CELPh'S COOPERATIVE EBOOK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT: IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE DIRECTIONS

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Abstract

This paper is a descriptive study of the profile and success of the collaborative ebook development project of the Consortium of Engineering Libraries-Philippines (CELPh). CELPh was established in 2014 to provide its member libraries better access to online resources through shared subscriptions/acquisitions. In the last three years, it has jointly acquired a total of 1417 e-book titles, bought in 3 tranches. The decision whether to continue or end the project depends largely on its success. To measure success, this study looks into the utilization rate, the cost-efficiency of the acquired e-books, and the members' insights with regard the project's strengths and weaknesses through the collected usage data from publisher and interviews among selected head librarians of member libraries. This study determines the cost-per-use to ascertain cost efficiency, while Applegate's Formula is used to ascertain utilization rate that include the percentage of items used/accessed, the circulation ratio of all titles, and the circulation ratio of downloaded titles.

Keywords: cooperative collection development, eBooks, cost-per-use, library consortium

INTRODUCTION

Providing the most comprehensive information sources possible, with oftentimes, very limited financial resources, has driven librarians to come together (Jakubs, 2015), usually in the form of consortia. It is for this very reason that the Consortium of Engineering Libraries of the Philippines (CELPh) was formed.

CELPh started out as an informal group in 2012 but was formally established and officially registered under the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in 2014. It initially had eleven members consisting of academic libraries from higher educational institutions (both private and state-funded), offering degree programs in engineering. Two years after its establishment, CELPh's membership grew by 63%. Currently it has 18 members, where nine are based in Metro Manila (Adamson University (AdU), Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU), De La Salle University (DLSU),

FEATI University, Mapua Institute of Technology (MIT), Technological Institute of the Philippines - Manila (TIP-Manila), Technological Institute of the Philippines-Quezon City (TIP-QC), University of Santo Tomas (UST), and the University of the Philippines-Diliman College of Engineering Library (UPD COE)); five in other parts of Luzon (Central Luzon State University (CLSU), Holy Angel University (HAU), Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST), Saint Louis University (SLU), University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB)); two in the Visayas (Cebu Institute of Technology - University (CIT-U) and University of San Carlos (USC)); and, two more based in Mindanao (Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) and Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan (XU)).

Member admission to the consortium is based on program offering (engineering program specifically); autonomy, both the institution and the library (i.e., self-governing and is at liberty to enter into agreement with CELPh as a formal organization); library administration (i.e., the library should be managed by a licensed librarian); and, more importantly, the availability of sustaining funds as proof of the member's capability to join and finance shared access to online resources.

In 2016, it has initiated a collaborative e-book development project among its member libraries. In the next three years, it has jointly acquired a total of 1417 e-book titles, which were bought in three tranches. Based on the agreement with the publisher, titles are to be acquired on a per batch basis. A member library selects e-book titles worth USD5,000.00 at the minimum. All titles selected and paid for by a library are owned by said library, perpetually. However, that library also gets to access all other titles acquired and owned by other members that made their purchases in the same batch, thus increasing the number of titles a member library can actually access. Access to other member libraries' acquired titles is charged with a one-time fee of USD2500.00. If Library A, therefore, acquires 43 titles in the first batch of acquisitions, it owns 43 titles but also gets to access 362 titles more that were acquired by other members buying in batch 1. Thus, it is able to access a total of 405 titles, although it only paid for 43 titles (plus the USD2500.00 access fee, of course). If, for example, Library A decides not to join the second batch of acquisitions, then its access will be limited to all titles included in batch 1 only, while those who joined both batches one and two acquisitions, get to enjoy access to all titles for the two batches; that is, provided they pay for another one-time access fee for the second batch.

CELPh's strength lies in the number of its members, its wide geographic coverage, and its highly specialized collection need, that is, electronic resources in engineering. As such, it takes advantage of its unique features as a group to negotiate with publishers and make sure to leverage on its purchasing power as a quite big group, to achieve its main agenda which is to save on cost, while at the same time providing a comprehensive engineering collection in electronic format to its respective clienteles.

