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Book Pricing Update: Mid-year Prices

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lems with TSII. First, the system tends to be click intensive. That is, operations usually require several mouse clicks. Over the course of the workday, this feature can become downright annoying, especially if the Internet is running slowly. Further, the current version of TSII does not allow defaults to be set prior to each ordering session, such as for the number of items to be ordered or the addition of notes. Currently these data elements must be re-entered with each order.

Impact on Organization, Outlook for Future

All four librarians — the Head of Adult Services, the Head of Family Services and the two reference librarians — the Family Services associate, the assistant director, and the catalogers are using TSII as a collection development or a bibliographic information and verification tool. TSII did cause one significant change in acquisitions procedures: now the head of Adult Services is the sole person to enter orders. Because the TSII ordering function is so very simple to use, and makes possible the expenditure of large sums of money quickly, the head of Adult Service has become the clearinghouse for all orders so

that fiscal responsibility can be maintained. TSII has also improved reference service: reference librarians use TSII for bibliographic verification, and to identify new materials on subjects of interest to patrons. The staff has fully embraced TSII because of the ease of use, the information provided, and the availability of the system from any Internet computer. TSII's Internet access will be especially valuable when the library's new branch opens. TSII has not led to other changes in the library's organizational structure or procedures, however.

Evaluation

With any new product, evaluation is critical to continuation of service, and the benefits of the new system should outweigh the costs. In 1995, Lynne Branche Brown (p. 87-88) listed six points used to evaluate vendor services. Using her six-question schedule, the library has drawn the following conclusions about TSII:

1. How much business is done with the vendor? In the case of the North Las Vegas Library District, more than 75% of the business is done exclusively with Baker and Taylor. GRADE = A.

2. How intuitive is the system? The ease of use is one of the selling points, but mastering the system takes more skill. GRADE = B+.

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Endnotes

1. For a more thorough introduction to TSII, see <http://ts2b.informata.com/TS2/> and click on "Product Info."
2. Many public library jobbers provide electronic acquisitions services. The following is a partial list of public library jobbers, besides Baker & Taylor, providing these services, based on the information available to us at press-time: The Book House's order database, Web ordering, and electronic ordering (<http://www.thebookhouse.com/>); Book Wholesalers Inc.'s TitleTales and electronic ordering (<http://www.bwibooks.com/>); Brodart's ROSE group of services (<http://www.brodart.com/books/elecord.htm>); Coutts Library Services' COLA and e-ordering (<http://www.coutts-ls.com/>); Eastern Book Company's online ordering (<http://www.ebc.com/>); Emery-Pratt's E-PAS and e-ordering (<http://www.emery-pratt.com/>); Ingram Library Services' "iPage" and electronic ordering (http://www.ingramlibrary.com/prog_svcs/Default.asp); and Regent Book Company's online catalog and e-ordering (<http://www.regentbook.com/>). We apologize in advance if we have inadvertently overlooked a public library vendor providing these services. We did not list vendors that primarily cater to non-public libraries. Please contact your vendor directly to learn more about the electronic acquisitions services they offer.

References

Brown, Lynne Branche. (1995) "Integrating Vendor Systems into Acquisitions Workflow," in *New Automation Technology for Acquisition and Collection Development*, edited by Rosann Bazirjian. New York: Haworth Press, 83-88.

Book Pricing Update – Mid-year Prices

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As many of you know, Blackwell's publishes an annual **Approval Program Coverage and Cost Study**. Last year was no exception, and in July we reported that the average list price of an academic monograph was \$61.55. Over the following six months (through December 31, 2000), the list price of the "average" academic monograph rose to \$61.99, or slightly less than one percent.

Although overall inflation has been low, its effect on prices has not been equal on titles originating in different parts of the world. As the following table shows, the US, Great Britain, and the rest of the world have shown markedly different trends in the list prices of new scholarly books. (The numbers in parentheses refer to the year ending June 30, 2000):

Country of origin	Avg. list price
US origin	\$54.22 (\$52.29)
UK origin	\$64.82 (\$67.00)
Other origin	\$90.64 (\$91.02)

The price of the average US origin title rose approximately 4%, while the price of titles originating in the UK actu-

ally declined 3%. The price of titles originating from all other countries declined.

To help explain this divergence in pricing trends, it is instructive to look at how the US dollar performed during this period. On January 1, 2000, the exchange rate for the British pound stood at .618 to the dollar; the Dutch guilder stood at 2.2 to the dollar, and the German mark stood at 1.94 to the dollar. Exactly one year later, the rates for these three currencies stood at .669 for the pound (almost an 8% decrease), 2.34 for the guilder (a drop of 6%) and 2.07 for the mark (or, a drop of 7%).

Only rarely does the rate of inflation in US publishing move in tandem with rates in the UK and other countries. In 1996, for example, the overall rate of inflation in scholarly book publishing over 1995 prices was 1.2%. But contained within that overall small increase were a rise of .7% in US titles, a drop of 1.9% in the price of UK titles and a substantial rise of 9.6% in titles published elsewhere. Had the dollar not enjoyed a pe-

riod of strength relative to other world currencies, it is safe to assume that the overall rate of inflation in book prices would have been higher.

Finally, let's take a look at the prices of that mainstay of scholarly publishing, the University Press book. The average price of a University Press title treated on approval during the one-year period July 1999 through June 2000 (excluding reprints) was \$49.76. For the six-month period ending on December 31, 2000, the average price of a University Press book (again, excluding reprints) was \$49.46 — or, a modest decrease of almost six-tenths of one per cent in the most recent period.

How your book budget will stand up to inflation over the next year will be influenced by several factors. Among them are: the overall rate of inflation in the US publishing industry; the countries of original publication represented in the unique mix of titles that make up your library collection, and the US dollar's strength relative to those countries' currencies.