



# *Documents Direct*

## A Case Study

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The Documents Direct project started in March 1999 and was internally funded by the University for 12 months. The project's trial started in June 1999.

It's my intention today to enlighten you on:

- what the project was about
- why it was needed
- what the project offered
- findings
- and the implications of the project on the collection development policy at Leeds.



## *Exploring alternative models*

### Traditional provision

- Holdings:
  - journal subscriptions
- Access:
  - via inter-library loan

The project's aim is to examine alternatives to the established collection management model that exists within the Library. As a major research library, our periodical collection has developed over time to support the research needs of the University and Leeds currently subscribe to and pay for approximately 6000 titles.

This has traditionally been achieved through our holdings and therefore journal subscriptions and all other required items are obtainable through the inter-library loans service, which we offer to all our users at £2 per request.

ILL has been viewed by many - both users and librarians alike - as a second best service because the more ILL requests we process reflects gaps in our collection and therefore our inadequacy to hold a global collection. In the past, ILL has been considered as having no lasting benefit to the University community because each request is based on individual need, while the same expenditure on periodicals and books bought items which could be used for years to come.

This approach has been overtaken by a number of issues which I will discuss later but primarily it is the role of the Library to support the University's researchers - regardless of whether that is held locally or remotely.



## *Aims*

- To examine alternatives to the established collection development model by:
  - offering a just-in-time policy
  - assessing costs and benefits of on-demand single article supply

The principle of the project therefore was to establish an alternative to the traditional method I have already described by offering journal articles and conference papers from a variety of suppliers directly to and from their desktops - offering a just-in-time policy to journal collections or single article supply, rather than our traditional holdings policy.



## *Why now?*

- Periodical price increases
- Increase in publishing
- Economic climate
- Commercial suppliers
- WWW technology

So why now?

A number of factors have demanded that alternatives to this model be sought and I'll touch on these briefly because I'm sure you're all more than aware of the following:

- firstly, periodical price increases continue to rise above inflation each year
- there are an increasing number of titles being published each year
- the current economic climate in the UK higher education sector and the subsequent constraints on the Library's budget
- a range of products are now available offering single article supply through commercial companies

finally advances in information technology now makes this type of service feasible as researchers use the web to access a range of library services including database searching and access to electronic journals



## *The project*

- 4 trial schools:
  - Biology
  - Chemistry
  - Civil engineering
  - Electrical and Electronic engineering
- unmediated document ordering and delivery to academics and researchers

The project's trial was officially launched in June with 100 registered users from 4 schools, and included both academics and researchers.

The user group was self-selected but was predisposed to:

- those who have an interest in library services;
- those who have a reasonable level of IT literacy;
- heavy users of inter-library loans;
- those whose research is not well supported by the Library's holdings.

Evaluation of the project's trial started in September. Questionnaires were mounted on the project's web pages and evaluation sessions took place throughout November. 72% of active users from the initial user group completed a questionnaire and 62% attended evaluation sessions. In addition, a Microsoft Access database was designed and used to gather quantitative data.



## *Selected suppliers:*

### Multidisciplinary

- Inside Web
- UnCover
- Technology University of Delft's DocUTrans service

### Subject specialist

- AskIEEE
- RSC's 3D service
- BioMedNet.

Suppliers were selected based on a range of criteria including

- ease of ordering
- individual user identification
- value-added services such as current awareness services
- billing methods
- cost

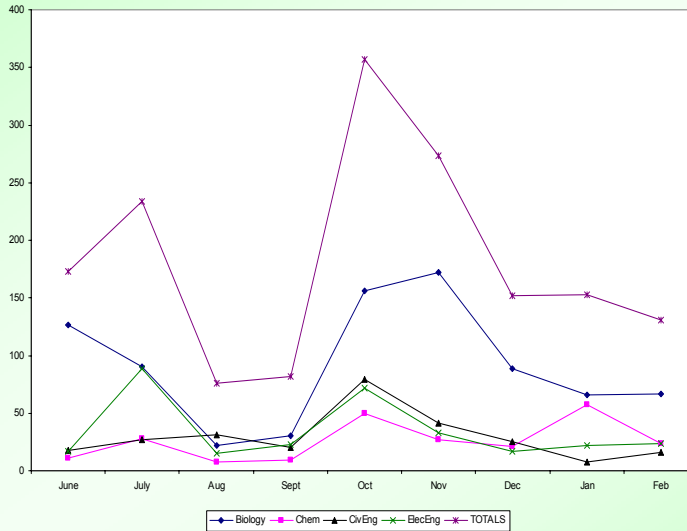
We had to pay copyright fee in addition to a service charge because a signed declaration is not collected from the users and therefore does not come under fair dealing provision in Copyright Law.

Inside Web gives the user access to search at article level 21000 journal titles from the BL's collection and offers current awareness services with linked document delivery. UnCover offers a multi-disciplinary database covering 17000 journal titles. Docutrans based at TUD in the Netherlands offers delivery in PDF as an email attachment. In addition 3 subject specialist suppliers were selected. In addition we set up an internal photocopying service whereby users could order articles held by the Library via a web based form.

All users had access to all the services and could order articles and papers with delivery in a range of formats including postal delivery of a photocopy, fax, email with PDF and web download.



