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Strengthening Regional Collections One Request at a Time: Using Resource Sharing Technology to Facilitate Coordinated Collection Development

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Abstract

There can be many barriers for success in Coordinated Collection Development (CCD) projects. Delivery and ownership are major concerns, and libraries are committing institutional funds, often to contribute to group or consortial collections, which requires trust and a consistent measuring of whether the CCD venture is a good use of scarce collection dollars. CCD efforts often require advance agreement on policies, collection areas, and dedicated funds, which can lead to decreased overall satisfaction. In many CCD projects, mutual trust is not built through a shared practice and workflow that allows for choice and data-driven decisions but is established through CCD agreements that are often complex and difficult to adjust. To address as many areas as possible that can prevent success with CCD ventures, the IDS Project and St. John Fisher College created a CCD tool that focuses on building diverse group collections through communication and efficient workflows connecting resource sharing and demand-driven acquisitions. Key to the project is finding how to most effectively share relevant information and provide opportunities for building diverse collections while also ensuring that purchased items fit local collection needs. Using real-time consortial and institutional resource sharing data, libraries could know what items are being requested that fit the institution's desired areas to build collections. The goal of the program is for libraries to use real-time information to purchase titles that fill user demands across a consortium, leading to more diverse collections and stronger and more flexible CCD projects.

Introduction

When focusing on cooperative or collaborative collection development (CCD), there can be many barriers for success, especially with print materials. Delivery and ownership are major concerns, and libraries are committing institutional funds, often to contribute to group or consortial collections, which requires trust and a consistent measuring of whether the CCD venture is a good use of scarce collection dollars. In addition, data about group-wide resource sharing requests, group-wide ownership, and whether items are in subjects of collection need are often not available in a timely manner. CCD efforts often require advance agreement on policies, collection areas, and dedicated funds, which can lead to decreased overall satisfaction with the project. In many CCD projects, mutual trust is not built through a shared practice and workflow that allows for choice and data-driven decisions but is established through CCD agreements that are often complex and difficult to adjust.

To address as many areas as possible that can prevent success with CCD ventures, the IDS Project and St. John Fisher College created a CCD tool that focuses on building diverse group collections through

communication and efficient workflows connected to resource sharing and demand-driven acquisitions. Key to the project is finding how to most effectively share relevant information and provide opportunities for building diverse collections while also ensuring that purchased items fit local collection needs. Using real-time consortial and institutional resource sharing data, libraries could know what items are being requested that fit the institution's desired areas to build collections. The goal of the program is for libraries to use real-time information to purchase titles that fill user demands across a consortium, leading to more diverse collections.

About the CCD Project

Through the use of a common software platform, IDS Logic, the resource-sharing requests and all related data for all IDS Project consortia members are gathered on a nightly basis and can be used to provide near real-time resource sharing usage data. In addition, the resource-sharing data can be used to conduct dynamic queries against live interlibrary loan (ILL) requests, so that if a library wants to use the resource-sharing data to automate decisions for acquisitions or CCD, the data is available and responsive enough to communicate with ILLiad to

facilitate enhanced resource sharing workflows. In addition, IDS Logic as a platform connects with many different Web services to pull relevant data about resource-sharing requests, and it can pull data from external systems or data such as total ILL requests across a group to help staff make data-driven decisions. For the CCD Project, the IDS Logic platform pulls all ILL book requests and then uses the Worldcat Search API to determine IDS Project group and local ownership, checks what libraries have indicated they would like to collect in areas related to the call numbers of requests, and also pulls the number of ILL requests placed both locally and within the IDS Project within the last year. Finally, since relying on checking single ISBNs or Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) numbers would lead to inaccurate data about ownership and ILL requests, the CCD tool within IDS Logic uses the OCLC ISXN and Worldcat Search APIs to pull all ISBNs and OCLC numbers related to the requested edition of a book, and it uses these variant ISBN and OCLC numbers to perform highly accurate searches of resource-sharing request volume and ownership. As many books have dozens of associated ISBNs and OCLC numbers associated with single editions, linking the different unique identifiers is essential to accurate CCD activities and analytics.