More importantly, CELPh is guided and has been influenced by the best practices done by libraries in different counries. Based on library literature and practice, cooperative collection development is a common activity among library consortia. For instance, the Conspectus of the Research Libraries Group (RLG) was created to enable the member libraries to jointly develop their collections, with each of the members specializing on the build up of a particular subject field, thus relying on each other's collection strength (Jakubs, 2015) to fill and compensate for one another's weaknesses. Efforts of other library consortia on cooperative collection development are likewise made evident in published literature. The experience of the University of Colorado (CU), for example, on its shared purchasing and cataloging of e-books project among its five libraries located in different campuses was shared by Lu and Chambers (2013). Said study focused on the catalog records of acquired e-books and how these are customized to fit CU's needs. The implications of the Pareto principle (80/20 rule) in the e-journal subscriptions of the UGC-Infonet Consortia in India was ascertained by Singson and

Hangsing (2015). Said rule proved to be relevant in understanding consolidated usage of large library consortia. The experience of Cleveland State University with consortial agreements, being one of the members of OhioLINK, particularly its impact on the roles of the selector or the librarian, in general, was, on the other hand, examined by Thornton (2000). Findings indicate that the profession, as a whole, is sure to undergo significant transformations. An assessment of interlibrary loan lending data was carried out by Thacker et al. (2019) to explore on the possibility of collaborative collection development on area studies collections. The study concluded that such is possible.

This study looked into the utilization rate and the cost-efficiency of the acquired e-books of CELPh which will serve as bases for the members in coming up with the decision on whether to continue or end the project. The members' insights with regard to the project's strengths and weaknesses, were also ascertained so it could be addressed and eventually help maximize e-book access.

METHODOLOGY

The study made use of descriptive quantitative design. Statistics of e-book usage were obtained from reports provided by the publisher. The reports covered a period of three years, that is, from 2016 to 2018, which included purchased titles of 12 member libraries for three batches. Statistics of titles that form part of the fourth batch of purchases were excluded from the study.

Structured interview was also conducted among the head librarians, particularly those who took part in the shared e-book project. However, only seven out of the 12 (58.33%) head librarians were able to share their thoughts regarding their expectations, issues, and future plans, as far as the project is concerned.

Data gathered were analyzed and presented using descriptive method of analysis of simple frequency count, mean and percentages. The individual cost-per-use (CPU) was calculated by dividing the total acquisition cost (sum of the total list price + access fee) to the total number of views or downloads of titles acquired by the individual institution. The consortium cost-per-use, on the other hand, was computed by dividing the total amount of all titles accessed (including those owned by other member libraries) to the total number of views or downloads of accessed titles. Microsoft Excel was used in organizing data into tables.

The extent of e-book utilization was ascertained using the 80/20 rule (also known as the Pareto principle) and the formula devised by Singson and Hangsing (2015), which was first used for printed books. The 80/20 rule presumes that 80% of the usage comes from 20% of the collection (Shachaf, 2003). The Applegate (2013) formula, on the other hand, looked at the percentage of titles circulated or used and the circulation ratio of all titles (titles that were viewed/downloaded in the case of e-books, and those that were not used at all) as well as the circulation ratio of titles that were used as shown in the number of times that they were viewed or downloaded. To determine the percentage of e-book titles used or accessed, the number of viewed/downloaded titles in a particular subject segment or class letter (e.g. TA) was divided by the total number of titles held in the said subject segment and was then multiplied by 100. To compute for the access ratio of all the titles in a particular subject segment, the number of views/downloads was divided by the total number of titles held in a particular subject segment. To calculate for the access ratio of used titles in a particular subject segment, the number of views/downloads was divided by the number of titles that gathered usage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Collection

From 2016 to 2018, there were 1417 titles acquired by the members of the consortium. On the initial year of the project's implementation, 12 members eagerly joined amassing a total 405 titles of acquisitions. A decline of 37.28% in the number acquisitions was observed on the second year of the project. Remarkably though, the number of acquisitions increased by 198% on the third year of its implementation.

Library consortia usually undergo a series of developmental stages—from the embryonic stage, to the early development stage, then the development stage, and finally maturation stage (i.e., either developing into a meta-consortia or disbanding for some) (Singson & Hangsing, 2015). Just like any other consortia, CELPh went through these different stages. The sharp decline in the number of acquisitions on the second year of the project (which is also the third year of the establishment of the consortium) reflects the members' feelings of uncertainty that is typical during the third stage, which is the development stage. The sudden increase in the number of e-book acquisitions on the third year of the project (not to mention the increase in the number of members), on the other hand, signals that CELPh is approaching the early stage of maturation where members feel more stable. In the coming years, the consortium is expected to negotiate with more publishers and database aggregators to further develop its members' engineering collections. Evaluation and assessments are foreseen to also be carried out more regularly to allow for evidenced based decision-making.

