

November 2017

Biz of Acq: Taking Advantage of Every Opportunity: Blending Local and Consortial DDA eBook Programs

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Recommended Citation

Graves, Tonia; Tench, Rob; Elguindi, Anne; and Flinchbaugh, Michelle (2017) "Biz of Acq: Taking Advantage of Every Opportunity: Blending Local and Consortial DDA eBook Programs," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 26: Iss. 2, Article 39.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6724>

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Biz of Acq — Taking Advantage of Every Opportunity: Blending Local and Consortial DDA eBook Programs

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Introduction

Can you have too many demand-driven acquisitions (DDA) programs? Is one DDA program enough? In the Commonwealth of Virginia, we're not sure how to answer the first question. However, our answer to the second question is an unequivocal NO! Well, that is at least true if you examine the experience of **Old Dominion University (ODU)** and the **Virtual Library of Virginia (VIVA)**, the Commonwealth's consortium of nonprofit academic libraries.

In the last 18 months, both organizations have implemented DDA pilots, and **ODU** participated in both of them. Because the same vendor was used for each pilot, it's not surprising that the plans have similar characteristics. Both plans only include eBooks, and their basic acquisitions models match. They have similar browsing periods, and both allow unlimited simultaneous users, although the overall number of uses is limited for purchased titles. The programs differ in a number of ways, however, including the number of allowable Short Term Loans (STLs) before purchase, the kind and number of books available for use, and the maximum list price for titles (Figure 1).

These plans also have different challenges. The primary issues faced by **ODU** have been training staff, avoiding duplication, creating end-user awareness, and developing efficient workflows. **VIVA's** primary issues have been communicating the plan effectively across the consortium and bringing publishers into the plan.

Some issues do affect both the individual library and the consortium, however. For both programs, record loading and record management are complex and challenging issues. Also, since both programs are pilots, creating and applying effective assessment tools to determine future viability and funding will be critical.

Old Dominion University DDA Background

Located in Norfolk, VA, **Old Dominion University** was founded in 1930 and currently serves just under 20,000 undergraduate and just over 5,000 graduate students. **ODU** offers 70 bachelor's degrees, 54 master's degrees, 42 doctoral degrees, and 2 educational specialist degrees. More than 70 degree programs are available through Distance Learning.

The University Libraries' collections total approximately 3.2 million items, including over 1 million monographic volumes, over 20,000 journals and other serial publications, over 2 million microform units, and over 68,000 maps, computer data files, audiovisual, audio, film, and cartographic materials.

DDA at ODU

Like many other college and university libraries, **ODU's** University Libraries have been coping with material budget issues over the last few years. In response to these challenges and in order to expand the universe of available titles and provide immediate access to materials, the University Libraries allocated funds to begin a DDA program in 2012. DDA would also serve the University's extensive Distance Education Program.

In August 2012, the University Libraries selected **EBL** as its vendor and implemented a DDA eBook pilot program. New titles were based on the Library's **YBP** existing monographic approval plan, and the plan only included titles published since 2010. All subjects were represented, although textbooks and popular titles were excluded, and the maximum prices were set at \$300 per title and \$30 per STL with staff mediating requests that exceeded the maximum limits.

Standard parameters for STLs, purchase triggers, loan periods, numbers of users, and course reserves were established. Three STLs were allowed, and on the fourth use of a title, the book was purchased. **ODU** opted for the seven-day STL, and, following the **EBL** model, once purchased, a title had 325 available loan days per year. Initially, 19,500 **EBL** titles were loaded into the libraries' Sierra Integrated Library System (ILS), and duplicates were removed as they were discovered.

Plan Criteria	ODU Plan	VIVA Plan
Subjects	All	Science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and health
Publishers	No restrictions	Added to the plan based on consortium request and negotiation by EBL
Publication date limit	2010	2012
Maximum list price	\$300/title; \$30/STL	\$250/title
STL period	7 days	7 days
STLs before purchase	3	10, then 25

Figure 1: Basic Comparison – ODU and VIVA DDA Plans

continued on page 63

Rumors from page 47

debate proposition will be — “Wherever possible, library collections should be shaped by patrons, instead of by librarians.”

