THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA® | University Libraries

Nursing and Allied Health Resources-Patron Driven Acquisition, a Pilot at The University of Alabama Libraries

Mangala Krishnamurthy – University of Alabama

Connie Stovall – Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Deposited 08/06/2021

Nursing and Allied Health Resources–Patron Driven Acquisition, a Pilot at The University of Alabama Libraries

MANGALA KRISHNAMURTHY
Presenter

CONNIE STOVALL
Contributor

This article is a report of a session presented by Mangala Krishnamurthy and Connie Stovall (a contributor to the presentation) of the University of Alabama Libraries at the 2015 North American Serials Interest Group conference. A patron-driven acquisition (PDA) pilot project was initiated in fall 2013 at the University of Alabama (UA) Libraries mainly serving the Nursing and Allied Health subject areas. Since the Capstone College of Nursing at UA offers an online Doctor of Nursing Practice program and partners with two other schools in the UA system, UA Libraries collaborated with the other libraries in the University System. The project uses Rittenhouse's R2 Digital Libraries' PDA module as the basic platform. The Capstone College of Nursing liaison discussed in detail the selection, management, assessment, promotion, and communication part of the project in addition to second year plans for the project.

KEYWORDS   acquisitions, e-books, electronic resources, demand driven acquisitions (DDA), patron-driven acquisitions (PDA), sustainable access, workflows

INTRODUCTION

The University of Alabama (UA) is a state university with leading programs and research activity located in Tuscaloosa. With over 36,000 undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students, the University of Alabama Libraries support academic research and service programs with a variety of resources to meet the needs of a growing campus.

BACKGROUND

UA Libraries began adding electronic resources to its collection well over a decade ago. Like many other universities, early adoption of electronic resources more readily occurred with science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs. In the late 1990s, e-reference Science & Engineering collections were added at UA's branch library, Rodger's Library for Science & Engineering. This provided a stepping stone to add more electronic book packages such as Springer e-book packages and Safari Tech books online.

In 2008, the Capstone College of Nursing along with other campuses in the UA system started a new Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program. Since the Capstone College of Nursing offers a significant number of online programs, the subject liaison along with the Associate Dean for Collections decided to set aside some funds for purchasing ebooks in Nursing and Allied Health subjects from Rittenhouse's R2 Digital Library platform. In doing so, they invited other nursing, medicine, and allied health librarians from UA system to join in this new collection development model. The model existed on the R2 platform and involved sharing the platform cost and purchasing new ebooks that all students in the system could access at any time.

A few years later in 2012, Rittenhouse introduced a new model for patron driven acquisitions. After looking from all angles at this model, the subject liaison and Associate Dean for Collections at UA libraries decided to participate in a pilot and invited the other three UA system libraries' representatives to join in this next phase of the program. Figure 1 represents the four major players in the R2 collaboration. Those players include The UA, Health Sciences Library (HSL), University of Alabama at Huntsville (UAH), and University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). Also included in the figure are the subject specialties for each of the players and the person involved in the effort.

