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Adding PDA for Print? Consider Your Options for Implementation

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Abstract

Drake University decided to expand our electronic patron-driven acquisition (PDA) program to include print. The reasons were low usage of approval books, librarian uncertainty about which slips to purchase, a desire to make more efficient usage of acquisition funds, and our desire to determine if PDA was a workable acquisitions model for print materials.

This paper will discuss the factors the Library considered in selecting a vendor, including the ability to integrate the two formats without duplication, technical considerations, and real-time stock availability to enable rush delivery.

Additionally, the paper will discuss librarian and teaching faculty roles in developing PDA profiles and profile considerations (e.g., selection of format, delay in electronic publication, and costs).

Drake selected the vendor Ingram's Coutts to implement the pilot. This paper will discuss and compare Drake's approach to print PDA with other customer, and share details of the choices libraries have when establishing a print PDA plan (determining which titles should be included in the PDA, mediated versus direct to vendor ordering, collecting information about the requesting patron, stock check and rush delivery, etc.). These comparisons will show how the choices made by Drake in setting up the plan and integrating it into the catalog make this print PDA a great example of best practices for others to follow.

Finally, this paper will discuss the metrics for determining the success of the project and future considerations, including refining existing profiles, expanding subject areas, budget impact, and developing a weeding method for records in the catalog.

Vendor Introduction

When librarians consider adding patron-driven acquisition (PDA) for print materials to their workflow, there are several reasons they might have in mind and several questions they should ask before moving forward. It is important to think about not only why, but also how this option will work in any library.

A quick clarification: Print PDA is very similar to PDA for e-books, which is a rather common practice in libraries today. The idea behind any PDA is that the library only purchases titles when they are needed by patrons. With an e-book PDA, the library loads MARC records into the catalog, and a link within the record takes the patron directly to the e-book. It is a seamless process, and the patron has no idea that the library does not yet own the title. With a print PDA, the library loads a MARC

record for an unpurchased print book into the catalog. This is not such a seamless experience for the user, however, because the book will need to be ordered and arrive at the library before it can be made available to the patron.

First, what reasons might make sense for implementing a print PDA? Is the goal to save money? This seems like an obvious answer, but think about e-PDA programs: as PDA becomes more popular and more and more records are added to the catalog, perhaps PDA is really a way to spend money more efficiently because only requested books are purchased. Is the goal to spend less time selecting new materials? A print PDA might save library selectors from having to weed through many slip notifications for new titles. Many librarians have difficulty choosing between slips for similar materials and might like the idea of placing all of the relevant titles into the

catalog to allow the patrons to discover their perfect title.

Another issue to consider is which titles will move into PDA. Will the library try a pilot with a few key subject areas? How will those subjects be chosen? Does it make sense to move titles that would have come as slip notifications into PDA or to move titles that would have come as automatic approvals into PDA?

Because print PDA does not offer the "instant gratification" associated with an e-book PDA, what does that mean for delivery of requested titles? How long will it take for the books to arrive from the vendor, and how long is "too long?" This answer could vary greatly. If a book is in stock at the vendor's warehouse, it can be delivered quickly, usually within a few business days. But if the title is not in stock and has to be ordered, will the patron be willing to wait? How can librarians set reasonable expectations with patrons? If possible, implement a real-time stock check with the vendor. This will allow the patron to see immediately if the title can be sent via rush delivery.

What will this look like in the OPAC? This depends largely on the ILS system and the IT resources available at the library. Vendors provide the basic framework for setting up the Print PDA, but the library's IT staff will customize the patron-facing view from the catalog. A simple message saying the title is not currently a part of the library collection, but can be ordered, is common. Using the real-time stock check, it is possible to show the patron a specific turnaround expectation. A form to collect information about the requesting patron may also be created by the library's IT group, but is there a way to encourage patrons who arrive at the request form to complete and submit the form? Will patrons misunderstand and think they are causing the library to spend money unnecessarily, or will they willingly submit the request?

Once the form is submitted, what happens next? Should the library mediate the request and route it to the acquisitions staff to ratify it and place an order? Or does an unmediated setup make more sense—to immediately send the form information directly to the vendor so the order is placed as quickly as possible?