And there are several more speakers so be sure and look at the **Charleston Conference** Website for updates.

www.katina.info/conference

We will have a change of pace for the **Saturday Rump Session**. There will be a

Charleston Seminar Luncheon and program from noon to 3:30 organized by **Michael Arthur, Meg White, Rebecca Seger, Jonathan Harwell**, and others. More information will be posted on the **Charleston Conference** Website. www.katina.info/conference

continued on page 86

The DDA program has proven to be well-used by faculty and students, and by the end of FY13 (June 2013), almost the entire allocation of funds for the program had been expended. Consequently, additional funds were allocated to the program for FY14. From July 2012 to December 2013, over 1,850 STLs and almost 50 purchases had been made (Figure 2), and additional usage was represented by browses (Figure 3).

VIVA DDA Background

The **Virtual Library of Virginia**, or **VIVA**, is the consortium of the nonprofit academic libraries within the Commonwealth of Virginia. Members include all 39 of Virginia's state-assisted colleges and universities as well as 33 private, nonprofit institutions and the Library of Virginia.

DDA within VIVA

In the 2012/13 biennium, **VIVA** received new state funding for eBooks in the sciences, technology, engineering, medicine, and health (STEM-H) disciplines. One approach taken by the consortium was to pilot a DDA plan with **EBL** for the 2013-2014 academic year. As all of the products **VIVA** acquires are provided to the public institutions, **ODU** was included in this pilot. Twelve of the 33 private member institutions also decided to participate.

VIVA began its pilot with an initial load of 2,200 titles with new titles added into the plan each week. Publishers in the plan include **John Wiley & Sons**, **Oxford University Press**, **Jossey-Bass**, **McGraw-Hill UK**, and **Sage**. Publishers are often hesitant to participate in consortial DDA plans, wary of the possibility that they could cannibalize their own sales. The pilot approach was therefore key for **VIVA** not only because it kept the risk low for its members but also because it kept it low for the participating publishers.

Unlike **ODU**, **VIVA's** plan was restricted to the STEM-H subjects. Because of the multiplier effect on purchases, the list price was set lower, at \$250, and only books from 2012 forward were included. Purchased books are shared in perpetuity among the participating members with 278 seven-day loan periods per year, refreshed annually. The STL trigger to purchase was initially set for 10, but it was raised to 25 in October 2013 in order to maximize access to the STEM-H eBooks while keeping total costs within budget for the academic year. Usage has followed the typical semester pattern (Figure 4), and many titles have been used across multiple participating institutions (Figure 5).

When the Consortial becomes Local

One of the key challenges for member libraries with the **VIVA** plan has been record loading and management. The consortium does not have a shared catalog, and there is a wide variety of library systems among the members. In order to provide a central record source, **VIVA** collaborated with **EBL** and