CCD Background in New York State

New York State libraries are poised for further library CCD activities. A long-standing New York State regulation and grant program, Coordinated Collection Development Aid or CCDA (<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/ccda/index.html>), provides funding for New York libraries to purchase materials in specific areas that will diversify collections. The Empire State Library Network (<https://www.esln.org/>) regional councils oversee the program to facilitate subject agreements. Individual libraries use funds to build specialized collections that will benefit the whole through mandated availability of items through resource sharing. A state-wide courier system, Empire Library Delivery, provides quick shipping of physical materials for a single annual flat rate. The large 64 campus State University of New York (SUNY) system has a strong culture of coordinated collecting, and the IDS Project serves to connect most of the SUNYs to private university libraries throughout New York. Additionally, there is a shared print program, Empire Shared Collection (<http://empiresharedcollection.org/>). The interest, infrastructure, networks, and

structural connections exist in New York. Providing tools to facilitate decision making will help New York libraries expand collections and access.

The IDS Project is a growing library cooperative that has, for the past 15 years, focused on bringing advances to libraries that cross the boundaries of departments. Although the IDS Project has remained focused on resource sharing, building collections collaboratively and integrating purchase-on-demand and collection development into resource-sharing workflows has been a key component of IDS. Most notably, the IDS Project created the Getting it Systems Toolkit (GIST). Through customizations of the ILLiad software product, GIST allowed libraries to factor in group ownership, collection strengths identified through a conspectus, and purchase availability and cost information, all in one interface (Pitcher et al., 2010, p.226). The CCD project sought to take the spirit of GIST, add in additional information (including resource sharing data, aggregate conspectus information for the group, and alternate edition checking), and allow other libraries to see this information cooperatively. Where GIST worked well for a single library, the CCD project can work well as a selection tool to allow for better data-driven purchasing by groups.

Literature Review

Existing coordinated collection development activities take many different forms. Some CCD programs rely heavily on effective resource sharing for success, while others rely on prospective collection building. There are often hybrid approaches in which access, collection building, and local and group needs are balanced. At the center of all approaches to CCD is a need for effective communication, methods to build and sustain trust, and tools for efficiently making decisions.

Successful cooperative collections based on effective resource sharing such as those facilitated through the Borrow Direct program still find obstacles to success, such as “no single library wants to be the first to appear to be ceding their collecting duties to outside entities, even (or perhaps especially) peer institutions. Overcoming this taboo requires collaboration, communication, and information.” (Collins, 2012, p. 102). For Collins (2012, p.103), “[t]he prospect of cooperative collecting must be founded on a reliable resource sharing system, but collection development requires more than just

library-to-library transaction data,” and he cites Metridoc as a system that will help integrate all the data points that will help those interested in CCD make informed decisions, such as ILL and circulation transactions in addition to catalog searches, database and journal usage, course offerings, and other information.

Obstacles to CCD have long been ingrained in “institutional competitiveness” and the “desire for autonomy,” which Deborah Lynn Jakubs (2015, p. 655) indicates were issues considered when the RLG Conspectus system was established, and which are challenges with larger CCD ventures. Jakubs (2015, p. 661) further asserts that “[t]o be successful, collaborative collection development should build in flexibility and adaptability.” Kinner and Crosetto (2009, p. 428) identify one challenge with consortial or group activities among libraries, which is that “as long as libraries have participated in collaborative endeavors, when faced with the possibility of giving up autonomy and funds, the spirit of collaboration and actual participation becomes challenging.”

To engage in CCD where libraries identify areas to collect, a certain knowledge of its collections is essential. Libraries should evaluate their collections and curriculum, which “allows the individual library to be a more effective partner in any resource-sharing venture” (Kinner & Crosetto, 2009, p. 421). Two major issues with the collection building approach to CCD are balancing the interplay between the local and the group collection and determining the best method to develop an understanding of the most effective use of funds to continue to develop collection strengths. When libraries join consortia and share collections, “individual libraries can focus on the unique needs of the local curriculum and research” (Kinner & Crosetto, 2009, p. 425).