For Drake University, these questions and scenarios were all part of the puzzle for implementing a pilot for print PDA

Drake University Background

Cowles Library at Drake University has had a successful e-book PDA program in place—using Ebook Library (EBL)—since fall 2009. Drake University is a small private academic school with 4,623 FTE. Drake currently has about 400,000 print books, 2,378 PDA print books, 19,000 subscribed to or owned electronic books, and about 173,000 PDA e-books via EBL.

The reasons we decided to expand PDA into print were much the same as for the EBL program: providing greater depth and breadth of titles available for patrons and more effective utilization of the monograph budget. The addition of print added some additional compelling dimensions. Many monograph titles are either not available in an electronic format at all or are not available for a long period of time. Some titles, though available, are exorbitantly expensive in electronic format. We determined that these were compelling reasons not to exclude the print format from PDA.

Project Implementation

The pilot commenced in April 2012 with a soft rollout. We decided on a pilot project with our four professional programs as subject areas: Business, Journalism, Education, and Pharmacy. The pilot ran through August 2013.

Budgeting

The four program areas agreed to divert their library monograph allocation to fund the pilot; rather than submit monograph (print or electronic) orders for "just-in-case" purchasing, they would instead let users and faculty in their areas find and purchase materials at the point of need.

Vendor Selection

We were looking to avoid duplication between the formats, and we decided early on that we preferred a vendor that could provide an

integrated print and electronic book profile. In 2011, we began evaluating a handful of vendors for the integrated PDA pilot, and while most vendors offer both electronic and print formats, we ultimately decided on Ingram's Coutts because of their ability to integrate PDA formats the way we desired. The final deciding factor was Ingram's ability to meet the technical objectives we had outlined for the request process.

Building Profiles with Faculty Involvement

We have exceptionally engaged liaisons from the programs we decided to pilot and had already garnered their agreement to work with us on developing profiles for this project.

Our profiling sessions included representatives from Ingram, the Collection Development Coordinator, the Acquisitions Manager, the librarian assigned to the department as liaison, and the faculty liaison. Our initial strategy was to use the "slip" plan profile that we had in place with another vendor as the starting point for our PDA profiles. However, we ended up rewriting the profiles for these four areas. Teaching faculty were present to ensure that the profiles would match, as closely as possible, the curriculum taught in their respective areas. Library faculty were present to shepherd the process and to make sure there were no glaring gaps in content or publishers.

We wrote the profile much like a traditional approval profile, keeping in mind that it was for both print and electronic and that the end result would be catalog records for discovery by patrons, not actual book orders or slips sent to librarians for review. When we created the profile, we did indicate "book" and "slip" just like we would for a traditional approval profile. We had Ingram do a back run so that we could see what records would have been generated based upon our profile.

In addition to the usual "nonsubject-parameter" decisions, we had to make decisions about the print and e-book parts of the profile. Specifically, do we prefer print or e-book? As mentioned above, we did not want duplicate formats in the catalog. Librarians strongly preferred e-book over print, but this was not initially shared by the

faculty liaisons. Eventually, after some persuasion from the librarians to the teaching faculty and from the teaching faculty to their colleagues, it was agreed by each discipline to go with electronic over print when available. The major factors that were useful for the faculty in persuading their colleagues were immediate availability of the material versus having to request the library to order it, convenience, and ease of access for students taking distance courses.

The next decision involved the wait period for an e-book before the print record was supplied, given the fact that most publishers do not simultaneously publish both print and electronic versions of their material. We decided to wait 2–3 months, after which time if an e-book version is not available, we will load a print record. Additionally, we decided upon a price differential between electronic and print. That is, if the electronic version is more than 130% higher than the print, we will load the print record instead of electronic.

Technical Objectives

We had two technical objectives we hoped to accomplish with the pilot. First, we wanted to make the request process as convenient for the patron as possible. One convenience is the ability to view book availability information before filling out the request form, and the Ingram stock-check API allowed us to provide that. Another convenience is the option to rush books when needed; we realized that if the service could make PDA books available to patrons in a few days rather than a few weeks, it would be an attractive option.

Second, we wanted to provide our Acquisitions Department with the necessary information about both the book (e.g., fund code) and the requester (e.g., university status) without requiring extra work of either the patron or the Acquisitions Associate. We accomplished this by customizing the URL in the field 856 in MARC records and creating the necessary fields in the request form. For example, the fund code is provided by Ingram as a parameter of the URL (see the "Customization and APIs" for an example), so when the user clicks

on the URL to arrive at the request form, the fund code is stored in the form as a hidden field value. Upon form submission, the fund code is then included with the rest of the field values that are e-mailed to Acquisitions.

