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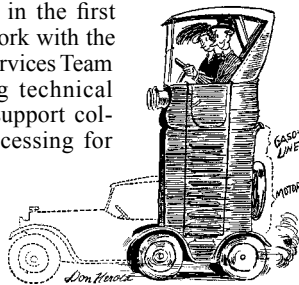
Pilot to Program: Demand-Driven E-books at the Orbis-Cascade Consortium, 1 Year Later

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Editor's Note: This is a follow-up to McElroy & Hinken's "Pioneering Partnerships: Building a Demand-Driven Consortium eBook Collection," published in the June 2011 issue of ATG. Readers are advised to consult that piece for information pertaining to the formative stages of the pilot. — JM

In July of 2011, the **Orbis-Cascade Alliance** (henceforth the **Alliance**) launched its pilot project for demand-driven acquisition of e-books at the consortium level, the culmination of nearly two years of planning. The **Alliance** is comprised of 37 member institutions; 36 in Washington/Oregon, with the **University of Idaho** joining post-launch. At the end of 2009, the **Alliance's** Council of deans and directors created an e-book team and charged that body with the following:

- Leverage the existing relationship with **YBP** to create an entirely new e-book consortial purchasing model that allows consortium-wide access to titles purchased by individual member libraries.
- Focus on developing and implementing the new model and on addressing access, collection development, financial, and technical issues outlined in the first e-book team's report... Work with the Collaborative Technical Services Team charged with developing technical services operations that support collaborative cataloging/processing for e-book collections.
- Develop a funding model to support the program in an equitable manner.



- Develop a model that prioritizes selection in a way that benefits the most members possible.
- Evaluate the project to determine ongoing viability
- It is broadly understood that **Alliance**-wide access to e-books purchased through this program will require full participation, including financial support, by all **Alliance** libraries. We expect that the membership's shared commitment to collaborative strengthening of the **Alliance** collection will enable the Team to craft a program all members can support.

As the last point states, it was decided from the outset that if the program was to be successful, it would not be an opt-out model and would require mandatory contributions from all (then) 36 **Alliance** libraries. This mirrors past and ongoing efforts of the **Alliance's** Collection Development and Management Committee (CDMC), the pilot's umbrella organization, which has focused on cooperative collection building, particularly maximizing existing resources and avoiding unnecessary duplication. Indeed, data collected for several recent CDMC initiatives informed our early decisions; first and foremost, it helped us establish the multiplier, to be discussed shortly.

Funding Model

The funding model for the pilot was done on a tiered FTE scale not unlike that used to calculate our consortial electronic resources. Rather than being a sustainable model for the long-term, it was a

comfortable system with which all in the **Alliance** had some familiarity, and the new team assembled to oversee the pilot, the Demand-Driven Acquisitions Pilot Implementation Team (DDAPIT), felt it would allow us to move forward without getting bogged down in debates on alternative formulas. In the end, all 36 institutions pooled a total of \$231,000 in what was slotted to be a six-month pilot. Libraries submitted their payments into a centralized **Alliance** fund, with all short-term loans and multiplied purchases generated by demand-driven usage charged against this account. This allowed for easy centralized tracking of data by the DDAPIT and alleviated the need for localized bookkeeping practices within the various acquisitions units.

Building the Profile

For the initial retrospective record load of 1,700 titles, and for the ongoing updates of new releases, the team constructed a profile whose broad subject content reflected the diversity of the consortium members. In the end, very few LC ranges were excluded, with content ranging from Basic through Professional, and encompassing 2011 imprints. Caps were put on cost, but the team decided not to dedupe for any e-books purchased by individual member libraries, under the reasoning that they could not be shared and therefore undermined cooperative collection development. **EBL** did rough calculations on how much our pool of funds would last, which is where we arrived at the 1,700 number for the back load. Admittedly, these were educated data-driven guesses stemming from situations quite different from our own, since this had never been attempted before. The team developed several contingency plans, should things move too quickly.

Partnerships and the Multiplier

With the funding and profile finalized, several challenges confronted us immediately. Chief among these was engaging in ongoing conversations with publishers and requesting their participation. Our close working relationship with **EBL** and **YBP** was vital to success in this area, and both worked very hard to build a pool of publishers for the pilot that could meet the diverse and demanding needs of the **Alliance** membership, which runs the gamut from community colleges to **ARLs**. That being said, it proved challenging; after all, part of the impetus of the pilot was a general dissatisfaction with the high-priced "big deal" e-book packages being offered by some of the very publishers with which we were initiating discussions. Although many publishers were participating in DDA acquisitions at the local level, the consortial model was an entirely different (and untested) affair. Furthermore, the high

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centage of votes, and all gained over 2008 as sources of trust for students with respect to resource evaluation.

