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Licensed to Share: How Libraries Are Handling Electronic Journal Article Requests

Karen Okamoto

This questionnaire-based study examines how libraries are now handling electronic journal (e-journal) article requests in both lending and borrowing. With an increasing number of publishers and e-journal content providers permitting interlibrary loan (ILL) sharing, and with the availability of new license management tools and services, many respondents stated that they share e-journal articles. However, problems persist. Respondents cited issues such as restrictive licenses, automatic deflection of e-journal article requests, and the lack of information from libraries about what e-journal titles they are licensed to ILL.

Introduction

Today there are almost 40,000 active electronic journals (e-journals) with print equivalents, and about 6,400 active online-only e-journals (Ulrich's Web Global Serials Directory, 2012). These e-journal numbers combined surpass the number of active print journals listed in Ulrich's, which is over 41,000 titles. While the term *e-journal* can refer to online-only scholarly publications (Turoff & Hiltz, 1982; Kaur, 2007), this article uses the term *e-journal* to denote both the digital version of print publications or a digital-only publication ("Electronic journal," 2010).

In their early years of development, e-journals held the promise of affordable production and quick distribution. According to Turoff and Hiltz (1982), the first electronic journal was published in 1980. Titled *Mental*

Workload, the journal published studies on the “person-machine interfaces in the operation of complex systems, such as the controls in the pilot’s cockpit or in a nuclear plant” (1982, p. 197). *Mental Workload* resembled a print-based publication. It was to be refereed, edited, copyrighted, and mass distributed like any other scholarly print publication, but “motivational and political regulatory factors” such as the lack of e-journal prestige and reputation led to its early demise (1982, p. 198). While experimental prototypes of e-journals were available in the early 1980s, Turoff and Hiltz explained, “[w]e are still at least a decade away from substantially supplementing print-based journals with electronic ones” (1982, p. 195). For Turoff and Hiltz, e-journals could potentially publish articles more quickly and at a lower cost. By 1988, 21 online-only journals were listed in Ulrich’s International Periodicals Directory (Langschied, 1991). Writing in 1991, Langschied reported that most electronic-only journal publishers were providing issues for free—a practice that she fully supported and advocated as the cost of e-journal production was lower than print. Langschied writes, “[t]hus far, the publishing of academic electronic journals shows every promise of being driven by a desire to share research quickly and inexpensively, rather than by profit.” However, by the mid-1990s, with the exponential increase in the number of e-journals—both electronic-only and with print counterparts—Langschied’s optimistic prediction of free and easy e-journal article sharing was far from reality. E-journals presented a completely new set of challenges for libraries and resource sharing.

The introduction of licensing agreements for e-journals with print counterparts changed the way libraries share articles. Since the 1970s, interlibrary “lending” of print journal articles has been governed by federal copyright law (U.S.C. Title 17, Section 108(d)) and further regulated and defined by the CONTU guidelines for photocopying copyrighted works (Croft 2005, p. 42). Physical items owned by a lending library are covered by the “first sale” doctrine, which gives the library the right to lend, rent, resell, or dispose items (U.S.C. Title 17, Section 109). However, with the explosion of electronic content in the 1990s, electronic resources were now being licensed under state contract law (Okerson, 1999; Croft & Murphy, 2002; Rolnik et al., 2008; Kristof, 2011). Libraries do not own digital content; instead they pay to access content owned by a third party producer or publisher who can limit fair uses, such as ILL, and mandate that lending libraries—not borrowing libraries (for print ILL)—be responsible for the limits that publishers impose on sharing (Croft, 2005). Although licenses may conflict with copyright law, most legislative and judicial bodies prefer the freedom of contract to copyright law (Croft & Murphy, 2002, p. 6). Hunter (2003), representing Elsevier Science and expressing publishers’ concerns about losing subscriptions, wrote that the new digital environment compelled publishers to restrict interlibrary loan (ILL) for electronic content.

