

June 2006

## Pricing Models for Electronic Resources: What's on the Menu?

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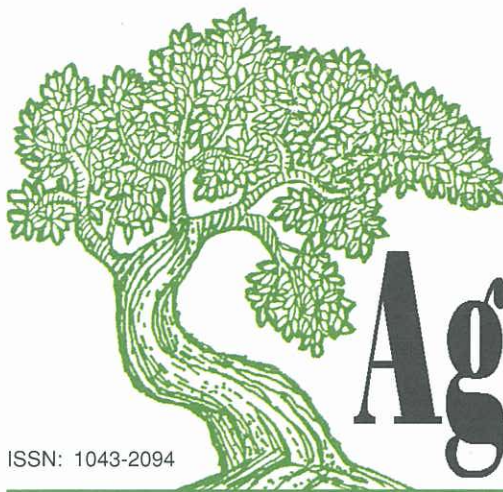
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### Recommended Citation

Bucknall, Tim and Bernhardt, Beth R. (2006) "Pricing Models for Electronic Resources: What's on the Menu?," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 18: Iss. 3, Article 5.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.4953>

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# Against the Grain

"Linking Publishers, Vendors and Librarians"

ISSN: 1043-2094

## Pricing Models for Electronic Resources: What's on the Menu?

by **Tim Bucknall** (Assistant Director and Head of Information Technology, and Electronic Resources, University Libraries, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, NC 27402; Phone: 336-256-1216; Fax: 336-334-5399) <bucknall@uncg.edu>



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Publishers and librarians alike feel inundated by the ever-increasing number of available pricing options for e-resources. This multiplicity can prove challenging to publishers and vendors who are trying to determine the best way to generate new income, maintain their current customer base, and launch new products. Meanwhile, many of their primary customers, librarians, are bemoaning the confusion and staffing issues related to understanding, negotiating, and managing so many different models. Yet this situation can't be bad for everyone in the long run. It takes two to tango, and if these agreements don't suit both publishers and libraries, they will soon cease to exist.

In many ways confusion and multiplicity equals opportunity. Sure, when I go to my favorite Chinese restaurant, it is hard to choose from among the literally hundreds of items on the menu. I may not be exactly sure of all the differences among all the options (waiter, can you tell me the difference between General Tso's Chicken and Szechuan Chicken?) and it may take me a while to decide what I want, but that doesn't mean I'd necessarily be better off at a different restaurant with a simpler menu and fewer choices.

In this issue of *ATG*, four experienced professionals help us make sense of today's lengthy menu of pricing options by examining them from

multiple perspectives. **Christine Fischer**, Head of Acquisitions at the **University of North Carolina at Greensboro**, guides us through the major choices, highlighting the most significant pricing models, bundling practices, and consortium issues.

**Rick Anderson**, Director of Resource Acquisition at the **University of Nevada-Reno**, views *continued on page 18*

## If Rumors Were Horses

Just back from a great workshop in Columbia, SC, called **Conquering the Tenure Terrors**. The workshop was organized by the vivacious **Karen Brown** <KWBrown@gwm.sc.edu> (USC) and Vice Chair of South Carolina Association's **College and University Section** and the equally lively **Kate Boyd** (Chair of the Section and Digital Collections Librarian, USC). The keynote speech was by the astute **Dr. Patricia Senn Brevik** (Vice President, Nehemiah Communications, USC) <patricka@nehemiah.sc>. There were many great friends there including **Joyce Durant** (Francis Marion University), **Bill Sudduth** (USC), **Jens Holley** (Clemson), **Mary Smalls** (South Carolina State), **Jane Tuten** (USC-Aiken), and many, many others.

Speaking of **Pat Brevik** (above), turns out she is a long-time friend of **Becky Lenzini** <rlenzini@earthlink.net> and **Ward Shaw** from back during **CARL/UnCover** days. Remember those? It was just at the beginning of unbundling of the article

from the journal. I even remember **Becky** and **Ward** struggling to think of a name for the company. How the years fly by!



Sad news about the death of the kind, gentle, and hard-working **Vicky Speck**. **Vicky** was a long-time member of the **Charleston Conference Planning Group** and worked for many years on the **Charleston Conference Proceedings** with **Rosann Bazirjian**. We will miss her. May she rest in peace.

**Vicky** was such a quiet, reserved person that many of us didn't know her very well. But **Rosann Bazirjian** <rvbazirj@uncg.edu>, who worked with **Vicky** for many years to publish the **Charleston Conference Proceedings**, took the time to remember **Vicky** in this issue, p.12.

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1043-2094(200606)18:3:1-L

the rapid proliferation of pricing models with skepticism. After all, how many different models do we really, really need? But **Rick** also asserts that simpler is not necessarily better. Libraries need to take a more holistic approach when evaluating the value of staff time involved in handling so many different types of deals. It may cost us a bit more to figure out a wide variety of models, but if the result is big savings, then we may be getting much more out of the deals than we put into them.