Nearly half of the students indicated a preference for using e-resources over print with another 30% sometimes preferring them and only 20% preferring print. There was a 3% shift toward print from the 2008 survey.

Reported favorable e-book characteristics and features like ease of use and citing gained about 7 percentage points relative to print books over 2008 for the top six characteristics of each. E-books gained 1%, and print books lost 6%.

Anytime access, search, off-campus access and the ability to download to a workstation

again were the features that collected the highest percentage of votes. Download to a handheld device, email text, and zoom and scale made the largest gains in desirability — up 16%, 15%, and 10% respectively.

Preferences for improving e-books remained about the same with the top three being more titles, less restriction of printing and copying, and more current titles.

The library Website (65%), catalog (56%), and **Google** (50%) are still the primary means of access for e-books. The largest changes were to the library Website, which dropped 9%, and **Google Scholar** (33%), which increased 8%.

Over 90% still view instruction as very or somewhat important. The preferred methods of instruction continue to be online tutorials, in-person instruction, and online help pages. 🐼

multiplier being suggested by some publishers showed that they held inflated expectations of the consortium's holdings for publications on their title lists. This was clear from analyzing the data gathered for our 2011 Threshold Pilot, which aimed to minimize consortial duplication by setting a maximum number of print copies for titles obtained through **YBP**. Data culled and analyzed for this project, with the help of **YBP**, showed that for 2009 there were, on average, no more than four print copies of any given title purchased within the consortium (note that this did not include purchases from other vendors, since the **Alliance** had already moved to **YBP** as our primary book vendor in 2008.) The team used this as a basis for its multiplier, increasing this slightly to five, in part to compensate for the above caveat. Thus, having recent and reliable data on duplication conveyed the reality of the **Alliance's** collecting patterns and helped immeasurably when negotiating what we considered to be a fair and equitable multiplier. More broadly speaking, it took publishers' trust in our collective abilities, and a certain degree of faith, that this new model would operate and succeed at the consortium level. In the end, the DDAPIT was excited about the pool of participants moving forward to the launch; these included: **ABC-CLIO**, **Ashgate**, **BRILL**, **Cambridge UP**, **Earthscan**, **Hodder Education**, **John Wiley & Sons**, **Oxford UP**, **Pharmaceutical Press**, **Sage**, **Taylor & Francis**, and **The Policy Press**. The **Alliance** is indebted to our vendor partners on the DDAPIT team who worked on these and other efforts, including **Robin Champieux**, **Sadie Williams**, and **Alison Bobal** from **EBL**, and **Joan Thompson**, **Barbara Kaweck**, and **John Elliott** from **YBP**.

Short-Term Loan Threshold

Another difficult and imprecise task was deciding upon the short-term loan threshold. For those unfamiliar with this process, when a user exceeds a five-minute browsing period while accessing an **EBL** e-book online, they are asked if they would like to initiate a loan (also occurs for copying, printing, or downloading any portion). At that point, a short-term loan (STL) is generated and charged to your account, which is a small percentage of the book's retail price. Once "X" number of STLs is reached, the title is purchased for permanent access. The DDAPIT already knew from the Council's initial charge that ownership was important, and prior e-book teams had operated under that assumption during the vendor review process. But there was a second important factor to balance this against, namely, the rate of spending and the assurance that funds would last long enough for a) all contributing members to get some amount of usage, and b) for the team to gather data spanning both peak and slow periods of the school year; this had been the rationale for running the pilot from July to December. Ultimately, the team decided to go with an STL threshold of ten, with the understanding that adjustments might be necessary once concrete patterns of patron usage emerge.

Discovery and Loading

As team chair **Emily McElroy** and member **Susan Hinken** mentioned in their June 2011 piece, the DDAPIT and portions of the Collaborative Technical Services Team (CTST) worked closely during the past year. As launch approached, discovery options and record-loading replaced profile building and publisher involvement as the central concern of both teams. The DDAPIT quickly realized that we had sorely underestimated the time it would take to sort through the myriad of technical issues that would arise, and the CTST's expertise in this area was instrumental in moving forward. **Alliance** members had three ways to achieve discovery, each based on existing practices: WorldCat Local, typically in conjunction with **OCLC's** knowledgebase; MARC records for **Innovative's** Millennium; or using Summit, our consortial catalog via the Navigator platform. In consultation with all areas of the library, particularly reference and public services folks, each institution selected one and reported this back to the DDAPIT, which then determined the type of record-loading workflow needed. These workflows and their implications for user discovery were covered extensively in the training materials by CTST members.