Literature Review

Today, a large percentage of e-journal publishers permit ILL. Lamoureux & Stemper's (2011) survey of 241 e-journal licenses at the University of Minnesota revealed that 214 of them—or 89%—permitted sharing via ILL; publishers that denied ILL were largely small scholarly societies. Similarly, the Information Delivery Service (IDS) Project's homepage noted that less than 15% of the licenses they examined prohibited ILL (Kristof, 2011, p. 58). Though ILL may be permitted, there are still limitations. Lamoureux and Stemper (2011) found that 12–19% of the publishers in their study restrict ILL to the same country only. They found, however, that many publishers now permit electronic transmission of articles, using secure programs such as Ariel or Odyssey. Before this, fax and mail were preferred methods of delivery (Croft & Murphy, 2002). Lamoureux and Stemper (2011) note that some publishers still require articles to be printed first and then scanned (p. 20). Other restrictions can include sharing e-journal articles only with non-profit or academic institutions (Croft & Murphy, 2002). Although ILL is largely permitted, there are no licensing standards: Licensing language is “often contradictory making it difficult both to interpret and to comply” with (Lamoureux & Stemper, 2011, p. 20). As a result, Croft (2005) writes that ILL practitioners have reacted to this e-journal environment in one of three ways:

1. Avoidance: Cancel all requests for e-journal articles
2. Reactive: Maintain and refer to a list of e-journals that are licensed for ILL
3. Proactive: Negotiate for ILL permissions

Croft (2005) insists that libraries should opt for the proactive approach. This approach could involve negotiating license terms that permit existing ILL practices covered by copyright law (Lamoureux & Stemper, 2011, p. 21). As a strategy to standardize licenses, libraries can also use a model license (Croft, 2001). A model license is an idealized template that provides “both librarians and vendors a basis for evaluating and negotiating contracts that will be fair and profitable for all parties” (Croft, 2001, p. 165). In 1997, the LIBLICENSE Project developed, among many of its services and products, the free LIBLICENSE software that allows libraries to “create and customize their own electronic resources licenses” (Okerson, 1999). Carrico and Smalldon (2004) provide other suggestions for negotiating contracts:

- Walk away from negotiations if you disagree with the terms
- Communicate the need for ILL rights with the library's license negotiator
- Negotiate the best terms for resources that are heavily used by ILL

As an alternative to licenses, Rolnik, Lamoureux, and Smith (2008) explain how libraries and publishers can agree to the “Statements of Common Understandings for Subscribing to Electronic Resources” which was developed by the NISO Shared E-Resource Understanding (SERU) working group. This working group was formed in 2006 to develop “Recommended Practices” that help publishers sell e-resources without licenses as long as their “perception of risk has been adequately addressed by current law and developing norms of behavior” (niso.org/workrooms/seru/wg).

Similar to Croft’s (2005) study on the three approaches adopted by ILL departments in reaction to licensing, Wiley (2004) examined the impact of licenses at 13 large research libraries in the Midwest. Wiley found that respondents referred to a paper list, a database or other software that indicated which titles could be used for ILL. This title-checking procedure created an additional step in the lending workflow. Over half of the libraries surveyed filled only 0–5% of requests using e-journals. Interestingly, licenses were not entirely to blame for unfilled requests. Wiley writes, “the license checking that is required inhibits fulfillment more than the license restrictions do themselves” (Wiley, 2004, p. 95). As a way of solving this problem, Kristof (2011) suggests that future ILL systems could be programmed to deflect requests for articles from e-journal titles that are not licensed for ILL. At present, deflection is used broadly, to cancel requests based on format.

While the ILL departments in Wiley’s study had access to their licenses, some departments may not. Long (2007) reminds us that ILL personnel should have access to and know the content of their licenses. The consequences for not knowing and complying with institutional licenses could result in publishers terminating a library’s subscription or seeking financial compensation (Long, 2007, p. 96). Long recommends that libraries use a flowchart or electronic resource management (ERM) system to communicate site licenses to ILL personnel. ERMS and other tools and services have been developed to address the problems of managing and communicating licenses.