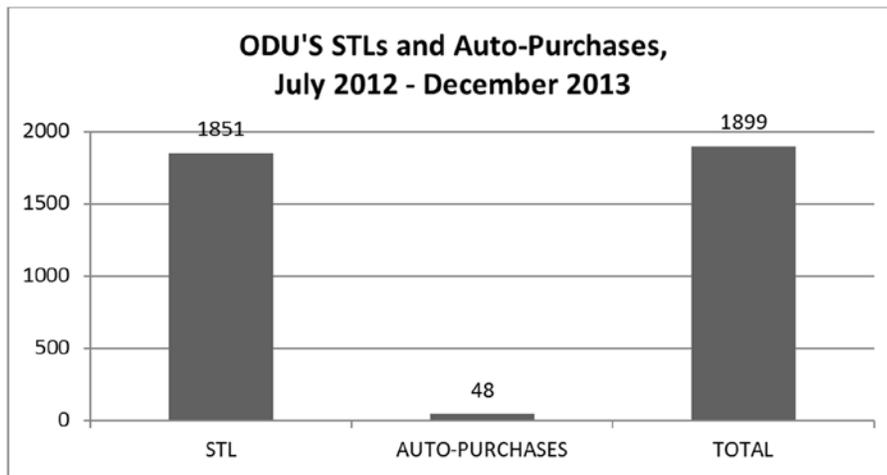


Figure 2: ODU STLs and Auto-Purchases

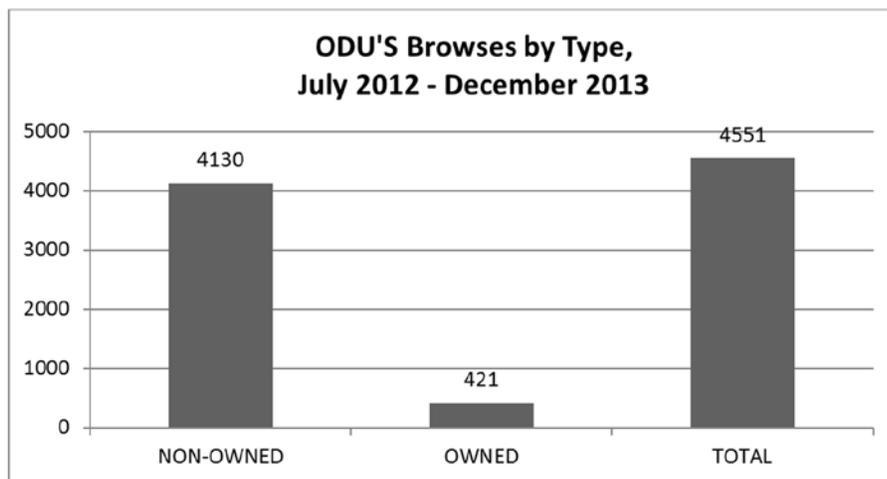


Figure 3: ODU Browse Data

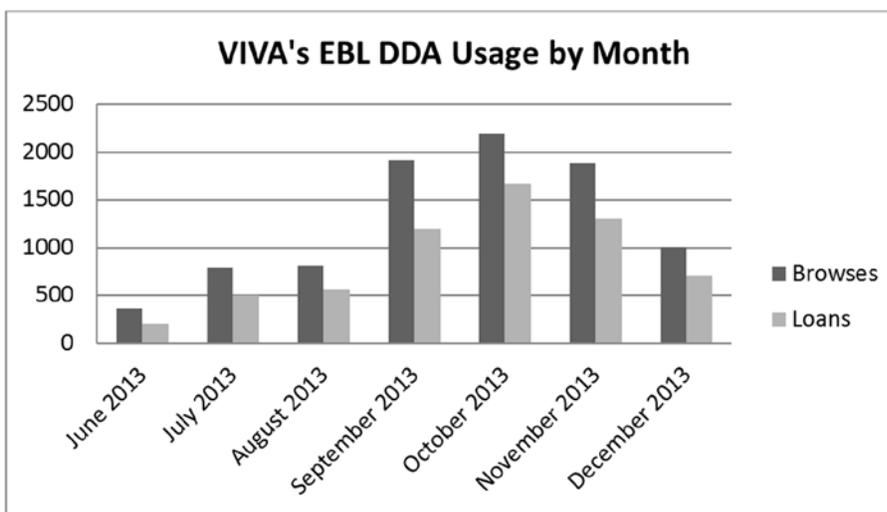


Figure 4: VIVA Usage

OCLC staff to implement a record management system for the plan through the WorldCat knowledge base (WCKB). This service allows member libraries to receive MARC records and updates that are customized with local preferences or provide direct access through WorldCat Local.

Although this service has effectively outsourced much of the record management for the plan from the consortium's central office, member libraries still have the challenge of managing the records in their catalogs and discovery services. For **ODU** (and many

continued on page 64

other VIVA libraries), using the WCKB as a record delivery service was entirely new. Local procedures and documentation continue to develop, as do troubleshooting and effective error reporting skills, and the distinction between the local and consortial plan can cause confusion.

In addition to confusion about record management, the VIVA plan also adds complexity for ODU and other member libraries with local EBL plans through the possibility of duplicated titles. In order to avoid duplicates, there is a manual check completed at EBL once a month. Libraries are alerted to any duplicate titles so they can make a decision about keeping or pulling them on a case by case basis.