IMPLEMENTATION

To provide access to discoverable titles and to get an idea of what patrons in Nursing and Allied Health areas need and want, the R2 patron-driven acquisition (PDA) model fitted well for the pilot project. Unknown cost commitments of
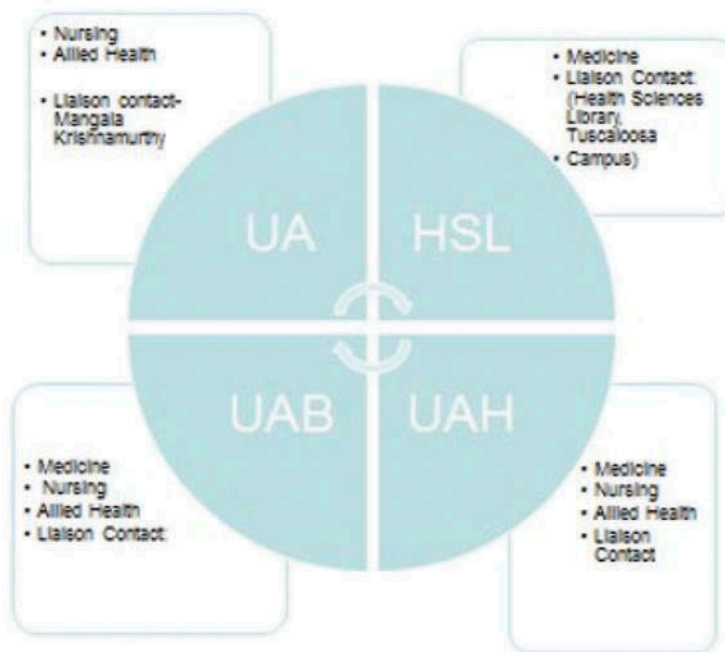
FIGURE 1 UA system collaboration.

patron driven/demand driven acquisitions is a concern for many academic libraries, and some collections and liaison librarians are cautious about signing up to adopt any such models. R2 Digital Library's PDA model appeared less risky since there were no hidden or surprise costs and, furthermore, subject specialists had the final say about ebook purchases even after patrons selected and used a title. In the case of R2 PDA, subject specialists select a pool of titles to be visible for patron use. After patrons access any selected title over more than three sessions at content level, an e-mail from R2 prompts the subject librarian with a purchase decision. The PDA titles are available for use with zero cost for those first 3 sessions. In summer of 2013, after meetings with the parties involved and the sales representative from Rittenhouse, selection criteria for subject coverage was determined and about 122 book titles selected for the first discovery pool. An initial deposit from UA libraries was paid to Rittenhouse and the first PDA titles were purchased early in the fall semester of 2013. Later on additional funds were added for PDA for UA Libraries. This amount constituted an addition to the regular collections budget for nursing.

WORKFLOW

Within the UA Libraries, the subject specialist, cataloging unit, acquisitions unit, electronic resources unit, and the Associate Dean for Collections worked

closely and met several times during the semester to streamline the workflow and to learn how the pilot was performing. Working across units within the schools in the UA system was planned internally and communication was paramount to success.

At any time that one school purchased a title, all other players would also gain access to the title. However, access to the title was not automatic for schools who did not initiate the purchase. That access is not complete without timely communication and enacting specific steps in the predefined workflow. This is due in part to a lack of alerting mechanism in the R2 user administration module. (It treats all players of the UA system as one entity, at least in terms of purchasing). Further, the players do not have a shared catalog or shared discovery system. Therefore, one person per participating library had responsibility for communicating the purchases to other libraries, at which point the title could be activated in Serials Solutions and added to their Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) and discovery layer.

Along the same lines, communication is needed across all institutions when a title needs to be removed from or added to all discovery pools. On a weekly basis, R2 sends out e-mails to all players alerting them to the existence of newly published titles. At this point, subject specialists must make a decision about including the title in the PDA discovery pool. To make those titles available for the PDA program, the subject specialist must alert their main contact person, who records payment and then contacts the electronic resources specialist so that they can activate the title in Serials Solutions. This activation also triggers the creation of MARC records, which cataloging departments handle accordingly. A similar workflow exists for deactivating titles. With the R2 PDA model, after an activated PDA title has been accessed three times, players are alerted via e-mail and prompted to make a purchase decision. The e-mail indicates, too, that the title has been placed in a shopping cart until that decision has been made. As such, the title is no longer eligible for PDA access. Subsequently, when patrons try to access this title via the discovery layer or catalog, they will not be provided with full text access. To ameliorate patron confusion, it is best to deactivate the title via Serials Solutions and remove the title from the catalog, all of which requires prompt and steady communication within one's own library but also outwardly among the other institutions. Figure 2 represents a summary of this workflow.