New Products and Services

Electronic resources management systems can be used to manage, display, and communicate licenses to ILL staff. Collins and Grogg (2011) recently reviewed 10 proprietary and four open source ERM systems, comparing their features in a detailed table that includes such information as the average implementation time for the system and the current number of users. Their survey of librarians’ ERM system preferences, however, found that interoperability is still a problem (Collins & Grogg, 2011, p. 22).

The IDS Project, a resource-sharing cooperative comprised of public and academic libraries in New York state, developed ALIAS (Article License Information Availability Service) in 2008 to provide licensing information and

e-journal holdings data. ALIAS captures holdings data from the SFX knowledge base of IDS libraries. Each year, IDS Project librarians gather licensing information voluntarily from publicly available policies on publishers' or providers' websites. The IDS Project assumes that "libraries would never restrict their use more than what the publisher publicly proclaims your rights are with their content" (IDS Project & MacLean, 2009). ALIAS includes other useful features, such as unmediated requesting, load leveling, addition of print holdings, and a preference for online journals (with ILL permissions) over print titles (personal communication with ALIAS developer Mark Sullivan, February 28, 2012). The ALIAS add-on for the ILLiad system can be downloaded free from <http://tinyurl.com/addons-ILLiad>.

In 2010, OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) launched its knowledge base service at no cost to OCLC cataloging subscribers (OCLC, 2010b). Libraries add their e-journal license terms for ILL and additional holdings information into the knowledge base. In lending, a direct link to the article is presented to ILL personnel, which allows them to process the request without having to search for the article in their local catalog or e-journal list (OCLC, 2010c). The knowledge base also supports Direct Request for articles. In 2011, OCLC partnered with Pubget to automate the process of loading e-journal holdings data into the knowledge base on a regular basis, further simplifying and facilitating the sharing of e-journal articles ("Pubget. . ." 2011).

These recent software and service developments further enable and simplify e-journal article sharing. These developments beg the question of whether libraries are adopting these tools, and whether they are now sharing e-journal articles and how. In order to address these questions, the author conducted a questionnaire-based study described further below.

Methodology

In December 2011, the author distributed a set of 17 questions (see Appendix) using SurveyMonkey, an online program for creating surveys and questionnaires. An e-mail message inviting subscribers to complete the questionnaire was sent to the following seven resource sharing and document delivery listservs:

- *The IDS Project Workflow Toolkit list*. This list has over 260 subscribers interested in best practices for using ILLiad software
- *ILL-L*. A list with over 2200 subscribers who have a professional interest in document delivery and interlibrary loan
- *Arie-L*. A discussion list with over 1000 subscribers for Ariel users, a document delivery software

- *Rapid-L*. A list with over 200 subscribers using Rapid, a resource sharing system developed by interlibrary loan staff at Colorado State University Libraries
- *STARS-L*. With over 500 subscribers, this listserv is for activities of interest to the resource sharing and access services communities in all types of libraries. It also provides information about programs of the Sharing and Transforming Access to Resources Section (STARS) of the American Library Association's (ALA) Reference and User Services Association (RUSA)
- *Odyssey-L*. Odyssey, software for electronic document delivery, has a listserv of over 490 subscribers
- *Clio-L*. A list with 456 subscribers for Clio interlibrary loan management software users

A follow-up message was sent to the listservs in January, 2012. These lists combined represent a range of library types, many of which are located in the United States. A total of 129 respondents completed the questionnaire.

Results

The majority of respondents represented academic libraries in the United States, although other library types were represented as well. Of the 129 respondents, 117 were from academic institutions. Medical (4 respondents), government (4 respondents), community college (3 respondents), and public (1 respondent) libraries responded in low numbers. American libraries largely participated in the study (121 respondents), but six libraries in Canada and one each from Italy and the United Arab Emirates participated. Libraries in the study serve population sizes ranging from 1,000–5,000 users (56 institutions), followed by 10,001–30,000 users (27 institutions) and 5,001–10,000 users (20 institutions). Table 1 depicts the size of population served and the type of institution.

