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Using Common Vendors, Joint Approval Plans, and Shared Acquisitions Databases to Enhance Cooperative Collection Development: The Africana Collections at the Libraries of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University

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F. If out-sourced, what vendors were consulted? Which vendor was selected and why?

- 2- Local firms were consulted. Time and quality were major considerations
- 1- UPA

G. What was the cost range per collection? What determined the cost of collection digitalization?

- Average cost of outsourced collections - \$15,000
- Type of item to be digitized determines cost

H. What has been your Library's experience? What are some insights and lessons learned from your digitalizing projects?

- "We went into the project untrained but now we better understand the 'time-per piece' element."
- "These projects take longer than expected"
- "Digital projects require detailed pre-planning"

I. What unique "Negro" or Black collection (s) belonging to your Library are possible candidates for digitalization?

- African Art Collection
- Civil Rights Era Photographs
- Presidential Papers

J. Which, if any, of these have commercial appeal and could possibly become revenue generators for the institution or the library?

- Mary McLeod Bethune Papers
- Papers of significant persons with national or international recognition

K. What are the outstanding features of your Library's Special Collections Web page?

- "Electronic Exhibits"
- "None at the moment"
- "No access to special collections at this time"

L. What are the outstanding features of your Library's Home page?

- Access to 140 databases
- Access to local catalog

M. Your comments:

APPENDIX B

A SURVEY OF DIGITAL INITIATIVES WEBSITE REVIEW GUIDELINES

- Prominent access points to Special Collections
- Arrangement and general information architecture
- Clarity of information
- Usability - Ease of use
- Use of unique historical photography and imagery
- Extent of holdings
- Overall aesthetic presentation
- Possesses collection with wide appeal

The Websites of 18 member libraries were selected as appropriate examples of Websites utilizing the best practices in library Web design, for ease of access and use, or as possessors of unique collections ideal for future digitalization.

(Alphabetical Listing)

1. Alcorn State University, Lorman, MS
2. Bluefield State College, Bluefield, WV
3. Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, Cheyney, PA
4. Dillard University, New Orleans, LA
5. Delaware State University, Dover, DE
6. Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, NC
7. Lincoln University, Pennsylvania Lincoln University, PA
8. Mary Holmes College, West Point, MS
9. Norfolk State University, Norfolk, VA
10. North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC
11. Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, TX
12. Southern University and A&M College, Baton Rouge, LA
13. Tennessee State University, Nashville, TN
14. Trenholm State Technical College, Montgomery, AL
15. Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, AL
16. University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Princess Anne, MD
17. University of the District of Columbia, Washington, DC
18. Winston-Salem State University, Winston-Salem, NC

Using Common Vendors, Joint Approval Plans, and Shared Acquisitions Databases to Enhance Cooperative Collection Development

The Africana Collections at the Libraries of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University

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ABSTRACT: *The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke libraries recently pioneered the use of common vendors, joint approval plans, and shared acquisitions databases to expand their cooperative collection development programs for African Studies. These efforts have enhanced the possibilities for systematic and ad hoc cooperation, increased precision in coordinated acquisitions, provided greater assurance that each library is meeting its cooperative obli-*

gations, and improved the complementarities of their combined collections. By maximizing the number of specialized monographs collectively available and minimizing the chances of needed books not being held locally, the libraries provide better service to patrons and enhance institutional excellence.

The literature on cooperative collection development focuses on libraries and the publishing universe, with only passing mention of the

role vendors can play. This omission is particularly striking in the case of area studies, where the problematic nature of publishing and the book trade in developing countries makes foreign vendors the critical nexus in the selection/acquisition processes. Major domestic vendors also are potentially key players in cooperation, because of their global coverage of English-language academic monographs published or distributed in the U.S and U.K. and technological

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capabilities. This article shows how librarians can make foreign and domestic vendors a central component in cooperative collection development and a vital element of success.

