

Beyond the Library Collections

Proceedings of the 2022 Erasmus Staff Training Week at ULiège Library

François Renaville and Fabienne Prosmans (Eds.)

ULIÈGE LIBRARY
LIÈGE





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How the interlibrary loan service can collaborate with other libraries and university services

Isàvena Opisso

Abstract

The Interlibrary Loan Service of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona has always been in constant renewal. In this paper, three new projects in collaboration with other university departments are analysed. These are (i) the analysis of interlibrary loan requests with the collection-management department; (ii) the uploading of public-domain documents in the repository with the institutional-repository department; and (iii) the digitization of PhD theses with the thesis department.

Keywords

Collection management; Library acquisitions; Digitalization; Repositories; Interlibrary loan; Collection development; PhD theses

Article

Introduction

The Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) is a public university with more than 40,000 students mostly located on-campus. After 50 years of existence, the UAB has consolidated its position amongst the 200 best universities in the world within the main university rankings.

The Library Service at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona has certified its quality system through ISO 9001 since 2000.

The methodology used to reinforce quality is through ongoing improvement actions that call for constant renewal. The working process of the UAB Library Service facilitates and enhances the implementation of improvement procedures and work instructions. The working method is by means of a wiki site in which all the library members can make proposals.

Most of the actions proposed by the Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Services over recent years have been focused on improving the service itself. During the COVID lockdown, the ILL team carried out a global rethink of both the workflow and requirements for supporting students, researchers, and lecturers.

New services were created in collaboration with other departments in the library and in university departments.

Three new projects in collaboration with other university departments are analysed in this paper. These are (i) the analysis of interlibrary loan request with the collection management department; (ii) the uploading of public domain documents in the repository with the institutional repository department; and (iii) the digitization of PhD theses with the thesis department.

Analysis of interlibrary loan requests with the collection management department

The mission of the UAB Library Service is to guarantee the information resources necessary for the University to achieve its objectives; resources are selected following the Collection Management Plan.¹ The library collection increases regularly with new physical and digital items. Most of them are acquired, but the collection also increases through donations and the exchange of publications published by the UAB with documents from other libraries. The summary of this annual increase in the collection is reflected in the annual report of the Library Service.²

Additionally, the University Library has offered the possibility to make suggestions for purchases with an acquisition form through the library web page³ where members of the UAB can purchase acquisitions of monographs or journals subscriptions. Purchase applications are evaluated by libraries and before the evaluation, requesters are informed of the process that their request has followed.

Users request documents that are not available in the UAB library collection by means of an ILL request. Each interlibrary loan request responds to a specific informational need, but the analysis of many requests provides an opportunity to obtain useful data regarding user needs that can be relevant to make decisions pertaining to the collection management.

Data that can be obtained with the systematic analysis of a significant number of

1. <https://www.uab.cat/web/our-collections/collection-development-policy-1345738248491.html>

2. <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/29>

3. <https://www.uab.cat/web/our-collections/suggestions-for-purchase-1345738248359.html>

requests is that of the titles requested by various UAB users. That is, distinct users make a request at distinct moments for a document that is not in the UAB library collection.

The methodology used to analyse ILL requests consists of analysing, every six months, those requests received over the previous calendar year.

The request information is exported to a spreadsheet programme, the list of items is divided between items that have ISBN or ISSN number, as they are considered unique identifiers, and items that don't have unique identifiers.

The duplicate detection of items that have ISBN or ISSN is done with the option to detect duplication in the spreadsheet programme.

The duplicate detection of items that do not have a unique identifier cannot be done with the searching duplicates tool in the spreadsheet programme. The titles of the requests come mainly from information collected by users in bibliographic citations and in different library catalogues. This means that small variations in the title are common, mainly in the titles of rare books and references that come from bibliographic citations.

The procedure used is to sort alphabetically and duplicates are searched by reviewing the alphabetical list title by title.

Once the information has been analysed, a list of duplicates is drawn up and given to the collection managers in the library, who can then decide to purchase and include the title within the library collection.

As expected, the duplicate average is remarkably low (Table 1).

