



SCELC and EAST: Results of Shared Print Program Assessments

Context

Both the Statewide California Electronic Library Consortium (SCELC) and the Eastern Academic Scholars' Trust (EAST) completed assessments of their shared print programs over the last two years. This report summarizes the results of the two assessments with a focus on the value of participation in shared print, barriers to either joining or continuing to participate in shared print and strategies programs such as SCELC and EAST may embark upon to address those barriers.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM SATISFACTION

Over 90% of respondents to both programs agree that EAST and SCELC:

- Are achieving their missions to protect and preserve scholarly print titles
- Are well run programs
- Communicate effectively and appropriately with their member libraries
- Provide help and assistance to member libraries, but should consider new paths to meeting the operating and service needs of their members.

In addition, the memberships of both programs endorsed EAST and SCELC participating in the Partnership for Shared Book Collections, a federation of shared print programs focused on national goals.

VALUE OF PARTICIPATION



For libraries that currently participate in shared print, there was general agreement that such participation:

- 1 Protects books and print journals**
Shared Print protects books and print journals vital to teaching and research
- 2 Fosters networking**
Shared Print fosters networking with other libraries to gain expertise and problem solve
- 3 Facilitates re-purposing of library space**
Shared Print facilitates the ability for a library to withdraw titles retained elsewhere and re-purpose space for other institutional needs
- 4 Supports local collection management**
Shared Print supports local collection management by expanding knowledge of the collections of partner libraries
- 5 Provides better understanding of local collection**
Shared Print provides the library with a better understanding of their local collection and its use as well as surfaces inconsistencies in local cataloging



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SCELC: Statewide California Electronic Library Consortium



EAST: Eastern Academic Scholars' Trust

Member libraries overwhelmingly value creating as large and diverse a collection of retention commitments as possible, sharing in this responsibility, and helping to build sustainable communal and collective solutions to print collection.

These libraries are beginning to see the collective collection of shared print as an extension of their local collections but acknowledge that improvements in discovery and access are needed for this to be truly realized.

The impact of participation in shared print on library operations

Libraries in both SCEL and EAST recognize that the tools and infrastructure available today are limited in support of shared print. It remains difficult, particularly for smaller libraries, to move data in and out of local systems to OCLC or other collection analysis tools. Few automated tools exist to ensure ongoing maintenance of shared print titles.



Institutional barriers



Financial barriers



Operational barriers



Collections barriers

CONCERNS EXPRESSED



Among the concerns expressed by member libraries are:

- The lack of open metadata sharing
- Slow growth of standards and support of shared print in standard library applications used across the library cycle of print collection management from selection to discovery and resource sharing
- The perception that e-books and journals are more important and useful may limit institutional investment in print collections and their management

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION



In addition to the concerns expressed relating to the impact of shared print on library operations, libraries - particularly those not currently participating in shared print - acknowledged other barriers to their participation. Those barriers were grouped into four categories:

Institutional barriers: uncertainty in making long-term commitments to retain print materials, resistance to withdrawing books locally in favor of borrowing via resource sharing, lack of information or misperceptions of shared print programs by administration, faculty, or library staff

Financial barriers: costs of membership in the program, cost of collection analysis work, cost of staff time and money to rely on other collections for access

Operational barriers: lack of staff resources to support the work, lack of expertise internally to maintain involvement in the program, staff turnover

Barriers relating to the book collections: being asked to commit to retain titles that are not closely aligned with local teaching and research, under-developed mechanisms to transfer retained volumes to other collections, particularly to large repositories for less used or historical materials

STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS



In discussions with both libraries currently participating in SCELCE or EAST as well as those SCELCE members who do not currently participate in the shared print program offered by the consortium, a number of possible strategies for overcoming the barriers described above surfaced. Like the barriers themselves, they fall into four primary categories:

Overcoming institutional barriers



- Develop talking points on the benefits of shared print oriented to different stakeholder communities – higher education generally, administrative staff, faculty, library staff
- These talking points need to focus on both qualitative and quantitative (i.e. return on investment) metrics and address known misperceptions of shared print

Overcoming financial barriers



- Provide collective or outside funding to support direct costs, subsidies from the shared print community, reduced costs of collection analysis tools

Overcoming operational barriers



- Thorough onboarding of library staff at every stage of the work of shared print
- Improvements in infrastructure and tools to more effectively embed shared print in the life cycle of print collection management
- Collaborative services by the shared print programs to supplement local library resources

Overcoming collections barriers



- Tailoring agreements to retain materials to more closely match local needs by focusing the retention model on titles well aligned with local needs
- Continually review the retention commitments as more libraries participate in shared print to reduce the burden on early adopters
- Emphasize the opportunities for libraries to withdraw titles held elsewhere
- Work with existing repositories or service providers to facilitate transfer of rare or scarcely held materials
- Link digitization initiatives more directly to the collective collections of shared print to increase access

The program assessments completed by SCELCE and EAST also focused on the future of shared print and both participants and non-participants emphasized the importance of continuing to make the shared print community, and the collections they commit to retain, as diverse and inclusive as possible in order to more fully realize each organization's mission.



About the Project Team

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SCELCE: Statewide California
Electronic Library Consortium



EAST: Eastern Academic
Scholars' Trust



Community Council Response to Results of Shared Print Program Assessments

CONTEXT



The Community Council, comprised of library leaders from MSIs, is responsible for advising on and providing oversight for all project activities. The Council reviewed the results of the Shared Print Program Assessments, and through structured inquiry, shared additional perspectives to assist in analysis of barriers to the adoption of shared print by MSIs and in assessing the value shared print brings to MSIs.

1

How should SCEL and EAST approach this work to support MSIs and minoritized communities?

Listen, Ask, Learn about Backgrounds, Invite, Empower, Be Respectful

"Instead of designing for people, you include people in the design process..."

2

What is the importance/benefit of shared print for MSIs?

Preservation, Access, Learning, and Networking

"These collections are about human knowledge, preservation of human knowledge, and the sharing of human knowledge."

3

What are the barriers to participation for MSIs?

Staffing and expertise are important, as well as building trust in the community.

"...A lot of MSIs are not as well staffed perhaps as larger institutions."

"Maybe there's a trust issue sometimes when [MSIs] are dealing with larger institutions. It's just a barrier...to build relationships, thoughtfully."

4

What solutions or opportunities should be explored?

Expanding participation and building expertise through existing trust networks like consortia.

"We have this catalog of experts,...people in various institutions who are experts in various issues. And if any of us is having an issue or that issue, we can call on that expert..."

5

Is there a need for organizations like SCEL and EAST to focus on program expansion to include MSIs or should other organizations build new opportunities for MSI participation in shared print?

Both regional and larger scale collaboratives and MSI-focused programs have benefits and need to be balanced based on collection needs, strength of existing trust networks, and the overall purpose of participation.