TABLE 1 Respondents by Type of Institution and Size of Population Served*

Size of Population Served	Type of Institution					Count by Size	Percent by Size
	Academic Library	Public Library	Community College	Medical Library	Government Library		
Between 500–1,000	4	—	—	1	2	7	5%
Between 1,000–5,000	53	—	1	2	—	56	43%
Between 5,001–10,000	20	—	—	—	—	20	15%
Between 10,001–30,000	24	1	1	—	1	27	22%
Between 30,001–60,000	12	—	1	—	—	13	10%
Over 60,000	3	—	—	—	1	4	3%
Skipped population question	1	—	—	1	—	2	2%
Count by Institution	117	1	3	4	4	129	—
Percent by Type of Institution	91%	1%	2 %	3 %	3%	—	100%

*Percentages were rounded up.

Staffing levels varied among the responding libraries. Approximately 55% of these institutions have 1–2 full-time ILL staff, followed by 24% with 3–5 full-time staff, 14% with none, 5% with 6–8, and one institution with 9–12 personnel. The number of part-time staff also varied. Approximately 42% of institutions have 1–2 part-time staff, while 30% had none at all. These were followed by 13% of libraries having 3–5 part-time staff, 4% with 9–12, and one institution with more than 13. Six respondents skipped this question.

Lending

Questions 6–13 of the study dealt with e-journal article lending practices. The majority of respondents supply e-journal articles (83%). As a follow-up question, libraries that do not supply e-journal articles (15.5% of respondents; 2 skipped this question) were asked to explain why they do not (Table 2). Eight respondents stated that they lack licensing permission. Six cited problems with keeping track of licenses, and five expressed fear or uncertainty and caution with licensing permissions as reasons for not sharing e-journal articles. Other reasons included equivocal licensing language or a practice of sharing only when the print version of a journal is also available. Three respondents were in the process of uploading holdings into OCLC's knowledge base in order to supply e-journal articles. The types of libraries that did not supply e-journal articles included 15 academic institutions, all three community college respondents, one government library and one for-profit college.

Respondents were then asked how they manage e-journal licenses (Table 3). The three most common responses, in order of magnitude, were: a list or spreadsheet (32% of respondents); a vendor-based ERM system (23% of respondents); and OCLC's knowledge base for Enhanced Sharing of Articles service (15.5% of respondents). Other respondents noted that they are a RAPID library (11%) or use the IDS Project's ALIAS service (5%). Although RAPID does not have its own license management system, its members

TABLE 2 Reasons for Not Supplying Electronic Journal Articles

Comment from respondents citing reasons why they do not supply electronic journal articles		
Answers	Count	Percent
Not licensed to ILL	8	6%
Difficult to keep track of licenses	6	5%
Afraid to supply, or we are cautious and uncertain about supplying e-journal articles	5	4%
License terms/language are unclear	2	2%*
E-journals are not listed in OCLC as yet	2	2%*
Willing to supply e-journal articles if we have a print copy of it as well	1	1%*

*Percentages were rounded up.

TABLE 3 How Libraries Manage/Keep Track of Licenses

Answers	Count	Percentages
We have a spreadsheet or a list of e-journal titles and/or databases that we can lend from	41	32%
We use a vendor-based electronic resource management (ERM) system	30	23%
We use OCLC's Knowledge Base (Enhanced Sharing of Articles service)	20	16%
We are a RAPID Library	14	11%
We use a homegrown electronic resource management (ERM) system	10	8%
We use ALIAS from the IDS Project	6	5%

indicate to system administrators which e-journals can be shared. Others use a homegrown ERM system (8%) or limit lending to select packages or databases (2 respondents). Three respondents stated that their electronic resources librarians make sure that ILL is allowed for all licensed content. Two respondents stated that they print and scan all e-journal article requests. Three respondents said that they examine such requests on a case-by-case basis and may speak to their electronic resources librarian if they are in doubt about licensing permissions. One noted that they simply know which journals they can lend from. Another stated that sharing permission is assumed but if they are in doubt, they contact the consortium that negotiates licenses.

