Embargoes and Exclusives: Latest Hot Debates Surround Journal Services

A wide variety of listservs and online discussions over the past few months have been burning up with the issue of publisher embargoes and exclusive arrangements for certain journal aggregating services. The embargoes represent the periods of time (usually set in months, years, or volumes), established by publishers, when online versions of the journal are “behind” the print version. This practice allows publishers to maintain the commercial viability of their print versions, or their own Web versions, but causes online users and libraries concern because the information they are seeking is incomplete or unavailable.

The number of embargoed journals on various services, such as EBSCOhost, ProQuest and InfoTrac, as examples, has only recently been made very public, thanks to active and lively discussion over the net. As an example, TCR reported in our last issue that 1,460 of EBSCO’s 2,947 fulltext titles have an embargo period of 3 months of longer, with 1,081 titles (36.7%) having an embargo period of at least 12 months. This information was posted to liblicense-l on May 15, 2001.

Exclusivity is a separate issue and one which is equally troubling to librarians. And, again, it is EBSCO that is making the most news in this area, after announcing several high-profile exclusives (most notably with the Harvard Business Review). What exactly does an exclusive mean in this scenario? It means that libraries are forced to use a single service to access the online version of a desired publication. In real terms, that means that anyone looking for the online version of HBR must know that it is only available on EBSCO’s online services and therefore, must use EBSCO.

A recent study published in Searcher by Larry Krumenaker, of Hermograph Press, took a statistical look at “Exclusive and Unique Titles” on the three most prominent aggregated journals services. Krumenaker used the latest available lists of holdings for EBSCOhost, InfoTracWeb, and ProQuest Direct and compared them with each other. He also compared the lists against the database of Web periodicals which are included in the Hermograph Press’ monograph Net.Journal Directory and its online Net.Journal Finder. The study looked at two possibilities:

- **Unique.** Did Journal X appear on one of the three services, and only one? But did it also appear on “commercial search services” such as Dialog, Lexis-Nexis, or Dow Jones, where it could be accessed by anyone with a credit card.

- **Exclusive.** Did Journal X only appear on one of the services and NOT on any of the “commercial search services.” This would be the case of a true publisher exclusive.

A summary of the study’s findings follow. Note that the percentages quoted represent the number of “unique” titles which could be found on the commercial service alternatives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Total Titles</th>
<th>Unique Titles</th>
<th>On L-N</th>
<th>On Dialog</th>
<th>On Dow Jones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EBSCOhost</td>
<td>4,039</td>
<td>2,170</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ProQuest Direct</td>
<td>3,602</td>
<td>1,742</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoTrac Web</td>
<td>2,784</td>
<td>1,160</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How many titles appeared on all three services? 827. On two of the three? 391 or 632, depending on the two compared.

EBSCOhost did top the list with 54% of its titles unique to it. However, ProQuest could boast 48% unique and InfoTrac 42% unique. Of exclusives, EBSCOhost could say that roughly 83% of its unique titles are actually exclusive, that is, not available anywhere else. But, one should note that while Harvard Business Review is exclusive to EBSCOhost in the academic market, it can still be found on Dialog, Lexis-Nexis, and Reuters Business Briefing.

The study’s author also analyzed embargoed titles on EBSCOhost and found that, excluding newspapers, there were only 932 titles (18%) with embargoes. Of these, 588 (63%) were embargoed for one year. Only 52 titles (1%) had embargoes of more than one year.

*Excerpted from “A Tempest in a Librarian’s Teapot,” Searcher, July/August 2001.*
Short Takes

In a widely publicized announcement, six major publishers of medical journals (Blackwell Science, Elsevier Science, the Harcourt Worldwide STM Group, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Springer-Verlag, and John Wiley & Sons) have agreed to give researchers in developing countries online access to their publications free or at highly discounted prices. The agreement covers 1,000 of the top 1,240 medical journals and will be extended to medical schools and research institutions in more than 60 countries where the per-capita gross national product is $1,000 or less. Another 30 countries will qualify for smaller discounts. New York Times, July 9, 2001.

The Institute of Museum and Library Sciences has awarded more than $1.8 million to support seven colleges in their efforts to recruit and educate students in library and information science. The awards will also provide advanced training, especially in digital technologies, to professional librarians. Recipients and award amounts are: Indiana University, $73,005; Mansfield University of Pennsylvania, $356,491; Montgomery College (Tex.), $268,491; Texas Woman's University, $77,320; the University of Arizona, $492,708; the University of Denver, $233,204; and the University of Kentucky, $329,427. For more information, logon to www.imls.gov.

Questia Media, the Houston-based online library service for college students that launched in January, has signed up its first college client. Elmhurst College, a liberal arts college of about 2,700 undergraduate and graduate students in Elmhurst, Illinois, will begin using the Web-based service this fall. The college will pay subscription fees for usage by about 300 students. Publishers will receive a small fee every time a user views a page of one of their books on the service. Questia had anticipated having more than 50,000 books in its virtual library, but is presently offering about 35,000. For more information on Questia, logon to www.questia.com.