	2 nd semester 2020	1 st semester 2021	2 nd semester 2021	1 st semester 2022
Number of duplicates	2	3	0	0

Table 1: Number of duplicates

With four analyses carried out, between zero and three duplicates have been detected in each analysis. This fact confirms the good quality of the Collection Management Plan.

Additionally, it must be taken into consideration that this is a procedure that requires approximately two hours of work every six months and can provide valuable and comparable data across collection management data and, furthermore, offers the possibility of detecting titles that should be incorporated into the library collection.

The analysis of data that can be extracted from the requests will lead to future lines of research that can contribute to improving the service. A possible line of analysis could be to find out which research discipline an ILL requester belongs to. With this information, a global rethink could be made working in collaboration with possible providers or universities that can provide loans or digital copies to meet the needs of interlibrary loan.

Uploading public domain documents in the repository with the institutional repository department

The process used in the Interlibrary Loan Service was the same for rare books and special collections in the public domain as for documents with copyright.

When another institution sent a request, the request was processed, digitized, and uploaded to a secure webpage where the requester could download the digital document. Once it had been downloaded, the digital document was then deleted.

The need to access digitized documents during the COVID lockdown, when access to the libraries was not possible, prompted us to think about uploading to the institutional repository those documents that had been digitized for a given requester, and that are in the public domain .

Spanish laws regarding copyrights surpass the life of the author and are maintained until 70 years after the death of the author. As a general rule, once this period has passed, the work goes on to form part of the public domain.⁴

The Spanish National Library facilitates information on Spanish authors whose works can be found at the Spanish National Library and are in the public domain, according to the information in the Library's catalogues, so they can be published, reproduced or disseminated publicly.⁵ This information facilitates the identification of works that are potentials for inclusion in the repository.

Documents published in the Digital Repository that are in public domain can also be consulted through the library discovery system, increasing their visibility. Those items are also harvested in different collectors such as Europeana⁶ and Hispana,⁷ which is the access portal to Spanish digital heritage and the national content aggregator to Europeana.

UAB repository gathers the list of collectors, which includes different types of materials. The complete list can be consulted in the collectors' section of the library service website.⁸

The aim of this specific best practice is to make available, in open access, those documents that are already digitized and that can be held in the institutional repository because they are in the public domain.

A procedure was carried out to identify the material requested that is in the public

4. <https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2006-12308>

5. <https://bnelab.bne.es/dato/autores-espanoles-en-dominio-publico/>

6. <http://www.europeanaconnect.eu/>

7. <https://hispana.mcu.es/es/inicio/inicio.do>

8. <https://www.uab.cat/web/our-collections/collectors-1345836940616.html>

domain and to define the tasks for uploading the relevant digitized items to the repository.

The main points on which this procedure is based are the following:

- Only complete documents like books, theses and issues will be uploaded to the repository. Digitization of articles, chapters or partial books are disregarded.
- The interlibrary loan staff identifies as likely to be uploaded to the repository all those requests whose author died more than 70 years ago. Before proceeding with the digitization, the university's expert staff in copyright verifies that the document is in public domain.
- Once the document is digitized, it is made available to the user and, in turn, the library staff arranges for it to be uploaded to the repository.

Digitization of PhD theses with the thesis department

PhD theses presented at the UAB are published in the Theses and Dissertations Online Repository (TDX), which acts as the repository for the UAB. The UAB library keeps a paper copy of the PhD theses that were not integrated into TDX at the time of the defence. Spanish doctoral theses prior to 2011 that are not digitized cannot be digitized without the author's express permission. Several restrictions on consultation and photocopying also apply.

As the Interlibrary Loan Service does not have permission to digitize or loan these PhD theses, the request for theses must be denied.

There is usually only one paper copy of the PhD thesis lodged at the university where the author presented their doctorate. Users have very limited possibilities to access a PhD thesis if the university that owns the only copy denies their request. However, PhD holders can upload their PhD theses to the institutional repository.⁹

A working instruction has been created to try to locate the thesis authors. If the author is located, the Interlibrary Loan Service informs them that a user is interested in their thesis and offers support for carrying out the administrative procedure needed to upload this doctoral thesis to the institutional repository.