Of the 12 members that participated in the e-book project, only seven (58.33%) joined for three straight series of batch acquisitions. The rest had either joined just one- or two-batch acquisitions. Library K, which happened to have the biggest number of student population, had the biggest share of title acquisitions. On the contrary, Library D, having the smallest number of student population, purchased the least number of titles, having joined only the first batch of acquisitions (refer to Table 1). Based on the trend, the number of titles purchased by the different members seemed to relate to the size of their population, which is very logical as the availability of budget, especially for private institutions, relies mainly on the number of enrollees.

Since the consortium comprises of libraries in higher educational institutions offering engineering programs, the goal of the e-book cooperative collection development project is to strengthen the engineering collections and related disciplines of all the members by providing access to more e-book titles than each of the institutions could actually afford. Looking at the table below shows that while indeed titles in engineering (T-TX) and sciences (Q-QR) dominate the acquisitions, there were titles that seemed to have deviated from the focus of the collection development. A close look at some of the titles classified under philosophy, psychology and religion (B-BX), auxiliary sciences of history (C-CT), and political science (J-JZ) showed incongruity with the established collection development goal. While the number of titles that did not fit into the criteria may be minimal, these still are misfits, hence may be considered as bad collection development decisions.

Table 1

Breakdown of Title Acquisitions per Member Library

Institution	No. of Titles Acquired			Grand Total
	Batch 1	Batch 2	Batch 3	
Library A	43			43
Library B	34			34
Library C	34	98		132
Library D	28			28
Library E	35	34	90	159
Library F	35	32	84	151
Library G	36		88	124
Library H	28	32	96	156
Library I	27	29	48	104
Library J	37	39	62	138
Library K	37	51	134	222
Library L	31	37	58	126
Grand Total	**405**	**254**	**758**	**1,417**

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Utilization

Overall Utilization

Out of the 1417 titles jointly acquired by the members, only 656 (46.29%) generated usage. Of this total number, 233 (16.44%) gathered 80% of the usage. Based on the 80/20 rule (which presumes that 80% of the usage will come from 20% of the collection) (Kumar & Lalita, 2017) the e-book usage of CELPh member libraries fell short as only 16.44% (less than 20%) of the titles generated 80% of the usage. This denotes that only a small portion of the title selections (233 or 16.44%) are considered vital to the clients of the member libraries and that the remaining 1184 (83.56%) are regarded to be trivial titles, further confirming title selection issues.

Most Frequently Accessed Titles

Sixteen (16) titles from among the 1417 titles acquired generated more than 500 views and downloads. The selection of Library E entitled Handbook of Human Factors and Ergonomics gathered the most number of usage, implying a common need and high demand for said title from among all the member libraries. Notice that its usage is way above the rest of the titles on the list demonstrating its value to the users. Examining the list of titles showed that only 2 (0.14%) out of the 1417 titles jointly acquired by the members covered ergonomics (the subject matter of the title with the highest number of usage), which again suggests uninformed collection development decisions among the member libraries.

Table 2

Breakdown of Titles Acquisitions by Subject

Class Letter	Subject	No. of Titles
B-BX	Philosophy. Psychology. Religion	4
C-CT	Auxiliary Sciences of History	1
G-GV	Geography. Anthropology. Recreation	18
H-HX	Social sciences	153
J-JZ	Political science	1
K-KZ	Law	8
L-LT	Education	8
M-MT	Music and books on music	1
N-NX	Fine arts	19
P-PZ	Language and literature	1
Q-QR	Science	337
R-RZ	Medicine	31
S-SK	Agriculture	8
T-TX	Technology	821
U-UH	Military science	3
Z-ZA	Bibliography. Library science	3
Grand Total		**1,417**

High usage titles (titles that were accessed/downloaded more than 500 times) came from the selections made by eight member libraries where each of these libraries contributing an average of two in demand title selections. On the contrary, none from the selections of Libraries B, F, G, and J made it to the list of in-demand/most frequently accessed and downloaded titles.

