Cancellation of Print Journals In The Electronic Era: A case Study

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INTRODUCTION
The Health Sciences Libraries at the University of California, Davis recently conducted their latest large cancellation projects for 2004 and 2005. The work on the cancellation projects was done during 2003 and 2004 respectively. These two specialized libraries, the Carlson Health Sciences Library (CHSL) and the UC Davis Medical Center Library in Sacramento (MCL), are part of the General Library of UC Davis and part of the system of libraries of the University of California, which also includes the California Digital Library. The General Library collections serve a number of subjects from arts to zoology, including a number of professional schools. This article describes the decision making, the processing of materials, and the impacts of the Health Sciences Libraries’ journals cancellation projects for 2004 and 2005.

The collections of the Health Sciences Libraries complement each other. The CHSL serves the faculty, staff and students of the School of Medicine and the School of Veterinary Medicine. The CHSLs collection has its strengths in the basic life sciences as they relate to human and animal medicine, collecting extensively in veterinary medicine. The scope of the CHSLs collection encompasses clinical medicine, veterinary research, and basic medical and veterinary sciences including genetics, virology, immunology, medicine, parasitology, orthopedics, neurology, epidemiology, preventive medicine and zoonoses. The journal collection is especially strong in the basic sciences and clinical research. The MCL serves the faculty, staff and students affiliated with the UCD Health System. This collection contains monographs and serials in the areas of clinical medicine, nursing and patient care.

The Health Sciences Technical Services (HSTS) is housed at CHSL, but it serves both libraries. Staffed by five FTE equivalents, HSTS provides a full range of technical services, from acquisitions and cataloging to binding/preservation, continued on page 18

IF RUMORS WERE HORSES

Y'all. Happy New Year!

We begin the year with more sad news. Our esteemed colleague, the astute, vivacious, energetic, and loving Deanna L. Cates passed away on December 6, 2005 in Greenville, NC. Deanna had struggled many valiant years with cancer and every time that I talked with her I was convinced that she would beat it. She was an amazingly resilient woman who never gave up. I will miss her greatly. Her quirky style. Her dulcimer playing. Her brilliant mind. Her crocheting. Her love of animals. May she rest in peace.

See Chuck Hamaker’s obit in this issue, p.12. And we are planning on conducting a service in her memory at the upcoming ALA in San Antonio. News will be posted on listservs.

On a more upbeat note, just this minute got a brief message from Heidi Hoerman <heidigoerman@yahoo.com>! She and Bill tied the knot over the holidays! She is married! Pretty exciting. More news forthcoming.

SAGE Publications has become the first corporate affiliate of the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological, and Cognitive Sciences. The Federation is a dues-supported coalition of member organizations (20 scientific societies) plus affiliates which include university departments of psychology, schools of education, research centers, regional psychological associations, and science divisions of the American Psychological Association. Representing the interests of scientists
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regardless of formats of materials. In recent years, HSTS has played an increasingly important role in supporting collection development and in the management of electronic resources.

Being part of the system of libraries of the University of California, including the California Digital Library, presents the Health Sciences Libraries with a unique situation with regard to conducting cancellation projects. The California Digital Library negotiates licenses for packages of electronic journals that are accessible to UC faculty, staff and students at all ten campuses of the university. There also are bibliographer groups which form part of the advisory structure for the CDL. The bibliographers at UCD’s Health Sciences Libraries participate in one of these groups: the UC Health and Life Sciences group. This group has negotiated access to electronic resources for those UC campuses that collect materials in the health and life sciences. As a result, electronic materials in CDL packages are accessible to all ten campuses or to some campuses. In considering which journals to be candidates for cancellation, the bibliographers from the CHSL and the MCL needed to review journals in CDL’s electronic packages and consult closely with their colleagues at their sister campuses. This aspect is one part of the profound influence the availability of electronic journals had on the cancellation projects.