There are also a variety of hybrid approaches to CCD, and many libraries indicate that they participate in multiple CCD activities with different goals for each program. Booth and O’Brien (2011, p.149) identify three major approaches to CCD, with one popular model identified as the demand-driven or patron-driven model, in which local and group ownership are factored in addition to comparing the item to collection policies and areas of interest. However, a hybrid approach of demand-driven cooperative collections “seems to be a fruitful approach to explore because it accommodates shrinking

acquisition budgets at the same time as leveraging improved discovery/fulfillment technologies and procedures” (Booth & O’Brien, 2011, p. 151). Booth and O’Brien provide multiple examples of how demand-driven cooperative collections can be built, including models where libraries purchase for each other, with ownership and access as equal priorities. One long-term benefit of CCD is to continue to keep both ownership and access costs as low as possible through the most diverse collection possible, “as UB’s materials budget shrinks and we are able to buy less materials, and as the SUNY aggregate collection becomes more homogeneous, we are forced to borrow more and more outside of SUNY at a considerable cost. What benefits all of us, small or large, is to make the SUNY collection more heterogeneous” (Booth & O’Brien, 2011, p.152). To help manage costs while encouraging coordinated collections, CCD tools such as GIST have configurable elements that help to reduce “the amount of duplication already present within particular groups of libraries” while also helping staff efficiently find the most cost effective option (Pitcher et al., 2010, p. 226). With tools such as GIST available to integrate purchase on demand and factor in consortial or group holdings, and resource-sharing initiated purchasing similar to turn around time for borrowing material, there is now ability to proactively build diverse group collections through resource sharing models (Pitcher et al., 2010, p. 230). Programs such as Not-Bought-in-Ohio at OhioLINK also seek to build diverse collections, enabling increased access through free resource sharing (Kinner & Crosetto, 2009, p. 427). Finally, institutions may participate in several different CCD programs at once to build collections with diversity at as many levels (local and statewide) as possible. As CCD programs and coordinated collection building are becoming much more common, continuing to develop effective tools such as GIST are key to making CCD parts of workflows such as resource sharing and acquisitions that will be affected.

Getting the Right Local Fit: Configuring Collection Areas Through an Easy-to-Use Conspectus

One area of CCD programs that is key to success is allowing individual campuses the ability to configure the areas that they would like to purchase materials and have some flexibility in refining these areas. An easy-to-use conspectus interface was created that

libraries can access through the IDS administrative tool (<http://my.idsproject.org>). The interface allows libraries to select call number ranges they would like to build their collection using a simple toggle button, as shown in Figure 1. Setting up and modifying the conspectus is intended to be simple so that libraries can add and remove subject areas in response to recommendations. The conspectus and the notifications are meant to be used in tandem to fine tune information used to strengthen both local and consortial collections, while still allowing for independent decision-making.

CCD Communication Tool

Communication and relevant information can make CCD projects more successful. Providing CCD participants with the data to make decisions builds trust by allowing local control and encouraging CCD activities based on up-to-date information. The CCD communication tool is configurable to send e-mails to CCD participants either daily or weekly (either or both option can be selected). Reports of titles matching selected conspectuses are sent with relevant holdings and ILL request information included, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 1. my.idsproject.org conspectus interface for St. John Fisher.

----- Forwarded message -----
 From: <help.ids.project@gmail.com>
 Date: Mon, May 16, 2016 at 5:38 AM
 Subject: CCD Report
 To: ivici@icivici.com, sprittin@gmail.com

Weekly CCD Report for VZJ

LibraryID	TN	Title	ISBN_IN	ISBN	OCLC_IN	OCLC	SN_LIST	LCC_LIST	TN_LIST_SITE	TN_COUNT
XNC	473592	Play Therapy: A Comprehensive Gu...	9781462517503	9781462517503	872621995	872621995	ISBN:9781462517503,OCLC:872621995	RJ	XNC:473592	1
XNC	473580	The dirty streets of heaven	9780756408459	9780756408459	826288246	826288246	ISBN:9780756408459,OCLC:826288246	PS	XNC:473580	1
XNC	473579	Happy hour in hell	9780756409838	9780756409838	861754732	861754732	ISBN:9780756409838,OCLC:861754732	PS	XNC:473579	1
XNC	473494	Circus days & nights /			43590208	43590208	OCLC:43590208	PS	XNC:473494	1
XNC	473487	Aztec & conquistadores : the Sp...	9781841769349	9781841769349	63185120	63185120	ISBN:9781841769349,OCLC:63185120	F	XNC:473487	1
XNC	473486	A concise history of Spain	9780521845137	9780521845137	489003072	489003072	ISBN:9780521845137,OCLC:489003072	DP	XNC:473486	1
XNC	473478	The ocean at the end of the lane...	9780062263032	9780062263032	835196487	835196487	ISBN:9780062263032,OCLC:835196487	PR	XNC:473478	1

Figure 2. Example of weekly CCD report e-mail for St. John Fisher.