Locating the author is not always possible, as this mainly depends on whether the author is still a university member or not. Library staff checks if the author is still studying or working in the University. If they are not a University member, the contact details provided when they presented their doctorate at the University are used.

The author is contacted by email explaining the possibility of digitizing their thesis and

9. <https://www.uab.cat/web/studies/phds/published-theses-1345688357239.html>

uploading it to the repository in open access. It is specified that the costs of digitization are at the expense of the user making the request.

The author is provided with an authorization form to publish the thesis in open access in the repository. The author must also specify under which open access licence they want the work to be available. The author is also provided with the document of the Open Access Commission¹⁰ of the UAB that indicates which Creative Commons licences are recommended for the different types of publications. In the case of a thesis, the Creative Commons licence recommended is CC-BY-SA,¹¹ but authors can always decide to publish their thesis in the repository under another open access licence.

Once the author signs the self-certification, the user is informed of the digitization budget, the document is digitized, sent to the user, uploaded to the repository, and the author is informed that the document is now available in open access.

It cannot be known a priori whether PhD theses uploaded to the repository will receive substantial numbers of requests; the only data known is that at least one researcher has shown an interest in it.

The digital version of the theses can also be retrieved through the library discovery system, which increases visibility.

The statistics of views and downloads of doctoral theses uploaded to the institutional repository, after the procedure of a request in the Interlibrary Loan Service, shows an average of 3.2 visits per month and two downloads per month (Table 2).

The statistical figures highlight the importance of carrying out this digitization procedure of doctoral theses when a researcher makes a request, since the interest in its content goes far beyond of the interest of the researcher that has made the ILL request.

Since the process of uploading doctoral theses to the repository began, theses from different knowledge disciplines and in different languages (Catalan and Spanish) have been incorporated.

Statistics show that all disciplines and languages have views and downloads beyond the interest of the requesting researcher. The document with lowest impact has an average of 1.2 monthly views and 0.3 monthly downloads and a total of 29 visits and seven downloads (Table 2), a figure that more than justifies the work involved in managing the digitization of these doctoral theses.

The statistics also show that a significant number of visits and downloads of these documents are performed outside Spain. As a curiosity, analysing the digitization of the doctoral thesis “Burgos Rincón, Javier. Printing and book culture in eighteenth-century Barcelona (1680-1808)”, it can be observed that 91% of the visits received in this case come from outside Spain.

10. <https://www.uab.cat/web/research/open-access-uab/open-access-board-1345692601011.html>

11. <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/129205>

After analysing this procedure, and seeing the results, the possibility of systematically digitizing the doctoral theses of which we only keep a print version is worthy of consideration.

Author	Added into the repository on	Total Views	Total Downloads	Avg Views per month	Avg Downloads per month
Burgos Rincón, Javier ¹²	22/09/2022	11	7	2.4	1.6
Coll, Araceli ¹³	16/04/2021	69	27	3.2	1.2
Borràs, Josep ¹⁴	15/03/2021	80	39	3.5	1.7
Bacaria, Jordi ¹⁵	24/02/2021	29	7	1.2	0.3
Moliner Rodríguez, Jordi ¹⁶	09/02/2021	90	61	3.8	2.6
Martínez Ribas, Ricardo ¹⁷	11/11/2020	144	130	5.4	4.8
Total Average		70.5	45.2	3.2	2.0

Table 2: Statistics of views and downloads of the theses published in the repository (as of 13 February 2023)

Conclusion

Collaboration with other departments both in the library and in the University offers diverse opportunities to create new value-added services for the interlibrary-loan department and for the ability to work together to detect users' needs, and—consequently—to be able to provide a better service.

12. <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/265579/usage?ln=en>

13. <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/239021/usage?ln=en>

14. <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/237646/usage?ln=en>

15. <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/237051/usage?ln=en>


16. <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/236534/usage?ln=en>

17. <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/233784/usage?ln=en>

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