The Training, Evaluation, and Exit Strategy Teams

Three subteams were developed to handle areas identified as essential to the pilot, and all proved crucial at various points throughout the year. The Training Team would oversee the coordination of local and regional onsite training sessions, in addition to webinars and distributable materials. The Evaluation Team would identify measures of assessment and organize the collected data in such a way as to be easily consumable by the rest of the consortium. Finally, the Exit Strategy Team discussed possibilities of slowing spending if necessary, including the temporary suppression of some content, and how to execute this in a non-disruptive and centralized manner. For Training, two main sessions were held, one in Portland, the second in Seattle, and an online webinar tried to accommodate those who could not attend. YouTube desktop recordings were made for various sections, such as record loading and using **EBL's** LibCentral to examine statistics. All were posted on a DDA dedicated **Alliance** website, along with an extensive FAQ. The Evaluation Team worked out calculations for all institutions ROI and offered them additional techniques for self-assessment if they chose to do so. Ultimately, the Exit Strategy Team, which was intended more as an emergency brake, became a more complex mechanism for tweaking STLs and purchases at key points of the fiscal year.

Changes Midstream: Lowering of STL Threshold and Extension

As Fall hit, it became clear to the team that the STL threshold of ten was too conservative for the amount of records included. A mass of STLs was moving forward, but most of these would not trigger by the pilot's December deadline, and we would therefore fail to meet

the Council's charge of acquiring, not just accessing, content. After debate, it was decided to incorporate e-book titles from 2009 and 2010 that also fit our existing profile. We would also lower the STL threshold to five, or having 5x copies purchased as the "sixth STL." Perhaps more importantly, in its November report to Council the team recommended that the pilot be extended to July 1, 2012, with the stipulation that additional funds may be required to close the gap between fiscal years. We emphasized that these funds would not exceed the amounts of the original contributions at the pilot's launch. As a byproduct of the extension, we would also have the opportunity to analyze usage patterns for an entire calendar year. Council agreed on both recommendations, and funds were generated to match the initial pool.

Usage

From the outset, it was important for the team to communicate usage updates to all, so title-level reports were created by **EBL** using LibCentral and distributed by the team to **Alliance** member contacts. For the final report to Council in spring, the Evaluation Team completed its usage analysis thus far and wrote the following: "Across the **Alliance**, a diverse clientele is discovering and using a broad range of immediately accessible scholarly content. Every participating library has seen a positive return on investment, in many cases quite substantial. Through sharing of expertise, **Alliance** libraries representing the spectrum of experience with e-books have successfully collaborated to overcome considerable technical challenges." Particularly high users were the community colleges, which the team tentatively interpreted as the unleashing of years of pent-up demand after continued and sustained cuts to materials budgets. The distribution otherwise showed predictable peaks at certain times of the year, with a slow start in the summer and spikes at the end of semesters, and to a lesser extent quarters.

New Funding Model for 2012-2013

With several months of data to analyze, it was clear that a new funding model would be needed as we moved forward with our recommendation to Council. While sufficient for the pilot, all agreed that member contributions needed to be increased considerably if we intended to expand, particularly since the limited publisher pool had been a common complaint throughout the year. The DDAPIT discussed the advantages and disadvantages of various formulas. Any model slanted towards usage would hit community colleges disproportionately, while materials budget and FTE models placed financial strains on the two **ARLs**, **UW** and **UO**. Abandoning a usage component completely in the spirit of shared collection building, the team agreed to recommend in its report to Council a budget distributed as follows: 30% Equal Split, 35% FTE, 35% Materials Budget. This was accompanied with two funding-level recommendations: one which would maintain the status quo (\$515,150), and a second which would allow for expansion (\$975,150). We submitted our final report to Council for review in advance of its March meeting.

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Demand-Driven Acquisitions at UC Merced

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As the **University of California, Merced** enters its seventh year, the student body continues to grow rapidly (now 5,200, an increase of 15% over last year). This growth has occurred in spite of the serious recession affecting California. While the recession has resulted in more than one billion dollars in cuts to state support of the **University of California** system, the Legislature and the UC Office of the President have continued to support the growth of **UC Merced**. The chief constraint on future growth is the delay in the construction of necessary academic buildings caused by the recession.

Library collections and operations budgets have remained relatively flat. While this is good news in comparison to libraries that have experienced significant cuts, library budgets have not kept pace with the increases in students and faculty. The collections budget has been impacted by the necessity to provide expensive electronic resources in support of the specialized research interests of newly-hired faculty. The response to this situation will likely be a continued reduction in the purchase of print monographs.

The library collection continues to be approximately 90% electronic, and electronic resources comprise over 80% of the total information resources budget. There are effectively no print serials; patrons have access to over 70,000 subscription and free online journals. While the library houses just over 100,000 books and DVDs, it provides access to over 700,000 e-monographs, including government documents, reference works, and e-books. Library patrons have access to the 37 million volumes **University of California** collection through the libraries internal borrowing system called Request.

