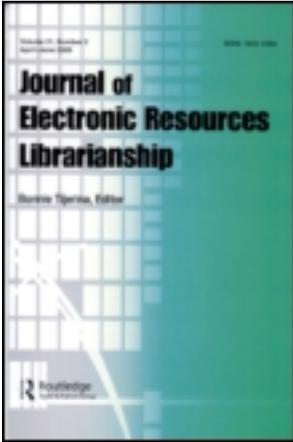


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E-Book Purchasing Best Practices for Academic Libraries

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Journal Library of the Year 2013, among other awards. A detailed explanation of the AI process and a list of other accolades is on their website at www.hclibrary.org.

Another method for libraries to delight their customers is User Experience (UX) design, which has a goal of creating library services and products that are not just usable and useful but also are desirable. Aaron Schmidt of Influx Solutions explained that UX is not just for technology, such as a webpage, and not just to improve customer service, but can be used to redesign any “touch point” where a user interacts with the library. Library staff can better understand how interactions make their users feel by mapping a series of touch points, thus mapping the journey that a user has to take when they interact with the library. Libraries conduct UX audits to examine the library environment, such as signage and buildings, as well as service processes. This type of contextual inquiry arose out of the ethnographic studies that anthropologists conduct in corporate settings, which have now migrated to libraries. Studying our patrons and how they use the library reminds us that “we are not our patrons” and “our patrons are not librarians.” This echoes themes from other presenters, for example, that the only people who speak Boolean are librarians, not library users. Knowledge of broader UX principles allows libraries to expand UX design beyond websites to all library touch points. More information is available on the Influx website at www.weareinflux.com.

The Sonoma County Public Library created both a valuable community resource, like Howard County, and a desirable touch point in the form of an exhaustive list of local music groups, supplemented by photographs and images of posters and fliers. David Dodd, Collections Manager, explained that the Sonoma County Local Music Community was inspired by the Seattle Band Map, the Austin Music Map, the Iowa City Local Music Project, and their own Sonoma County Local Author Community. The Santa Cruz Public Libraries created another music resource, SoundSwell Local Music, a downloadable database of music from local musicians. Diane Cowen, Virtual Services Librarian, explained how the Santa Cruz Public Libraries worked through licensing, storage, and cataloging challenges to create an archive for the members of their local community who want to be involved with music both as creators and listeners.

Finally, Josh Hanagarne, the author of a book with the unexpected title, *The World's Strongest Librarian*, reminded us why we are librarians with a talk whose effect cannot be described within the linear limitations of reading and writing. It can only be fully experienced by viewing at www.infoday.com/il2013. Block out an hour on your calendar, and bring a hankie. Then save the dates October 27–29 for Internet Librarian 2014 and October 30, 2014, for whale watching in Monterey Bay, as a final conference experience that transcends the bounds of literacy.

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E-BOOK PURCHASING BEST PRACTICES FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

By Jason C. Simon, Fitchburg State University

With the advent of digital technologies, we are seeing an increase in demand from users for content within electronic formats. While academic libraries have already been providing a substantial portion of journal content digitally, and it might seem like purchasing

books using similar criteria might make sense, given the current markets there are limitations that make providing digital access to books a little more complicated.

While some of the methods for purchasing electronic books (e-books) are similar to the models used for journal-evaluation purposes, there are a number of factors important to consider that are different for e-books. Typically as usage patterns have dictated, digital purchase of journals has been favored over print, either individually or through databases. While theoretically there should be some advantages with purchasing books in electronic format, such as user-preference and reduction of theft, many of these are reduced by factors imposed by publishers and vendors. Whereas most journal access through databases tends to allow unlimited access to titles, e-books at this point rarely follow this access model. There are often restrictions regarding the number of users permitted to view an item at a time and, in some cases, even access to a library of items. The point of this article is to provide a guideline for academic libraries when deciding whether to purchase individual e-books, platforms, or collections.

The following is a list of criteria that may help best inform purchasing decisions:

- Acquisition route
- Access model
- Title selection
- Access management
- File formats
- Cataloging
- Interlibrary loan
- Licensing and copyright
- Privacy
- Open access

ACQUISITION ROUTE

When determining an approach for e-book purchasing, the first step usually involves determining how specifically these books are going to be acquired. Decisions must be made as to whether a library wishes to work directly with publishers, many of which have their own access models; through aggregators, which typically involves bulk-title purchases; or through a monograph vendor, such as *Yankee Book Publishers* (YBP/GOBI). Each has various advantages and disadvantages. These are outlined below.

