

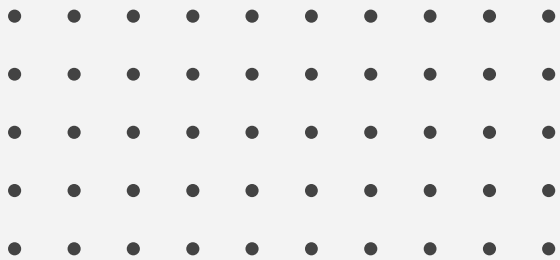


Communicating about Big Deal Cancellations

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**This presentation is based on our findings
to be published in Jan 2021:**

**Communicating Collections Cancellations to Campus: A Qualitative Study
Jaclyn McLean, Diane (DeDe) Dawson, Charlene Sorensen**

Scheduled to be published in *College & Research Libraries* in January 2021

This is the author-accepted manuscript/postprint of the paper. It has passed through peer review and undergone revisions.

<https://harvest.usask.ca/handle/10388/12696>

Outline

- Context: Why this study?
- Methods & Results: Phase 1 & 2
- Advice from participants
- Application of Results
- Questions and Discussion

Context

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Big deals are getting cancelled...

The screenshot shows the SPARC website's navigation bar with links for 'Who We Are', 'What We Do', 'Why It Matters', and 'Become a Member'. The main content area has a red background with the text 'POPULAR RESOURCES' and 'Big Deal Cancellation Tracking' in white. Below this is a row of four white buttons: 'BIG DEAL TRACKER', 'CONTRACTS LIBRARY', 'FURTHER GUIDANCE', and 'CANCELLATION TRACKING'. The 'CANCELLATION TRACKING' button is highlighted. Below the buttons, there is a 'SHARE' section with a Facebook icon and the word 'Overview' in large text. A paragraph of text follows: 'Large publishers have marketed bundles of journals at a discount off of aggregated list price since the late 1990's. The value proposition for publishers is a guaranteed revenue stream at a high overall'.

SPARC*

Who We Are What We Do Why It Matters Become a Member f

POPULAR RESOURCES

Big Deal Cancellation Tracking

Open Access

BIG DEAL TRACKER CONTRACTS LIBRARY FURTHER GUIDANCE CANCELLATION TRACKING

SHARE

Overview


Large publishers have marketed bundles of journals at a discount off of aggregated list price since the late 1990's. The value proposition for publishers is a guaranteed revenue stream at a high overall

<https://sparcopen.org/our-work/big-deal-cancellation-tracking/>

Memorial University to cancel thousands of journal subscriptions



Professors say cuts will damage MUN's reputation, hurt student recruitment

 [Laura Howells](#) · CBC News · Posted: Dec 08, 2015 8:01 AM NT | Last Updated: December 8, 2015

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/memorial-%09university-to-cancel-thousands-of-journal-subscriptions-1.3354711>

The spectre of angry faculty...

Ottawa

University of Ottawa puts thousands of journals on the chopping block

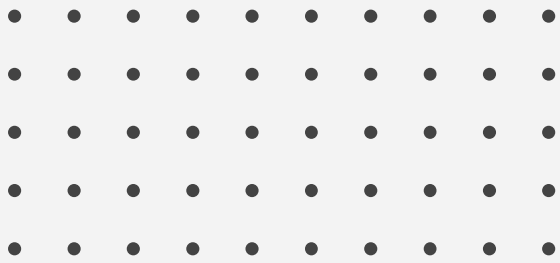


'All the researchers that I've spoken to are very upset about this,' says petition starter

[Stu Mills](#) · CBC News · Posted: Oct 21, 2016 6:51 AM ET | Last Updated: October 21, 2016



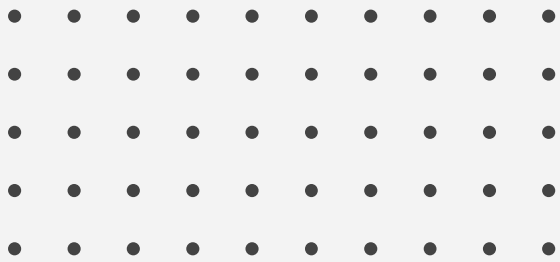
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/university-ottawa-library-budget-journal-cuts-1.3815030>



This Study

Question: What are some effective strategies for communicating to campus about collections cancellations?