In an effort to bring the debate about the future of scholarly and scientific publishing to a wider audience, Nature magazine has invited leading representatives of the main groups of stakeholders and observers from the mainstream Internet industries to express their views in 1,000-word articles. The result is a good overview of the interested parties in the debate and the various solutions proposed from the library, publishing, and scientific communities. Be sure to check it out at: www.nature.com/nature/debates/e-access/.

By the Numbers

225%... is the increase in part-time students in library schools in the 20 year period from 1979/80 to 1998/99. Full-time students in that same period increased 10.3%. Against the Grain, June 2001.


63%... of online shoppers “ditch” their transactions when they are presented with additional shipping costs, according to Jupiter Media Matrix. Wall Street Journal, June 27, 2001.

$1.62 billion... was the total of sales of online resources in the U.S. in 1999, an increase of 14.3% over the previous year, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Multi-media products rose 8.4%, to $811 million. The two categories combined to represent 10.1% of total publishing industry revenues in 1999 (compared to 9.6% in 1998). Publishers Weekly, February 26, 2001.

60%... of Internet users in a recent survey said that online purchases should be taxed. In the same survey, 79% stated that the Internet had made their lives easier. New York Times, July 10, 2001.

421... job seekers and 621 available jobs attempted to connect at the placement center of the American Library Association’s Annual Conference in San Francisco. The previous annual conference in Chicago saw 1,004 jobs and 481 job seekers. Library Hotline, June 25, 2001.

18%... of Reed Elsevier’s annual revenue is represented by science and medicine; legal is 31% and education is 5%. Business divisions, including Cahners, account for the remaining 44%. Total revenue is 3.8 billion British pounds. Wall Street Journal, July 10, 2001.

670,000... is the number of journal articles accessed and delivered in May 2001 from ingenta, now encompassing both UnCover and CatchWord. This figure represents a 400% increase over the same period one year ago. Press Release, July 16, 2001.

TCR Quote


Mark Your Calendars

NASIG 2002 will be held at the College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia, from June 20-23, 2002. NASIG is the North American Serials Interest Group.

The 21st Annual Charleston Conference takes place from November 1-3, 2001 with Preconferences and The Charleston Advisor Vendor Showcase set for October 31, 2001. This year’s theme is “The Trends They Are A’Changing.” Don’t miss this important meeting. Register online for the main conference at www.cofc.edu/library/conference. To register for the Vendor Showcase, send an email to <rlenzini@charlestonco.com> including your company name, email address, and fax number.
ALA was incredibly subdued this year. No big mergers were announced at the show and no really new products that we hadn’t seen before.

**eBooks** — There was still much talk about eBooks, but with this meeting there was a lot of discussion as to why they haven’t taken off the way they were expected to. Publishers still seem compelled to have some level of eBook production, but the outlook is cautious.

**Selling direct/cutting out the distributors** — Some publishers, especially the bigger publishers with more content, have made more of a push to market their products (including eBooks) direct to faculty, students, or other users. Libraries don’t like this, but it continues to be a trend to watch. The November issue of *Against the Grain* will feature articles on this subject.

**Embargoes** — There was a lot of talk of embargoeing (that is, holding off online access of particular issues of journals, usually the current year or multiple recent years). Librarians don’t like this practice, but for many publishers this seems to be a necessity to continue their print profit streams. (See related article in this issue of *TCR*.)

**Reference publishing** — Is there less going on than in the past? *Choice* reports that the number of reference books received for review has dropped, but a lot of publishing in this area still continues.

**Two related overheard quotes** — “Reference librarians never leave their chairs anymore.” “More and more title decisions are made at the Consortial level.”

**Two New Lists for eBooks and eResources**

**LIS-E-JOURNALS@JISCMAIL.AC.UK** is a new list for the discussion of e-books primarily intended for the use of UK academic librarians and other interested parties. To join the list send “join lis-e-books (first name) (last name)” in the body of an email message with nothing in the subject box or below the message (no autosignature) to: <jiscmail@JISCMAIL.AC.UK>. The listserv is part of the UK government’s Distributed National Electronic Resource (DNER) and is sponsored by JISC (the UK’s Joint Information Systems Committee).

Electronic Resources in Libraries (ERIL) is a forum for librarians who are involved with selection, acquisition, or management of electronic resources at their institutions. Examples of issues covered include: collection development policies, electronic journal holdings, use statistics, licensing and negotiation, product set-up and maintenance, and specific product issues. This is a private list that requires the list-owner's approval for subscription. To learn more, visit www.topica.com/lists/eril.

**Don’t Miss This!**

CNI Executive Director Clifford Lynch’s most recent article, “The Battle to Define the Future of the Book in the Digital World,” is available in the June edition of *First Monday*, a peer-reviewed journal on the Internet. The article offers a comprehensive survey and analysis of the technological, legal, economic, and intellectual challenges associated with publishing in the digital age. To check out the article, logon to www.firstmonday.dk/issues/issue6_6/lynch/index.html.

