Demand-Driven E-books + Usage Data = Informed Collection Development

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Abstract
San José State University’s (SJSU) Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library implemented a patron-driven acquisition program on March 2, 2011 to make electronically available a wide collection of items without compromising limits, most users’ needs on a timely basis, and maintain the collections budget by purchasing materials as needed and selected by University users.

In September 2011, SJSU’s Library implemented a simple widget that reported demographic data from its EBL users. Users identified their status (i.e., faculty, staff, or student) and area of discipline. Correlating these data points with EBL usage statistics, SJSU librarians and staff have begun to question the validity of long-held assumptions about the habits and needs of its users.

After reviewing the initial pilot results, the DDA plan was modified:
• Increasing the price ceiling from $200 to $250 per title
• Ongoing updates to discovery record pool, keeping only titles published in the last 3 years

Future Areas of Research
SJSU’s Martin Luther King, Jr. Library has successfully implemented a long-term DDA plan. Library employees have begun to interrogate long-held assumptions about which disciplines would benefit from the e-book format.

In the future, the library will continue to scrutinize the DDA plan and evaluate the frequency of e-books access. Correlations between e-books purchased, books purchased through a general education approval plan, and subject selectors’ choices may be possibly made with further examination.

First Steps
To facilitate the pilot launch, decisions had to be made:
• When to officially start the DDA program
• How much to allocate for the pilot
• Should SJSU use a vendor or directly work with the e-book aggregator

Implementation Parameters
The pilot was launched with the following parameters:
• 9,000 discovery records were loaded into the catalog, based on SJSU’s existing YBP profile
• A $200 price ceiling per title
• No short-term loan (TTLs), i.e. a purchase would be made after the trigger condition has been met
• Purchase triggers included:
  • Use of e-book content beyond a 5-minute free browse
  • Printing a portion of an e-book

Results
2,487 Unique users
Total e-books purchased = 622
$54,441 expended

Remaining Questions After the Pilot
• E-book users’ departments and campus status
• LC range

DDA Applications for Libraries
For subject selectors, the following information is available:
• LC range
• Subject level
• E-book user demographics

As of Fall 2011, SJSU’s DDA plan has produced a novel way for library employees to learn more about their users and their use of e-books.