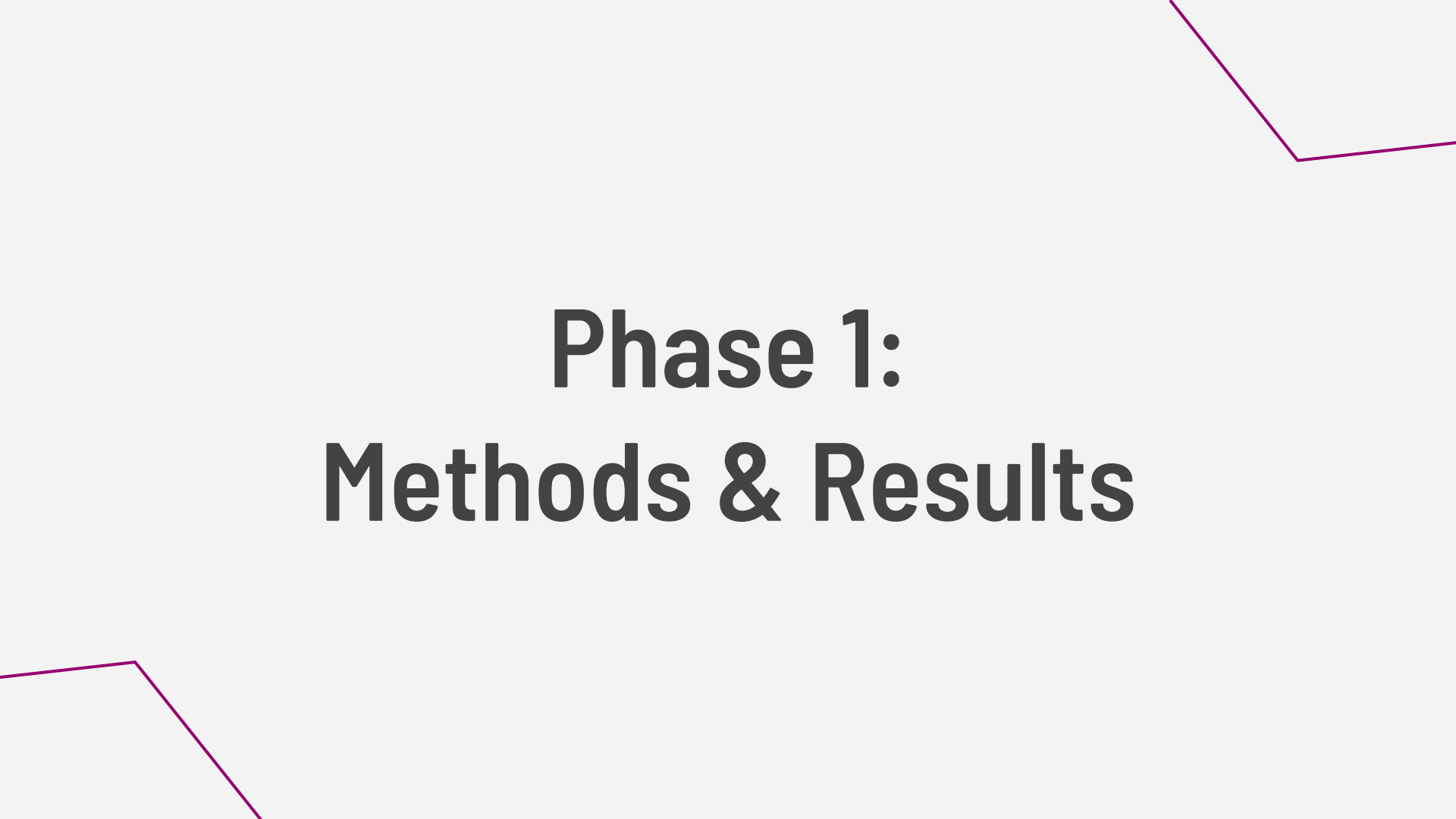
Scope: 29 member institutions of Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL)