DECISION-MAKING

Strategies for Decision-Making for Cancellations

The usual factors involved in deciding which print journals to cancel have included price, usage, faculty demand, duplication at other libraries on campus and at the UC, and, at times, impact factors. In the last couple of years, this scenario has changed as the situation has evolved and further complicated the process of decision-making. New factors include the reliance on the electronic versions of journals over the print journals, resulting in the cancellation of the “duplicate” print format of journals that also are available in the electronic format.

Relying on Electronic Format and Considering Print Equivalents as “Duplicates” to Consider for Cancellation

The access to electronic journals was a primary element in our strategies for making decisions about which journals to cancel. Our main strategy was to support one format of an information resource whenever possible, customarily canceling the print format of journals while retaining the electronic equivalents of those journals. The print journals were considered as “duplicates” of their electronic equivalents, a new construct in our considerations for 2004. Previously, duplicates only had been envisaged as duplicate copies of print journals. Another strategy was the maintenance of unique content whenever possible so that one copy of a print journal on campus was retained and duplicate copies of the print journal were cancelled; this reflected the traditional practice of canceling duplicate copies of a print journal in libraries at UCD.

Print Journals as “Duplicates” of Their Electronic Equivalents

At UC, librarians decided to cancel the print duplicates of those electronic journals to which we had stable access. Because there was relatively stable access to the online journals as a result of their being in a package licensed by the CDL, the librarians reasoned that it would be possible to safely cancel the print journals and rely on their electronic equivalents for those packages. Since the CDL-negotiated electronic journals are in packages by publisher, current information about publishers and the journals in each package was important to consider in our decision-making. At UCD’s Health Sciences Libraries, most print journals in these packages were candidates for cancellation; some print journal “duplicates” were kept because of faculty demand or subject area.

Those print journals with electronic counterparts that were not in stable CDL packages with print archives generally were not considered for cancellation. Also, those print journals with electronic counterparts to which UCD subscribed separately were not examined for cancellation.

Duplicates of Print Journals at UCD

Most duplicates of print journals in the libraries within UCD’s General Library had been cancelled in past cancellation projects. There were a few remaining duplicates that were cancellation candidates for 2004 and 2005.

Price

Naturally, price was a big factor in determining which print journals to cancel. Numerous electronic journals in packages licensed by CDL were priced at a discount for print. This meant that it was necessary to cancel more journals to achieve a significant cost savings.

Usage Statistics

Usage statistics for both the print journals and their electronic counterparts were gathered and carefully scrutinized. Print journals with low use were viewed as candidates for cancellation.

Demand from Faculty

Comments from faculty were valuable and given weight in the decision-making. We communicated with faculty in response to their comments.

Process for Decision-Making

In view of our decision to consider cancelling print journals in CDL’s packages which provided print archives, we relied on lists of the journals in those packages and focused our attention on the journals within our subject areas. In addition, we relied on lists of print journals duplicated at UCD libraries within the General Library and concentrated on possible duplicates to cancel. We created Excel spreadsheets and Access tables, queries and reports to aid in the decision-making process. The General Library posted lists of cancellation candidates on the Web for faculty to view.

Because the General Library is comprised of several departments and two separate technical services units, it was important to have a mechanism to record cancellation decisions to share among library departments and units. The Serials Department in the Shields (Main) Library placed lists of journals in the packages licensed by the CDL that were under review on the library’s networked drive for library department..
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ments to view and annotate. Each department keyed in its cancellation decisions on the spreadsheets. The recorded decisions were necessary for processing the cancellations.

We set up numerous fields in the Access tables which allowed us to create queries and reports that were very helpful. We could easily view the possible cancellation candidates listed by publisher, price, and use. We created lists of duplicates at UCD General Library departments or at the two Health Sciences Libraries. Also, we constructed lists of those candidates receiving comments from faculty. The General Library prepared a database of comments electronically submitted by faculty. The comments were then distributed to library departments according to the academic departments of the faculty members submitting comments.

We consulted with other library departments of the General Library about duplicates of print journals to consider for cancellation. The consultation between the two Health Sciences Libraries was especially important.

Collaboration

Collaboration was necessary to help with the decision-making process. We worked with librarians and library staff in the Health Sciences Libraries, the other departments of the General Library, on other UC campuses and at the CDL. Our consulting with other collection development librarians at UCD centered on interdisciplinary areas, such as biological sciences, animal culture and psychology. We consulted with other UC librarians in biomedical or health sciences libraries with whom we had made cooperative arrangements.