Utilization of Owned Titles

The percentage of owned titles that were accessed or downloaded by the owner libraries ranged from 0 to 100%. Library B's usage of its owned titles was at 100% (refer to column E of Table 4) implying excellent title selections, considering that all the titles it acquired have been used by its own clients. Similarly, Library F generated 45.03% usage

Table 3
Most Frequently Accessed Titles

Title	Class Letter	Owner	Total Usage
1. Handbook of Human Factors and Ergonomics	TA	Library E	2451
2. A Handbook for Construction Planning and Scheduling	TK	Library K	1,006
3. Water Resources in the Built Environment: Management Issues and Solutions	HB	Library L	888
4. The New Workplace: A Guide to the Human Impact of Modern Working Practices	TK	Library C	847
5. Agricultural and Food Electroanalysis	TH	Library E	844
6. Digital Signal and Image Processing Using MATLAB®: Advances and Applications: The Stochastic Case	TK	Library D	832
7. Introduction to Particle Technology	TP	Library H	762
8. Progress in Nanotechnology: Applications	TA	Library A	729
9. Transport Phenomena: An Introduction to Advanced Topics	TP	Library H	699
10. Handbook of Food Safety Engineering	TX	Library I	595
11. International Handbook of Work and Health Psychology, Third Edition	HF	Library C	594
12. Digital Signal and Image Processing Using Matlab®: Volume 1 Fundamentals	TK	Library A	582
13. Open-Ended Problems: A Future Chemical Engineering Education Approach	TP	Library K	566
14. Design of Highway Bridges: An LRFD Approach	TG	Library L	556
15. Dictionary of Scientific Principles	Q	Library L	532
16. Risk Assessment	QA	Library L	510

(refer to column E of Table 4) from its owned title selections. These libraries' title selections showed to be responding well to the needs of their respective clients given the high utilization rate.

Quite alarming, though, is the case of Library D and Library G, as the titles they had purchased to own, gathered zero and one usage, respectively. This clearly demonstrates a mismatch between the titles selected and the needs of their users. Worst is the fact that the data presented actually corresponds to three years of e-book usage (refer to column F of

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Table 4). As the titles are sure to "age" through the years, its relevance is likely to diminish, thus increasing usage in the succeeding years is highly improbable. Therefore, the investment that these libraries have put in to acquire these titles is inclined to go to waste, that is, as far as its own clients are concerned. Once more, this corroborates the previous findings that indeed there are problems with the selection of titles.

The extent to which e-books are being utilized is best gauged by looking at the access ratio of all titles as this provides a holistic view of how well the title selections of an individual institution are meeting the needs of its users. The access ratio of all titles refers to the average number of times the titles were used within the specified time frame, which in this case is three years. Library F generated the highest usage at 16.90 from 2016 to 2018 or a yearly average usage of 5.63 times per title. On the contrary, Libraries D, G, and J generated 0, 0.01, and 0.25 usage of its owned titles, respectively, in the last three years, implying poor collection development decisions and practices (refer to Column F of Table 4).

The average number of times that a used title has been accessed or downloaded is presented in column G of Table 4. Library K obtained the highest access ratio of used titles which was closely followed by Library E. Used titles that

Table 4

Utilization of Individual Institution's Owned Titles

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Institution	**No. of Titles**	**No. of Titles with Views/ Downloads**	**No. of Views/ Downloads**	**% Used/ Accessed (C/B*100)**	**Access Ratio of All Titles (D/B)**	**Access Ratio of Used Titles (D/C)**
Library A	43	8	167	18.60	3.88	20.88
Library B	34	34	149	100.00	4.38	4.38
Library C	132	7	173	5.30	1.31	24.71
Library D	28	0	0	0.00	0.00	-
Library E	159	10	407	6.29	2.56	40.70
Library F	151	68	2,552	45.03	16.90	37.53
Library G	124	1	1	0.81	0.01	1.00
Library H	156	16	477	10.26	3.06	29.81
Library I	104	14	356	13.46	3.42	25.43
Library J	138	6	35	4.35	0.25	5.83
Library K	222	10	408	4.50	1.84	40.80
Library L	126	4	116	3.17	0.92	29.00
TOTAL	**1,417**	**178**	**4,841**	**12.56**	**3.42**	**27.20**

garnered high access ratio proved to very well match with the user needs.

Access to Consortium Acquisitions

Based on the gathered data, Library I logged the most number of views and downloads from 2016 to 2018 followed by Library L and Library C, respectively. Surprisingly though, even those that have access to only one batch of title acquisitions like Libraries A, B, and D had their fair share of views and downloads (see column D of Table 5), suggesting that the number of titles accessible to the members does not necessarily dictate the usage trend; rather, it is how well the selections fit the needs of the users.