This Study

Phase 1: Content analysis of communications posted on library websites
(results presented at the 2018 OLA Super Conference)

Phase 2: Semi-structured interviews with librarians responsible for communication about cancellations – funded by CARL
(results presented at EBLIP 2019 Conference)

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Phase 1: Methods & Results

Methods:

Phase 1

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Data Collection:

- Searched all 29 CARL library websites
- Sample = 74 documents from 12 libraries

Data Analysis:

- Each independently coded all documents
- Intensive group discussion to arrive at consensus on main themes

Phase 1 Results: Themes

Stewardship & Reassurance

01

Education & Justification

02

Transparency & Assessment

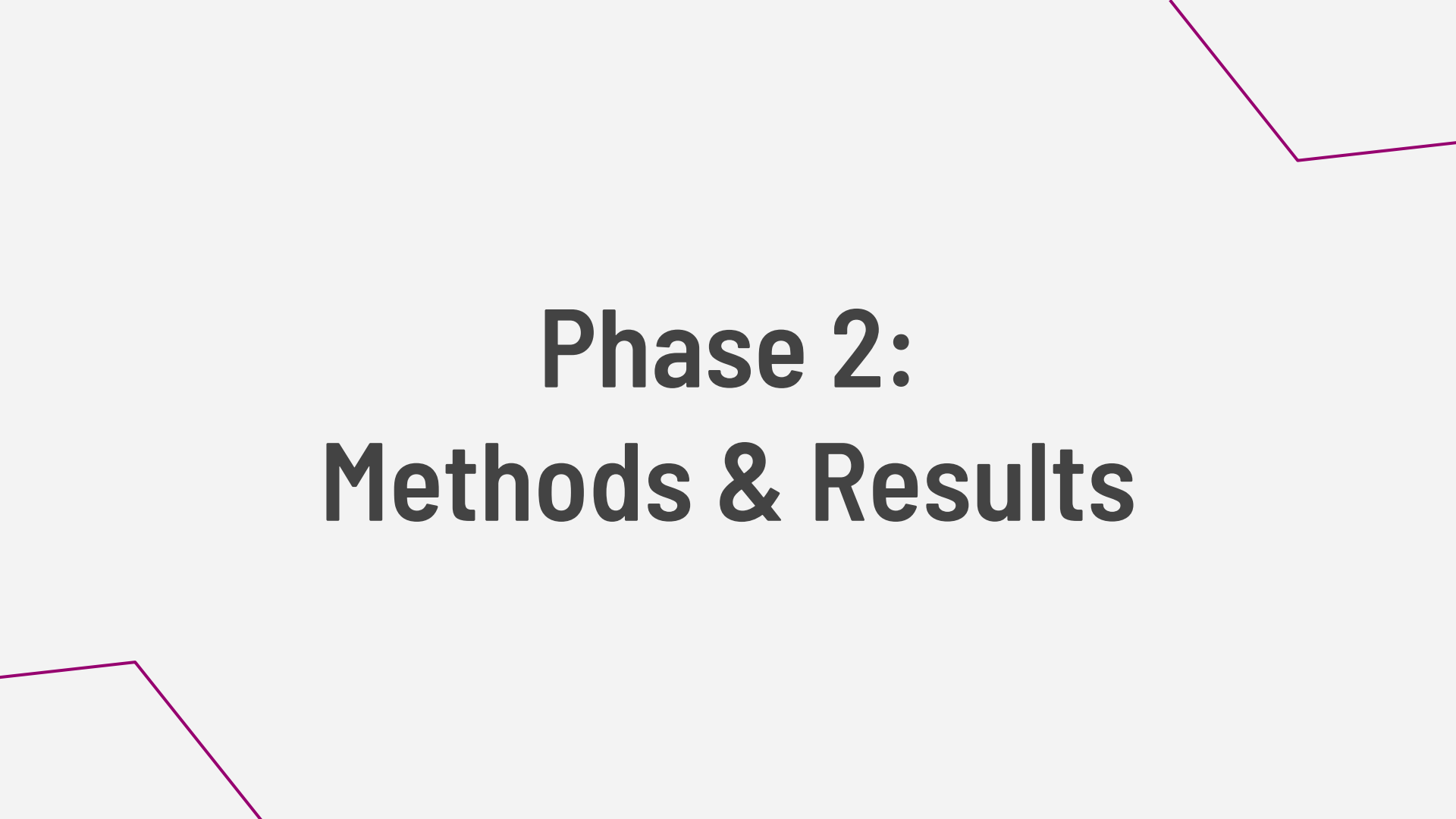
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Vocabulary & Tone