Support for Decision-Making

Librarians responsible for deciding which journals to cancel at the Health Sciences Libraries greatly relied on support from library staff at the Health Sciences Libraries and at the Shields Library. Staff at the Carlson Health Sciences Library were particularly helpful. They conducted bibliographic checking, procured lists of subscribed journals from vendors, and provided substantial amounts of information, such as locations, prices, and current publishers. Student assistants and staff in Collection Development and in Access Services assisted with compiling usage statistics and keying data into databases and spreadsheets. These efforts represented a huge workload and were greatly appreciated.

Results

Based on the data collected, over 700 journals were cancelled, resulting in significant savings that could be used to support electronic collections.

Processing

The work on cancelled titles started after the cancellation lists were finalized. The process was a collaborative effort among several library units, spearheaded by Health Sciences Technical Services (HSTS). At HSTS, four library assistants were involved at various stages of the process. They notified vendors/publishers about the cancellations, closed records, updated holdings information in the local ILS, and sent unbound issues to the bindery. They also updated the library holdings in SERHOLD, the National Library of Medicine's holdings statement database for biomedical serial titles. The cancelled title lists were sent to the library's Systems Department where notes related to cancellation information were keyed in systematically. The lists were also forwarded to Health Sciences Library Circulation Services to remove call number labels from shelves in current periodical stacks for those cancelled titles.

IMPACTS/OUTCOMES ON TECHNICAL SERVICES

The cancellation projects have had major impacts on technical services. There are fewer print titles in the collection as a result of the cancellations. At the same time, there is an increasing number of electronic titles in the collection. CDL negotiated the licenses for most of the electronic journals to which UCD has access. CDL also acquires and catalogs those electronic journals through the Shared Cataloging Program (SCP).

We still perform traditional tasks because of the existence of the print collection, but it is also necessary to learn to use new tools to work with electronic resources. While routine tasks are diminishing, new complex and diverse tasks are increasing. The work in technical services has shifted from step-by-step processes to more dynamic, complex tasks, such as information gathering, troubleshooting, access, and coordination/cooperation with other units in managing electronic resources. This change in our work affects acquisitions, cataloging, maintenance, check-in, binding, and support for collection development. It also requires a higher level of skills for staff to support electronic resources.

We are doing less cataloging for electronic titles because of the SCP, but we are maintaining a growing number of electronic journals because of the large number of electronic journals licensed by the CDL. To ensure access to these electronic journals, in CDL packages as well as locally licensed, we have been much more involved in resolving problems associated with access to electronic resources, maintaining accuracy of URLs, and online coverage notes. We fix problems for the titles HSL has licensed, but report others to the SCP or other UCD cataloging units. More than ever, we are cooperating and collaborating with SCP and other UCD cataloging units in order to maintain the high quality of cataloging records. We are aligning our local cataloging practice with SCP cataloging guidelines; at the same time, we strive to preserve local information customized for UCD users.

We now have fewer print titles to catalog as a result of the cancellations, but we are doing much more maintenance work with the print collection. As we load SCP records into the local ILS, we identify those records for print titles that need to be cleaned up or re-cataloged. Re-cataloging triggers maintenance on other associated records (subscriptions, holdings, and item records) and on physical volumes in some cases. Some cataloging maintenance work, such as changes in ISSNs and publishers, has been incorporated into the journal check in process.

The work in acquisitions has changed. To better manage locally licensed electronic titles, we note in the records whether the titles are paid or "free" with print subscriptions. We catalog electronic titles with licenses that conform with the CDL model license. For those electronic journals without acceptable licenses, we do not...
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The journal cancellations had a profound impact on our binding workload. We have fewer and fewer titles to be bound. New library policies regarding binding, claiming, and replacement have changed the way the binding unit operates. More volumes are bound incomplete due to the policy “No claiming for missing issue that is available online.” We fastback the majority of our print titles now because the library has access to their electronic counterparts.

