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Pay-Per-Use Article Delivery at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

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monthly use statements; this report shows the number of articles used by each of our departmental groups and the corresponding cost analysis. Statistics can also be gathered via the administrative interface. These statistics are real time and can be accessed at any time by the administrator. In addition, the administrator can set up email alerts to send out a notification email once a certain budgetary threshold is met within each of the accounts.

If the program proves to be successful, we will be looking into expanding the Pay-Per-View model with other, perhaps more specialized, publishers.

Conclusion

Transactional access/pay-per-view allows libraries to offer expanded access to content for which they cannot afford traditional subscriptions. **Murray State University Libraries** sees transactional access as one new tool in our arsenal. We do not intend for it to be a replacement for traditional modes of journal access, but rather a supplement to our existing collections. This program may also allow us to reallocate funds for rarely used journals that are available via transactional access/pay-per-view to purchase journals that will be used on a more frequent basis.

While we are in the beginning stages of this process we believe the experience has proved to be an exciting and relatively easy process thus far. We look forward to continuing our journey into the realm of transactional access/pay-per-view.

A Note to Publishers, Vendors and Librarians

After attending/presenting at the Electronic Resources Interest group meeting at the **2009 American Libraries Association Conference** in Chicago, IL, we have gained further valuable insight into the pay-per-view options that are available. We will be using this information to inform further program allocations.

After talking with librarians from all over the country, we also have a better grasp on the need and interest in such programs. In the future we can see the need for a vendor such as **EBSCO** or **SWETS** once again providing a pay-per-view/transactional access model across publisher lines, or, rather, an **iTunes** model for journals.

We would like to take this closing opportunity to challenge a vendor to roll out an inter-publisher pay-per-view service within the next few years and ask that fellow librarians contact their vendors to encourage them to move toward offering this type of service. We in the academic community want, but even more, *need* a service like this! If you build it we will come! 🌱



Pay-Per-Use Article Delivery at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

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Introduction

Do your users really care about which subscriptions your library holds? Of course not, they just want the information they need and they want it quickly. Sure, there are those old hold-outs who want to know that their favorite pricey journal is just a walk across campus to the library, purchased *just in case* it may one day be needed. But, for most college libraries low-use, high-priced journal subscriptions are no longer sustainable and don't make much sense to continue. Many of these high-priced journal titles don't even belong in most college libraries to begin with. An institution that grants doctorates in chemical engineering can justify subscribing to *The Journal of Polymer Science*. But what about an institution like **UW-Stevens Point** that doesn't grant doctorates and only offers four master's degrees (none of which are in the hard sciences)? Yet, we still kept that subscription running and the money flowing — that is until we adopted our pay-per-use program.

Pay-Per-Use

While many journal subscriptions are pricey, but worth keeping due to high use, there are an alarming number of journal titles that are rarely used and cost a fortune. This is where pay-per-use comes in handy. Pay-per-use is the practice of purchasing individual journal articles directly from the publisher instead of carrying subscriptions. The user becomes a stronger participant in collection development by telling us exactly what is needed. The requested content is delivered to the user *just in time*, rather than the library guessing what might be needed and paying for costly subscriptions *just in case* they are needed. Of course, pay-per-use is not the answer for every journal subscription. There are definite advantages and disadvantages to consider before moving forward. See Figure 1 (page 24).

Background

The **University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point** is an undergraduate college with only a handful of graduate-level programs. **UW-Stevens Point** is part of the greater **University of Wisconsin System** and is one of 13 comprehensive (primarily undergraduate) campuses in the **UW System**. The **Council of University of Wisconsin Libraries (CUWL)** provides a forum and structure for

library and information planning within the **University of Wisconsin System**.

In June 2007, **CUWL** began pursuing the idea of pay-per-use article delivery in response to complaints from a group of faculty members from across the various comprehensive campuses demanding access to “the same resources **Madison** has” — referring, in part, to the **Elsevier Science Direct** and **Wiley Inter-science** subscriptions held by **UW-Madison**. The comprehensive **UW** campuses could not afford the hefty subscription fees for these databases, either collectively or individually. The faculty group also commented that while interlibrary loan services are highly regarded, there are many times when article delivery is too slow through traditional interlibrary loan services; particularly when faculty are competing for time-sensitive patents or scholarly publications. These factors made pay-per-use the best, perhaps the only, option to satisfy those research demands.