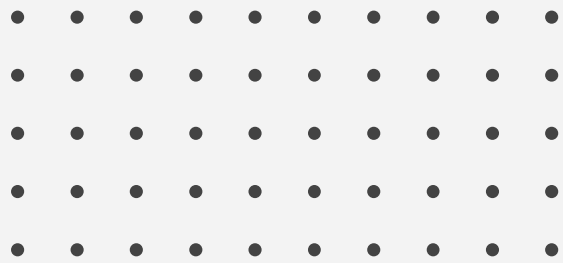
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Open Access & Advocacy

05

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Phase 2: Methods & Results

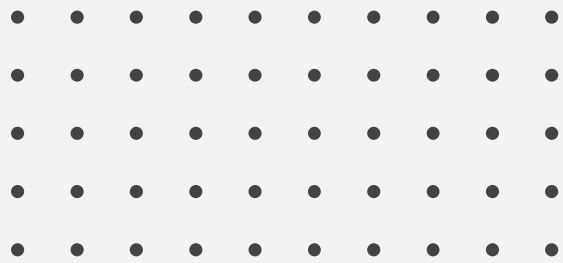


Methods: *Phase 2*

Received Research Ethics approval

Participant selection for interviews:

- Purposive sampling technique:
 - Targeted librarians with collections and administrative responsibilities
- 17 accepted our invitation



Data Collection:

- Developed and tested interview guide
- Conducted the semi-structured interviews

Data Analysis:

- Each independently coded all 17 transcripts
- Intensive group discussion to arrive at consensus on main themes

Methods:

Phase 2

Phase 2 Results: Themes

University Librarian's role

01

Relationships and in-person
interactions

02

Stewardship and expertise

03

Internal library communication

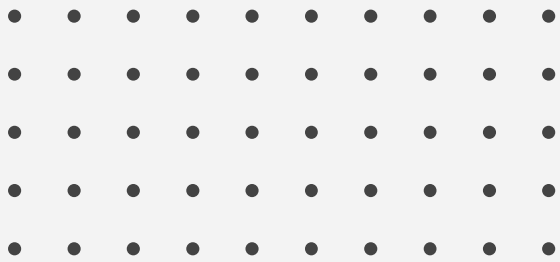
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Intersection of cancellations
and scholarly communication

05

National leadership and
community sharing

06



1. University Librarian's role

- Active involvement
- Ensure senior university administrators understand the issues
- Garner support from Provost
- Communicate effectively

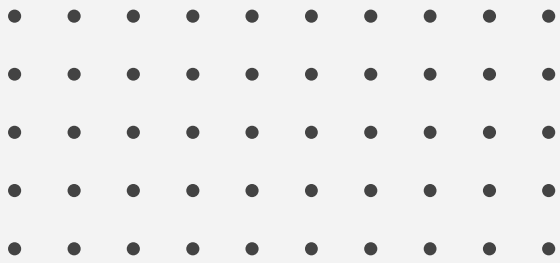


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1. University Librarian's role