The turnaround for supplying articles, both in print and electronic, and the percentage of article requests filled by e-journal titles varied. More than half of respondents (56%) have a turnaround time of 24–48 hours, 39% take less than 24 hours, and 4% take 48–72 hours. The percentage of article requests filled using e-journals also varied. Nearly half of the respondents (47%) fill 30% or less of their total article requests using e-journals. This percentage drops to 18.6% of respondents filling 30–50% of article requests using e-journals. Table 2 depicts the remaining percentages of article requests filled using e-journals.

TABLE 4 Percentage of Requests Filled by E-journals

Percentage of article requests filled using e-journals	Count	Percentages
0–10%	34	26.4%
10–30%	7	20.9%
30–50%	24	18.6%
50–70%	23	17.8%
70–80%	10	7.8%
80–100%	5	3.8%
Total responses	123	95.3%
Skipped question	6	4.7%

rights. Approximately 52% of respondents stated that their library negotiates for ILL licensing rights, 14.7% said they do not, and 25.6% said they were not sure. Other respondents mentioned being part of a consortium and not knowing who negotiates licenses. Two mentioned that ILL rights are negotiated for select databases. One respondent stated that the electronic resources librarian did not consider resource sharing to be a priority. Respondents were then asked if they communicate the need for ILL rights with the person who negotiates licenses at their institution. The majority of respondents said that they do (73.6%).

Lastly, respondents were asked to comment on how e-journal article sharing could be improved. Nineteen respondents stated that they would like to be able to share all e-journals. Another 19 respondents would like the “[e]limination of licensing language requiring that articles be printed and then scanned again.” Twelve respondents stated that they want to have better access to their licensing agreements and better management tools for licenses. Other comments included:

- “Broader vendor permissions regarding file format and delivery system”
- “It would be helpful if publishers provided a more standardized interface for locating articles”
- “[A]ffirmation of Fair Use rights in license language”
- “Standardization of rights across publishers”
- “Clearer statements on publisher’s pages: we subscribe to a few titles directly and I have to hunt for their policies”
- “Getting rid of publishers’ embargo on the current year of a publication”
- “The lifting of geographic restrictions in some publisher licenses”
- “[C]ertain publishers need to realize that ILL is not a threat to their subscription base”

Borrowing

For borrowing, respondents were asked whether the journal format, print or electronic, determines where the library submits a borrowing request. Almost half (48%) of respondents stated that they send journal article requests to libraries with print holdings. Less than half (42.6%) stated that the format does not matter. Six respondents (4.7%) send requests to libraries with electronic holdings.

Respondents were also asked if they use the Copyright Clearance Center’s “Get It Now” service (<http://tinyurl.com/ccc-getitnow>), a purchase-on-demand service for articles. Thirteen respondents stated that they are either currently using the service or are interested in it.

Respondents were then asked to comment on what improvements can be made to borrowing e-journal articles. Twenty-one respondents stated that

they would like more clear and accurate e-journal article holdings records in OCLC. Thirteen respondents want libraries to stop automatically deflecting e-journal article requests; one respondent wrote that they want to see “[l]enders not deflecting e-serials, but actually knowing what their rights are and accepting/filling requests when possible.” Twelve respondents want to know which libraries are allowed to supply e-journal articles and nine would like to know whether a particular e-journal title can be shared via ILL before they submit a request. Seven would like libraries to negotiate for ILL rights and for vendors and publishers to grant these rights. Others expressed frustration with embargo periods: one respondent would like “the ability to see which libraries have an embargo period for recent years of a particular e-journal” as these requests are for titles that the borrowing library has an embargo for as well.

