People Profile: Ryan Weir

Editor
completing through a handful of emails and phone conversations.

Negotiating the contract was also very easy. The contract we received from Elsevier contained most of the items that are musts and did not contain any of the items that we initially red flagged as necessary changes, with the exception of legal jurisdiction. Elsevier made all of the changes that we requested. Elsevier still requires (2) original copies of the contract — one they retain and one they mail back to the university after it is signed at their headquarters. Waiting on the contract to be returned took longer than the entire contact negotiation process.

Implementation

For this first implementation of the transactional access program we decided not to authenticate through IP ranges and open the program to the entire university community. We came to this decision due to the fact we had limited funding available and wanted to make sure the program would be well received before we moved on to a larger, more expensive, program. We also have more control over money used and who can use it in this model. With regard to re-opening access to some of the 2005 journal cuts, it was appealing to us to market this solely to faculty of relevant departments (specifically, the sciences) first.

We opted for a process that used user-name/password authentication. The process of setting up this login/password authentication model was difficult at first, but as we have progressed in the start-up process, we have become more familiar with the functions of assigning faculty to their user group and allocating funds to each of the user groups. The administrator can assign faculty to a group using the admin interface and the faculty’s email address. The system automatically creates an email with authentication information and delivers it to the faculty member.

The second part of this implementation was bringing the faculty members on board. We have just started, but it has proved to be an interesting process.

Communicating with Faculty

Once it was determined that a Pay-Per-View model was a better business plan that would open up thousands more titles and allow for money to be spent at the point of need, university libraries’ faculty began “feeling out” the idea first with the Dean of the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology. As a scientist, we knew that he would only approve of such a model if the logic was justifiable with supporting research. Once his approval was given, we decided to leave it up to him to distribute the pre-paid articles to his own faculty, and he recommended that there be no divvying at all — merely the monitoring of usage for this initial year. Thus, all Pay-Per-View purchases would come from the same large pool, and the program’s continuance would be determined by how much each department had used.

The program was revealed at a meeting of the Chairs of the departments within the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology just prior to the fall 2009 semester. Information prepared for this meeting included: a list of all the Science Direct journal titles included in the program, listed both by title and by discipline; a list of the titles available that had been cut in 2005; and a list of the titles available that are frequently (e.g., >5 requests per year) Inter-Library Loaned. The program was met with enthusiasm and thanks, as well as reluctance and suspicion. Some of the department chairs deemed this a progressive move, while others were suspect that this was a move to “get rid of” the journal subscriptions entirely, as well as Inter-Library Loan.

The program rolled out to the faculty via an email invitation from Science Direct. The mechanism was fairly quick, as departmental affiliations were created for statistical and monitoring purposes, and a simple email would affiliate the departmental name with the user’s personal email. After logging into Science Direct, all users would simply have to identify that they are using the departmental access, and all articles are simply one click away.

The Future

In the short-term, we will be continuing to communicate with the targeted faculty groups and get as many of them enrolled in the program as possible. Though we realize the first few weeks of school are hectic for everyone, we would have liked to see more faculty respond in a timely manner to the emails that provided them with their login information.

In the longer-term, we have initially committed to a three year program trial that is fully funded for each of the departments involved. We will be gathering statistics monthly on use by department, to inform the Dean of the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology to inform the allocation process for next fiscal year. We will also use these statistics to plan for future expansions or cancellations of our pay-per-view/transactional access programs. Alongside the transactional program, we intend to gather statistics on our current journal subscription usage. We will be looking for opportunities to switch individual titles to transactional access if the usage is consistent, but low. We will also be looking at adding subscriptions, if possible, to items that have consistently high usage within the transactional process. Ultimately, we are looking to ensure that the funds have the highest cost benefit, and that we are offering the most content that we can offer with the funds we are allocated.

Statistics can be gathered/received in two different ways. Science Direct sends out

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Ryan Weir

BORN & LIVED: Born in Greencastle, IN. Lived in Southern and Central Indiana.

EDUCATION: Attended Indiana State University – B.S. Elementary Education and Special Education (K-12). Attended IUPUI IU SLIS Indianapolis – MLS.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Currently the Serials and Electronic Resources Librarian for Murray State University Libraries. Member of: ALA, KLA, NASIG.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE: I have two daughters of my own (2) and a soon to be adopted nephew (2), so I have very little free time, but have a lot of fun with them.

FAVORITE BOOKS: I do most of my reading online or in an e-format.

PET PEEVES/WHAT MAKES ME MAD: Overcomplexity and lousy signage and bad spelling.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: Achieve tenure at Murray State University and continue to contribute to the profession.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: I think it depends on where you are at; the needs of each individual library vary to such a large degree. I think in the next few years we will have to look at striking a balance between traditional subscriptions, open access models, pay-per-view options, and other sources of content. I think there will have to be give and take on both sides of the aisle, (publishers/vendors and libraries).