Publisher Direct

These are often packages that come directly from publishers (e.g., *Springer Link*):

- **Advantages:** There are some cost savings in purchasing titles in packages, and the quality of titles tends to be fairly strong, as these typically have a peer-review process.
- **Disadvantages:** These include some limitations regarding the titles that are available; if a title is not provided by a specific publisher, it will not be available without making a different arrangement with a different publisher. There is also an associated loss of control over which titles can be selected. Individual titles may be able to be selected; however, these typically come as packages, and thus the library would lose some autonomy with

purchasing. Also, if choosing this model for multiple publishers, it can become expensive to obtain a more comprehensive collection.

Aggregators

These are packages put together by third party vendors (e.g., *eBrary*), and typically they provide the option of obtaining entire collections or subsets of these collections for a set price.

- **Advantages:** This is a good way of immediately building a fairly large e-book collection. This can free up libraries from having to spend a large amount of time selecting and purchasing titles. There is also a large cost advantage to this approach if one looks at cost per title. Flexibility is often offered in these collections, which can help make sure key areas are covered.
- **Disadvantages:** There is again a significant loss of control over the selection process; the decision-making is left to the aggregators themselves. Often titles may be removed from collections without much library input. Also, many publishers do not allow the most recent titles to be available through packages. For some disciplines, such as those that evolve rapidly, this can be problematic, and it becomes necessary to evaluate titles before approving bulk purchases of this type.

Monograph Vendors

Traditional monograph vendors (e.g., YBP/GOBI) have adapted their purchasing plans to work with various aggregators to provide digital content. Before purchasing e-books through monograph vendors, it is necessary to first establish a relationship with one of the aforementioned aggregators.

- **Advantages:** Monograph vendors enable the library to manage e-book purchasing much in the way it has been done for traditional print materials. Individual choice of titles can be integrated more easily, and this leaves the agency of title choice in the hands of librarians. Many titles that are not available through aggregators, such as current titles, can still be purchased individually.
- **Disadvantages:** E-books sold in this fashion are often more expensive than their print counterparts. Availability of specific titles may also be limited, depending on which aggregators the monograph vendor has contracted. These also require maintaining a subscription with one or more specified hosting aggregators (prices can vary).

Other Considerations (For All of the Above)

- Is there an embargo on digital access to certain titles?
- What are the platform fees?

ACCESS

When considering the purchase of e-books it is important to examine various access models. As with other digital resources, it can be important to understand the difference between ownership and access. Traditional paper books are owned by a library; these only require one purchase, and the library then owns a copy of this book. When dealing with

digital media, however, many e-books use the access model. In other words, instead of owning a copy of any book upon purchase, the library instead leases access to the book for the period of the license. It is important to understand whether a vendor has any policies in place before starting an agreement. Typically, monograph vendors may enable purchase of an item; however, continued access remains dependent upon maintaining access through an aggregator. Sometimes there is an agreement with vendors of electronic journals or periodicals stating that even if a subscription has been canceled for a title, the library may be able to retain continued access to back issues of that title. This, however, may not apply for many e-books, so it is important to find out if the titles purchased include perpetual ownership.

Even within access models, there is some variation in the types of access. Whereas many providers use a subscription model, wherein access is maintained to all titles within a package as long as the subscription is active, others, such as Ebook Library (*EBL*), use a pay-per-view model. While most vendors limit the number of users per title, some limit access to their entire collections by a specified number of users, such as *Safari*. Below is a brief outline of the pros and cons of each model.

Ownership

- **Advantages:** When making a purchase of a title, this is a known one-time expense. Once purchased, a library will continue to “own” this title. This model also fits in well with preexisting print title purchasing models. Also, in contrast with traditional print titles, there is no risk of loss, theft, late returns, or damage.
- **Disadvantages:** Many titles have a limited shelf-life, and for certain fields (for example, Computer Science) this can result in a collection that may become rapidly obsolete. This, however, is not a new issue, as this has always been the case for traditional print volumes. Some vendors may also force “obsolescence” as they may limit the total number of “views” or “borrows” from a user before the book “wears out” and must be repurchased. Another thing to look for is that even if one purchases a title and has rights to it (unless it can be downloaded), there is no protection against contract changes. The same situation occurs if a hosting vendor goes out of business (Budler, 2013). For information and other problems, see DRM, under licensing below.

