.   What are the advantages, disadvantages, and limitations of these partnerships?

      iii.   Are there policies or procedures that can be applied at CUL?

      iv.   Are there areas where CUL can provide leadership in terms of consortial e-book collection development?

6. **What e-book trends within the academic community and/or publishing industry could impact Columbia University Libraries' e-book collection development practices in the future?**

    a.   What non-academic e-book services are being implemented at peer institutions? (e.g., Overdrive at Cornell)

      i.   How could these services impact the user experience?

    b.   What trends impact scholarly communication?

      i.   Open access

      ii.   MOOCs

      iii.   Self-publishing

      iv.   Library as publisher

      v.   Makerspaces and digital scholarship

        1.   How could these trends impact the user experience?

    c.   What trends impact data collection/assessment methods?

      i.   Big data

Research Methods and Data Collection

Columbia University Libraries Assessment Program states, "strong assessment plans are characterized by multiple and mixed methods of assessment. They do not rely on a single assessment tool to gather the information we need" (Bakkalbasi, 2012).

In compliance with this recommendation and to ensure the reliability and validity of study results, four complimentary methods of data collection were selected.

1. Statistical analysis
2. Survey
3. Focus groups
4. End-to-End Test

Together, these methods will create a body of quantitative and qualitative data that documents the e-book landscape at CUL. Ultimately, the data provides evidence for services the Libraries' can reasonably provide to stakeholders, and targets areas where CUL can provide leadership in the academic community through advocacy. The data sets also create a baseline that can be used for future evaluation of e-book holdings, usage trends and collection development policies.

The reality that the e-book landscape is currently unstable was factored into decisions regarding the assessment framework. The research design was created so that it can be replicated regardless of how e-books evolve in the coming years. Because the design is flexible and

adaptive in nature, it promotes continued assessment, evaluation and strategic planning as a regular component of e-book collection development.

Additional Activities

In September 2013, I completed the online course *E-Books: What Librarians Need to Know Now and for the Future* offered through ALA. It ran over a four week period and in total, I completed 24 hours of training. The session provided an introduction to e-books and e-readers, publishing trends and various e-book business models. Through online course assignments and discussion boards, I discussed e-book challenges and strategies with librarians working across the United States.

In October 2013, I observed two University Writing Program (UWP) sessions run by Barbara Rockenbach and Anice Mills to learn more about the research and learning needs of undergraduate students. It was helpful to hear students' questions about electronic resources and observe comfort levels with CLIO/databases.

In November 2013, I met with ARL Fellow Jacquie Samples and learned about some of the e-book initiatives and assessments taking place at Duke University Libraries. It was interesting to learn more about consortial collection development through TRLN, especially because of overlaps with MaRLI's business model. I look forward to continued discussion with Jacquie about e-book services and programs.

Throughout the second quarter, I attended several ERUDWG meetings to discuss data collection and analysis strategies. At the end of the quarter, I became a member of the group and will serve a two year term that ends in May 2015.

In November 2013, I served as a reporter at the Charleston Conference and wrote four articles for *Against the Grain* (scheduled for publication in 2014). It was a great opportunity to connect with professionals from the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia who are working on e-book related pilots and assessment projects. By learning about their methodologies and analysis techniques, I picked up ideas about how to analyze data and present findings.

Conclusions

In summary, the results of the second quarter provide an assessment framework that will inform data collection and analysis activities throughout the duration of the study. The design ensures that recommendations and strategies based on study findings are user-focused and evidence-based. Also, it provides a baseline that can be used for future evaluation of collection holdings and policies. Finally, the design itself can be replicated regardless of how the e-book landscape evolves over the coming years. As such, it creates an environment that is flexible and adaptive in nature, and prioritizes assessment activities moving into the future.

Next Steps

1. Data collection and analysis: Financial, item, and usage statistics
2. Data collection and analysis: Faculty and student survey
3. Continue observation and documentation of e-book policies and workflows at CUL
4. Continue documenting e-book policies and workflows within the academic community and publishing industry
5. Disseminate results from the second quarter to solicit feedback from stakeholders
6. Submit conference proposal for the ARL Library Assessment Conference

References

Bakkalbasi, N. (2012, June 25). *Columbia University Libraries Assessment Program*. (Unpublished assessment guidelines). Columbia University, USA.

Columbia University Libraries and Information Services. (2010, January). *Strategic Plan, 2010 - 2013*. Retrieved from https://culis.columbia.edu/content/ dam/staffweb/admin/strategicplanning/ 2010-2013/CULIS_Strategic_Plan_2010- 20131.pdf

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. London: Pearson Education Limited.