Comparing the individual institutions percentage of used titles that they actually own against the percentage of used titles that they have access to appeared to have dropped for most of the libraries, except for Libraries D and G (refer to column D of Tables 4 and 5). This is because the number of titles accessible to the member libraries is a lot higher than the number of titles they actually own, thus the apparent decrease. Comparing column Cs of Tables 4 and 5 will best illustrate the reason behind the seeming decrease. In reality though, the member libraries actually benefited significantly from one another through the shared e-book project as they were able to multiply the number of titles made available to their respective users.

Table 5

Shared Utilization of Consortium Acquisitions

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Institution	**No. of Titles**	**No. of Titles with Views/ Downloads**	**No. of Views/ Downloads**	**% Used/ Accessed (C/B*100)**	**Access Ratio of All Titles (D/B)**	**Access Ratio of Used Titles (D/C)**
Library A	405	43	5,289	10.62	13.06	123.00
Library B	405	34	4,737	8.40	11.70	139.32
Library C	1,163	43	6,872	3.70	5.91	159.81
Library D	405	27	3,768	6.67	9.30	139.56
Library E	1,417	43	6,194	3.03	4.37	144.05
Library F	1,417	75	5,136	5.29	3.62	68.48
Library G	1,163	43	3,556	3.70	3.06	82.70
Library H	1,417	86	4,418	6.07	3.12	51.37
Library I	1,417	83	8,400	5.86	5.93	101.20
Library J	1,417	77	5,842	5.43	4.12	75.87
Library K	1,417	51	5,270	3.60	3.72	103.33
Library L	1,417	50	7,322	3.53	5.17	146.44

Distinct from the rest of the members was the case of Library B, which seemed not to have taken advantage of other members' acquisitions and appeared to have restricted its access to only those titles that it owns. Thus, from a 100% utilization of the titles it owns, the percentage of titles it accessed or downloaded from the entire number of titles that it has access to dropped to 8.40%. Said library seemed to be having access problems as it looks like they were unable to view titles acquired by the other member libraries. The sad part though, is that they seem not to be aware of the said problem or that they may have been experiencing difficulties addressing the problem, which has been going on for three years now.

Cost-per-Use (CPU)

Individual Libraries CPU

The cost per use is a measure for gauging the cost efficiency of a subscription (Tetteh, 2018) or an acquisition. The average individual libraries' cost per use was computed at USD43.08 or Php2175.32 (at Php50.4950 exchange rate). This means that the 12 libraries paid Php2175.32, on the average, for every access/download made by its own client from its owned title selections.

Examining the individual performance of each of the 12 libraries, however, proved to be upsetting if not infuriating. Take Library G as an example. If said Library acquired as a solo institution, it would appear that the single e-book view/download made by its own client from the titles it owns had cost it a humongous amount of USD14,234.34 (Php718,762.99). The case of Library D is even worst, though. Since it logged no usage from its owned title selections by its own clients, it totally wasted away its USD6,673.84 (Php336,995.55) investment. This should not have happened and could have been avoided if the selection of titles was done judiciously. On the contrary, Library F's CPU which is at USD8.62 (Php435.27) showed to be very encouraging.

Consortium CPU

The average consortium CPU was computed at USD8.13 (Php410.52), which is 81.13% lower than the average individual institution's CPU. This clearly shows that the cooperative e-book acquisition project of CELPh is very cost-efficient generating a total savings of USD334,840.93 (Php16,907,792.76) or an average of USD27,903.41 (Php1,408,982.73) per member, thus significantly benefitting all its members.

From among the member libraries, Library L's individual's cost per use appeared to be the lowest. However, looking at the amount of money it was supposed to have "saved", revealed that it actually incurred a loss amounting to USD9,314.53 (Php470,337.19) as the titles of e-books it has actually accessed summed up to an amount that is way less than what it actually paid for. Among the 12 members that joined the project, it was Library J that profited the most having accessed e-books that cost more than three times the amount it actually paid for. Surprisingly, even Library D which generated no usage from the titles it owns benefited a lot having accessed titles from other member libraries, the amount of which exceeded the price it paid for.