The libraries of the **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill** and **Duke University** have been pioneers in cooperative collection development, with extant programs going back to the 1930's.¹ Librarians learned early that the goals of successful cooperation are institutional excellence and better service to patrons, which are achieved by maximizing the number of titles available. In addition, they came to realize that agreements must be built on the principle of self-interest and based upon existing academic programs and collection strengths. Divisions of responsibility also have to take into account audience and level of use and, hence, work only for research materials. Moreover, faculty are most willing to support such efforts for interdisciplinary subjects, with area studies providing not only some of the best subject possibilities but also geographical opportunities to coordinate these efforts and, thereby, maximize benefits.

UNC and **Duke** also identified two major types of cooperation. Ad hoc approaches work for specific titles across the publishing, bibliographical, and format spectrum. Systematic approaches are appropriate for categories of materials where parent institutions have unique academic programs and/or the libraries have exceptional collection commitments. Librarians have used both successfully for African Studies.

English-language academic monographs, scholarly journals, microform sets, and Web-accessible databases for news and data produced in North America and Western Europe represent the core teaching and research resources for area studies in terms of quality, visibility, and use. The central importance of these publications limits them to ad hoc forms of cooperation, while their relatively high cost justifies the time spent on title-by-title selection.

Libraries supporting major programs in African Studies also need to acquire a range of indigenous publications. African imprints provide important cultural, economic, political, and social documentation. In addition, they fill lacunae in the standard academic literature and provide local perspectives for subjects covered elsewhere in the scholarly literature.² At the same time, precisely because books published in Africa do not represent core materials at American institutions, they lend themselves to systematic divisions of cooperative collection development responsibility based on broad categories.

Libraries at **UNC** and **Duke** developed cooperative programs for Africana when the latter's parent university created a **Commonwealth Studies Center** nearly a half-century ago. **Duke** naturally began to build research collections on the anglophone countries of the continent. **UNC** therefore complemented these efforts by assuming the primary collecting responsibility for

materials from and about the remaining areas, which are mainly lusophone and francophone countries. Based on their previous experiences, the two libraries also recognized instances where unique academic programs mandated a primary subject commitment that transcended geographical divisions. For example, because only **UNC** has a geography department, it took primary responsibility for this subject; **Duke** assumed the main obligation for religion in support of its divinity school. Over the decades their joint ad hoc and systematic cooperative efforts have resulted in a combined collection offering users tens of thousands of unique titles.³

While dividing responsibility for in-depth acquisitions from and about Africa worked well, at the end of the 1990's the two institutions pioneered the use of vendors to enhance systematic cooperation for publications from foreign countries of the world.⁴ Within this context, librarians decided to choose a common dealer for monographic publications from sub-Saharan Africa except for South Africa. They also excluded those imprints the U.K.-based **African Books Collective** distributes. Given the problems that even the best vendors experience in securing materials directly from Africa, the libraries prefer to buy books from this continent through American or European distributors whenever possible.⁵

Because of the interest both libraries have in South Africa and the quantity and quality of books published there, broad systematic divisions of responsibility are not appropriate. In addition, the existence of an organized book trade makes ad hoc title-by-title cooperation effective for this country, within the context of **Duke's** primary collecting commitment. Since **UNC** and **Duke** use the same primary vendor for South African books, both libraries receive its lists of publications available for sale. Reliance on the same vendor, coupled with knowing each other's buying patterns and being in regular e-mail contact, facilitates this ad hoc coordination.

To maximize the possibilities of systematic cooperation for sub-Saharan Africa exclusive of South Africa, **UNC** and **Duke** looked for a vendor that could both provide the most comprehensive coverage and effectively supply the materials. The librarians also needed a vendor willing to work with a joint approval plan. They chose an international vendor, **Hogarth Representation/Meabooks**, because it is a reputable supplier of African imprints and best met these criteria while offering a Website that allowed them to know which titles not sent on approval were in stock and available for firm ordering.