The change in our work also requires a higher level of skills for staff to handle the complexity of new tasks. To help staff acquire this new set of skills, more training opportunities were provided, either in a formal classroom setting or as one-on-one hands-on training. In addition, all staff members were encouraged to participate in the development of procedures and design of workflows. This process provided staff with the big picture of our workload and shows them how their work is related to the work of others. It was also a great opportunity for them to learn from each other. From the management perspective, these sessions helped to identify the areas where further training is needed.

CONCLUSION

The cancellation projects of print journals for 2004 and 2005 presented us with novel situations that changed our policies and practices. Current information about publishers of electronic journals is required for us to perform our work, especially when electronic journals are grouped in packages by publishers. The instability of electronic journals in publishers’ packages has become more apparent. When titles move to other publishers, identifying new terms for continued access often has added to our workload. To ensure uninterrupted access to electronic resources for library users, we have to work proactively and collaboratively within the UCD libraries and among the libraries in the UC system. The management of electronic materials also mandates a higher level of analytic and problem-solving skills for staff. We have to commit ourselves to providing enough training opportunities to empower our staff to perform their jobs. The shift of the library collection from print to online has transformed technical services from a processing-oriented unit to a service-oriented center. Technical services will continue to evolve with changes brought on by new technologies and resources/services the library provides. Overall, the projects were beneficial to us and to our users.

Endnotes

Going Online-Only with Journal Content: American University Library Takes the Plunge

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Introduction

The decision to move from print to online-only journals is fraught with uncertainty. While many aspects of the online environment have stabilized over the past few years, many unknowns remain, particularly about long-term preservation and access of content. Yet user demand, coupled with emerging technologies that facilitate the integration of online journal content with indexing databases, is driving the print journal toward obsolescence. Add to these factors the realities of library budgets and the cost of collecting in multiple formats, and the shift to online journals seems inevitable.

At American University Library we have decided that the time has come to embrace the inevitable, but we have been laying the groundwork for years, and it is this prep work that makes us ready to take the e-only plunge. This article provides a summary of the actions we have taken to prepare ourselves for this day, and describes the process we have followed throughout the first phase of the transition from print to online journal content.

Laying the Groundwork

One of the first things we did in preparation for the shift to online-only journals had to do with our bound periodicals collection, and that was to create a mechanism to collect usage statistics on them. Because our periodicals collection is non-circulating, volumes had neither item records nor bar-codes. Without them we had no automated means of collecting usage data on volumes that “circulated” off the shelf. Not having this data was problematic enough for making collection management decisions about cancellation and off-site storage; clearly it would prove a hindrance in managing the collection through such a transitional time. In 1998 we began a project to bar-code our bound periodicals using part-time periodicals desk staff as our workforce. Five years later the project was completed and we began collecting data on all volumes that passed through the re-shelving process. This usage data has been an important factor in evaluating titles for online-only access.

Another early implementation that has served us well was the development of licensing guidelines for e-content. We wanted to ensure from the start that our licenses would allow for the same uses that we enjoyed in the print environment. These uses include interlibrary loan, reserves, the full range of use allowable by “fair use” exemptions, and archiving rights. Having licensing guidelines in place early on means that we will not have to go back and negotiate those rights now.

One of the developments that has most greatly influenced the decision to make the transition from print to electronic journals has been the emergence of link-resolver products like SFX from ExLibris and Article Linker from Serials Solutions. (American University uses the SFX product from ExLibris.) Link-resolvers provide so much value added service to online collections by creating seamless connections between disparate e-content. And the databases that such services are built upon (e.g., the SFX KnowledgeBase) are themselves quickly becoming indispensable tools for managing e-journal collections.

Another relatively new tool that facilitates the shift to online-only content is LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keeps Stuff Safe). LOCKSS, an open source, peer-to-peer software package, is a relatively low cost and low maintenance system of capturing and storing digital journal content. Using a Web crawler similar to a search engine, the LOCKSS software collects newly published content from select e-journals. (For more information on the LOCKSS program, see http://lockss.stanford.edu.) American University Library became a LOCKSS par-