

Chapter XI

Working with Database and E–Journal Vendors to Ensure Quality for End Users

Heather Christenson
California Digital Library, USA

Sherry Willhite
California Digital Library, USA

ABSTRACT

This chapter describes how the California Digital Library (CDL) supports the thousands of electronic journals, databases, collections and reference works that are licensed by CDL on behalf of the ten campuses of the University of California (UC). Three key components are vital to the success of this activity: the involvement of librarians at all the campuses to monitor and evaluate UC's electronic resources; CDL's internal processes for working with vendors; and CDL's requirements documents which emphasize both technical standards and best practices. By sharing these processes and documents, the authors hope to provide a foundation for developing practices to work successfully with vendors and ensure quality for library patrons.

INTRODUCTION

The California Digital Library (CDL) licenses thousands of electronic journals, databases, collections and reference works on behalf of the ten campuses of the University of California (UC), which are located across the state of California from San Diego in the south to Davis in the north.

The CDL is an all-digital library and is located at the UC Office of the President, rather than on a campus. The CDL's responsibilities include monitoring UC's systemwide electronic resources for access, performance, features, functionality, completeness of content and usage. Within this large consortium, the relationships are complex, and the range of digital content provided to end

users takes many forms and covers many subjects. Since the CDL is not directly connected to the users of the electronic resources we license, we have created a process to gather and share information about electronic resource use, monitor and evaluate the resources, prioritize issues and problems, and work with vendors to improve the resources.

This chapter describes three key components of the CDL's electronic resources program: the involvement of librarians at all the campuses to monitor and evaluate UC's electronic resources; CDL's internal processes for working with vendors; and CDL's requirements documents which emphasize both technical standards and best practices. The authors hope these processes and documents will provide a foundation for librarians who wish to develop practices for working successfully with vendors and ensuring quality for end users, regardless of the size of their organization and numbers of staff.

BACKGROUND

Today's libraries license and provide access to an ever-increasing array of digital content from a wide variety of vendors. The vendors, and associated publishers and platforms, can range from small scholarly organizations to large corporations, and have varying levels of technical expertise and engagement with librarians.

UC makes a sizable investment in licensing electronic resources from these vendors, and we must ensure that our investment results in useful content and services for our end users. The electronic resources licensed by the CDL on behalf of the campuses fall into two categories: resources licensed for all ten UC campuses, which we call "tier 1" resources, and resources that are championed by one UC campus and may include other campuses in the license, called "tier 2" resources. The ten campuses license electronic resources for the use of their individual campus

locally, but these are currently out of the scope of our programs. However, some of the principles we describe could indeed be adapted to an individual campus or library.

Everything we do is for the purposes of ensuring a quality research experience for the students, faculty and staff of our university. The quality of their experience is critical for their pursuits of teaching, research and knowledge. Because the CDL centrally licenses electronic resources for all ten campuses, we are well positioned to advocate for quality. But this effort also involves our campus librarians, since it is they who work with the end users and are the subject experts.

The two primary groups whose work we will discuss are the CDL Resource Liaisons (CDL, 2005b), a campus-based, consortium-wide group, and a team of six staff at CDL called the Resource Wranglers. The beginnings of our current processes date back to 1999, when CDL formed the Resource Liaisons group to monitor UC-wide licensed electronic resources.

The CDL's electronic resources program, which includes the Resource Liaisons and the Resource Wranglers, demonstrates that a successful program does not have to be centralized to provide maximum benefit and that it can be achieved without requiring an enormous amount of time from any one staff member. Investing the time to identify the services critical to users, the technologies necessary to support these services, and the requirements that brings these together is necessary for a successful program. In addition, these activities provide vendors with a clear picture of the user community and can aid them in their process of product development.

THE CDL RESOURCE LIAISON PROGRAM

Central to CDL's "watchdog" efforts is a group called the CDL Resource Liaisons. Resource liai-

17 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/working-database-journal-vendors-ensure/10035

Related Content

Acquiring, Promoting, and Using Mobile-Optimized Library Resources and Services

Chad Mairn (2012). *E-Reference Context and Discoverability in Libraries: Issues and Concepts* (pp. 178-198). www.irma-international.org/chapter/acquiring-promoting-using-mobile-optimized/57923

Methods and Tools for Managing Library Web Content

Johan Ragetli (2005). *Content and Workflow Management for Library Websites: Case Studies* (pp. 22-50). www.irma-international.org/chapter/methods-tools-managing-library-web/7105

Assessing Strategies of the International Council on Archives: Section on University and Research Institution Archives Re-Opening During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Nkholezani Sidney Netshakhuma (2021). *Handbook of Research on Knowledge and Organization Systems in Library and Information Science* (pp. 141-156). www.irma-international.org/chapter/assessing-strategies-of-the-international-council-on-archives/285493

The Value of Employee Engagement to Enhance Work Performance and Customer Service in Public Libraries

Ashley R. Norris and Sharon E. Norris (2020). *Handbook of Research on Emerging Trends and Technologies in Library and Information Science* (pp. 357-376). www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-value-of-employee-engagement-to-enhance-work-performance-and-customer-service-in-public-libraries/241576

Evolving Roles of East West University Library During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Shaharima Parvin, Dilara Begum, Mahbub E. Shobhane and Md. Nazmul Hasan (2021). *Handbook of Research on Knowledge and Organization Systems in Library and Information Science* (pp. 213-230). www.irma-international.org/chapter/evolving-roles-of-east-west-university-library-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/285497