Pieces of the Puzzle

The components of our online environment that make print PDA requests possible include:

- Separate location codes for both e- and print PDA in the integrated library system (Drake uses the SirsiDynix Symphony ILS). While this is not absolutely necessary, we highly recommend it as separate codes allow for easier identification and maintenance of these records as discrete sets.
- Custom catalog links. We employ Symphony's "revD" online catalog environment.
- Custom web form. Our web site is built in WordPress, and we use the Formidable plugin to generate forms and collect form submissions.
- PHP and JavaScript to interact with stock check and request APIs.

Customization and APIs

We arranged with Ingram to customize the MARC call number and 856 fields, and the profile that loads the records into the ILS automatically assigns the item type, location, and permanence. As a result, we do not need to manipulate the

MARC records after receiving them from Ingram; we can simply load them into the ILS.

Figure 1 demonstrates how these customizations are reflected in the online catalog.

- We replace the Library of Congress call number with "On Demand" to avoid confusion with physical items on the shelf (and we have not yet been asked where the "On Demand" section of the library is!).
- The catalog's built-in conditional logic uses the location code to replace the standard "one copy available" message with "This book is available On Demand" and a link to an FAQ entry on how print PDA requesting works. Again, we wanted to differentiate PDA availability from regular print book availability.
- Finally, the custom 856 field creates a "Request this Book" link, which leads patrons to a form on the library's web site.

Because we added the form's page to our proxy configuration, and the URL includes our proxy prefix, off-campus users are required to authenticate with their University credentials before they can fill out the form. Here is what one of the custom URLs looks like:

```
http://cowles-proxy.drake.edu/login?url=
http://library.drake.edu/request-
book/?isbn=1936959135&title=Teaching%20s
cience%20through%20trade%20books&fund=
EDUC
```

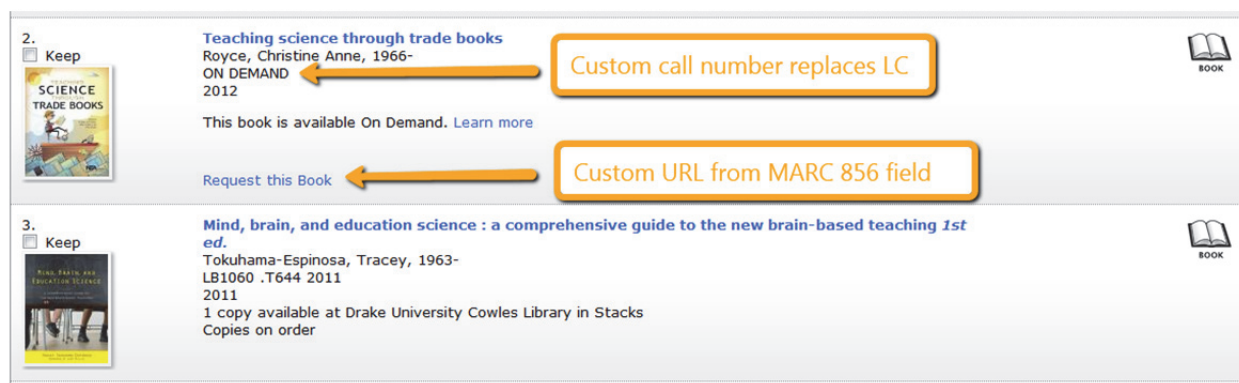


Figure 1. Display of a Regular Print Book (Top) and a PDA Print Book (Bottom) in the Online Catalog

The form, modeled after one used by The University of Vermont Libraries, accomplishes three things:

1. Upon arriving at the form page, an API call is sent to Ingram to check availability of the title (based on the ISBN that is passed to the form as a URL parameter). If the API response indicates availability within a certain threshold, a "Rush delivery is available" message is displayed (Figure 2).
2. We can collect additional information about the requester, such as university status, how soon they need the book, and any additional comments.
3. Finally, the form submission collects the patron's e-mail address, their rush/no rush preference, and ISBN and uses these to create the API request to Ingram.

Request Workflow

After the patron submits a request, our workflow looks like this:

1. Acquisitions receives an immediate e-mail notification of the WordPress form

submission; the e-mail includes the actual form response.

