

Books on Demand: A New(er) Look for Print Monographs Acquisitions

Paolo P. Gujilde
National Louis University, pgujilde@nl.edu

Cara Huwieler
ProQuest, cara.huwieler@proquest.com

Debra Skinner
Georgia Southern University, dskinner@georgiasouthern.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/charleston>



Part of the [Cataloging and Metadata Commons](#), and the [Collection Development and Management Commons](#)

An indexed, print copy of the Proceedings is also available for purchase at:

<http://www.thepress.purdue.edu/series/charleston>.

You may also be interested in the new series, Charleston Insights in Library, Archival, and Information Sciences. Find out more at: <http://www.thepress.purdue.edu/series/charleston-insights-library-archival-and-information-sciences>.

Paolo P. Gujilde, Cara Huwieler, and Debra Skinner, "Books on Demand: A New(er) Look for Print Monographs Acquisitions" (2017). *Proceedings of the Charleston Library Conference*.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5703/1288284316681>

Books on Demand: A New(er) Look for Print Monographs Acquisitions

Paolo P. Gujilde, National Louis University

Cara Huwieler, ProQuest

Debra Skinner, Georgia Southern University

Abstract

How do you respond to increasing library materials cost? Do you still provide enough, fewer, or more print books? How do you sustain access to library resources? In the past few years, Zach S. Henderson Library at Georgia Southern University faced these questions and more. As many libraries have done, Henderson Library responded by decreasing monograph acquisitions to allocate additional funds for serial acquisition. However, these challenges provided opportunities for the library to be creative in purchasing monographs. One of the approaches the library chose to explore was establishing a print demand-driven acquisition (pDDA) or Books on Demand program with ProQuest. Through this program, the library has increased its access to print monographs despite experiencing budgetary challenges.

Introduction

In May 2015, the Zach S. Henderson Library at Georgia Southern University made the bold decision to move away from the long-established practice of acquiring monographs through a vendor book approval plan and move to a demand-driven acquisitions model. The library dean described this plan as moving from a “just in case” model of acquiring books to a “just in time” plan. The change in monographic acquisitions was described to the faculty as a modification of the approval plan; books would be selected and approved in advance. Rather than acquiring books through an approval plan with the option of retaining those selected, the library would only order books specifically requested and needed by users including faculty, students, and staff.

The reasons for this decision were many, including the dean’s declaration that the library could no longer buy books just in case someone wanted to use them. Too many books were purchased only to gather dust in the stacks. Due to our flat budget and increasing demands for subscriptions, the library had to make tough decisions, including limiting book purchases to titles actually needed by our users. The library budget had remained flat for a number

of years, in effect resulting in decreased spending power. The flat budget combined with increasing demands for online resources and the significant level of inflation resulting each year brought about the decision to limit monographic purchases to titles specifically requested and needed by the library patrons. The library is also a member of a 28-library member consortium so that every library does not have to own identical titles.

Initially, there was some resistance to the change as the responsibility for collection development fell more to the library liaisons and faculty. If faculty members wanted to ensure that certain new titles were added to the collection, they had to proactively request them for purchase. The library provided online review sources for faculty members who wanted to seek out the important books published in their field and request them for the collection. The negative reaction on the part of a small segment of the faculty was short lived as they realized the ease with which they could acquire new titles. In fact, they now seem to feel free to ask for more titles without the assumption that the approval plan would cover their fields adequately.

Prior to May 2015, the library had dabbled with demand-driven acquisitions for electronic books but not print. This program was limited in scope with only nursing titles and engineering titles included as a trial run. This trial period was successful with the electronic demand-driven program working well, although with a limited scope. As a result, the library embraced demand-driven acquisitions for both print and electronic titles. The new “just in time” plan included all subjects for both print and electronic titles with only a few exclusions such as textbooks.

Initially, faculty were notified about the change in monographic acquisitions through an e-mail message from the library dean explaining the change and the rationale for it. Library faculty liaisons were encourage to discuss the change with faculty as well and to provide guidance for the acquisition of new

monographs under the new system. For ongoing information, the library established a public-facing LibGuide for faculty with a tab labeled "Purchase Requests" that explains the "Elective Purchasing" at Georgia Southern. The guide explains all the ways in which faculty may acquire new books through the demand-driven method or by direct request. The guide also contains a logical catalog search that lists all on-demand titles. Faculty can link to this list and then use facets to locate titles of interest. The guide has an additional search of the catalog for a list of new monographs that are currently on order.

