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Leaving the Big Deal: Consequences and Next Steps

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Leaving the Big Deal: Consequences and Next Steps

Presented at the North American Serials Interest Group, 26th Annual Conference, June 3, 2011

By Jonathan Nabe and David C. Fowler

Introduction

The intent of this session, Leaving the Big Deal: Consequences and Next Steps, was to provide some level of comfort to those who are contemplating leaving big deals. The experience of Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) and the University of Oregon (UO) should help provide that comfort.

The consequences of leaving these deals have been less than what might be expected. Given this, the question arises, why don't more institutions make similar decisions? Why are big deals so persistent? The reluctance to take the big step may be tied to two chief concerns:

Perceived value, mostly measured in terms of download numbers, and fear of the reaction from the University community. Both of these concerns are shown to be overstated by the experience of these two institutions.

The Southern Illinois University - Carbondale Experience

Background

SIUC is classified as a Carnegie high research university, and is part of the Southern Illinois University system, which includes a Medical School, a Law School, and a sister campus, SIU Edwardsville. SIUC offers 32 doctoral and professional programs and 75 Master's programs. Total student enrollment for SIUC is just over 20,000. Morris Library is an ARL library, holds 2.8 million volumes, and has a collection budget of \$5.3 million.

Morris Library and the Big Deals

SIUC's Morris Library has a great deal of experience with ending Big Deals, as we have left three big deals in the last three years. These were agreements with Springer and Wiley, via the Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA), and Elsevier, which involved Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE).

The impacts of leaving are real in a number of areas, some obvious and predictable, some more subtle or unexpected. Five specific areas of impact were examined and form the basis of this presentation: lost access to titles; changes in interlibrary loan requests; reaction from the University community; impact on the collection budget; and impact on the library collection itself.

Measuring Impact: Lost Access

The loss in overall number of titles is significant. Specifically, access was lost access to 1,100 titles from Springer, 597 titles from Wiley, and 242 titles from Elsevier. In assessing the impact of these losses, download statistics from the year prior to departure from the respective deals were collected and analyzed. For the Springer titles, there were 10,000 downloads from the 1,100 lost titles. For Wiley, there were 11,254 downloads for the 597 lost titles. For Elsevier, there were 19,452 downloads from the 242 lost titles. In total, there were 40,000 total downloads from non-subscribed titles in the year prior to departure from these three publishers.

These numbers are significant, and it can be deceptively disheartening to lose this access. However, these numbers do not provide an accurate or complete assessment of the impact to the University community. More detailed examination of these numbers provides a clearer indication of the value of the non-subscribed titles contained within each of the Big Deals.

For the Springer titles, eighty-two percent of the non-subscribed titles received one or fewer download per month. Further, thirty-five percent of these titles had no downloads in the year examined. For Wiley, these numbers were sixty-two percent and ten percent, respectively. For Elsevier, twenty-eight percent of the titles had one or fewer downloads in the year prior to departure from the Big Deal, and two titles received no downloads. This clearly shows that many of the non-subscribed titles were superfluous to the needs of the University community.

Measuring Impact: Interlibrary Loan

Other metrics help to provide a fuller picture of the impact. One way to measure the true impact is by the number of interlibrary loans (ILLs) filled for titles that were previously part of the Big Deals, the non-subscribed titles. Interlibrary loans require staff time and can carry copyright fees, thus representing an actual impact on the library in terms of personnel and finances. Also, because of the effort required to initiate an ILL request, on the part of the requester, they represent a clearer indication of real need on the part of the patron. Therefore, ILLs are a reasonable measure of the true impact, on all parties, of leaving Big Deals.

There are some limitations to the data available regarding Interlibrary loans. Analysis of the Springer titles is incomplete, so only data on Wiley and Elsevier are presented here, and it should be noted that only one year of data is available. Since we still have archival access to the non-subscribed titles for the years in which we were participating members of the Big Deal, available ILL numbers are restricted to the current year of content. Lastly, because of various anomalies, such as complimentary access, it is not always possible to know if the University community has had access to a title, regardless of the information contained in our link resolver database.

