Regional Print Management: Right-scaling Solutions

Operations and Services, or How to Shave and Prune Library Collections

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background

• OhioLINK, part 1: 1990-1995 (WSU)
  – Design and implementation of SWORD

• NELINET (1999-2010)
  – Developed and marketed the New England Regional Depository, a brokered commercial service

• OhioLINK, part 2: 2010 – present (CWRU)
  – Not a Northeast Ohio regional depository participant
  – One on-campus storage facility + off-site at Iron Mountain
  – Changed our “philosophy” of retention and access [faculty Task Force on the Acquisition and Retention of Library Materials]
  – Currently investigating a multi-institutional, local commercial depository

• EIFL (1999-present)
  – Print management isn’t an issue for developing countries
  – Be thankful your problem is you have too much stuff to manage
how much to shave?
Occam’s Razor

William of Ockham:

For any given set of circumstances, the simplest explanation is best ...

... except in complex situations, in which case the simplest answer may be wrong

Entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem
Pruning

I have a delicate question that I’d like to ask ... 

does your collection suffer from irregularity of use? 

if so, how do you know what or how much to keep? 

perhaps I have something that can help
new print management solution?

Fletcher’s Consortia

With prunes, you never know: are 3 too few, are 6 too many?”
If we are going to do print management, let’s get in gear

If multinational corporations can agree on interoperability standards for the ‘Internet of Things,’ why can’t librarians agree on a common length of loan period?

A consortium of industrial giants, including AT&T, Cisco, General Electric, IBM and Intel said on Thursday that they would cooperate to create engineering standards to connect objects, sensors and large computing systems in some of the world’s largest industrial assets, like oil refineries, factories or harbors. …

The group, called the Industrial Internet Consortium, hopes to establish common ways that machines share information and move data.

“… for the Internet of Things to really take off, we needed more interoperability, better building blocks and better standards,” said Abhi Ingle, a senior vice president of AT&T’s advanced solutions group. …
While we were sleeping...
(in case we didn’t already have enough to worry about)

Is this the death knell of interlibrary loan?
Is “library print management” about to be an irrelevant concept?

The American Association of Publishers and the Author’s Guild…

Emboldened by their ability to control resale of electronic books through tight licensing arrangements, the publishers and authors are now seeking to close the door on libraries by ensuring that the same provisions apply to all copies of print books sold in the United States since 1924.

[The publishers and authors are seeking Congressional approval to] amend U.S. copyright law to require that royalties be paid to the publishers each time the work is borrowed or lent in physical form...

Warning: this is not a real article.
## managing print in hindsight

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years Ago</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Changes in Technology</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>~2009 AD</td>
<td>Sony Reader (2006); Kindle (2007); e-books go mainstream</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2004 AD</td>
<td>Google Print [Books] project announced</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>~1994 AD</td>
<td>JSTOR founded (1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>~1989 AD</td>
<td>OhioLINK begins, with planning for state depositories (1990)</td>
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<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>1964 AD</td>
<td><strong>First Xerox photocopier</strong> (1959); OCLC founded (1967)</td>
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<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>~1949 AD</td>
<td>Memex (1945); Center for Research Libraries opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>~1914 AD</td>
<td>Commercial use of <strong>micrographics</strong> for saving space (1920s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>~1514 AD</td>
<td>Moving from Illuminated manuscripts to <strong>Gutenberg</strong> (1456)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1014 AD</td>
<td>Moving from tablets to scrolls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2414</td>
<td>~300 BC</td>
<td>Library of Alexandria opens (burns in multiple attacks through 391 AD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4000</td>
<td>1986 BC</td>
<td>Hieroglyphics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000</td>
<td>~2500 BC</td>
<td>Stone tablets, Stonehenge, earliest surviving papyrus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6000</td>
<td>3976 BC</td>
<td>Cuneiform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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What if we had managed print based upon upon the most cutting-edge technology available at that moment?
print management service decision overlays

local environment

consortial environment

Strategic
Tactical
Financial
Political
Operational
print management service decision overlays: examples

• Strategic: what are we trying to accomplish?
  – Increased access to content for faculty & students?
  – Integrate electronic and print collections strategies?
  – Reduce the footprint required for storage?
  – Generate operational cost-savings?
  – Ensure long-term preservation of the content?

• Tactical: campus versus partnership perspectives
  – What are the consortium’s policy requirements?
  – What will each contribute? What value will each gain?
  – Is this a reliable and sustainable collaborative?
  – How will weeding affect content and services?
service decision overlays: examples

- Financial
  - What will the processes cost (staff, space, etc.)
  - Can we find additional sources of funding?
  - Will collaborative efforts really reduce or only increase our out of pocket expenses?

- Political
  - Will faculty accept the retention guidelines?

- Operational
  - When and how will we implement the solution?
[relatively] recent impact factors affecting print management decisions

- ARL index no longer counts volumes (directly)
- Availability of stable and trusted in-state lending & borrowing systems
- Availability of trusted archives
- E-books are maturing and may potentially replace print in the future
emerging issues for print management: *storage facilities*

• In an age of competing university and library priorities, what is the ROI for storage facilities?

• Storage conditions versus storage costs
  – What is the real tipping point for humidity and temperature control?
  – Is preservation storage of all material in perpetuity still a reasonable (or desirable) goal?

• If we pursue a commercial option, what contractual protections should we seek?
emerging print management: 
*e-book backfile availability*
(regardless of source)

- To what extent do the electronic and print collections overlap?
- Does the e-book supplement or duplicate the print copy? (Can we eliminate the print copy?)
- How much of the new electronic (non-overlapped) material is of significant value for our academic programs?
collaborative solutions: 
*are three copies too few, are six too many?*

• How many copies are enough to meet
  – local needs?
  – regionally needs?
  – national needs?*

• Who owns the copies that are retained?

• What happens to the print collection if the collaborative dissolves or if a member leaves to join a new partnership?

Prediction: the complexity of a national solution makes it impossible for this to ever happen in the U.S. Any such effort is doomed to go the way of the “National Periodicals Center”
What do we learn if there is a very low correlation between the number of items in the collection and the circulation rates?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cincinnati</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-0.041</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>All Items to Circulation Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.057</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Circulating Items to Circulation Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.217</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>Circulation to Circulation Rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
is it surprising that the more you have, and the more recent it is, the more it circulates?

Correlation of All items : Circ % of Total = 0.74
How closely should we shave print management?
In the spirit of Occam’s Razor

“[I]n most matters it is more important that the applicable rule of law be settled than that it be settled right...
This is commonly true even where the error is a matter of serious concern…”

future proofing print management: 
*things to ponder* 

1. Neither overcomplicate nor oversimplify the decision, knowing that those who learn from the past will be condemned to make different mistakes, and past practice will never fully predict future behavior.

2. Statistics can guide us, but never lead us.

3. Best practices won’t be best for very long.
4. You can assess and manage risk, not eliminate it, but don’t worry: this is print management, not brain surgery.

5. Regardless of what you decide, time will prove some of your decisions to be wrong, so forgive those who made bad decisions before you, and hope future generations will forgive you.

6. Most importantly, do something, because it is always better than talking but never getting anything done.
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