A **CUWL** committee, in conjunction with a statewide cooperative library support organization (**WiLS**), was able to negotiate discounts with **Wiley** and **Elsevier** for articles purchased directly from those publishers. **CUWL** set aside a pot of money to help the comprehensive campuses fund this new concept of pay-per-use, although individual campus libraries were still responsible for funding a portion of the service. **WiLS** also developed a simplified workflow to aid in ease of article ordering. A special queue was set up in the interlibrary loan system (**ILLIAD**) so that any **Wiley** or **Elsevier** article requested via interlibrary loan would automatically be flagged, and library staff could then easily determine whether or not to provide the article via the pay-per-use method.

Reason for Implementing at UW-Stevens Point

For political reasons (or perhaps pure nostalgia) **UW-Stevens Point** continued to subscribe to a number of high-cost, low-use print-only titles that gathered gobs of dust on our shelves. While our serials budget remained stagnant, journal subscription costs continued to balloon. Unable (and unwilling) to keep these subscriptions (or switch to electronic) we had little choice but to cancel several titles. Journal cancellations are always bad PR for an academic library — even if we are canceling subscriptions nobody is reading. This situation gave us the idea: why not cancel a long list of high-cost, low-use print journals and offer fast article delivery (via pay-per-use) in place of the subscriptions?

continued on page 22

With the **CUWL Project** already underway we had partial funding, an agreement for discounted **Wiley** and **Science Direct** articles, and a simplified workflow in place. As insurance, our library director pledged an additional \$5000 in case **CUWL** funds were spent before the pilot concluded. We were in a great position to start pilot testing our own pay-per-use program. We quickly identified that a majority of the print-only titles left in our collection happened to be from the publishers **Elsevier** and **Wiley**. We did a cost-per-use study on these titles and identified several titles with costs higher than \$30 per use (the average cost of an article ordered via the pay-per-use method). These titles were targeted to be canceled and replaced with a pay-per-use article delivery service. See Figure 2 for a selection of these titles.

In order to determine whether or not pay-per-use was a legitimate alternative to ongoing journal subscriptions we decided to run a pilot project, and use the information gathered to answer the following questions.

- Can we save money by eliminating high-price/low-use subscriptions and offering pay-per-use articles instead?
- Is pay-per-use faster than traditional ILL?
- How do our users feel about canceling these print subscriptions?
- Do our users prefer desktop article delivery or having access to print holdings in the library?

The Pilot Project:

Our primary goal in this pilot project was to find out if our users (faculty, students, and staff) find pay-per-use article delivery to be an acceptable substitute for selected print journal subscriptions. From February 2, 2009 to April 10, 2009 the library offered 24-hour desktop article delivery as an alternative to using the print version of several journal titles. To sweeten the deal, we also offered pay-per-use delivery of any article published in an **Elsevier** or **Wiley** journal; expanding access to over 3,000 different journal titles.

One of the main goals of the implementation of our pay-per-use program was to make it as easy as possible to use for both our users and our staff. This service needed to be as seamless as possible. We did not want our users to have to remember which titles were eligible and which ones were not, nor did we want them to have to remember a complicated process to request articles from these journals. Our solution was to utilize openURL (**SFX**) and interlibrary loan (**ILLIAD**) technology, two methods our users were already familiar with, to facilitate the ordering process.

On the user side, once an article was identified as needed, the user clicked on our FIND IT! (**SFX**) button to discover where the full-text was available. If the article was published in one of the 54 journals that were identified as possible cancellations a note was displayed

Figure 1

Advantages	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not committed to ongoing journal subscriptions • Access to a broader range of journals • Only pay for what is used • Save costs related to shelf space, binding, staff time, maintenance of electronic • Quality of articles (Color photos, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access is not immediate • No archival copy • May pay for the same article more than once • Another alternative in staff workflow? • Accreditation requirements

Figure 2

Journal Title	Cost	Use	Cost/Use
Aquaculture	\$4,666	2.4	\$1,944
Journal of Memory and Language	\$1,025	2.6	\$394
Journal of Polymer Science: A & B	\$16,769	14.8	\$1,133
Journal of Separation Science	\$2,558	3.6	\$711
Solid State Ionics	\$5,389	5.8	\$929

indicating that the article was available via pay-per-use article delivery within 24 business hours. The request was made using the standard interlibrary loan form that is automatically populated by **SFX**.

On the staff side, workflow was also kept simple. Once the user made the request, it was sent to a special queue in **ILLIAD**. Our interlibrary loan staff knew to order any request funneled to this queue via the pay-per-use method. A request in the special queue was found on the publisher's Website, paid for and downloaded. Due to arrangements made by **CUWL** and **WILS**, accounts were previously set up and the amount of the article was automatically deducted from these accounts. Once the article was downloaded, it was sent via email to the requester along with a link to a simple survey asking them to evaluate the service.

