

Case Study: Managing Print and Electronic Serials Collections

The Problem

With great budget cuts and a shrinking staff, Southern Connecticut University Library was faced with finding new ways to provide additional library content to a growing student body. Finding a way to better manage and enhance their print and electronic serials collection was a core concern. WT Cox Information Services was challenged with helping Southern increase the level of service needed by the serials vendor and to help provide a savings on securing Southern Connecticut's serials collection.

About Southern Connecticut University and the Hilton C. Buley Library

Southern Connecticut University is a flourishing community of more than 12,000 students located in the artsy Westville Village near New Haven. Southern is a comprehensive university offering 116 graduate and undergraduate programs.

Housed in a beautiful new facility in the heart of Southern, Hilton C Buley Library serves the academic and research needs of Southern Connecticut. Dr. Christina Baum is the director of the library and leads an innovative staff serving faculty and student needs.

Rising Cost of Serials

According to various sources, the cost of serials in an academic library rise about 8 to 12 percent per year. Publishers set the price of their publications, charging the same rate to each library depending on the applicable tier or the media type of the publication. Subscription vendors do not determine the cost of the journals as is often thought, but act as "brokerage firm" to supply libraries with the content at the cost determined by the publisher. Southern was faced with the same concern as many libraries – "How do we continue to keep our existing collection with a shrinking budget and how do we get more from our serials vendor when we need more and more information and service from them?"

Finding Savings – Increasing Service

Faced with a service charge of \$38,000 from their current serials vendor, Southern needed to find financial savings. But more important was the level of service and access to information and data details for their extensive serials collection. Ease of obtaining information and complete and accurate bibliographic detail was an imperative requirement. With research, timeliness and efficiency is paramount and content must be available and easily found.

The Solution

WT Cox Information Services, considered more than just a subscription vendor, but rather an “information partner” was able to offer *CoxNet* to Southern Connecticut University. *CoxNet* is WT Cox’s online management tool that provides its customers with up-to-the minute bibliographic and collection details. As a very simple and intuitive user interface, *CoxNet* provides libraries an easy way to view order records, reports, renewals and invoices and gives details in an easy-to-understand format. One of the developers of *CoxNet* states “By making information available and functions usable within two clicks, our customers get to the information and complete the needed tasks quickly. We’re here to make sure ordering through us is easy and save our customers time – *CoxNet* excels at helping accomplish this.”

Even with an increase in the level of service available, WT Cox was also challenged with helping Southern save money. By reducing their service charge, WT Cox Information Services was able to save Southern Connecticut around \$40,000 for 2011 of the total invoice. Southern Connecticut also took advantage of a pre-pay option saving additional funds for 2011.

The Savings

Not only was W T Cox able to improve the customer service experience, we were also able to extend a significant annual savings to Southern. By reducing their service charge, W T Cox Information Services enabled Southern Connecticut to save around \$40,000 for the total annual invoice. Additionally, Southern Ct. was able to utilize a pre-pay option to further extend the total savings value.

Finding a subscription service that helped save both time and money was very important to Southern Connecticut University. Buley Library prides itself on being effective and efficient – a quality that WT Cox also finds to be one of its core values.

Summary

WT Cox Information Services was able to offer a steep financial saving and provide an online user interface that will allow Southern Connecticut University to complete its task more quickly and easily than with their previous vendor. Knowing that a high level of professionalism and personal interaction was part of the package made the decision to switch vendors a win-win for both Southern and WT Cox Information Services.