Nevertheless, the preliminary numbers are convincing. In examining the top twenty-five percent of Wiley and Elsevier titles, determined by the number of downloads in the prior year, the impact of departure on interlibrary loans is minimal. For Wiley, only twenty-seven percent of the lost titles had at least one request in the year following departure. Further, only nine percent had more than one request. For Elsevier, only 38% had at least one request, and only twenty percent had more than one.

One interesting way to measure this impact is by comparing the download numbers in the final year of participation versus the interlibrary loans in the year post-departure. For Wiley, of the 125 titles that comprised the top twenty-five percent (as measured by downloads), which had received a total of 7,770 downloads, there were 71 ILL requests. Interlibrary loan demand was thus 0.9% of prior use. For Elsevier, there were 46 requests for the 61 titles, compared to 15,017 downloads the prior year. Demand was thus 0.3% of prior use.

These numbers deliver an important message: download statistics are not an accurate indicator of demand. They are inflated, through a number of variables. These include incidental use, such as when a user accesses an article without meaning to or after accessing it, determines it to be of no use. Online articles are also subject to repeated use, when a user access an article once, and then finds it necessary to go back to read it again, perhaps revisiting it multiple times. The method of linking can also inflate use; for example, Elsevier takes users from links in Google and other sources directly to the html full-text of an article, thus recording a download, regardless of whether the article is actually read or not. Another source of inflation is created by the mere convenience of the availability of the content, as users may simply be trying to maximize the number of references reported, without regard to the content itself.

Librarians are heavily reliant upon use statistics in the assessment of the value of the resources they acquire for their users, but these numbers show that usage statistics, even when meeting agreed-upon standards, are not a true indicator of user need or demand. They should be used, obviously, but cautiously, and with a healthy dose of skepticism. Other assessment techniques and metrics should be employed as well, to gain a more accurate picture of the needs of the community served.

Measuring Impact: Reaction from the Community

Community reaction to the lost access has been minimal. Thus far, there have been less than a handful of complaints. What response there has been tends to be uninformed, due to confusion between subscribed and non-subscribed titles, a predictable development from participation in Big Deals. This confusion illustrates that departure presents an opportunity to educate faculty on Big Deals, price increases, and all the issues of scholarly communication that librarians are familiar with.

When protests do arise, they can typically be dealt with by presenting numbers such as those provided above, as well as cost-per-download figures for lost titles. For most titles, the latter figure provides a strong argument for not retaining them, because interlibrary loan presents much more economical means for providing access. Another persuasive technique is to present the alternatives to faculty, assuming library subscriptions are assigned to specific departments. Since our decision to leave the Big Deals coincided with a large journal cancellation project, it was possible to present to faculty the

unappealing scenario of cutting other titles in order to start subscriptions to lost non-subscribed titles, a process necessary for meeting the target cancellation values assigned to each department. When this was necessary, or deemed desirable, the academic departments were unwilling or unable to volunteer such swaps.

Measuring Impact: The Budget

Protecting the collection budget was the immediate impetus for making the decision to leave the Big Deals. For Morris Library, leaving the three deals allowed us to save almost \$300,000 annually. This amount would have represented more than half of our FY2010 monograph funds. Even with the large cancellation project for 2010, resulting in an abnormally high budget for books, this amount would have been about one third of the FY2011 monograph budget, still an enormous amount. Alternatively, if the decision had been made to cut more from our journal subscriptions, in order to protect the monograph budget, many other journals would have had to be cut, almost exclusively from smaller publishers, including university and society presses.

Measuring Impact: The Collection

This leads to the final area of impact, the Library's collection, specifically as to who will control it, and how. The impact on our ability to control our collection was enormous. The flexibility the Big Deal cancellation gave us was pivotal in our effort to provide a collection that the community needs. We were able to cancel 230 titles from these three publishers. This represented savings that did not have to be squeezed from somewhere else, either from smaller journal publishers, or from the monographs budget.

In addition, we were able to swap titles, beyond what is typically allowed for in Big Deals to provide a more appropriate collection for the SIUC community. This is important because academic programs change over time, as departments change, faculty come and go, and new programs are established. Because we had been tightly locked into a set subscription list for years with Big Deals, we were restricted in our ability to address these changes.