The report can be exported in a variety of formats for further analysis, as shown in Figure 3.

Although creation of a metric was not initially something developed, feedback from librarians indicated that they wanted a metric that would allow them to quickly scan reports and e-mails to identify the best CCD titles to consider. This metric can be customized if the library participates in multiple CCD initiatives. The metric uses the following data, which can be weighted and configured to reflect shared policies and practices.

- Number of requests for item at borrowing site
- Number of requests for item within consortia (IDS by default)
- Whether item is owned at borrowing site
- Number of holdings within consortia
- Whether item matches conspectus at site
- Whether item matches conspectus within consortia

Future use cases of the recommendation metric would be to help facilitate automated real-time CCD in resource sharing, batch acquisition checking of

requested materials for CCD compliance, or analysis of large purchases such as e-book packages with large batches of ISBNs (as alternate ISBNs would be analyzed). As real-time use of the CCD data was another goal of the CCD project, an application programming interface (API) was built to leverage the data and analysis gathered by the libraries participating in the CCD project. The CCD API accepts both OCLC numbers or ISBNs as input and will return information that is currently held in the CCD application. The data returned is in real-time (up to previous day) and reflects current CCD data. A summary of the data returned from this API is:

- Related ISBNs and OCLC numbers.
- Number of requests for item from the borrowing library and all of IDS Project.
- The match of the conspectus for both the conspectus of the requesting library and any other CCD participating sites.
- Recommendation level (configurable metric that factors in number of requests at site and consortia, matches of conspectuses, and number of local and consortial holdings).

Site	TN	Title	ISBN	OCLC	Reqs Site	Reqs IDS	Owned Site	Owned IDS	Conspectus Site	Conspectus IDS	Rec Level
VZJ	177775	The Engine 2 Diet : the Texas fl...		225870171	1	1	0	6	RM	RM	5
VZJ	178847	Frequently Prescribed Medication...	9781449698843 (978-1-4496-9884-3)	826530798	1	0	0	3	RM	RM	4
VZJ	177280	Deinstitutionalization : promise...		47295721	1	1	0	12	RC	RC	5
VZJ	180693	Early modern hermaphrodites : se...	0333925378	48450978	0	1	0	6	RC	RA,RC	4
VZJ	180199	Deliver us from evil : the slave...	9780195118094	270131469	1	0	0	35	RC	E,RC	4
VZJ	179721	Autism in adolescents and adults	9780306410574	8976014	1	0	0	19	RC	RC,RJ	4
VZJ	170433	Critical care		748700818	1	0	0	1	RC	RC	4

Figure 3. CCD borrowing report for St. John Fisher.

As many libraries in the IDS Project and NY State currently participate in some type of CCD but may not be interested in participating in the CCD program, the general consensus was that they should still benefit from the aggregate data collected for the CCD project so that either selectors or collection development staff could see real-time usage of titles across the consortia, in addition to ownership to make the best decision possible. For example, although a CCD agreement may indicate that only three copies among a group of libraries should be purchased, if dozens of resource-sharing requests are being placed for the title, it may be reasonable to make an exception to the CCD rule. A CCD search tool was created that provides ownership, ILL requests, and conspectus matches across the entire IDS Project. This tool is now available for anyone in the IDS Project to use as a CCD tool.

Conclusion

Since flexibility, communication, trust, and assessment are keys to CCD success, building a tool that is flexible and allows for local decision-making without loss of efficiency in the process is a key to building a successful CCD tool. The CCD API tool provides libraries and staff with information in an easy-to-understand format and facilitates communication about CCD decisions within the tools and workflows that they use every day. By continuing to build the CCD API and related tools, staff will be able to efficiently make decisions that will allow for quick patron service and increase the diversity of coordinated collections.

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