Looking to the Future

If ODU continues to blend local and consortial DDA programs, it will create a number of interesting questions. ODU selectors already wrestle with how and if they should “select around” the titles on VIVA’s plan, and that is while it is still in a pilot phase. Usage in a DDA program is also a complex issue, such as comparing a browse to a loan, identifying usage within the loan period, and noting continuing use after a title has been purchased. Collection

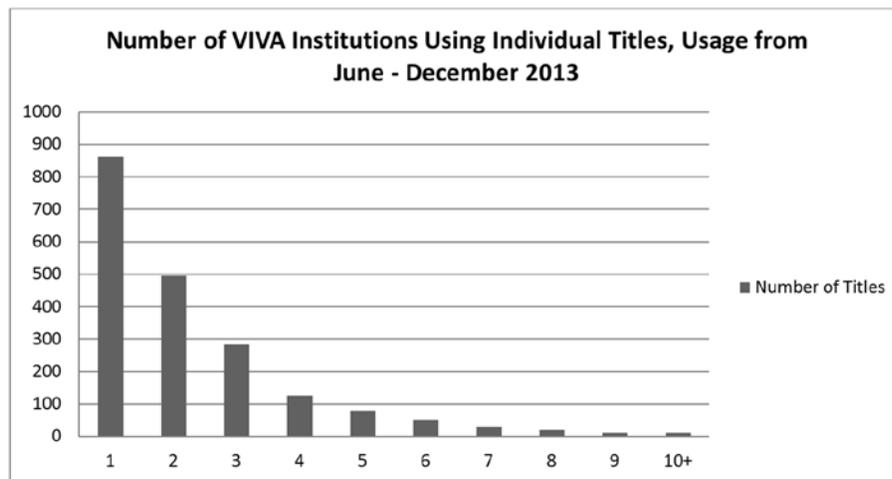


Figure 5: VIVA Title Use across Institutions

development personnel at ODU have begun the discussion of how DDA usage, both at the local and the consortial level, can be likened to the usage of other eBook collections so that the benefits and costs of each can be fairly compared.

The positive impact of VIVA’s DDA plan on ODU’s collections and services, however, is clear for the simple reason that it is getting

used. From July to December 2013, ODU users made 535 downloads of 222 titles — titles that ODU otherwise might not have been able to provide. As there are different advantages to each DDA program, it seems likely that ODU will continue to wrestle with the challenge of multiple DDA programs as long as the projects continue. 🌱

Optimizing Library Services — Access to Service Keeps the Academic Library Community Busy These Days

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Ever since the Internet inspired the creation of Web-based, accessible materials, many libraries have developed a Web presence so their service populations can access information and various library materials. New, emerging technologies continually create more effective ways for managing, searching, retrieving, storing, and preserving information, data, records, and important documents.

While keeping abreast of new technologies poses challenges, academic libraries, in particular, consider this as an opportunity to improve access to new expressions of content for their users. In many ways, improving access is synonymous with improving services and a look at past endeavors along with current happenings gives direction for the future.

In the early years, the library catalog was the focus of attention. Academic libraries created and built legacy systems in an effort to automate the catalog and various technical services functions. The catalog offered patrons quicker access to the library’s holdings and, theoretically, technical services librarians and staff were able to deliver materials to the stacks

faster for patron use. Gradually, though, the catalog was considered an inaccurate representation of a library’s possessions due to the influx of journals that resided in aggregator databases that became part of the initial online products for libraries courtesy of the Internet. Also, many librarians were hesitant to use the 856 field in the MARC catalog record because the links would often break as publishers perfected their online platforms. Many concluded that the legacy system catalog would become extinct in a Web-based environment.

The academic library community was understandably excited when **Serials Solutions** offered a way to produce an A-Z list of journal holdings residing in online databases, the OpenURL ushered in SFX (and subsequent variations) for linking between databases, and vendor records and durable links could be added to the library catalog with less concern as to their accuracy. Proprietary integrated library systems offered more seamless ways to handle the daily activities for acquisitions, serials, and cataloging. Additional products for federated searching and digitizing items typically held

in special collections were developed and electronic resource management systems were introduced to assist librarians with managing the numerous licensing agreements and subscription information that accompanied each journal, database, or online resource. Despite these terrific advances, new challenges arise on a regular basis.

So what activities are keeping the academic library community busy these days?

Issues and Challenges

I recently edited a book for **IGI Global** that focuses on the answer to this very question. *Cases on Electronic Records and Resource Management Implementation in Diverse Environments* is a collection of examples of electronic records and resource management implementation in various settings. Section 1 of the title contains a number of chapters discussing the ongoing issues in academic library communities that impact the level of access, and ultimately service, that the library can offer its patrons.

continued on page 65