One of the greatest advantages of the on-demand model is that new monographic titles, both print and electronic, appear in the library catalog. When a patron searches the catalog, the new demand-driven books appear, integrated into the collection. The catalog entries look identical to the regular collection entries except that "ON DEMAND" appears as a prefix to the classification number. The user is given the option to "Ask the Library to Purchase," creating an automatic purchase request in the library system. For print demand-driven titles, the process is mediated with a librarian reviewing requests and sometimes asking for clarification such as whether an electronic version needs to be duplicated in print. For electronic titles, the requests are not mediated, but based on predetermined usage thresholds worked out in advance with the vendor. Library users can actually request any title in the consortial catalog for purchase, whether new on-demand titles or not, giving a new dimension to the traditional catalog.

On-demand records are loaded into the library catalog as they are shipped from the vendor on a regular basis. Patrons must log in to create purchase requests, preventing requests from individuals not affiliated with the library. Since the library opted to load a broad spectrum of titles in a wide array of subjects, there are many very visible demand-driven titles in the catalog. The fact that these records are easy to locate in the catalog is evidenced by the frequency of requests.

The library plans to continue the demand-driven plan along with direct requests as the monographic purchasing model for the near future. The library is buying what our users want, rather than trying to anticipate what might be needed. Although, as mentioned, there were initial reservations on the part of a few faculty members, the level of participation now indicates a great percentage of buy-in with some of

the early protesters being among the greatest users of the service.

One word of caution regarding demand-driven purchasing: The method is not less work for staff but rather involves a fairly intensive purchasing process compared to the traditional approval plan model. Each title is purchased individually rather than in batch through a vendor selection based on a library profile. The electronic titles, which do not require mediation, do not increase the workload substantially. It is possible to eliminate the mediation step as well for print demand-driven titles, which might become necessary as the program increases in popularity. However, the process is no different from direct requests from faculty that also require attention to each title.

An important element for the success of a demand-driven program is the visibility of the titles in the catalog. A high level of visibility facilitates serendipitous discovery and selection of titles as students and faculty are looking for relevant materials for their work. Having these titles integrated into traditional library searching makes the requests all the more significant for our users. In May 2017, the library moved to a new library system, providing much greater visibility to demand-driven titles than the previous system that had been in place for more than 15 years. As a result, the demand-driven acquisitions method is becoming more relevant and much more popular with library users.

Establishing a Books on Demand Program

ProQuest began work with Georgia Southern to create their Books on Demand (BOD) program in May 2015. Setting up the program took several months. The stakeholders involved in establishing the BOD program included IT staff from both ProQuest and the library, in addition to collection development and acquisitions staff, to facilitate the technical components of the setup. After initial information gathering, more specific conversations focused on patron experience and library workflow needs.

The options the library desired to provide to patrons were key to determining what additional work was needed. Georgia Southern chose to provide multiple options to patrons when requesting BOD titles through the catalog. These options included whether the patron preferred print or electronic format, and how soon the title was needed. Providing these types of options meant that the library

would need to mediate patron requests. To facilitate mediation, ProQuest customized the ordering portal, OASIS, to generate alerts for the mediator when titles were requested. The library determined that several shipping speeds would be offered to patrons to accommodate different delivery requirements. Not all patrons would need their requests fulfilled right away, but some would need them very quickly. To that end, ProQuest created multiple shipping account types for Georgia Southern to use: regular, rush, and overnight rush.

Once these requirements were completed, the library moved on to setting up their collection parameters. This part of the project followed the same process that is typically used when setting up an approvals or DDA plan, using a standardized profiling template to identify subject and nonsubject parameters to include in the program. The library chose to adopt a broad collecting strategy so that all subjects were included, and most nonsubjects were included. Parameters such as reprints, textbooks, and large-print format were some of the few nonsubjects they chose to exclude, so that overall the collection would be quite broad. All publishers were included except for a very small set, and the price limit was set at \$250. Due to the volume of titles being generated through the plan, the library decided to use an initial load of approximately 7,400 titles from May to September 2015 to populate the plan at its launch.