Lastly, respondents were asked to provide any further comments on resource sharing and e-journal articles. One respondent suggested a regional collection building effort where one library is designated to be responsible for collecting and securing a copy of print journals. One respondent stated that they are not concerned about licenses: if “[a]nother library needs the article, I fill the request. Libraries are supposed to share knowledge, not restrict it.” Another respondent remarked that “ejournal lending should be no different from print lending.” Other comments restated the problem with deflection and the hassle of having to print and scan e-journal articles. These comments and issues will be discussed further below.

Discussion

The results from this study apply largely to academic libraries in the United States, as most respondents were located in the United States and represented this library type.

Lending

The majority of responding institutions lend e-journal articles (approximately 83%), but they fill a limited percentage of requests using e-journals. The high percentage of respondents who lend e-journal articles may reflect the increasing number of publishers that allow ILL (Lamoureux & Stemper, 2011; Kristof, 2011). Again, almost half of respondents (47%) fill 30% or less of their total article requests using e-journals. Wiley’s (2004) earlier study found that over half of the libraries she surveyed filled 0–5% of requests. Approximately 26% of respondents in this study fill 0–10% of their requests using e-journals, which is slightly more, though not equally comparable to Wiley’s finding. Many libraries in this study are sharing e-journal articles, but to

e-journal articles, writes: “There are still many libraries that do not lend e-journal articles because they don’t know what ILL rights they have—so better education [is needed].” ILL departments need to communicate with librarians who negotiate licenses about ILL permissions. Doing so will facilitate e-journal article sharing.

On a wider resource-sharing scale, the number of electronic resource requests that were cancelled in OCLC WorldCat Resource Sharing increased between 2008 and 2010, but then dropped sharply in 2011. OCLC statistics on the number of “not licensed to fill” cancellations indicates the number of requests cancelled due to licensing restrictions (see Figure 1). This cancellation reason can apply to e-journals and other electronic content. Overall, the total number of requests in the OCLC system remained at about 10 million since 2008 (OCLC Annual Reports). The number of not licensed to fill cancellations rose from 17,846 in 2008 (personal communication, Tony Melvyn at OCLC, November 9, 2011) to 34,721 in 2009 (personal communication, OCLC Support, November 14, 2011) and then to 51,509 in 2010 (<http://tinyurl.com/oclc-reasonsforno>). In 2011, this number dropped to 15,423 (<http://tinyurl.com/oclc-reasonsforno>). This drop may be the result of more libraries being licensed to share e-journal articles. It could also reflect libraries removing automatic deflection of eresources or improving management of their licenses.

For the most part, libraries continue to use what Croft (2005) calls a “reactive approach” to e-journal sharing. Reactive ILL departments maintain lists of e-journals from which they can lend. A total of 96 respondents used some form of license management tool or list to keep track of e-journal licenses. One library stated that they “have a short list that we CANNOT lend from, since we CAN lend from the vast majority of our e-journals.”

FIGURE 1 Number of “Not Licensed to Fill” Requests Cancelled by Year in OCLC WorldCat Resource Sharing.

Source: 2008 data from personal communication with Tony Melvyn, November 9, 2011; 2009 data from personal communication with OCLC Support, November 14, 2011; 2010 and 2011 data from <http://tinyurl.com/oclc-reasonsforno>.

Although libraries may be maintaining lists or using license management tools, this comment points to the increasing number of publishers and e-journal providers that permit ILL as a result of librarians' negotiating efforts and advocacy work.