## Monthly usage rates



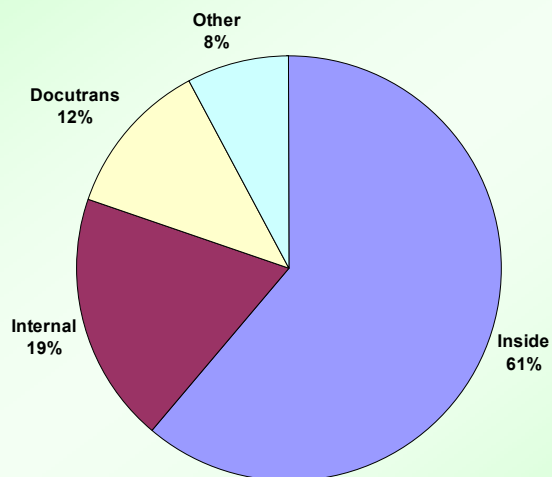
In 9 months from June to February, 1467 requests were placed. We anticipated that launching the project in June would be timely as academics would return to the research following examinations. However, as you can see this was not the case and usage dropped dramatically in August and use decreases significantly during vacations.

The increase in usage in October reflects an increase in the size of the user group at this time. We decided to extend the user group to include more research students.

During January and February use remained steady and this will be monitored through the project's next phase.



## Use of services



As you can see from the chart - the British Library's Inside web service was the most well used of the suppliers with 61% of the total.

93 users placed orders with Inside at least once and 968 orders were placed and only 57 were not filled. 95% of orders were delivered by 1st class mail. Focus groups and questionnaire responses indicated that what users wanted was good subject coverage, reliable document delivery, and an easy to use service. They also liked the level of control with Inside as they can monitor the progress of their orders at any time.

I think one of the primary reasons for Inside's popularity was that each users was given their logon name and password for Inside. With other services they had to use either a generic username or they had to register themselves with the service.

The internal photocopying service also proved popular and 283 articles were supplied to 30 users during the 9-month trial.



## *Distribution of external orders*

Number of users	Number of orders per user	Total orders	%
1	70+	71	6%
0	60-69	0	0%
2	50-59	107	9%
3	40-49	139	12%
4	30-39	127	11%
7	20-29	175	15%
25	10-19	336	28%
54	1-9	231	19%
<b>96</b>		<b>1186</b>	<b>100%</b>

This table shows the distribution of all of the orders placed with external suppliers. As you can see, 47% of users have ordered between 1 and 19 articles. 8 users have ordered only 1 document and 5 of these orders were placed within the 1st 2 months of the project. The average number of external orders placed by users is 12 and the median is 8 over a 9-month period.

As a project no restrictions were placed on users. As you can see only 1 individual used the service to excess. By the end of February the user placed 71 external orders and 24 internal orders. He had ordered almost a third of of the school's total number of orders. The users access to services was suspended in January. In a real scenario, fund allocation per person would be negotiated between the individual, the departmental representative and the faculty team librarian.

6% of all the external orders could have been filled locally but further investigation showed that the Library's holdings were usually incomplete for the title and it was more convenient and less time-consuming for the user to request the item from an external supplier.

The 4 schools taking part in the trial were from science and engineering disciplines and it was anticipated that usage would be for current material by the nature of their research.



## *About orders....*

From June - February:

- 1467 orders
  - 283 internal orders
  - 1184 external orders
- 846 different publications
- 82% from 1990 onwards
- 18% - 1999

Users placed 1467 orders from 846 different publications - 41% of titles have been ordered only one. Most orders were for current material - 760 requests were for articles from 1990 onwards.

One title was ordered 14 times - the earliest article was from 1951 and the latest 1992. The average cost of a science, technology and medicine journal in 1999 was £616. More than 60 articles from 1 title would have to be ordered to make a subscription cost-effective. In addition - an electronic subscriptions - even with access to all issues from 1995 - would not meet demand and the user would still be reliant on document delivery services.



## *About costs.....*

- Service charge:
  - £6293.00
- Copyright fee:
  - £5566.94
- TOTAL:
  - £11859.94

Since June 1999, the project spent £6293 on external orders and £5566.94 - making the total spend over 9 months £11859.94.

This makes the average cost of an external order £10.30 and the median cost £9.90. Only 2 orders cost more than £30 and 61% cost less than £10.

The average copyright fee was £4.84 and the median was £4.40 and the highest copyright fee was £24.98.

Leeds currently estimate the average cost of an ILL request - including staff time and other overheads - at £13.30, which makes unmediated document delivery a cost-effective alternative to inter-library loans.

There are no cases where it would be more economical to subscribe to the journal rather than acquire individual articles from Inside. The range of titles ordered demonstrates the value of access over holdings as no journal title was ordered enough to justify a subscription for research purposes. As with most academic research libraries - the Library does not have any reliable data on use of its journal collection.



## *What about users?*

- convenience
- control
- confidence in the Library
- costs



## *Conclusions*

- Service usage
- Research students
- Supports research
- Suppliers
- Cost-effective
- High quality, reliable service

The project's interim report which was approved by the management board



## *Scalability?*

- One supplier
- 10 schools
- Faculty team librarians
- User behaviour