Subscription

- **Advantages:** Typically these come with a lower initial price, and it is easier to build a collection. Also possible is the ability for collections to (at least theoretically) be upgraded and new editions can replace older ones.
- **Disadvantages:** This can cause the possibility of an inability to maintain a steady collection without continued purchasing. If a collection or subscription is canceled, that could very well mean the loss of full access to those collections and become a problem for libraries with uncertain funding futures.

Pay-per-view

- **Advantages:** This approach enables a library to avoid large overhead costs for materials that may or may not be used. Charges only apply when a title is actually “checked out” or read. This can also help tie usage stats directly to spending. This approach also eliminates

some of the licensing hurdles that can come into play for interlibrary loans, as each title lent is charged at the same rate as an internal user.

- **Disadvantages:** This can lead to a significant loss of control over expenses. Although there may be a possibility of putting in safeguards to prevent bills from exceeding a budget, it may go against some of the basic budgeting policies under which many libraries operate. It could also make the expense of interlibrary loaning prohibitive. One caveat: with this model it might make it easier to determine which titles need to be purchased outright, quite simply because it is relatively easy to measure usage.

Simultaneous vs. Single User

Some packages provide access models that limit the number of users. Whereas purchasing multiple-user access to individual titles may be more expensive, this can be compared with purchasing multiple titles of print volumes. Some charge per person for access to the entire collection at a time rather than by volume (e.g., *Safari*¹).

- **Advantages:** These collections tend to have very high-quality content, including the most updated editions of books. This can be particularly valuable for high-demand technology titles. The titles that exist within subscription models allow full management and enable switching old titles with new ones at no extra expense. Often these titles are available in no other packages.
- **Disadvantages:** This model can be very expensive, as each additional user is charged at a rate comparable with the purchase of all of the titles separately. The restrictions on usage can also be unwieldy for an educational library where multiple users may wish to have access to titles at the same time; even if they are interested in different titles, the title becomes inaccessible if the maximum number of users is reached for as long as those users are still reading a book in the system. As these books are not downloadable, this could be for a significant length of time.

Other Considerations

- Are titles downloadable or transferable to any other device?
- Is there an ability to borrow a title before purchasing it? Is there an associated fee?

TITLE SELECTION

Within many packages, there are a number of variations in the way titles are selected. Many vendors use an approval plan in which they will automatically ship titles to the library. This model tends to be more common with public libraries, but in case some of the academic vendors or publishers use this model they are included here.

Firm Order. In this model, titles are automatically shipped to the library, based on the publisher or vendor's choice. This model is usually not feasible for academic libraries because typically items need to be purchased that best suit the curricula of the institution.

¹Note that at this time negotiations with the vendor suggest willingness for the adoption of a more manageable access policy.

Individual Title Selection. Within many collections, there is the option to choose which titles appear. Many do not allow this option, but if it is available this may be helpful in determining whether a package or collection model will work.

Patron Driven. While this model is more likely to be seen in public library scenarios (such as with *Overdrive*, which allows users to choose titles for the library or at least submit recommendations), this may also include academic vendors like *EBL*, which use the pay-per-view model.

Standing Order. This model follows traditional models for publications of a serial nature, such as annual guides. This approach, however, is slowly being replaced by other models with digital publications (Carr, 2009).

ACCESS MANAGEMENT

One of the issues with managing e-books is directly related to the fact that access to titles may need to be purchased from different vendors. Each vendor or aggregator tends to have a different ecosystem. A user who wishes to search for books specifically in a digital format may find they have to search each database separately. While catalogs can help alleviate some of this, there is the option of using Electronic Resource Management Systems, or ERMS. Examples of these include *Serials Solutions* or *SFX*, both of which provide alternative access models to electronic content. These also come with a number of features such as the ability to run cost-per-use reporting and can also help with license management. More advanced tools such as aggregated searching or discovery tools can be integrated with these products.

Catalogs

- **Advantages:** These tend to integrate well with existing collections; it may be helpful to not make a distinction between electronic and print media except in holdings designations. Catalogs also tend to hold a good deal of useful metadata for each item and also can be easily managed by libraries.
- **Disadvantages:** Subject access can be problematic due to the inconsistent use of LCSH data in many MARC records. OPACs are still difficult for many students to navigate. There is also often a reliance on the vendor for upgrades or customizations.