Currently though, there is no standard value that has been established which could be used as a basis to determine the level of cost-efficiency or a formula to compute for an "acceptable" CPU. Some libraries use their average CPU as a benchmark (Kumar & Lalita, 2017) to determine how cost-efficient a database or an e-book title is, while others use the average cost of purchased articles from publishers or document supply sources which, at present, is between USD30.00-USD35.00 (Kumar & Lalita, 2017).

If the average individual CPU, which is USD43.08, is to be used as the basis, then, only Libraries F and A passed in terms of cost-efficiency. Table 6 provides a comparative quantifiable value of the individual institutions' and the consortium's cost per use.

Table 6
Individual vs Consortium Cost-per-Use

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Institution	**Actual Amount Paid (in USD)**	**Individual Views/ Downloads**	**Individual CPR (B/C) (in USD)**	**Total Cost of Titles Accessed (in USD)**	**Total Views/ Downloads**	**Consortium CPR (E/F) (in USD)**	**Savings (in USD) (E-B)**	**% Savings**
Library A	6,876.70	167	41.18	20,887.19	5,289	3.95	14,010.49	67.08
Library B	7,450.69	149	50.00	11,595.19	4,737	2.45	4,144.50	35.74
Library C	17,432.18	173	100.76	51,681.68	6,872	7.52	34,249.50	66.27
Library D	6,673.84	0	-	8,849.49	3,768	2.35	2,175.65	24.59
Library E	21,973.45	407	53.99	84,616.05	6,194	13.66	62,642.60	74.03
Library F	22,010.90	2,552	8.62	66,492.16	5,136	12.95	44,481.26	66.90
Library G	14,234.34	1	14,234.34	20,514.04	3,556	5.77	6,279.70	30.61
Library H	21,245.91	477	44.54	61,338.53	4,418	13.88	40,092.62	65.36
Library I	21,629.95	356	60.76	41,660.22	8,400	4.96	20,030.27	48.08
Library J	25,403.84	35	725.82	115,151.40	5,842	19.71	89,747.56	77.94
Library K	22,322.64	408	54.71	48,623.95	5,270	9.23	26,301.31	54.09
Library L	21,302.84	116	183.65	11,988.31	7,322	1.64	-9,314.53	-77.70
TOTAL	**208,557.28**	**4,841**	**43.08**	**543,398.21**	**66,804**	**8.13**	**334,840.93**	**61.62**

CELPh Librarians' Insights on the e-Book Project

Strengthening the member libraries' engineering collections and expected savings from the shared e-book access were the two main reasons why the member libraries decided to join the project. Except for one library (14.29%), all the others (85.71%) are convinced that the project was able to meet their expectations of having a strong engineering collection at a reduced cost. This shows that for the librarians, acquiring or having access to additional engineering titles is tantamount to having a strong collection regardless of whether those titles proved to be useful or not. It should be noted though that no usage reports had been provided by the publisher to the head librarians since the project commenced in 2016, thus, no assessments have ever been conducted by any of the libraries. Therefore, the librarians' perceptions seemed to be based on their best estimate of the project's benefit and not on accurate and reliable data. The single librarian who expressed disappointment with the project also appeared to be upset not with the project per se but with the technical problems (e.g. connectivity)

that it persistently encountered, which is a totally different issue emanating from a totally different source, and had nothing to do with the project or the publisher.

The idea of being able to literally stretch their budget by having access to more number of titles for the least amount of money possible is what all the librarians liked most about the project. Access issues and publisher support regarding access problems were issues that some of the member libraries encountered.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CELPh's e-book cooperative collection development project proved to have successfully attained its goal of providing a comprehensive engineering collection to its members at a significantly lower cost. Given this, it would be sensible to continue with the project as it definitely was able to provide benefits which would not have been possible if the members were to acquire the e-books independently.

It is unfortunate though that the process of selecting titles demonstrated to be a challenge that is common among the members. The lack of expertise of title selectors, the librarians' unfamiliarity with the users' needs or imprudence, seemed to have contributed to poor title selections. As such, it is recommended that title selection be done judiciously which can be carried out by looking at available data. Examining turnaways, analyzing usage patterns or transaction logs are some of the many ways which may be carried out to gather insights to serve as bases for title selection. The publisher may actually be tapped to help provide useful data so that selection decisions made are evidenced-based.

Overall, the effort of the members to provide a comprehensive engineering collection to library users is noteworthy. However, ensuring that the titles selected fit the users' needs so that use is maximized, is more virtuous; hence, should be the ultimate goal of the consortium.

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