2. The patron receives an immediate confirmation e-mail generated by the WordPress form.
3. Acquisitions receives a request confirmation e-mail from Ingram. Because we use a mediated model, our Acquisitions Associate must first ratify the request to generate a purchase.
4. When the order has been shipped, Ingram sends the patron an e-mail (optional).
5. Our Acquisitions Associate receives all Ingram shipments directly. She gives them priority and matches them to Ingram request confirmations.
6. When the book is received, our cataloger removes the 856 field and changes the location code and call number to reflect a regular print book.
7. After the book has been processed, Acquisitions sends an e-mail to patron that it is available for pickup.

Request This Book

Teaching science through trade books

Drake University does not own this book. By completing and submitting this form you are requesting that Cowles Library purchase this book for our collection. Regular orders may take up to two weeks to arrive. If you need this book immediately, please make that choice below.

Note: This service is only available to users with a current Drake affiliation (Drake students, faculty and staff).

First Name *

Last Name *

Phone *

Please include the area code (e.g., 515-271-9999)

Your Drake Email Address *

Please use your Drake email account here.

Drake status *

Choose one *

I need this book immediately!

I need this book in about a week or so.

I'm not in a hurry, but please notify me when the book is available.

Comments

Rush delivery is available for this book.

Message changes based on stock check API response.

Figure 2. Request Form Displaying the "Rush Delivery Is Available" Message

Subject area/Format	# of titles	Ave. \$	Total \$
Business Print	13	30.31	392.78
Business Electronic	5	\$56.76	\$283.78
Education Print	7	\$31.59	\$183.99
Education Electronic	14	\$30.67	\$429.42
Journalism Print	2	\$35.87	\$71.74
Journalism Electronic	2	\$65.90	\$131.80
Pharmacy Print	1	\$42.65	\$42.65
Pharmacy Electronic	6	\$83.63	\$501.78
TOTALS	50	\$41.59	\$2,037.94

Table 1. Activity Generated by PDA records

Subject area/Format	# of titles	Ave. \$	Total \$
Business	11	\$30.21	\$332.31
Education	37	\$31.59	\$1,168.83
Journalism	8	\$35.87	\$286.96
Pharmacy	21	\$42.65	\$938.30
TOTALS	78	\$34.85	\$2,683.75

Table 2. Form Visits that Did Not Request a Purchase

Project Metrics, Summary, and Next Steps

Metrics

We ended up loading 1,031 e-book records and 2,378 print book records. The total number of records added was 3,409.

Drake patrons ended up purchasing only 50 titles during the Pilot. 23 print titles and 27 electronic titles were purchased. We found these numbers to be much lower than anticipated.

In addition to the items that were purchased on PDA, there were 78 form visits that did not generate a purchase. This bears further investigation on our part to determine why the patron opted out at the last minute. It is worth noting, however, that even if these titles had all been purchased we would still have been well under the projected budget for the project.

Summary

Project Successes:

1. Library and teaching faculty chose the parameters for PDA inclusion; librarians still have major role in Collection Development;
2. A wider variety of books were made available to patrons at point of need;
3. We did not exclude print monographs from PDA; and
4. We did not spend money on unused materials, thus, we recognized more effective utilization of acquisitions dollars.

Project Missteps:

1. There were not enough PDA titles loaded into the catalog for patrons to discover. We overengineered the profiling process.

Next Steps, or Where Do We Go From Here?

These are the areas that we are in the process of addressing:

1. Expanding pilot profiles to generate more records;
2. Including all subject areas in the PDA program using existing "slip" profiles with another vendor as a starting place; and
3. Developing weeding procedures for the PDA bibliographic records in the catalog.

Future Considerations

These are the areas where we anticipate further discussion and decisions will need to be made in the future:

1. EBL records: We have a large number of EBL records loaded into our catalog and we will need to figure out a process for managing these in conjunction with Ingram. Hopefully, in early 2014 we will be able to filter the EBL records through the Ingram profiles.
2. A broader issue deals with the monograph budget and the allocation of funds. What is the proper mix of "just-in-time" and "just-in-case" purchasing of monographs? At this point, we anticipate continuing a hybrid model. We believe strongly in the purchase of core materials and do not anticipate abdicating the role of our librarians in this process.