ERMS

- **Advantages:** These tend to have user-friendly front-end interfaces. In some of the more advanced ones, the catalog itself is incorporated, and faceted searching makes it easier to teach in instruction classes. There also tends to be better subject-access to titles. The additions of some useful back-end features are also included, such as cost-per-use reporting, making it easier to manage e-books.
- **Disadvantages:** These can be quite costly, with annual pricing that may be out of reach given current budgets of many smaller academic institutions. Many providers, such as *Serials Solutions* have in the past claimed ownership of the metadata (Grant, 2012). There have also been occasional problems with poorly cataloged e-book entries, especially when dealing with metadata from multiple vendors who may not use a standardized set of criteria for data transfer.

FILE FORMATS

E-books come in multiple file formats, but there has yet to arise a standardized format. If titles are downloadable, then it is especially important to consider formats. The open standard of EPUB, which provides the most accessibility, has been adopted by most commercial vendors and E-book readers (Polanka, 2013). Amazon's *Kindle*, however, does not handle this format; instead, they use a modification of MOBI format which they bought, added Digital Rights Management (DRM), and converted to their own format: AZW. This format cannot be read on any other reader, and it is illegal to modify if DRM has been applied (it does not exist on all titles; Polanka, 2013).

The most commonly used standard format for academic vendors is *Adobe's* PDF. This can be read on most devices (except the older versions of the *Kindle*). All can be read in some fashion on a PC, although they may have some display issues on smaller readers. As most academic users still use a computer for reading items, this may not be as important at the current time; however, there may be a need to adapt as patron usage changes. It is particularly important to keep an eye on EPUB not only because of its prevalence, but due to its flexibility. This format (or others like it) may become a requirement in order to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Plugins

When viewing through a PC, some vendors require browser plugins to view content. These can include *Adobe Digital Editions* (ADE) or Java. Some mobile devices may require the installation of the *BlueFire* reader or other software.

CATALOGING

The main question regarding this is whether MARC records are available. If a collection is being used wherein titles change, either occasionally or frequently, it is important to determine how these records can be kept up to date. Some vendors may provide automatic MARC record updating; others require a manual process. There may also be an additional charge for MARC records.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

Many e-book publishers are only now just getting used to the idea of libraries being able to access their content, due to fears of piracy. In many cases, despite the fact that digital formats should technically be easier to share, many prevent access. Often in the terms of the contract there are specifications regarding this. Whether or not the library is interested in providing access to e-books to other libraries, it is important to consider whether this is possible at all, as interlibrary loaning falls within the traditional role and philosophy of libraries, where cooperation and sharing has often been the default position. For this reason, it may be important to consider whether a title is available for loan (such as via the pay-per-usage model) or whether it might still make sense to purchase print titles until this gets worked out. These questions ideally should be asked when purchasing access to either individual titles or collections.

LICENSING AND COPYRIGHT

With digital content, license trumps copyright. Despite existing copyright laws regarding fair use of documents, the language within the contract with individual vendors overrules these. For this reason it is important to pay attention to the fine print within the contracts of these vendors.

Many vendors, publishers, or aggregators include Digital Rights Management (DRM) software that limits the uses of items to a specific device or devices. Due to the terms of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), it is illegal to remove DRM from any digital file, including e-books (Digital Millennium Copyright Act, 2006). The inclusion of this software automatically supersedes any claims to “Fair Use” doctrine, which, among other things, is how many colleges and universities have been able to share materials within classroom situations. If a vendor includes this software, it is important to understand by what terms they allow these books to be shared.

With this in mind, items that need to be identified include (but are not limited to) the following:

Usage Rights

- What are the terms for accessing the materials? Are items downloadable?
- Do titles expire after a certain number of views?
- Can more than one user view a title at the same time?
- What software is required? What formats do the titles use?
- Does the system use DRM? What sort of sharing is allowable?

Indemnification

Of a high level of importance to libraries is to make sure there is language included in the contract to exempt the library and the school of any legal responsibility if a user violates the terms, such as removing DRM through many widely available tools. Even though software for removing this exists, under DMCA it is illegal to instruct users on how to do so or how to use this software.