As Library Relations Manager for **Duke University Press**, **Kimberly Steinle** gives a vendor's perspective. Her in-depth analysis of pricing for their **Scholarly Collection** yields insight into the kinds of decisions that publishers must face as they develop a model that will keep their business going while keeping their customers happy. **Kimberly** also describes what happens when a pricing model fails to be viable, and how a publisher makes a transition to an alternative model.

Finally, **Scott Rice**, Networked Information Services Librarian at the **University of North Carolina at Greensboro**, surveys the pricing terrain in the rapidly growing arena of eBooks. **Scott** delineates three major models and describes an innovative approach, and analyzes the importance of **Digital Rights Management (DRM)** in pricing models and license agreements.

Although these four authors have different backgrounds and perspectives, their articles share a common thread — there are numerous pricing models, and libraries and publishers alike must devote resources to understanding their complex options. Like it or not, we are all dining at a restaurant with lots and lots of items of the menu. It's going to take time and energy to make decisions, but that time is well invested. If libraries and publishers don't spend the requisite time to understand the menu, they might end up with an unpleasant surprise on their plate! 🌱

## against the grain people profile

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### Tim Bucknall

**BORN & LIVED:** Grew up in Austin, Texas. Moved to North Carolina in 1987.

**EARLY LIFE:** The **Austin Public Library** was four blocks from my house. I became very adept at walking (and crossing streets!) while reading a book.

**FAMILY:** My beautiful wife, **Nancy**. My highly intelligent but disorganized 11-year-old, **Kevin**. My determined and self-confident 7-year-old, **Carolyn**. And my mercurial and rambunctious 5-year-old, **Michael**.

**EDUCATION:** B.A. in Liberal Arts from the Plan II Honors Program, **University of Texas** at Austin. MLS and M.A. in Art History from the **University of North Carolina** at Chapel Hill.

**FIRST JOB:** Running soccer and basketball leagues at the Austin YMCA.

**PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES:** Worked several years in Reference and now run a combined Systems/Electronic Resources unit. Member of the Librarians Council for **NC LIVE**, and founder and convener of the **Carolina Consortium**. One of the inventors of **Journal Finder**, the first OpenURL link resolver and knowledge base to go into production in the U.S.

**IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO:** Cook, garden, and build furniture.

**FAVORITE BOOKS:** **Robin Hobb's Farseer** and *Live Ship* series. **O'Brian's Aubrey-Maturin** series. **Frazier's Cold Mountain**. **Feist's Riftwar** series.

**PET PEEVES/WHAT MAKES ME MAD:** "But that's the way we've always done it!"

**PHILOSOPHY:** Give the users what they want.

**MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT:** Building **Journal Finder** and the **Carolina Consortium** in such a way that the greatest benefits go to the schools most in need — community colleges, **HBCU's**, and other historically underfunded institutions.

**GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW:** Successfully adapt to the enormous changes coming to libraries as demand for many of our traditional services erodes, and pressure for new services increases.

**HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS:** Libraries will play a smaller role in access to journal literature as Open Access, repositories, preprint services, and pay-per-view continue to grow.

We will still be key players in integrating these services (unless **Google Scholar** moves aggressively into that area), but there will be a significant reduction in the "library as journal subscriber" model. 🌱

## Electronic Resources Pricing: A Variety of Models

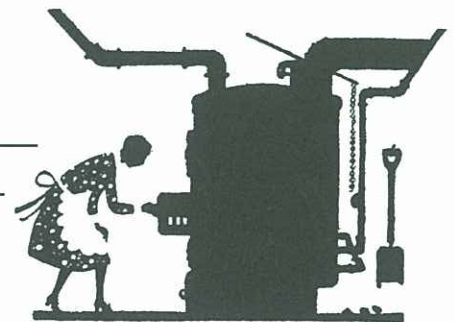
by **Christine Fischer** (UNC Greensboro) <christine\_fischer@uncg.edu>

Building and maintaining library collections is increasingly complex. Determining pricing for physical resources actually housed in the bricks and mortar facility is relatively simple. In contrast, libraries must select electronic resources that range from databases to online journals to eBooks, and these information tools are purchased using pricing models that tax every library with their variability. Are we to be charged by use, individual title, or package? Is

our institution quoted a charge based upon enrollment as a whole or the number affiliated with the program for a specialized resource? The possibilities seem to be growing as libraries, publishers, subscription vendors, aggregators, and others continue to respond to the changing information resource and access environment.

### Cheaper by the Dozen?

Journal titles can be selected individually.



With a thorough knowledge of the library's user community, this option seems reasonable. Focus can be given to the particular disciplines or subject interests that engage patrons. With us

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