

# ALTERNATIVE ACQUISITION ROUTES

E-publishing has increased the ways libraries can add to their collections, and it has had particularly marked impacts on interlibrary loan, the decades-old method of mitigation of gaps in holdings.

Two other e-based means of collection development—establishment of institutional repositories and creation of other kinds of digital content by libraries—also will be discussed in this chapter. The last two topics will be covered only briefly, since each requires far more comprehensive treatment than is within the scope of this report.

## Interlibrary borrowing

Electronic publishing is affecting interlibrary loan and document delivery operations at different sizes and types of institutions in different and seemingly contradictory ways. Certain trends seem to be emerging but, as with most phenomena related to electronic distribution of information, the situation remains fluid.

Statistics and anecdotal evidence point to a dynamically changing interlibrary loan environment. Many factors influence the situation, including:

- Availability of sophisticated online search and discovery tools with broad coverage and deeper back files
- Still imperfect local library e-information management systems
- E-publications marketing strategies that have changed the way libraries acquire material
- Technical developments
- Budget pressures
- Copyright developments and electronic resource license restrictions

Effects of these factors are explored below.

## When users find something they need online, they want it fast

With the online search tools now at their disposal, users can easily identify more things they think they need, including, for example, older articles, overseas publications, and hard-to-find items such as unpublished reports, conference proceedings, and ephemera—what librarians categorize as gray literature.

Easy identification of this kind of material by research library users, where the demand for it is greatest, has likely contributed to the steady increase in interlibrary loan activity at Association of Research Libraries (ARL) institutions. Web-based processing also has helped increase volume since cutting and pasting citations into online request forms is such a simple process.

ARL borrowing has been rising at an average rate of 7% per year from 1986 to 2002, for a total gain of 200%. Lending rates have been going up 4% per year, yielding an overall increase of 80%.

Probably every library of any size now provides access to an aggregated general periodical database offering convenient access to full text of many articles. But not everything indexed is available at the click of a mouse. For example, recent articles in embargoed titles, or texts or images where rights have been withheld, may be missing.

Indexing may extend further back in time than text files covered by the database or the journal publisher may be unwilling to license content to the aggregator. OpenURL link resolvers implemented by many libraries allow users to easily request these candidates for interlibrary loan.

Patrons were never happy waiting weeks for loans. Now even a few days' delay is problematic, since Web searching has accustomed them to instant gratification.

### We have it but they can't find it

Borrowing departments have always had to address requests for items actually owned by the library, especially in large institutions with complex catalog records. Evidence is mounting that users are having an increasingly hard time finding out whether the library owns what they are looking for and in what format.

Sometimes interlibrary loan librarians find that clients persist in requesting a loan even after being told they can find the article they want in a source held by the library. With the bewildering of array of electronic resources on offer, some users find searching for the desired item just too confusing and difficult.

In making the argument that more online subscriptions may not be helping users, one university librarian sums up the situation as follows:

[Users] "only know that if they find a citation, sometimes there is a button to click for full text and sometimes there is not. If the button isn't there, they are increasingly unclear about their options.

"Because the problem lies at the intersection of several systems—the catalog, the serials list, the digital resources list, the linking program, the indexes, the...portal—it will not be solved soon."<sup>1</sup>

### E-journal packages, cancellations, and ILL

Although the new ease in locating more esoteric materials tends to increase interlibrary loan volume, widespread availability of aggregated journal databases and bundled journal packages works in the opposite direction.

Many libraries have access to far more journals than they ever believed possible through state and even national-level Big Deals. According to an ARL survey in 2002, 24 of 31 respondents indicated they had subscribed to a bundle of Elsevier journals.<sup>2</sup>

Because of widespread availability of online journals, major noncommercial article suppliers have seen their business decline sharply. Volume reached a peak

for the British Library Document Supply service in 1998-1999 and has since declined about 10% per year, as has business at the Canadian and French services, CISTI and INIST.

Few librarians, however, believe bundled journal packages can be supported over the long term. In 2003, another ARL study found 22 of 57 libraries were either planning to or considering canceling a bundled package coming up for renewal in 2004. In addition, the rush to e-only journal collections seems likely to generate at least some number of requests for print articles.

Libraries have always relied on borrowing and expedited document delivery to cushion the blow of journal cancellations. What is new in relation to the electronic environment is the effect e-journal package purchases have had on user expectations.

When libraries subscribing to packages give up access to titles after deciding, for philosophical or financial reasons, that they want to select what they buy, they naturally promise users rapid access through document delivery.

The University of Wisconsin illustrates a variation on this theme. Having stood on principle and never subscribed to the Big Deal, they need to placate users who do not have the ready access to information available to their academic competitors at peer institutions. Keeping services close to user need in a decentralized system, Wisconsin currently maintains six interlibrary loan operations.