PRIVACY

One issue that might require some attention is the fact that using e-books is significantly different than traditional print materials in one specific area. Unlike traditional books, where tracking usage requires keeping a specific record of transactions, e-book usage creates a digital trail of all usage, whether a user checks the item out of the library at all. If libraries are concerned with maintaining users' privacy, it is important to identify exactly how and where usage data is tracked. This means identifying whether reading of material requires individual identification, such as through a library card, or if all users simply read these items without logging in while in the library. While many libraries are currently purging circulation records after a certain period of time, it may be necessary to examine what method e-books (along with other digital materials) use for storing usage statistics, and whether it can be associated directly with individual users. If this is the case, it may be necessary to establish procedures or policies regarding how long this data are kept, and possibly erased. It may be advisable to notify users of this fact before accessing e-books.

OPEN ACCESS

Beyond the above models, many titles are available openly to the public. If the library wishes to increase its collection, there are a number of open-access options. These include many titles whose copyright has expired and are now available within the public domain. There are also a number of titles whose authors have chosen to make freely accessible even though their copyright has not yet expired. Below is a brief, though less than comprehensive, sampling of these.

Project Gutenberg

This collection is primarily public domain books. Many classics are included; however, there are few relevant current titles. It may be useful for certain academic disciplines, such as English, History, Philosophy, and other Humanities departments who still make use of original works. Many file formats are available, including EPUB and PDF.

Archive.org

Similar to Project Gutenberg, this collection has many public domain books. Beyond this, there are also many other files, including live musical and video performances, and various historical software.

Hathi Trust

Like the two above, this collection contains many public domain titles, but it also appears to have quite a bit of content that may be relevant for academic libraries. There is a large collection of primary source documents that may be of particular use for history students.

DISCUSSION

While the information provided in this document is not entirely comprehensive, and many things that may be true now may change within a fairly short period, this can help provide an overview and some guidance in adding e-books to the library collection.

Currently, the high variability in access/ownership systems and file format systems makes the process of determining how and whether to purchase e-books a difficult one for academic libraries. Digital Rights Management (DRM) software remains one of the largest barriers toward use. If libraries are unable to lend books to patrons or to users in other libraries, the advantages associated with the utility of e-books become diminished.

The barriers against e-book adoption are still relatively clear, and there are many reasons why an academic library may not wish to replace its current collection with digital volumes; this is not an approach that would be strongly recommended. The landscape is indeed changing, however, and academic libraries may need to be prepared for these new adaptations of reading and research materials. Monograph vendors may provide a model that may best suit many libraries that wish to remain faithful to their traditional purchasing methods without drastically changing acquisition patterns. While agreements must be made with aggregators to display the content, there is at least some modicum of ownership that is maintained. Although it may be a touch more expensive than purchasing packages, the

control over content may outweigh the volume of titles provided. As long as licenses can be obtained that allow some sharing of titles, this model may work well for many academic libraries that may be a bit timid about their adaptation of electronic titles. Open Access titles, as mentioned, also provide a pain-free method of testing the waters. Whatever the case, e-books are not a development that would be wisely ignored by academic libraries.

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INTRODUCING PROMUSICDB: A PROFESSIONAL MUSIC CREDITS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

By Kimmy Szeto, Baruch College, City University of New York

Music production is a labor of love, and it involves a lot of labor. And yet, music professionals' work often goes uncredited and languishes in history. Even details of well-known musicians' lives can be fuzzy, confusing, or even conflicting due to incomplete and inaccurate information spread over multiple data sources. Taking advantage of emerging semantic web technologies, ProMusicDB, a professional music credit management system now in development, plans to standardize this fragmented landscape and provide a central, comprehensive source for professional music credits.

Professional music productions can be understood as series of events. Musical products, such as scores, sound and video recordings, live performances, broadcasts, and web streams, are culminations of creative, engineering, and administrative events. But some music events take place as part of other types of productions such as live action shows, television programs, motion pictures, and podcasts. Currently, information on these music events and products is captured to varying degrees of detail—published scores and sound recordings are generally cataloged professionally in bibliographic databases, while lists of personnel at live events are often incomplete. Different aspects of the data are found in a wide range of sources such as professional unions, performance rights organizations, media assets databases, music credit databases, name and work authority databases, bibliographic and archival catalogs, as well as online user-generated content.