Libraries are actively asking for ILL rights, an approach that Croft (2005) calls being "proactive." The majority of respondents (95 out of 129) communicate the need for ILL licensing rights with the librarian who negotiates licenses. Just over half of the respondents, however, are certain that their license negotiator actually asks for these rights during negotiations with publishers and providers. One quarter of respondents stated that they were not sure whether their negotiator asks for these rights. Although many ILL departments are communicating their needs with librarians who negotiate licenses, these librarian-negotiators are not necessarily keeping ILL departments informed about negotiations. Five respondents stated that they do not know who negotiates their licenses because their electronic resources are provided by a consortium. Similarly, consortia need to negotiate for ILL rights and communicate these rights with their members. Some comments from respondents, however, indicate that their librarian-negotiators are effective:

- "We don't license journals without ILL rights"
- "[W]e have a great negotiator to ensure our contracts contain proper wording to allow ILL"
- "We have negotiated electronic lending on all of our e-journals"

Borrowing

While a growing number of e-journals are licensed for sharing, slightly more respondents (62 or 48%) preferred print journal records when selecting potential lenders. Respondents commented that they select print journal holdings because e-journal requests are often automatically deflected or they assume that libraries are not licensed to share e-articles:

- "We would prefer electronic holdings, but most libraries cannot ILL eJournals, and so we usually use the print record anyway"
- "Normally, we use the 'print' OCLC records when ordering even though we know that a library may have it electronically because some libraries have an automatic deflect for e-journals"

The number of auto-deflections between 2008 and 2010 increased from 653,717 requests (personal communication, Tony Melvyn, OCLC, November 9, 2011) to 792,870 in 2010 (personal communication, OCLC support, November 14, 2011). This number decreased dramatically in 2011 to 218,197

FIGURE 2 Number of Requests Deflected by Year in OCLC WorldCat Resource Sharing.

Source: 2008 data from personal communication with Tony Melvyn, November 9, 2011; 2009 data from personal communication with OCLC Support, November 14, 2011; 2010 and 2011 data from <http://tinyurl.com/oclc-reasonsforno>.

requests (<http://tinyurl.com/oclc-reasonsforno>; see Figure 2). Auto-deflection can apply to different format types, such as audio-visual materials and microforms, in addition to electronic resources, which include e-journals. These numbers do not reflect the total number of e-journals deflected, but it suggests that the number of deflections overall may be decreasing including e-journal article requests.

There is still room for improvement in borrowing. Suggested improvements include the following:

- Libraries listing more accurate e-journal holdings data in OCLC WorldCat
- Libraries eliminating blanket automatic deflection for e-journal article requests. A more granular auto-deflection setting that can deflect requests based on whether an e-journal is or is not licensed to share would be more useful
- Ability to identify libraries that are licensed to share specific e-journal titles
- Ability to identify libraries that are willing to share e-journal articles
- Negotiate better licensing terms that do not require printing articles and that do not limit international lending
- Include embargo periods on OCLC local holdings records or eliminate embargos altogether

To make these changes possible, several respondents insisted that libraries should know and assert their rights:

- “Collectively libraries are playing astronomically for ejournals and many libraries have negotiated the rights for ILL—most publishers allow this now after years of pushing for these rights. ILL needs to get on board—the rights are there, lend them or we all lose the access we have paid so dearly for”

- “I wish libraries wouldn’t auto-deflect e-journals automatically. If we want things to change, we have to lead that change”

Change is needed on several fronts. In Frederiksen and colleagues’ (2011) study of ILL and ebooks, the authors identified areas needing improvement that are also applicable to e-journal articles. These areas include increasing internal communication within individual libraries and improving external communication among libraries about electronic licenses and what can be shared. Internally, Frederiksen and colleagues (2011, p. 126) attribute the lack of communication about licenses to the limited adoption of ERM products or to the restricted use of these products to technical services and collection development. ERM products could be more widely adopted by libraries and their content shared with ILL departments to facilitate e-journal article sharing. External communication is hindered by confusion, misunderstanding, and a lack of knowledge about rights vis-a-vis licenses (Frederiksen et al., 2011). Libraries first need to know their local licenses and then communicate these licenses to other libraries in order to share e-journal articles effectively. In addition to negotiating better licenses and improving communication channels, libraries need software and services tailored specifically to the ILL workflow. These tools are now available to ILL departments, but ILL personnel need to adopt these new tools and practices.