The savings realized from our departure and our cancellations, while no substitute for badly needed increases in funds, have been crucial for us. In the end, we are in a better position to provide a collection more suited to the needs of the University community.

Moving Forward

Making the decision to leave a Big Deal is not the end of the process. In fact, the end is just the beginning, as it is necessary to renegotiate arrangements with publishers for those titles still deemed essential for the institution. The Big Deal is a great deal for publishers, because it provides a guaranteed revenue stream, with significant annual increases. It makes forecasting simple, reliable, and the results are always positive for them. Consequently, renegotiations may start off from an unavoidable strain in the relationship.

The reaction from publishers, unlike from the community, are noticeable and unambiguous. One publisher indicated that upon leaving, a twenty-five percent “content fee” would be applied to our subscriptions. This was not widely known at the time, and still may not be, that if you end a multiyear deal and cancel titles, this publisher will impose this heavy surcharge. Such a fee would have wiped out the value of our cancellations, and more. On top of this, there would have been no price cap, giving the publisher the opportunity to raise our base to any figure they determined.

Another publisher presented a similar problem, in that leaving the deal carried an immediate large increase. This reflected a discrepancy in pricing inherent in Big Deals: as the years pass, the price paid for subscriptions moves further and further away from the list price. This is because with the price caps typical to a Big Deal, annual price increases are lower than the publishers’ official increase (indeed, this is one of the attractive aspects of a Big Deal). With this particular publisher, when we left the Big Deal, the list price became our new base price, a significant upfront cost for us.

In fact, the stance taken by publishers is to make leaving so painful, as to discourage an institution from taking that step. In our case, tied up with this was an absolute requirement that we be allowed to cancel subscriptions, at the level we felt necessary for the sake of our budget and our collection. This meant that the guaranteed revenue stream, based on a subscription package determined

years before, with guaranteed annual increases and marginal cancellation allowances, would be changing. We were demanding to reduce our base, a demand we maintained throughout renegotiations.

Negotiation can and for us, did, result in the removal of the worst terms of the publishers' proposals. Partly this reflects the fact that ultimate control and power resides with the buyer, provided the buyer is willing to keep the money and do without the product. However, we found that ultimately it is necessary to compromise in order to minimize the impact of the changed terms proffered by the publishers. This took the form of multiyear deals with price caps and little or no cancellation clauses. This was acceptable to us because we were able to make the cuts we needed and reduce our base, to find a new starting point for the new agreements. If we hadn't been willing to make such agreements, the immediate financial impact on our budget would have been significantly worse.

Enforcing License Agreements

A final story from our experience may be informative. When SIUC did not renew the Springer/GWLA deal, the issue of archival access arose. At the time of the original contract, GWLA had managed to have a clause about archival access added, specifying that LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe) was one acceptable means for achieving guaranteed archival access. This showed great foresight, and though they could not have realized it at the time, the negotiators who had it added had paved the way for ensuring Springer participation in LOCKSS. Springer had no intention of doing so at the expiration of the contract, at which time we discovered that Springer was not LOCKSS compliant, and was not making its vast reservoir of content available for harvesting by LOCKSS participants. Springer informed us they had not worked with LOCKSS in the past, and would not do so in the future. Eventually, after several discussions, this position was reiterated by their legal counsel at the time. A member of SIUC's legal counsel was present for that conversation, as she had been kept current on the situation, and had supported our efforts to see that particular clause enforced. She drafted a document stating that we believed Springer to be in violation of the contract, and was quite prepared to pursue the issue. In the meantime, we also informed GWLA of our experience, and we prepared a document describing the situation and asking the GWLA leadership to support our efforts and inform Springer of their intention to

do so. The leadership did so, and also took the issue to ICOLC, the International Coalition of Library Consortia, for their support as well. In the end, Springer agreed to abide by the terms of the contract, and in 2011 began making their content available for LOCKSS harvesting. This experience illustrates the kinds of unexpected issues that may arise for any institution leaving a Big Deal, and the need to be prepared to work for the enforcement of the terms of the expiring contract. This effort needs to be done before the expiration of the contract, after which time the recourse for addressing the issue may no longer be available.

