

DATE: April 12, 2005
TO: Orbis Cascade Alliance Council
FROM: Orbis Cascade Alliance Collection Development and Management
Committee Steering Team:
Pat McLaughlin, CWU; Larisa John, OIT; Jane Starnes, PCC;
Sarah Beasley, PSU; Mark Watson, UO; Lynn Chmelir, WSU
(Chair); Joni Roberts, Willamette
RE: Article Supplier Analysis

Background:

At its January meeting, Council requested that the new CDMC gather interlibrary loan data requests for one month to determine the

1. number of journal articles requested from within or without the Alliance membership;
2. number of article requests that could have been filled from within the Alliance membership;
3. number of copies of those articles that could have been filed from within the Alliance membership; and
4. potential effectiveness of load balancing journal article requests.

Council called for the report at its April meeting and encouraged the Committee to provide it with observations concerning fill rate, load balancing, and other factors related to article requesting within the consortium.

The new committee tackled this project post haste. The steering team convened its first meeting via teleconference to design the survey instrument. John Helmer and Nancy Nathanson provided excellent staff support. A draft version of the data collection form was tested at several libraries and comments were solicited from interlibrary loan and serials staff. After revision, the final version of the Data Collection Sheet for Article Supplier Analysis was posted on the Committee Web page in mid-February. Committee members at each library were alerted that the data collection project was underway and tasked to organize their library's local data collection. The Steering Team wishes to thank the many staff members from Alliance libraries who worked diligently to collect the data.

Data collection ended March 25, with a few spreadsheets trickling in over the next week. Only one Alliance library was not able to submit data. Nancy Nathanson followed up on the many anomalies she found in the data reports and loaded the individual library Excel spreadsheets into an Access database for query and analysis. Her tabular reports and explanatory notes are posted on the Council Web page. Please note that there are some minor discrepancies in totals because of the way data were collected. We wish to

acknowledge with appreciation Nancy's excellent work in helping us to analyze this mass of data.

Results:

1. Number of journal articles requested from within or without the Alliance membership?

The Steering Team selected to examine ILL articles received at Alliance libraries during November 2004. November tends to be a busy month for ILL whether the institution operates on a quarter or semester calendar. The ST felt that November data would provide a good sample of ILL article receipts. A couple libraries could not identify articles received last November, so they analyzed current receipts for an equal number of business days. 30 Alliance libraries reported receiving 17,654 articles. 7,903 (45%) were supplied by Alliance member libraries. 9,751 (55%) were supplied by libraries that are not members of the Orbis Cascade Alliance. (See Nancy's *Articles Received: Actual* table for institutional data.)

2. Number of article requests that could have been filled from within the Alliance membership?

Of the 17,672 articles received,* 13,385 (76%) could have been filled by Alliance member libraries. Only 4,287 (24%) articles were not held by any Alliance library. Of the 9,751 articles received from non-Alliance libraries, 5,464 (56%) could have been filled within the Alliance. (See Nancy's *Number of Suppliers Available* table for institutional data.)

*Please note: this number differs slightly from the number reported in #1 because the data were collected from different fields.

3. Number of copies of those articles that could have been filled from within the Alliance membership?

Of the 13,385 articles received that were held by Alliance libraries,
3,613 (20%) articles were available from 6 or more libraries,
1,136 (6%) articles were available from 5 libraries,
1,585 (9%) articles were available from 4 libraries,
1,985 (11%) articles were available from 3 libraries,
2,313 (13%) articles were available from 2 libraries,
2,753 (16%) articles were available from a single library.

84% of available articles were held by at least two libraries. (See Nancy's *Number of Suppliers Available* table for institutional data.)

The availability of articles within the Alliance libraries for individual institutions ranged from 45% to 100%. 16 institutions could have obtained more than 80% of their articles within the Alliance. 26 institutions could have obtained more than 70% of their articles within the Alliance. Only one institution (UW) could have obtained fewer than 50% of its articles within the Alliance. (See Nancy's *Alliance Supplier Available* table for institutional data.)

4. The potential effectiveness of load balancing journal article requests?

For load balancing to be effective, holdings must be distributed among member libraries. As noted above, 84% of the articles received were held by more than a single Alliance

library and 20% were held by six or more libraries. The 2,753 (16%) articles held by a single library are distributed throughout the consortium. UW is the sole supplier of a little more than a third of them, 6.2% of the total number of articles received. WSU is the sole supplier of 1.9% of the articles received; UO is the sole supplier of 1.4%; and OHSU is the sole supplier of 1.3%. The remaining 5.2% of articles with a single owner are shared by the 26 other libraries in the consortium, each of whom owns less than 1% of the unique holdings. If load balancing software can direct loans away from the four libraries with the heaviest concentration of unique holdings--except for when they are the only holding library--it is likely that lending could be distributed equitably among the member libraries. (See Nancy's *Unique Holdings* table for institutional data.)

Further Discussion:

If the November data are predictive of future transactions, it looks like about three-quarters of the article requests from Alliance libraries could be filled within the consortium. Given the distribution of needed titles and the availability of load balancing software, it appears that those requests could be distributed equitably among member libraries. If patron-initiated requesting for articles would be activated through Summit, it would probably be desirable for the load balancing software to operate independently for books and articles since there may well be different patterns of use.

Council members are no doubt aware that the data collection for this project was very time consuming. The reason it took so long is that serials holdings recorded in Summit are not in any standard format. Some libraries use summary holdings. Others list individual item records for each volume. It is not clear in the serials holdings whether or not the licenses for electronic subscriptions allow for ILL. Interpreting this disparate information was a challenge for many very smart people and we wonder if a computer could do it accurately. If the Alliance wishes to pursue development of any patron-initiated ILL program for journal articles, it may wish to discuss whether or not an effort to normalize holdings records throughout the consortium is desirable.