The two institutions then wrote a joint approval plan profile for the sub-Saharan nations based on pre-existing country and subject coverage agreements. Following long-standing practice, one library assumed a primary collecting obligation for each nation, which allowed

the other institution to acquire materials selectively from and about that country. Collectively the two libraries left no publishing market uncovered in terms of in-depth acquisitions. This joint profile also recognizes pre-existing instances where strong or unique academic programs and concomitant library collection emphases resulted in **UNC** or **Duke** making a primary subject collection development commitment that transcended country divisions.

By using the same vendor for a specified universe of publications and a joint approval plan to divide responsibility for their acquisitions from Africa systematically, **UNC** and **Duke** know exactly what the other library is obtaining. This arrangement maximizes the chances that all subjects and countries are covered

appropriately to support their combined programmatic and user needs and ensures no topic of common interest falls through the cracks. The two libraries keep duplicate acquisitions to an absolute minimum. Finally, they achieve all these benefits without spending one cent more than they would or could have otherwise.

Librarians at **UNC** and **Duke** also use a common dealer and shared vendor database to create more possibilities for ad hoc coordinated acquisition of books published or distributed in the U.S. and the U.K., including, of course, those related to African Studies. This process was more gradual and followed from the broader decisions of the separately-administered libraries at **UNC**, **Duke**, and their consortial library partner, **North Carolina State University**, to use the same vendor, in this instance, **Yankee Book Peddler**, to supply nearly all books published or distributed in the U.S. and U.K.

As in the case with **Hogarth/Meabooks** for African imprints, **YBP** as a domestic vendor is a good choice because of its comprehensive coverage of new books published. Whenever libraries choose vendors that cover the largest common publishing universe, they provide selectors with the greatest number of possibilities for cooperative acquisitions. In addition to profiling more books published or distributed in the U.S. than any other dealer, **YBP's** U.K. and Australian subsidiaries and its inclusion of key English-language publishers along the western Pacific Rim and elsewhere provide the global academic book coverage needed. This broad scope, in turn, integrates maximally relevant foreign imprints into core domestic collection development programs.

YBP's Gobi 2 also turned out to be an excellent choice for enhancing ad hoc cooperation because its acquisitions database includes both titles its staff profiles as well as all orders from any of its customers. This shared database allows librarians to see what all libraries on a given campus and within their self-defined consortium have been sent on approval, have ordered, have received as notification slips, or

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have selected online for possible later purchase. The database indicates actions taken in real time, using YBP further increases the potential for coordination by providing selectors with this information close to the time a book is published or becomes available for acquisition.

This domestic vendor decision resulted in creating a common universe of English-language monographs that encompassed relevant domestic and foreign publishers in the emerging global English-language academic book market, while dramatically reducing the time and effort required to find out what consortial partners were doing. The shared database also indicates decisions as soon as libraries or YBP takes any action. Such timely knowledge, coupled with the use of email and the quick responses this medium typically gets, allows the Africana selectors at UNC and Duke to coordinate cooperative collection development for specialized or expensive purchases down to the level of individual titles on a comprehensive and on-going basis. The UNC Africana bibliographer selects YBP titles online from its Gobi2 database. By checking the consortial status box to the right of the bibliographical record he can review at a glance what actions have been taken by selectors at Duke and NCSU.⁶

Using the same vendor for English-language books published or distributed in the U.S. and U.K. also has resulted in extending ad hoc cooperative collection development for Africana beyond the formal agreements between the main libraries at UNC and Duke. The Africana bibliographers can now easily see what the branches and separately administered health science and law libraries on both of their campuses are acquiring as soon as an action is registered in YBP's database. Although NCSU is not part of this cooperative program, its acquisitions can also be con-

sidered when the UNC and Duke Africana bibliographers make their selection decisions. This de facto expansion of the libraries involved has further decreased unneeded duplication and, through such dollar savings, has correspondingly increased the number of unique titles available to users within the local consortium.