Conclusion

With more publishers and vendors allowing ILL for e-journal articles and with new services and software to help manage these licenses and requests, libraries have options to help them share, not deflect, e-journal article requests. OCLC’s knowledge base and enhanced sharing of e-journal articles service, which is freely available to OCLC cataloging subscribers, can enable sites to share these articles and improve their workflow. Individual sites must still check with their institutions for licensing permissions. The ALIAS add-on, freely available to ILLiad users, provides licensing information to individual sites. The tools are available, but there still remains the work of negotiating licenses favorable for ILL. As Croft (2005, p. 51) wrote, “It is in the best interests of our patrons and our colleagues at other libraries to insist that interlibrary loan is a reasonable use which should be supported by the providers of our electronic information sources.” With the increase in the number of ILL requests over the years (Mak, 2011) and with the growing number of journals and journal issues available electronically, libraries cannot ignore the need to be proactive in negotiating favorable ILL licensing terms. Without these licensing rights, ILL departments will be unable to perform our fundamental activity: sharing resources.

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Appendix

Questionnaire distributed from December 2011 to January 2012 through seven resource sharing e-mail lists.

1. What is your institution type?
 - a. Academic
 - b. Public
 - c. Community College
 - d. Medical
 - e. Corporate
 - f. Law
 - g. Government
 - h. Other (please specify)
2. Where is your institution located?
 - a. United States
 - b. Canada
 - c. Other (please specify)

3. What is the size of the population your institution serves?
 - a. Less than 100
 - b. Between 100–500
 - c. Between 500–1000
 - d. Between 1,000–5,000
 - e. Between 5,001–10,000
 - f. Between 10,001–30,000
 - g. Between 30,001–60,000
 - h. Over 60,000
 - i. Other (please specify, special population?)
4. Number of full-time ILL employees
 - a. 0
 - b. 1–2
 - c. 3–5
 - d. 6–8
 - e. 9–12
 - f. 13 or more
5. Number of part-time ILL employees
 - a. 0
 - b. 1–2
 - c. 3–5
 - d. 6–8
 - e. 9–12
 - f. 13 or more
6. Do you lend electronic journal articles?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
7. If you do not lend electronic journal articles, please explain why.
8. If you lend e-journal articles, how do you keep track of which journals you have ILL licensing rights for?
 - a. We use ALIAS from the IDS Project
 - b. We use OCLC's Knowledge Base (Enhanced Sharing of Articles service)
 - c. We are a RAPID Library
 - d. We use a homegrown electronic resource management (ERM) system
 - e. We use a vendor-based electronic resource management (ERM) system
 - f. We have a spreadsheet or a list of e-journal titles and/or databases that we can lend from
 - g. Other (please specify)

9. Does your library ask for ILL rights when negotiating database and e-journal licenses?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not Sure
 - d. Other (please specify)
10. Do you communicate the need for ILL rights with the librarian who negotiates electronic licenses at your institution?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Other (please specify)
11. What is your average turnaround time for supplying articles (print and/or electronic format) in lending?
 - a. Less than 24 hours
 - b. 24 hours
 - c. 24–48 hours
 - d. 48–72 hours
 - e. More than 72 hours
12. Approximately what percentage of article lending requests do you fill using e-journals?
 - a. 0–10%
 - b. 10–30%
 - c. 30–50%
 - d. 50–70%
 - e. 70–80%
 - f. 80–100%
13. What would make lending e-journal articles easier for you?
14. In borrowing, does the journal format (print/electronic) determine where you send the request?
 - a. Yes, we send the request to libraries with print holdings
 - b. Yes, we send the request to libraries with electronic holdings
 - c. No, it does not matter
 - d. Other (please specify)
15. Do you use the Copyright Clearance Center's "Get It Now" service?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Other (please specify)
16. What would make borrowing e-journal articles easier for you?
17. Additional comments about e-journal articles and ILL.