The library first began to acquire e-books through a subscription to **ebrary Academic Complete**. The intent is to retain this subscription because it provides access to a large number of titles at a very low cost per use. Usage statistics continue to demonstrate that this resource is heavily used. The library also participates in systemwide licenses for **Springer** and **Wiley** e-books. The **Springer** agreement covers 2005-2011 publication dates and may be extended through 2012; the **Wiley** agreement includes 2011 titles only. **Springer** usage continues to be significant; chapter downloads continue to equal approximately 80% of total annual print circulation. While the library continues to employ these means of acquiring e-books, patron selection plans remain the exclusive method of title-by-title acquisition of e-books.

Why patron selection? The answer lies in the “long tail” phenomenon — some titles are accessed large numbers of times, while others are not accessed at all. A study published in *Library Resources & Technical Services* in 2010 showed that an average of 35.5% of print books purchased on approval by two large **ARL** libraries did not circulate within 21 to 33 months of receipt. Both libraries spent a combined \$381,723 on books that did not circulate during the study period. For the **Springer** e-books purchased by the **UC** system, 19% were not accessed even once in 2010, 73% were accessed at least once, and 8% were accessed more than 100 times. These are simply two examples of the unsustainability of “just-in-case” purchasing of library materials.

The **UC Merced Library** has patron selection e-book plans with **EBL** and **Coutts/MyiLibrary**. The plans are structured differently. The entire **EBL** catalogue is visible to **UC Merced** patrons; this includes titles that would not ordinarily be acquired by an academic library, e.g., travel guides, popular psychology books, etc. A title is purchased on the fourth access after three short-term loans. The **Coutts/MyiLibrary** plan is limited by publisher to research-level STEM titles; there are no short-term loans, so a title is purchased on the second access.

Over several years, the library has averaged 154 transactions per month with **EBL**. A transaction is either a short-term loan or a purchase; it does not include free browsing. During the same period the library has averaged four purchases per month and nine transactions per month involving non-academic content. The latter is significant in that it appears to demonstrate that opening the entire **EBL** catalogue has not resulted in significant costs for non-academic content. As currently configured, the **EBL** plan is functioning as a very cost-effective supplement to traditional ILL rather than as a mechanism to purchase significant numbers of titles. The average short-

term loan costs \$15.00, and the average purchase \$85.30. Short-term loans for the non-academic content average \$3.00.

An average of six titles per month is purchased through the **Coutts/MyiLibrary** plan with the average purchase price being \$121.50. This is understandable given the focus of the plan on relatively expensive STEM titles.

Overall, both plans have helped to produce a balanced e-book collection, have resulted in predictable expenditures in spite of the significant increase in the size of the student body, and have provided good value. There is no evidence that patron selection has produced an e-book collection inferior in quality to what would have been selected by librarians. There is also no evidence that any individual purchaser has had an inordinate influence on the shape of the collection. Even exposing large amounts of non-academic content has not skewed the collection.

Expenditures for **EBL** have averaged \$2,640 per month during the past two years with little variation. It is to be expected that expenditures will trend higher with increases in the number of students, but there have not been wild swings that would impact the information resources budget.

Average costs were given above. The costs for **EBL** short-term loans in particular represent significant savings over the costs of traditional print ILL. Most important, all the costs were incurred in providing titles that were actually used. During the past two years, 4% of the available **EBL** titles have been browsed. If the library had purchased an additional 2% of the available titles, that would have been an expenditure of over \$250,000 for un-accessed titles. In the context of cost avoidance and “just-in-time” acquisition, PDA continues to represent good value for the **UC Merced Library**.

At the end of Spring semester 2011 the library ended its program to loan laptops to students. While popular with students, this program proved to be financially unsustainable and also unnecessary as almost all **UC Merced** students have personal computers. An important priority is to make as many information resources as possible available through mobile devices. The library still does not maintain a reference desk staffed by librarians; reference services are provided through a triage model with librarians available as necessary. Online reference is provided through participation in **OCLC** Question Point. Food and drink continue to be allowed throughout the building. This has not resulted in damage to the collection or the building.

Many important developments continue to occur at the systemwide level as the **UC Libraries**

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Pilot to Program

The DDAPIT is excited to announce that Council has unanimously agreed to move forward with the DDA E-book Program for FY2013, at a funding level of \$750,000 to be distributed according to the team’s recommended 30-35-35 formula. More importantly, it has reaffirmed its strong commitment to a shared e-book collection for the **Orbis-Cascade Alliance** and declared its intent to increase funding for FY2014 to \$1,000,000. A reconstituted e-book team has been created to administer the program moving forward, as there are still many technical challenges that need to be addressed in the coming year. 🍌