

Unnecessary Duplicate Threshold

November, 2010

Recommendation: The Collection Development and Management Committee recommends that Council charge CDMC with overseeing a voluntary pilot project in which participants agree to an unnecessary duplicate threshold of three (3) monograph copies. CDMC will conduct the project over calendar year 2011, evaluate its impact, and provide recommendations to the Board and Council for the November 2011 Council meeting.

Summary: The November 2009 Strategic Agenda for the Collection Development and Management Committee (Alliance-cdmc) included an initiative to determine a threshold for the maximum number of copies to be purchased by consortium libraries. This threshold would be voluntary and applied at the grass roots level when orders are placed on the YBP GOBI software. Analysis of YBP purchasing patterns from 2008 to September 2010 revealed that consortial libraries purchased one or two copies about 70% of the time and four or fewer copies about 90% of the time. The average copies purchased when analyzed with data from GOBI and WorldCat Collection Analysis was about 2.3 when all monographs were included; 2.7 copies for English literature monographs and 1.9 copies for medical monographs. The majority of the membership voted to trial a voluntary unnecessary duplicate threshold of three although several members reasoned that two or four copies would be a better choice. If titles for which four or more copies were purchased from 2008 to September 2010 had only been purchased three times, the average duplication would have been 1.8 instead of 2.3. Therefore, we are recommending three monographic copies, believing it will result in savings, which will in turn result in offering more depth and breadth coverage for the consortium. If a threshold of three is accepted by the Council, the threshold guideline will be announced and promoted in January 2011.

Introduction: According to OhioLink members, “encouraging the reduction of duplication in current purchases, thereby freeing funds to be reallocated to increase the depth and breadth of the collections” (O’Neil and Gammon 2009) was one of the rationales for suggesting a maximum number of copies to be purchased by OhioLink consortia libraries. OhioLink with 600,000 FTE and 90 institutions suggested an optimum number of circulating copies from 3 to 8 depending on the subject area. “Ohio State University has a ceiling of 5 and John Carroll University uses 8 copies. These guidelines are called “soft caps” within the consortium and can be overridden when the need becomes clear.” (O’Neil and Gammon 2009) (Clarification: Ohio State University will not add a copy if there are already 5 copies in the system. OSU has an enrollment of 64,000 students.)

The Alliance-cdmc would like to recommend a threshold to member libraries to leverage our buying power and continue to build individual collections cooperatively with other members of the Orbis Cascade Alliance of 200,000 FTE and 36 institutions. This recommendation would be voluntary because individual institutions will sometimes identify purchases necessary to their institution regardless of the number of copies already held by the Alliance. The application of the threshold will be made within individual libraries using the information about purchases made by other consortial members on YBP GOBITween.

Current situation: The number of monograph copies held by Alliance libraries or purchased through YBP with an imprint of 2008-2010 was analyzed on WorldCat Collection Analysis (WCA) and YBP GOBI. The number of libraries holding a title was investigated by constructing an Orbis Cascade Alliance Libraries peer comparison group in Washington State University’s WCA subscription. Libraries were

counted by OCLC symbol so multiple copies held by one library were counted just once. YBP data only included the materials purchased via GOBI but counted all copies of books purchased. As can be seen in table 1, many more books were included in the WCA full review of books held on any topic than GOBI; however, the average duplication was similar at 2.4 copies for WCA and 2.2 for GOBI. English literature and medicine were selected for specific review as individual subject examples. There was similarly higher number of duplicates for materials in English literature and fewer number of copies for medicine reflected by both analyses (see table 1).

Table 1. Average duplication was between 2 and 3 copies for books acquired from 2008-9/19/2010

	GOBI	WCA
Number of titles acquired		
Total books purchased all subjects	185,223	350,875
Unique titles purchased all subjects	83,693	146,957
Average Duplication	2.2	2.4
Total books purchased in English Literature	11,232	8,823
Unique titles purchased in English Literature	4,083	3,436
Average Duplication	2.8	2.6
Total books purchased in Medicine	12,484	16,742
Unique titles purchased in Medicine	7,431	8,008
Average Duplication	1.7	2.1

Threshold of three: If a threshold of a maximum of three copies had been in place for the last three year with 100% participation, the average duplication using the GOBI data would have been 1.8 (See table 2). This is an extreme situation which is unlikely, but it is a scenario that explains how an average duplication average of 2.2 can decrease when the threshold is set at three. In this theoretical purchase pattern, 14,824 titles purchased four or more times would have been purchased at the three copy level and added to the 9,949 titles actually purchased by three libraries. This would not adversely affect the number of unique titles available to the consortium (83,693) but we would have purchased 151,333 copies of monographs instead of 185,233. The average duplication for this scenario is 1.8 and would have allowed the purchase of an addition 33,900 “copies” or unique monographs. The reason the average decreases with a threshold of three is that individual libraries already diversify the consortial collection with about 50% of the monographs purchased uniquely and 70% with one or two copies. It is critical that this continues and that it is understood that this it is a **maximum** of three and not that three copies are needed or a measure of adequacy. The data reviewed does not measure adequacy. Adequacy measurement would need to be pursued with data from interlibrary loans and circulation data which are not available.

Recommendation of the CDMC: The Alliance-cdmc members voted to perform a trial of the threshold of a voluntary maximum of three copies in 2011. Several members thought that three copies was too conservative and would not be adequate to reduce duplication significantly and several thought that four copies would be a more realistic target for their library situation.

Timeline for implementation: If this threshold is approved by the Council, the Alliance-cdmc steering team will launch the trial in early January. A handout and a PowerPoint talk will be created that the representatives can use in presenting this information to selectors at their institution. This is an optimum

time for this trial to be a success as there are currently 36 libraries ordering a significant portion of their books through YBP.

Assessment: At the end of 2011, YBP reports will be created and the analysis used in table 2 will be repeated. A benchmark for the success of this initiative will be a duplication rate of 2.0 or less in 2011. Also, as part of the evaluation of the trial, resource sharing staff will be surveyed to make sure there are not any unforeseen problems. The results will be discussed and a recommendation made about the threshold.

Table 2: (A) Current purchasing of duplicate copies and (B) example of current purchasing of duplicate copies modified with a threshold at three (3) copies using GOBI data from 2008-2010. Note that the “Number of Titles Acquired” for 3 libraries in table 2B is the sum of the “Number of Titles Acquired” from 3 to 16 libraries in table 2A.

(A) Current purchasing of duplicates; Average number of copies = 2.2			
Number of Libraries	Number of Titles Acquired	% acquired	Number of copies purchased
1	40,826	49%	40,826
2	18,094	70%	36,188
3	9,949	82%	29,847
4	6,145	90%	24,580
5	3,828	94%	19,140
6	2,173	97%	13,038
7	1,239	98%	8,673
8	692	99%	5,536
9	372	100%	3,348
10	197	100%	1,970
11	102	100%	1,122
12	47	100%	564
13	19	100%	247
14	7	100%	98
15	2	100%	30
16	1	100%	16
	83,693		185,223

(B) Proposed maximum threshold of three; Average number of copies = 1.8			
Number of Libraries	Number of Titles Acquired	% acquired	Number of copies purchased
1	40,826	49%	40,826
2	18,094	70%	36,188
3	24,773	100%	74,319
	83,693		151,333

Written by Diane Carroll and Peggy Firman, on behalf of the Alliance-cdmc committee and steering team.

O'Neil, Edward T, and Julia A Gammon. "Building Collections Cooperatively: Analysis of Collection Use in the OhioLink Library Consortium." *ACRL 14th National Conference Proceedings*. Seattle, Washington: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2009. 36-45.