### Convergence of interlibrary loan and acquisition

Access as opposed to ownership has become a far more entrenched strategy than when it was first introduced in the 1980s as a way of addressing escalating print serial prices. The idea then was that libraries should subscribe to a core set of journals and rely on interlibrary loan or document delivery to supply less critical materials.

Generally speaking, the core of journal titles many libraries can subscribe to and the number of monographs that can be purchased are decreasing. Both logic and anecdotal evidence suggest that smaller libraries are turning increasingly to a shrinking pool of large libraries to satisfy user demands.

Some of the very biggest libraries with the richest collections have never lent materials and have charged high fees for copies. The increasing concentration of broadly based collections in a dwindling number of premier institutions will inevitably strain their ability to respond and may lead to denials of service or higher charges.

At least some libraries are allowing ILL requests to drive acquisition. Experiments have been carried out at several places, including Purdue University, University of Wisconsin, and McGill University.

In the books-on-demand scenario, if the patron places a request for a book that meets criteria set up in advance, instead of processing it through the normal borrowing procedures (except for ownership checking), an order for the volume is placed with a rapid delivery purchase agent such as Amazon.com.

The preset parameters vary depending on the finances and organization of the libraries. They normally include a maximum price, recent date of publication, and exclusion of foreign imprints. In some cases purchases are made automatically; in others, they must be preapproved by selectors.

The benefits generally reported include:

- Buying rather than borrowing the book is cost-effective.
- Patrons receive books in time to be useful and, for the most part, rate them as worthy additions to the collection.
- Books circulate at least once and usually somewhat more than books purchased in the normal way. Experimenters point out that many books purchased in the just-in-case mode never circulate.
- Patrons do not abuse the service by ordering an excessive number of titles.
- Bibliographers agree that a high percentage belong in the collection and will be useful over the long term.

Researchers at Wisconsin and Purdue report low success in obtaining science titles, but the trial at the science and engineering library at McGill demonstrated a high rate of acquisition for desired titles.

The Purdue study confirms that today's researcher rarely reads only in the primary field of interest. Requestors from particular departments often request books that are outside the collecting responsibility of the selectors for that department. Constituents from both English literature and foreign language, for example, request a high number of books in sociology.

The data samples in all of these studies and the timeframes are as yet too limited to draw broad conclusions. Nevertheless, the results tend to suggest users are good selectors. (For more information, see this report's bibliography.)

Since tight budgets limit purchasing, selectors want to maximize the use of scarce resources. Automated ILL management systems make possible the collection of detailed statistics on borrowing that can inform purchasing. Journals with the highest number of borrowed articles can be identified. Selectors increasingly want data on monographs as well.

### Trends in copyright/licensing restrictions

The move from a purchasing to a licensing business model in the digital era has had a significant effect on libraries' ability to share resources. E-journal licenses address the sharing of content in many ways.

Sending the electronic form of articles as interlibrary loans is not normally permitted, and some publishers prohibit any form of interlibrary loan based on the electronic format. Vendors that have liberalized terms related to resource sharing generally now allow libraries to make print copies from the e-version either to mail or fax, or to scan print and make digital copies available through controlled, Web-based, desktop delivery.

Licenses also may place restrictions on those who may receive copies. Loans to commercial entities or foreign countries may not be authorized uses. Prohibitions on lending to corporations are a problem for institutions mandated to support statewide resource sharing as a basis for economic development and, in turn, as a justification for state support. Barriers to international interlibrary lending will increasingly impact the ability to serve patron needs, given the globalization of information.

Developments in the international copyright arena do not bode well for resource sharing. The 2001 European Union Directive on Copyright in the Information Society has already begun to affect exchange of information

with European Union (E.U.) countries, and some fear that the directive also may have negative repercussions within the United States.

The directive grew from a desire to harmonize the laws of the E.U. member states and to fit them to the realities of the world of networked information. The broadcasting, film, and music industry lobbied hard for the European Parliament to take strong action to combat media piracy, and the final directive strengthened the position of rights holders, targeting in particular infringements by commercial entities.

Member countries were given 18 months to pass legislation based on the directive. States have proceeded at different rates and as of June 2004 eight of the original member states—Belgium, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom (for Gibraltar)—had not yet met their obligation.

The approach taken in the United Kingdom (for itself) has been representative of the general response in other countries. In compliance with the directive, copying for commercial purposes has been removed from exceptions to copyright allowed to libraries and under fair dealing.

The situation in France is more drastic, since the draft legislation also removes exceptions for educational purposes, which would mean higher costs for items obtainable only through a French library.

Red flags for supporters of fair use also were raised by the publisher rights enforcement action against Subito, the German document supplier.