Marketing of this service was kept fairly simple. A general campus-wide message announcing the service was sent out via the "Message of the Day." Also, information was included as a news item on the library's Web page. More detailed information about the service, and lists of journals to be "replaced" via this service were sent to department teaching faculty.

In order to gather feedback, we developed a

questionnaire through *SurveyMonkey.com*. All pay-per-use articles were delivered to the user's desktop via email, and our ILL staff included a link to the questionnaire in the email along with a brief note requesting the user's participation. Figures 3-7 display our questions and the responses we received. Qualitative feedback was gathered in a comment section of the survey tool and also through communication with the campus departments.

Usage Results:

During the just over ten week period we received over 400 requests; the majority of which came from undergraduate students (75%) seeking **Science Direct** titles (80%). Total expenses were just over \$7,000.

We received a 10% response rate to our survey. While not an overwhelming number, we were still able to gather some valuable feedback. Our users were most impressed with the speed of delivery and the high quality of the articles (Figures 3 and 4). Specific comments include: "the figures (in full color!) were easy to view in this format. I also like the bookmarks tab on the side — how helpful" and "great to get the article so quickly and the quality of the copy was far superior to

continued on page 24

ILL copies I've received in the past." All of the respondents thought the service was more convenient than interlibrary loan (Figure 5), and 90% of respondents thought this service was more convenient than having a print copy in the library (Figure 6). Overall, 100% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the pay-per-use article delivery service (Figure 7).

Results

Our survey results indicated that users thought the pay-per-use article delivery service was faster and more convenient than traditional ILL and more convenient than using print journals in the library. Based on this information and comments received directly from campus departments, it was decided that replacing ongoing print subscriptions with a pay-per-use article delivery service was a viable option indeed.

But, would the pay-per-use article delivery service actually save us money? Since our pilot ran for only a portion of a year we had to approximate the usage we expected to receive in a full year. Based on historical ILL usage we decided usage would be double or triple what it was for the pilot. For a full year, we were looking at somewhere between \$14,000-\$21,000 to fund the program.

The original 54 titles were re-evaluated and it was decided that 18 journals received enough usage via the pay-per-use article delivery service that it would be worthwhile to maintain our library subscriptions to them. However, these print-only subscriptions would be switched to electronic access to aid in usability. The remaining 36 titles have been canceled for a yearly savings of \$52,000, a portion of which will be used to fund the pay-per-use program in the future. A cost savings should definitely be realized.

Future Outcomes

Because of the success of this program we plan to expand our pay-per-use article delivery service to publishers beyond Elsevier and Wiley, resulting in further savings through cancellation of additional low-use print journals. Pay-per-use requests will also be reviewed to identify high-use journal titles that might be better suited to online subscriptions.

Conclusion

Pay-per-use article delivery proved to be a viable method for providing access to journal content. Users valued both the speed of delivery and quality of the article, and favored the pay-per-use article delivery service over using print journals in the library and over having articles delivered through "traditional" interlibrary loan services. The pay-per-use program will result in significant savings at our library while greatly expanding the content quickly available to our users. 🐼

Figure 3

How would you rate the speed of document delivery for this article?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Very fast	63.4%	26
Fast	34.1%	14
Same as Interlibrary Loan	2.4%	1
Slow	0.0%	0
Very slow	0.0%	0
answered question		41

Figure 4

How would you rate the quality of the document you received?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Excellent	73.2%	30
Very good	26.8%	11
Good	0.0%	0
Acceptable	0.0%	0
Poor	0.0%	0
answered question		41

Figure 5

How would you rate the convenience of the Document Delivery Service?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Very convenient	90.2%	37
Convenient	9.8%	4
Equals Interlibrary Loan	0.0%	0
Somewhat inconvenient	0.0%	0
Very inconvenient	0.0%	0
answered question		41

Figure 6

How would you rate the Document Delivery Service compared to using a print journal at the library?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Much more convenient	70.0%	28
More convenient	20.0%	8
Similar to using print	7.5%	3
Less acceptable than using print	2.5%	1
Not acceptable	0.0%	0
answered question		40

Figure 7

How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the Document Delivery Service?		
Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Very satisfied	78.0%	32
Satisfied	22.0%	9
Equals Interlibrary Loan	0.0%	0
Somewhat dissatisfied	0.0%	0
Very dissatisfied	0.0%	0
answered question		41