PROMOTION

Once the pilot for patron driven acquisition was in place, the subject liaison continued promoting the R2 Nursing, Medicine and Allied Health ebooks collections and its platform to faculty and students at Capstone College of Nursing. Subject specialists also utilized other channels of promotion
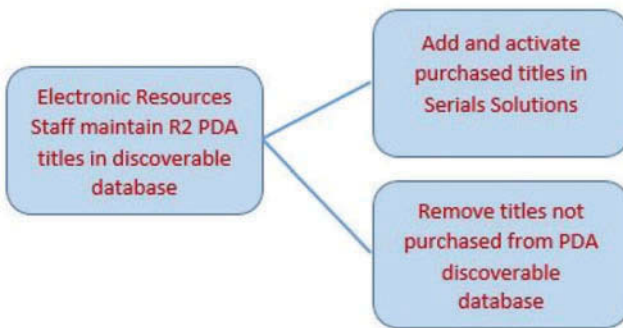
FIGURE 2 Serials solutions workflow.

including twitter, Facebook, digital monitors, and Libguides. As for the digital monitor displays, the R2 digital platform and corresponding collections were promoted in STEM buildings on campus to inform and capture patron and researcher attention in interdisciplinary subject areas like biology, chemistry, and chemical and biological engineering. Poster displays were utilized in the library, and information about the collection was provided in blogs and other social media avenues, like reaching out to students via Blackboard.

Downloaded statistics (Table 1) from the publishers' site provides some feedback on the usage of ebooks. In addition to adding more new nursing titles to the discovery pool, UA libraries started adding titles recommended by the Human and Environmental Sciences subject liaison as well.

This snapshot in Figure 3 provides a look at usage statistics for one specific PDA purchased title.

TABLE 1 Total downloads of titles from R2 digital library

Year	# of downloads
2012–13	4,104
2013–14	3,268
2014–15 (up to Jan. 2015)	1,337

FIGURE 3 R2 cost/use snapshot.

Summary of the R2 e-book collection:
660 books exist on the R2 platform
193 titles of 660 are currently discoverable via PDA Project
UA Libraries have added 178 out of 193 titles
(Retrieved on June 11, 2015)
Subject breakdown of all R2 ebook titles:
Allied Health (140)
Consumer Health (2)
Medicine (60)
Nursing (435)
Psychology (3)
Undergraduate (20)—Covers nutrition, dietetics, and exercise

CHALLENGES

As with any new initiative, there are still some challenges. The need for regular communication among those involved in the project is essential to keep it moving forward. One quirk requiring regular attention is the challenge of using the shopping cart for UA purchasing, because the platform sees the players as one entity when it comes to purchases. More specifically, if the main UA campus wants to purchase one title in the cart, it must remove all other items in the shopping cart even though other players may want to view and perhaps purchase one of the titles in the shopping cart. To make sure that others can view these items, UA then must download a list of all titles prior to purchasing the lone title. After purchasing the title, then UA adds the titles back to the shopping cart. Lastly, eliminating duplicates in Serials Solutions and deselecting titles from the discovery pool requires routine maintenance.

CONCLUSION

Team effort is key for this project. One year later, all players in the UA system libraries have agreed to continue with the R2 PDA model, and UA libraries have deposited more funds and have identified another batch of over 100 discoverable titles in Nursing and Allied Health Subjects. Additional subject area titles in the fields of Human and Environmental Sciences (HES) have been added to the mix and the HES subject librarian is now part of the PDA team at University of Alabama Libraries.

The collaborative efforts and the momentum for sharing access across the system seems to be working well and is becoming a model for other combined programs to follow and share the library resources. This method of cost sharing benefits students and administrators alike.

CONTRIBUTOR NOTES

Mangala Krishnamurthy is Associate Professor, Reference Librarian at Sarah & Eric Rodgers Library for Science & Engineering, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL.

Connie Stovall, former Head of Acquisitions at UA libraries, is now head of Collection Management at the University of South Alabama in Mobile, Alabama and also serves as a Collection Management Consultant for Virginia Tech.