Maintaining a Books on Demand Program

When Georgia Southern launched the BOD program in September 2015, it then entered the maintenance phase. The program was generating between 200 and 400 titles each week that were being sent weekly in a discovery file. The library approached the program as a pilot, so one-time maintenance strategies were employed during the first two years. After the first year, the library identified several profile-centric changes, such as removing textbook-like content not defined as textbook by ProQuest bibliographic terms. During the second year, additional profile-level changes were made. In both years, analysis and profile updates resulted in changes to forthcoming title matches, but no changes were employed to the existing pool of titles.

Moving forward, Georgia Southern will want to identify recurring maintenance strategies to ensure that not only does the profile generate desired

content, but also that the title pool remains current and accessible for their patrons. The longer the titles sit in the pool, the higher the likelihood that titles may no longer be in print, so it will be important to decide how the library wants to maintain the collection. There are several different strategies the library will be able to consider when choosing the strategy that fits well for them. Standard withdrawal parameters such as publication date or time in the collection could be used to identify titles for removal on a rolling basis. Other options would include using a Print-on-Demand retention strategy, where only titles without Print-on-Demand status would be removed. In the alternative, the library could choose to swap out print BOD titles for e-book DDA titles where there is DDA eligibility. The library could also opt to employ any combination of these strategies, depending upon their collection goals. The adoption of a recurring maintenance strategy will be critical to the ongoing success of the program.

Books on Demand Acquisitions

For FY 2016 and FY 2017, a total of 38,330 records (21,517 records for FY 2016 and 16,813 records for FY 2017) were uploaded to the library catalog. These records encompassed all subject areas. The library wanted to capture as many selections as possible by opening the program to all subject areas; however, some parameters were established to parse materials the library does not want to acquire. These parameters included, but were not limited to, new publications only, no reprints, and exclusion of some publishers. In addition, adjustments to the parameters were ongoing throughout the first two years of the program to mitigate some concerns with the acquired titles. This included excluding publishers that typically produce textbook materials. The program acquired 628 individual titles in the first two fiscal years. For FY 2016, the library acquired 278 titles with the largest number of titles in Library of Congress Class P (Literature = 88 books) and Class B (Philosophy = 48 books). These acquisition numbers and subject areas were similar to FY 2017 with 350 total number of books acquired, including Class P (Literature = 113 books) and Class B (Philosophy = 46 books). As for publishers, the acquisition trend leaned favorably to academic publishers such as Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, and other university presses, though some publishers who produce popular books such as HarperCollins and Simon & Schuster were acquired.

Circulation Data

Circulation in Books on Demand is not as clear-cut as in its electronic demand-driven acquisition counterpart in which circulation is automatically triggered with patron use. In this program, circulation data is affected by factors such as user behavior, selectors (e.g., librarians vs. nonlibrarians), and purpose of the request (e.g., research needs vs. collection development). For FY 2016, there were 209 total loans (checkouts) and 719 total loans including in-house use (browsing). For FY 2017, there were 310 total loans (checkouts) and 766 total loans including in-house use (browsing).

Additional analysis of the data provided more detailed effect on circulation and use of the books. For instance, for FY 2016, 209 books (75.18%) out of 278 acquired titles circulated either as a loan or as an in-house use. In FY 2017, 273 books (78%) out of 350 acquired titles circulated either as a loan or as in-house use. Furthermore, ~16% of the acquired titles for each fiscal year were loaned (checked out) at least twice and ~50% of the acquired titles for each fiscal year were loaned (checked out) at least at least once.

Though circulation or use of the books were significantly higher than for the typical print circulation,

there were at least ~20% of the acquired titles that did not circulate for each fiscal year. In looking further into these titles with no loan and no browsing use, 69 books (FY 2016) and 77 books (FY 2017), the selectors and purpose of the acquisition may have played a significant role in the lack of circulation. In some instances, librarian selectors used Books on Demand as a collection development tool in which they requested titles to be added to the library collection. For each fiscal year, librarians selected ~75% of the books that did not circulate either as a loan or as an in-house use with the remaining selected by nonlibrarians (students, staff, and faculty).

What's Next?

The Books on Demand program is now on its third fiscal year and continuous updates to the program are ongoing, including changes to the request workflow due to new ILS. This analysis only captured a small fraction of the effect of the program on the acquisition of materials at Georgia Southern University. Hence, further analysis and maintenance to the program are part of the plan. These plans include but are not limited to weeding the temporary records in the catalog, studying the effect of librarian and non-librarian selections and multiyear circulation trends, and comparing the approval plan acquired titles and Books on Demand titles.