Since the E.U. directive has not mandated a common ground for fair dealing, interlibrary loan librarians will have to cope with differing practices in different countries. The likelihood is that borrowing and lending to Western Europe will be more complicated and more expensive.

Given the dynamic and interrelated nature of international intellectual property law, some experts worry about further assaults on fair use in the United States as a result of E.U. activities. Some fear that laws prohibiting copying for commercial use without a clear specification of what that means might well cause problems for libraries and other nonprofit organizations. According to one specialist, "Should the U.K. copyright regulations become part of U.S. law, the increasingly weakened Fair Use Doctrine may be unable to survive."<sup>3</sup>

## Technology and ILL

Loan librarians have improved efficiency in many ways through the use of technology in recent years. Owing to license restrictions, however, they have not been able to reap the benefits of fully electronic request processing.

Publishers are even more convinced now than in the days of print that interlibrary loan robs them of subscription income. They are increasingly restive about fair use, especially the number of articles specified by the Conference on Fair Use (CONFU) that can be supplied without payment of royalties. They have become more interested in seeking ways to derive revenue from lending and document delivery.

The British Library has a long history of experimentation in the use of digital media for interlibrary loan. The noticeable decline in the document supply business over the last few years has caused British Library to look for new ways to serve. It therefore undertook a new investigation of ways to take advantage

of technology to give publishers what they want and, at the same time, supply material to end users as quickly as possible.

In 2002 the British Library began working with Elsevier and Adobe on a system that would address both digital rights management and secure electronic delivery of articles requested. The two sets of requirements are met by using the Adobe Content Server and the Acrobat eBook Reader.

To supply the article, British Library Document Supply Centre Service (BLDSC), also called the BLib Document Supply Service, draws on its large store of electronic journals and, with publisher permission, transmits the item to the end user. The client must download the reader, and the use of the file is limited to the machine receiving the download. Saving and viewing are for a limited time, with no ability to forward or copy. The content can be printed only once.<sup>4</sup>

The service was inaugurated in March 2003. A few months later the Canadian Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (CISTI) document supply service announced a similar service to offer e-journal articles from Elsevier, Taylor and Francis, and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) British Library Document Delivery Service also has signed contracts with other major publishers.

Although secure electronic document delivery does take advantage of the latest technology, receiving libraries have found it to be a less-than-ideal solution. Clients must accomplish the tricky business of installing and using the software. The copy may be lost if they make a mistake in the process, frustrating both the user and the library paying the bill.

Elsevier has recently proposed another model for direct electronic article delivery from the publisher's site. The process would work like this:

1. The library needing the article would place a request with an intermediary (OCLC, British Library, or the Copyright Clearance Center).
2. The intermediary would authorize the request and forward it to the publisher's platform and the article would be delivered online directly to the requesting library.
3. The intermediary and publisher would each receive a reasonable fee in payment for the transaction.
4. When the CONFU guidelines limit is reached the library would be notified and royalty charges applied by the intermediary.

The proposal so far has not been met with much enthusiasm from the ILL community.<sup>5</sup>

As e-books multiply, librarians also may look for ways to increase efficiency for returnables by fully online borrowing of chapters or other defined sections. The new EBL Book Library has suggested its short-term lending solution as an alternative to photocopied chapters or physical loans.

### Will ILL departments wither and die?

ILL practitioners do ask this question because of the decline of article borrowing and increasing implementation of patron initiated loan/circulation applications. The article economy has kept major document suppliers in business, but the dominance of this regime seems to be fading owing to the wide availability of e-journals and greater reliance of researchers on a wider array of sources.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, more or less everyone agrees that Big Deals will not last forever. Possibly article lending and borrowing will rebound and be reborn, with publisher agreement, as an entirely electronic process.

ILL departments also will be kept in business by the growing diversity of materials and formats used in the research process. Though international loan will continue to be complicated and expensive, the need for materials published overseas will likely increase.

Borrowing books will continue as a major function, at least for the immediate future. Increasing centralization of print materials in compact campus storage centers will create new demands on ILL or circulation departments in connection with both ILL and intra-institution lending.

If (when) e-books become integral to collections, the ease of identifying chapters or pages of interest will skyrocket, opening up an entirely new field of activity. ILL librarians also will have new battles to fight regarding licensing restrictions.

Parts and subparts of books will be indexed and cited with the frequency that journal articles are today, and ILL librarians will want to borrow and lend electronic chunks of books. They will have new battles to fight regarding how much of an e-book may be shared.

Interest in developing a national-level approach to the preservation of the original formats of library materials has been gathering force since the late 1990s. High-level planners recognize the many as yet unresolved issues surrounding digital archiving, especially the ultimate costs involved.