In conclusion, these vendor-based programs at UNC and Duke have enhanced the possibilities for systematic and ad hoc cooperation, in-

creased precision in coordinated acquisitions, and improved the complementarities of their combined collections. By that process, they have provided greater assurance that each library is meeting its cooperative obligations. By maximizing the number of specialized monographs collectively available and minimizing the chances of needed books not being held locally, the libraries provide better service to patrons and enhance institutional excellence.

Endnotes

1. On the history and development of this cooperation, see Patricia Buck Dominguez and Luke Swindler, "Cooperative Collection Development at the Research Triangle University Libraries: A Model for the Nation," *College & Research Libraries* 53 (1993), p. 470-96.
2. Hans M. Zell's, *The African Publishing Companion: A Resource Guide* (Lochcarron: Hans Zell Publishing Consultants, 2002), provides the most up-to-date and comprehensive overview of publishing and bookselling in Africa. A continuously updated version is available to purchasers of the print volume at <http://www.africanpublishingcompanion.com/>, while a new published edition is scheduled to appear in 2004. For the situation in countries with English as the official language, see *Book Chain in Anglophone Africa: A Survey and Directory* (Oxford: International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications, 2002), which is also available in its entirety free at <http://www.inasp.info/pubs/bookchain/profiles/>.
3. The overview section on the UNC-Chapel Hill Libraries' Website located at <http://www.lib.unc.edu/cdd/crs/international/afri/overview.html> provides a list and map of the divisions of primary responsibility by African countries in general and a copy of the current joint approval plan profile for African publications specifically.
4. Although the focus of this article is on sub-Saharan (black) Africa, UNC and Duke librarians built on a success in the mid-1990's of a joint approval plan with the Library of Congress regional acquisition offices for South Asia. They subsequently decided to use the LC Cairo Office as their primary vendor for north (Arab) Africa. They wrote complementary profiles for this part of the continent in terms of subjects and levels of coverage in order to create cooperative collections of African imprints for their nascent Middle Eastern Studies programs. Incidentally, this joint approval plan for South Asia, which includes nearby North Carolina State University, represented the first and remains the only such one with the LC regional acquisitions offices.
5. All libraries, including those in Africa, face the same problems. For a recent report on the obstacles faced by a library trying to get publications from even its own African country, see H. K. Raseroka, "The Acquisition of African Published Material by a Library in a Developing Country," *African Research & Documentation* 72 (1996), p. 45-53. In addition, African libraries also rely on the same U.S./U.K. distributors to get indigenous imprints. Raseroka, p. 47, and John Pinfold, "Acquiring Books from Southern Africa: A Librarian's View," *Focus on International & Comparative Librarianship* 27, no. 2 (1996), p. 55-6.
6. While this article centers on the experience of research institutions using vendors to enhance ad hoc cooperation, such approaches are potentially relevant to all libraries. See, for example, Rob Kairis, "Tools for Small Colleges: Using Yankee Book Peddler to Facilitate Cooperative Collection Development," *Library Collections, Acquisitions & Technical Services* 27 (2003), p.173-78.

Preparing for the Future: Strategic Planning and Leadership in Special Collections

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African-American collections at **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)**, in spite of a longstanding history of limited and unequal funding, were birthed, survived, some might even say blossomed, in the adverse climate of nineteenth-century **Jim Crow**. Donations from prominent bibliophiles provided the core of these nascent African-American collections. Some special collections, including those at **Howard Fisk, Tuskegee, and Hampton**, stand as a tribute to the library leaders of the past and their dogged

determination to chronicle the notable accomplishments of people of African descent. The work of **Dr. Dorothy Porter Wesley** (1905-1995) and her contemporaries (Waller, 2003, p.17) are evidence of exemplary collection development. According to **Charles L. Blockson**, curator of the **Charles L. Blockson Collection**, "**Dr. Wesley** transformed **Howard's** collection of black culture into an internationally known treasure." Thanks to the effort of these early bibliophiles and library pioneers, African-American

Collections at HBCUs remain a national, in some cases international, treasure.

In the twenty first century, information professionals will be challenged to answer persistent questions regarding these special collections; 1) What role, if any, will the African-American collection play in advancing

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