**TCR MARKETING TIP:**

*Making the Most of the Sales Call*


**Rule #1:** Make an appointment. There is nothing worse than a “cold call.”

**Rule #2:** Let me know about new services your company is adding (or dropping).

**Rule #3:** Likewise, tell me about staff who are new to your company or staff who are leaving.

**Rule #4:** If you are new, introduce yourself with references, business cards, and brochures.

**Rule #5:** It’s important to be pleasant. Many vendor reps are considered personal friends.

**Rule #6:** Lunch and/or dinner is a treat, but feeding me is not a requirement of a visit.

**Rule #7:** It’s the rep’s business to ask for business. Reps must stay focused on that essential purpose and librarians must respect this.

**Rule #8:** The best vendor reps ask questions and listen as much as they talk.
Charleston Advisor Readers’ Choice Awards Best and Worst

For the first time, The Charleston Advisor is sponsoring a series of awards for the best and worst electronic services and databases for libraries. The awards are not necessarily limited to products covered in TCA but the reviews were consulted in the final consideration. These awards will be published on an annual basis in the July issue of TCA. Votes were taken on the TCA Website and additional input was received from the TCA editorial board.

Best New Product
Nominated by the Board: Alexander Street Press, Runner up: AccuNet/AP MultiMedia Archive
Nominated by Users: SFX (ExLibris), Gale Business Research Center, LSSI Virtual Reference Desk, netLibrary, Women Writers Online

Best New Product (not yet released, but anticipated)
... by the Board: eBrary, American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) History E-book Project

Most Improved Product
... by the Board: Project Muse, Runner up: ABI-Infrom
... by Users: UnCover@ingenta, Cambridge Scientific Abstracts (CSA), ISI Web of Science, Journals@Ovid

Best Interface
... by the Board: Columbia International Affairs Online (CIAO), Runner up: California Digital Library (CDL)
... by Users: Ovid, Wilson Omnifile, iBistro, CSA Medline (IGW), HighWire

Best Content
... by the Board: Softline, ABC-Clio, ALLDATA, MathSciNet, Grove’s Scientific American
... by Users: ISI Web of Science, CSA, JSTOR, HighWire

Best Pricing
... by the Board: Project Muse
... by Users: ResearchIndex, WilsonOmnifile, LSSI Virtual Reference Desk, CSA, Women Writers Online, Blackwell Science/Munksgard

Best Contract Options
... by the Board: American Mathematical Society
... by Users: SPARC journals, Wilson, CSA

Best Customer Support
... by the Board: FIS-Online
... by Users: CSA, ProQuest, HighWire

Best Effort
... by the Board: netLibrary
... by Users: netLibrary, Bowker, Science Direct, BioOne

Vaporware
... by the Board: DRA TAOS
... by Users: Questia, DRA TAOS, LOCKSS

Lemon Award Users only! ... Britannica, FirstSearch, DRA TAOS, PsycInfo on SilverPlatter, Mosby on IDEAL

Enlightenment (for listening to users): Nature

Products to Watch: Serials Solutions, Serials MasterFile

Be sure to check out this article and many more available free in fulltext in TCA’s latest issue, v 3, no. 1, July 2001, available at www.charlestonco.com/toc.cfm?iss=v3n1.

How About It?

ERLIC Shareware: Electronic Resources and Licensing Information Center

In 1999, the Pennsylvania State University Libraries developed a Microsoft Access database file (ERLIC) to track electronic resource acquisitions both at a title and aggregated service level. Since that time, the ERLIC database has been utilized to record information regarding authentication, usage, license data, supplier contact information, etc. Currently, the Libraries also use the database to create the monthly fulltext list of electronic resources on its homepage, to capture supplier and local usage statistics, and to extract data files for UnCover, among many other uses. ERLIC has now been offered to all interested parties as shareware in an as-is format. No technical support is provided, and ERLIC remains copyrighted by Penn State University; however, interested parties are welcome to modify the file to suit individual library needs. To download, go to ftp://anonymous.libraries.psu.edu/erlic.


A Profile of Online Shoppers

A recent study conducted at Brigham Young University divided Internet users into eight psychological profiles.

• Shopping Lovers (11.1% of Internet users). Enjoy shopping online; do it frequently.
• Adventurous Explorers (8.9%). Think online shopping is fun, but use the Internet for other activities.
• Suspicious Learners (9.6%). Reluctant to buy online.
• Business Users (12.4%). Computer literate, but use the Internet primarily for business, not shopping.
• Fearful Browsers (10.7%). Spend time “window shopping” online but worry about credit card security and buying products sight unseen.
• Fun Seekers (12.1%). See entertainment value in the Internet but are wary of shopping online.
• Technology Muddlers (19.6%). Show little interest in improving Internet and computer skills; spend less time online than other categories.
• Shopping Avoiders (15.6%). Have money for shopping, but like to see merchandise before buying and don’t like to wait for products to be shipped.


Coming in Future Issues

— How and Why are Libraries Changing? Findings from the Digital Library Federation Survey
— Copyright Roundup: What Does Tasini Really Mean for Us
— Moving from Print+Electronic Pricing to Electronic+Print Pricing: Will Subscription Agents Suffer?
— Previews of Charleston Conference Sessions