A network of regional repositories has been proposed to assure that the physical form will survive.<sup>7</sup> Creating and maintaining these archives will be an expensive undertaking whose costs will ultimately have to be recovered through charges to borrowing libraries.

## Libraries as digital publishers

Academic libraries saw a role for themselves as creators of content from the beginning of Web-based information delivery. Several institutions began early and have strong, well-established programs.

Stanford is the home of HighWire Press, a host and distributor for scientific journals, and also created the LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe) program for digital preservation. Within the last year, it has announced a collaborative project with Google to digitize pre-1923 imprints.

The Universities of Michigan, Chicago, Columbia, and Virginia also are producing important, widely used databases. Many other colleges and universities, and some public and special libraries, also have created electronic products with the aid of grants and other short-term funding. The institutions with the most far-reaching programs have added digitization to their missions and developed a sustained resource base to support it.

Unique collections in many different kinds of libraries could be made more useful and shared widely through digitization, but institutions can no longer rely on grant support alone to do the job.

Since creating a digital version is a way to acquire maximally usable content, libraries who want to add value to important holdings will have to find a way to integrate this goal into the resource allocation process.



Momentum is building for libraries to take on an entirely new collecting and preservation role via the creation of what are called institutional repositories (IRs). These storehouses are meant to contain the entire intellectual output of an organization.

In the case of a university, content stored would include the total scholarly output of the faculty, the data, records, and documents generated by the university as an organization, electronic instructional objects, and some designated share of what has been produced by students.

The concept of institutional repositories is entwined with the open-access movement, since the repository provides a way for faculty to self-archive their research. SPARC has promoted the idea that scholars could deposit papers in the IR instead of publishing them in high-priced journals.

In practice, repositories have thus far been most successful in acquiring the gray literature produced in academic departments and centers. Working papers, technical reports, grant proposals, conference presentations, and similar items are part of the university's record of scholarship. Libraries often receive requests for them, but in the past they have been difficult to identify and to add to collections on a reliable basis.

Creating a repository involves a high degree of collaboration involving university administration, academic computing, and e-learning system managers. Acquisition librarians, selectors, archivists, and catalogers will all have important roles to play in building IRs. (See "Establishing an Institutional Repository," *Library Technology Reports*, by Susan Gibbons, July/August 2004 for more information.)

Limited experience so far at MIT and Berkeley has shown faculty members are reluctant to contribute material and lack the knowledge or the inclination to create the metadata needed for long-term preservation. The task of acquiring material for the IR will likely be added to the traditional acquisition activities of the bibliographers who serve as liaisons to academic departments.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Margaret M. Landesman, *ARL Bimonthly Report* 234 June 2004, p. 13, [www.arl.org/newsltr/234](http://www.arl.org/newsltr/234).

<sup>2</sup>Mary M. Case, "A Snapshot in Time: ARL Libraries and Electronic Journal Resources," *ARL Bimonthly Report*, [www.arl.org/newsltr/235/snapshot.html](http://www.arl.org/newsltr/235/snapshot.html).

<sup>3</sup>George Pike, "New International IP Laws on the Horizon," *Information Today*, v. 21, no. 1 (January 2004), p. 20. This sentiment is reiterated by Mary Jackson Director of Collections & Access Programs, ARL, who "sees a growing pressure on the U.S. Congress to adopt copyright legislation that harmonizes with international copyright Treaties." Mary E. Jackson "The Future of Interlending," 8<sup>th</sup> IFLA Interlending and Document Supply Conference, Oct. 28-31, 2003, Canberra, Australia, [www.nla.gov.au/ilds/abstracts/JacksonM.pdf](http://www.nla.gov.au/ilds/abstracts/JacksonM.pdf).

<sup>4</sup>Andrew Braid, "The Use of Electronic Journals in a Document Delivery Service," *Serials* 16 1 (March 2003) p. 38-40.



<sup>5</sup>Personal communication from Daviess Menafee based on a PowerPoint presentation at the ALA annual conference "License to Fill."

<sup>6</sup>David Brown, "Is This the End of the 'Article Economy': A Strategic Review of Document Delivery." *Interlending and Document Supply*, v. 31 no. 4, p. 253-263.

<sup>7</sup>In July 2003, the Institute for Museum and Library Services, the American Antiquarian Society, and the Center for Research Libraries sponsored a conference on long-term archiving of print in the digital age. "Preserving America's Print Resources: Toward a National Strategic Effort." Various aspects of a future national network of regional print repositories were discussed. For the report, see: [www.crl.edu/content/PAPRreportdraft.pdf](http://www.crl.edu/content/PAPRreportdraft.pdf). To carry forward the action agenda spelled out in the report, a strategic forum was held at the Center, as part of the annual meeting in April 2004, with speakers outlining plans and issues for print monographs, government documents, newspapers, and journals.