In moving forward, then, these issues need to be considered when leaving a Big Deal: is there a penalty, in whatever guise, for doing so? Is a multiyear deal the most desirable way forward? What length of time is acceptable? Will the deal provide price caps? Strictly limit cancellations? Finally, once the decision to depart has been made, it may be necessary to take prove it steps to ensure that the terms of the expiring license are met.

Conclusions

The experience of SIUC's Morris Library in leaving Big Deals has implications for other institutions considering the same move. Our experience shows that use of non-subscribed titles is overvalued; that interlibrary loans will not skyrocket in any proportion to reported download numbers; that the community will not erupt in revolt; and that conversely, the savings to the budget are large and ultimately essential, and that leaving Big Deals allow libraries to provide a collection more suited to the institution and community.

The University of Oregon Experience

Background

The University of Oregon, founded in 1876, and part of the Oregon University System (OUS), is classified as a Carnegie very high research university, one of 108 institutions in that category. Although UO has a law school, this is a relatively uncommon ranking for a university without medical, engineering or agricultural schools. The University of Oregon had a 2010-11 enrollment of 23,389 FTE students, including 19,534 undergraduate students, and 3,885 graduate/doctoral students. The University operates 263 academic programs, as well as another 33 research centers and institutes that range in scope from Asian and Pacific Studies to Neuroscience and High Energy Physics.

The University of Oregon Libraries comprises the central Knight Library, as well as the Jacqua Law Library, a science library, a mathematics library, the architecture and allied arts library as well as the geographically separated Portland Library and Learning Commons, which supports graduate programs in Oregon's largest city, and the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology Library, which supports marine programs in Charleston, Oregon. The library held 3,138,936 books and serials, 4,198,103 microforms, 783,154 maps, 1,327,009 slides and photos in 2010. These figures also include 291,531 electronic books and 74,487 current serials. Also, in 2010, patrons retrieved 2,468,633 full-text downloads (and rising) and made 361,809 circulations of physical items (and falling). The total budget of the UO Libraries in 2010 was \$20,042,433 and the materials budget was \$6,427,158. It is a member of the Greater Western Library Alliance and the Orbis-Cascade Alliance.

The University of Oregon Libraries and the Big Deal

The UO Libraries have participated in a number of Big Deals over the past several years, including Cambridge University Press journals, the e-Duke Scholarly Collection, Sage Premier Online and the two collections to be discussed here: Elsevier ScienceDirect and the Wiley Online Library. The Elsevier deal was initially brokered through the Orbis-Cascade Alliance, a collection of 36 large and small academic libraries in Oregon and Washington, and which includes UO, Oregon State University, the University of Washington and Washington State University. The Wiley deal was received via the Greater Western Library Alliance, a consortium of 32 research libraries in the west and Midwest.

The Financial Crisis and the University of Oregon

During 2008-09, the world was hit by one of the biggest financial crises since the Great Depression, which had huge impacts on the nation and the world economy. The State of Oregon and the University of Oregon were not immune from the financial stresses that this downturn generated. As the State and the Oregon University System initially grappled with the impacts, initially a twenty percent budget cut was imposed on the state portion of the University's overall budget. The state presently provides only about nine percent of the University's budget (causing some people to call the UO "a state university in name only"), but investments and endowments, major sources of income, also took big hits during this period, further reducing our ability to meet commitments in the existing budget.

The University was able to attack this problem in a number of ways, some by design and some by serendipity including the raising of tuition rates by 7.5% in that time period (with more to come). In addition, the UO Foundation was near the close of a successful \$853,000,000 fund-raising campaign, which included several million raised by the library itself. There were however state (and donor) restrictions on how donated money could be spent, how it could be invested and when interest disbursements could be made, which limited how much could be used to ease the immediate financial shortfalls.

On another front, the UO benefitted greatly from the financial woes of our neighboring states' even greater monetary woes, especially those of California's, and in particular, those of the University of California system, where budget cuts have been deep, and tuition has risen at a far greater rate than ours. Partly as a result of this, student applications to the University have skyrocketed, and UO's total enrollment has increased by approximately 2,000 students in the last two years, creating many new tuition dollars for us.

