

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT DELIVERY: COOPERATIVE EFFORT FOR MAXIMUM SERVICE AT TRENTON STATE COLLEGE LIBRARY

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Recent Changes in Journal Publication and Acquisition

The past few decades have seen a great increase in the number of scientific and technological journals being published, as well as in the prices of most journals. For libraries, the result of the abundance of materials and rise in prices was that every journal subscription and holding had to be justified, because budget and storage concerns limited the number of journals that could be bought and kept.

Now, with the advent of electronic publishing, libraries must cope not only with economic and space considerations, but with different publishing formats, such as Internet and on line, as well. It is essential that libraries stay at the forefront by constantly being aware of new journals that are being published and the formats in which they are available, and by determining the best way to provide patrons with access to them.

Trenton State College has made a concerted effort to evaluate and update its periodicals collection, while ensuring that a wide range of materials is available in a variety of formats for easy and efficient access by patrons.

Assessment of the Periodicals Collection

The first undertaking, evaluation of Trenton State's periodical collection, was accomplished through a multi step process. A usage study was done for periodicals to which Trenton State currently subscribed, as well as for backruns (journals to which Trenton State formerly subscribed, and for which it owned several years of back issues). To conduct the study, subject lists of Trenton State's periodicals, including usage statistics for each title for the past nine years, were created and distributed to the individual subject librarians. They worked with faculty liaisons, deans of the academic departments, and the dean of the library to determine which subscriptions should be maintained and which journals should be kept.

Based on usage statistics and the costs of journals, several subscriptions were canceled. Occasionally, academic deans requested that the library continue to receive certain journals that had been used infrequently. In these cases it was agreed that the subscriptions would be continued, with the understanding that usage statistics would still be kept and reevaluated yearly. Continued evidence of infrequent use would be brought to the deans' attention so they could determine if receiving the journal was still worthwhile. Review of the usage statistics for each holding began as a one time project intended to last several years, but is now done regularly each year.

The great success of the project was due ultimately to the fact that it was conducted very professionally: all parties who would be affected were involved in the process of determining which titles were retained and which were canceled, and almost everyone was very cooperative.

Electronic Document Delivery: Providing Additional Material Quickly

Another result of the publishing boom was that Trenton State College was unable to subscribe to all the journals requested by faculty members. Nevertheless, it was recognized that patrons would frequently need articles from these journals, as well as from journals to which Trenton State had canceled its subscriptions, and the library endeavored to find simple, efficient ways for patrons to obtain needed materials within 24 48 hours. Several different models were introduced. These included: Joining a resource sharing project, in which participating state colleges agree to provide needed material to each other via fax within 48 hours. Relying on commercial vendors such as Carl Uncover or CISTI to provide articles. Utilizing full text sources, including Dialog, BRS and OCLC First Search to obtain material for patrons.

The library makes use of all three models to provide the best possible service, and keeps careful usage statistics to determine which journals are sought after most often and whether it would be more beneficial for the library to subscribe to these rather than to continue obtaining individual articles.

Goals for the Future

Recently, with ever increasing use of PC's and rapidly expanding access to the Internet and World Wide Web, periodicals are becoming available electronically. Many are now published both in printed and electronic format, while some of the newest titles can be accessed exclusively by computer. It is a continuing challenge to libraries, including Trenton State's, to find economical ways to provide patrons with the greatest possible access to electronic titles. It is easiest to provide those

journals which have no cost for electronic subscription if the patron has Internet or World Wide Web access, he or she can search for, find and read the needed material from their home or dorm room, without ever coming to the library, merely by inputting data into a PC.

However, if there is a cost to the library for the electronic version of a journal, the library will supply the patron with the Internet or Web site address and information on how to locate it, but will not subsidize the cost.

Trenton State has been quite successful in facing the challenges of evaluating and consolidating its periodical collection and finding efficient, cost effective ways to connect patrons to new on line journals. However, there are several concerns for the future that still need to be faced and will probably be an ongoing part of Trenton State library's effort to maintain the quality of its services. One important consideration is the need to be selective in developing the periodicals collection. It is necessary to obtain and keep journals that will be most useful to the campus community, although it may be difficult to predict the future usefulness of a particular title or to gain a consensus from all the parties involved. It is also vital that the library be able to provide access via document delivery to materials that cannot be kept on site but are frequently needed by patrons. Full text databases are being further examined as a way to increase availability of articles! found in journals the library does not own. Lastly, because the number of electronic journals is increasing every day and is sure to expand greatly in the future, client server systems are being explored as a method of facilitating selective collection development of on line periodicals. Easy access is key; a mark record option should be part of the on line catalog system, as well as electronic access information with a direct link to service that would enable the user to quickly locate a desired article from an on line journal.

Trenton State's Commitment: Quality Service Using Technology

Evaluation of its current periodicals collection, as well as selective development aimed at keeping the collection streamlined and economical in the future, are two of the most important steps Trenton State College has taken to face the rapid changes in journal publication. Because Trenton State College recognizes that electronic publishing will only become more important in the future, it has taken steps to cope with change by making the best possible use of this new technology. Trenton State library aims to be a mediator, bringing people and information together; therefore, one of its primary goals is to provide patrons with access to as many journals as possible, both electronic and printed, from its permanent collection as well as through document delivery. New electronic technology is

here to stay, and Trenton State College recognizes that it must not be avoided, but must be put to good use, helping staff to do their jobs more effectively and enabling library patrons to gain information more efficiently.

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