Don’t get lost in the weeds:
A critical look at electronic serials management

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Let’s be honest…

Someone mentions weeding and your initial reaction (and sometimes not-so-initial) looks a little something like this.
Our weeding story

• Why weed?
  • Significant increase in subscription prices
  • Collection management best-practice
  • Attempt to align collection to current research trends

• What had been done before?
  • A large weeding project focused on our physical serials collection
    • Curriculum changes
    • Online subscriptions in current databases in addition to print materials
    • Obviously unused & neither core nor classic titles
Plan of Attack

Objective cancellation based on two criteria:

- Duplication
- Usage

Reference for cancellation:

- EBSCO renewal
  - Consisted of 533 titles / 154 pp.
  - Split renewal equally between three librarians
The criteria examined

Duplication

• LOUIS-provided databases
• Duplication found in access…
  • True duplication = same years of access (rare)
  • Pseudo duplication = journal resides in numerous databases, access can vary because of various embargos or larger backfiles
• Found in A – Z List
  • Navigate easily
  • Clearly defines access = where / years

Current LOUIS Electronic Resources can be found here: https://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/louis/er/
Physical therapy

Academic Search Complete  2000 to present
CINAHL Plus with Full Text  2000 to present
EBSCO Open Access Journals  1980 to present (Embargo: 1 year)
Free Access Journals (HighWire)  1980 to present (Embargo: 1 year)
Free Medical Journals  1980 to present
Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition  2000 to present
ProQuest Nursing & Allied Health Source  1996 to present
SPORTDiscus with Full Text  2000 to present

Resource Type: Journal
ISSN: 0031-9023 Online ISSN: 1538-6724
Publisher: American Physical Therapy Association
Subject: Medicine -- Therapeutics, Pharmacology -- Physical medicine, Physical therapy
The criteria examined

Usage Statistics

• Anything with 4 or fewer usage statistics on the chopping block
• Usage = downloads
• ILL as supplement

To find

• Ebsco (usage consolidation platforms)
• Ebsconet → Publisher / Highwire, etc.
Exceptions to the rule

• Prominent journals in the field
• Requests from faculty and our Archivist to keep certain journals important to a particular field / area
Renewal

Pull Usage Stats

Pseudo Duplication
- Numerous access points
- Front- or Backfile different?
  - Frontfile: embargo one year or less?
  - Backfile: is archival access important?
- Low Usage?

True Duplication
- Access is a perfect match

Unique Title
- Preeminent journal in the discipline?
- Important to university’s specialty curricula?
- Requested to be kept by faculty?
- Low Usage?

Candidate for cancellation

End results

- Savings of approximately 15%
- Choices supported by numerical data
- Further streamline our collection
  - Out with the old, in with the new!
- E-journal general maintenance
Thoughts on future weeding

- The impossible dream: More Time!
- Compare numerous years’ data for trends in use as well as growth and decline
- Cost-per-use analysis
All images credited to the Metropolitan Museum of Art can be found at metmuseum.org.

Success Story: A Play is part of Syracuse University’s online exhibition: “Steinbeck’s Grapes of Wrath: Bitter Fruit of the Depression. An Exhibition of the Special Collections Research Center.” It can be found here:

http://library.syr.edu/digital/exhibits/g/GrapesOfWrath/case3.htm