Other Financial Pressures at the University of Oregon

The recession was not the only pressure on the UO Libraries. Even had it not occurred, the Libraries still would have had to face the results of regularly accumulating serials inflation rates. Since 1992-93, the UO Libraries had had four major serials cancellation projects: 1993, 1995, 2000 and 2004-05, totaling \$1.49 million. The Libraries had effected enough cancellations and reduced format duplication to a minimum following the last cancellation to delay further cuts for several years. At about the same time that the recession hit however, inflation had finally caught up with us, and 2008-09 was coincidentally also targeted for what intended to be a two-year serials cancellation project. Combined with the initial budget rescissions required by the State of Oregon and the Oregon University System, we would now have to achieve serials cuts of up to \$1.2 million.

Breaking the Big Deals

As we began to analyze the necessary dollar cuts versus the serials actually available to cut, it quickly became apparent that it would be impossible to meet our goals if we were to rely solely upon unattached titles from smaller, individual publishers that were not tied up in contractual “Big Deal” obligations.

It was thus, clear to us that some Big Deals would have to be broken.

We looked at the various deals that we were involved with, and several were not good fits for numerous reasons, including size, available titles, scope of titles and the term of the license. It did become apparent however, for somewhat different reasons, that both Elsevier and Wiley would meet our criteria for breaking up some of our large deals.

Breaking the Deal: Elsevier

As an initial matter, and specific only to the University of Oregon, we had also participated in an unmediated pay-per-view arrangement for Elsevier journals. This was initiated to address content loss concerns expressed by faculty after the 2004-05 cancellation project, which had eliminated some titles that were at least moderately used by UO researchers, due to their high cost. At first, this was a cost-

effective (about \$25 per article) means of providing seamless (to the user) access to otherwise unavailable titles. As time went on, however, more people were using the service, and we had to replenish the Elsevier deposit account at ever-faster rates. That factor, combined with several expensive instances of pay-per-view download abuses (hijacked student credentials, for example, being posted on an open message board, and being used to download vast amounts of geology and petroleum journal articles at UO's expense) caused us to terminate this service, and bank the savings towards required serials cancellation targets.

Once this step was accomplished, UO determined that, based upon cancellation target amounts, it was not feasible to remain a participant in the Orbis-Cascade Alliance-brokered Elsevier deal. In a sense, we had anticipated financial turmoil the previous year (due to serials inflation catching up with us though, not due to the yet-to-occur recession) and rather than sign the Alliance's three-year deal with Elsevier, we opted to sign a one-year extension of the previous Alliance deal. This gave us an initial sense of having freedom to maneuver as we started evaluating our options.

We considered cancelling titles outright and going it alone on a UO-only subscription plan, but thought it could make sense to engage our academic partners at Oregon State University (OSU; only 45 minutes to the north of us) to develop a cooperative plan. After some initial concept meetings, we began to develop a statistical framework for evaluating our shared titles in terms of overall usage, cost-per-use and impact factors, which was spearheaded by Dean Walton, a librarian from the UO science library.

Before too long it was also decided to extend an offer to the other large public university in Oregon, Portland State University (PSU), to join our efforts. They accepted the offer, and after statistics were expanded and revised to include PSU, we created what could be termed an "ideal" deal based on keeping the titles that represented 90% or more of our combined, overall usage within a proposed new arrangement, discarding most everything else (exceptions were made for certain important small-discipline niche titles that had importance to their areas not necessarily reflected by usage), as well as proposing target inflation rates and content fee figures. With these steps accomplished, we then felt we were ready to approach Elsevier with an initial proposal.

Elsevier's initial reaction to this was to request three separate meetings with the individual leadership groups at the three libraries, which was viewed by all of us as an attempt at a possible "divide and conquer" strategy, and which was quickly denied by the three libraries. Elsevier was informed that the three schools would only negotiate together as a single unit. A few weeks later, during the summer of 2009, we held our first meeting with Elsevier representatives at the Portland State University Library, and we presented our initial proposal.

Although UO was contractually free to pursue its options at the end of 2009, OSU and PSU were both locked into three-year deals. In order to make any new arrangement work, our partner schools had to be released from their contracts. To their credit, Elsevier, apparently deciding that it would be in its best interests to make this deal work, did agree to abrogate their contracts, and subsequently accepted the three schools as a mini-consortium that they would negotiate in good faith with.

In order to make such a potential deal work, we would need a combined eighteen percent of our combined subscription dollars with Elsevier cut. Elsevier chafed at that figure, and asked that we not exceed ten percent in cancellations. This caused a somewhat extended period of disagreement between the two sides, but eventually Elsevier offered to reduce the content fee for a potential joint deal (basically, a fee just for the right to access their titles). The fee was initially proposed at twenty-five percent; Elsevier reduced it to 12.5%. This reduction was substantial enough for us to recalculate cancellations and reduce our cuts from eighteen percent to fourteen percent. Elsevier agreed to this.

It was further established by Elsevier, that one of their imprints, Cell Press, which represented a small, but significant subset of our titles, could not be included in the proposal, due to internal restrictions. We did not contest this.

A key element of the deal would be the construction of a unique title list (UTL), which would be a set of non-subscribed titles that Elsevier would provide access to, at a significantly reduced price. This was based on a similar arrangement that the Orbis-Cascade Alliance had brokered with Elsevier in the old deal.

Elsevier had no problems with continuing this, but offered us a couple of different options; one would provide a UTL, a ten percent content fee, and which would provide for full sharing of titles between the schools. The downside to this option was that it reverted to a ten percent cancellation ceiling. We found that unacceptable. The second option provided the UTL, however with no sharing, a 12.5% content fee, and the fourteen percent cancellation ceiling. This was mostly acceptable, but we held a hard line on title sharing, and also requested three years of zero inflation. Elsevier relented on the sharing, but rejected the inflation proposal; they countered with a three year deal with inflation rates at 0%/2%/5%.

We accepted the basis of this deal, but given the uncertainty of the economy at the time, the schools decided that they would feel more comfortable with a two-year deal. All the parties agreed, and the agreement was eventually ratified.

At the time of this writing, the first two-year deal is coming to a successful conclusion and we recently completed negotiations for a new three-year year to go forward with, There will be no major title adjustments, and to the view of the UO Libraries, holds inflation to very reasonable levels. Elsevier had given consideration to offering us a new Big Deal in the form of their Freedom Collection, but to their credit, realized early on that this would not be a good fit for us.

Post-Big Deal: Elsevier

Leaving the Orbis-Cascade deal, and creating a significantly downsized “medium deal,” ended up being a wise choice for us. At UO, we were spending \$409,566 on Elsevier products before cuts. In 2010, our total spend was down to \$361,689, representing an eleven percent cut at our institution. We project we will surpass the 2009 dollar amount again in 2014. We do also anticipate a stable serials budget through that year. It may last longer than that, but projections beyond that are naturally murky. The major budgetary impact with this downsizing then, was to buy us five years of stable serials budgets, the value of which cannot be underestimated,

Other Impacts

There was a coincidental, significant rise of ILL/document delivery requests experienced by the UO library (47%) at about the time the Elsevier cuts took hold. An analysis however, indicated that there was only a modest rise in those involving Elsevier titles. The larger overall increase was believed due to the near-simultaneous implementation of WorldCat Local at UO.

There were very few student concerns noted after the downsizing, and only a modest amount of concern exhibited by faculty members. We attribute this largely to a continuous communication about the serials cancellations between the library's subject specialists and their respective academic departments, and the involvement of teaching and research faculty in providing feedback about planned cancellations.

The largest area of concern exhibited was from the chemistry and physics faculty, who have a number of high-cost and less cost-effective serial titles in their areas. The library has primarily addressed these concerns by promoting a very efficient ILL/document delivery operation, which can generally provide any requested article within 24 hours. However going forward, we are also examining the possibility of re-instituting a much smaller scale, mediated and subject-targeted pay-per-view project for these scientific fields. To date, this is just conceptual and there is not yet a clear way forward.

Elsevier Conclusions

The University of Oregon has no regrets about eliminating these titles, or about creating the smaller deal. Negative impacts have been minimal, and positive impacts, particularly on the budget, have been large and demonstrable. We believe our partners in the arrangement have had similar experiences. The keys to success for us were cooperation with our partners, communication with our customer base, and a large amount of front-end preparation, particularly analyzing and evaluating prospective titles, which in turn, greatly minimized the negative back-end impacts, and in our view, made it a very successful experience.

Breaking the Deal: Wiley

The Elsevier cuts, while important, were not enough for UO to reach its cancellation goals however. Wiley, another of our biggest “Big Deals,” had a license that was due to expire at the end of 2009, so it automatically became a prime target for us to examine for further reductions. We briefly considered the prospect of pursuing an additional “medium deal” with OSU as a partner for the Wiley titles in late summer 2009. However, the work that was done to prepare for the Elsevier negotiations was considerable, and the negotiations took the better part of that summer. At this point, relatively late in the year, UO collection managers had expended a lot of energy on Elsevier, and it was felt that there was not much left in the tank for another round, not to mention the fact the time was short, and a new school year was about to start.

It was then, decided to forego this option, and to simply eliminate the GWLA Wiley deal in its entirety. As such, we contacted our Wiley representative, and requested a single-institution “enhanced access license.” Wiley did comply with our request, with little protest.

Our plan with Wiley was to cancel all titles on subscription with them, and then re-order only those determined to be financially and academically desirable. An additional wrinkle of complication was that Wiley and Blackwell hadn’t yet merged their title lists, and our serials acquisitions personnel had to work with two, rather than one list to complete this project. Using a similar mechanism to the Elsevier evaluation, it was decided that we would cancel 96 titles that were not cost-effective for us, thus saving \$166,103. We then re-ordered 278 titles, worth \$353,513. Also, due to our exit from the deal, we lost access to several desirable shared titles that we had to re-subscribe to. Our planned cancellations had to balance these “additions” out.

Post-Big Deal: Wiley

Since the termination of the Big Deal, our Wiley subscriptions have remained relatively stable. Blackwell titles are now fully integrated, and we still occasionally do find Wiley imprint titles that were missed, and which need to be folded into our single-institution license. Also, every year, there is a small but constant parade of title transfers in and transfers out, that netted, for example, an additional \$10,000 in subscription costs in 2011.

We spent \$519,616 on our Wiley Big Deal in 2009. In 2010, that amount was reduced, as has been mentioned, to \$351,567. We expect it will be at least three additional years, into 2014 or later before inflation has eaten the savings that we have achieved with these cancellations.

Other Impacts

We are left with 297 subscribed titles from Wiley, titles that passed cost-per-use and other impacts analysis. We retain limited post-cancellation access to 862 titles that had been held by our GWLA partners. Our current full-text access to these terminates in December 2009/January 2010. This is a gap that will only continue to grow wider as time goes on.

There was, as was noted before, a noticeable increase in ILL rates coincidental with the date that these cancellations took effect. Like Elsevier however, Wiley increases were modest, and the implementation of WorldCat Local was determined to be responsible for most of the increase.

With respect to Wiley, we have had virtually no complaints whatsoever from faculty or students, and this essentially ended up being a non-event from our customer's point-of-view. We counted this Big Deal elimination as a great success for us, and again, attribute a large portion of that to the upfront preparation that we engaged in, in order to make the smartest, most sensible cancellations possible.

Conclusions

The University of Oregon cancelled one full Big Deal, and shrunk a second one significantly. It required much thought, analysis and effort by us and our partners, but in our view, we created a pair of very successful results out of a very scary and uncertain financial situation.

We are not naïve, and understand that no matter how wildly successful this effort was, that sometime in the near future, be in 2014, 2015 or 2016, we will have to cut again. We feel however, that we have established a sensible template for any future cuts, should it involve the cancellation of another Big Deal, or the contraction of one.

We understand that making a major change such as this is a scary and difficult possibility for a library to consider. The status quo always seems safer, but it may not be smarter. We feel that other institutions that are contemplating a similar situation to what we experienced, can benefit from our success, and know that they can succeed as well.

Finally, although it is easy to vilify and demonize vendors as being “evil empires” and other such names, they can be willing to work with you to reach a mutually beneficial result. They may be looking initially at how to maximize profit, but smart vendors will know that some business is better than no business and will conclude that working with you is better for their bottom line, as opposed to working against you.

Contributor Notes

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