“Have someone in your court, the Dean or UL, who can really be a **very strong communicator** and understand **how to mobilize allies** and really express the library's interest in really compelling terms.” P10





2. Relationships & in-person interactions

- Build trust and credibility
- Defuse anger and frustration
- Examples: town halls, faculty council meetings, Senate meetings, one-on-one discussions

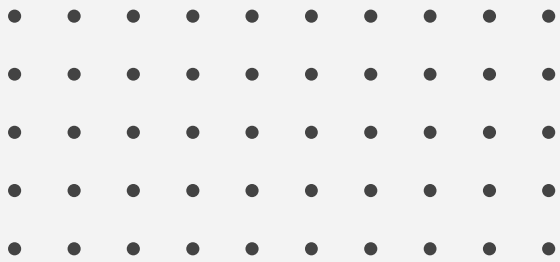


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2. Relationships & in-person interactions

“even though there was a lot of sort of immediate reaction and blasting emails and angry phone calls, in every case [...] **as soon as we sort of talked about the issues [in person], the conversation changed entirely**” P14





3. Stewardship & expertise

- Explain e-resource management issues to non-experts
- Demonstrate library's collection management expertise
- Share evidence-based assessment

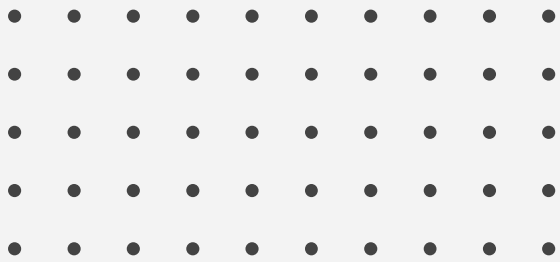


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3. Stewardship & expertise

“And gradually, as we explained things and explained things [...] they were able to sit back and go, 'Yeah, that's a problem isn't it? There's no way you can buy all that stuff, can you?' It was just kind of a disbelief that we knew what we were doing.” P11





4. Internal library communication

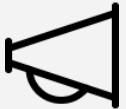
- Develop common understanding **within the library**
- Present united front as much as possible
- Support liaison librarians with tools & information

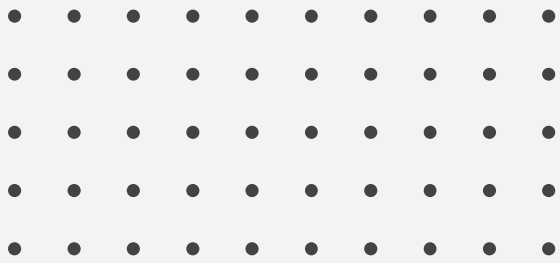


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4. Internal library communication

“I spent a lot of time presenting what the project was, how we were going to go about it, coaching folks, **answering questions internally to build trust**” P17





5. Intersection of cancellations & scholarly communication

- Link cancellations to problems in current publishing system
- Reinforce that it's not just a "library problem"
- Assert library's role in driving change to a more sustainable and equitable publishing system



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5. Intersection of cancellations & scholarly communication

“So really moving the discussion away from, ‘Here’s the library coming to you with a library problem’ to, ‘Here’s the library presenting you with an issue that we all need to be a part of.’” P13



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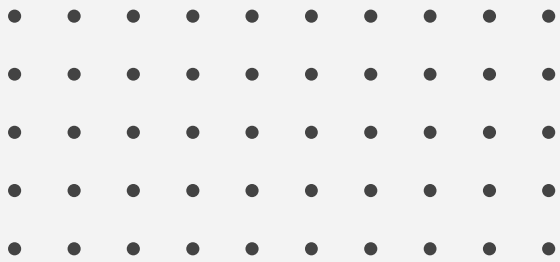
6. National leadership & community sharing

“it’s a **coordinated message and strategy** that can’t just be done on one library or one institution’s campus.” P6



Advice

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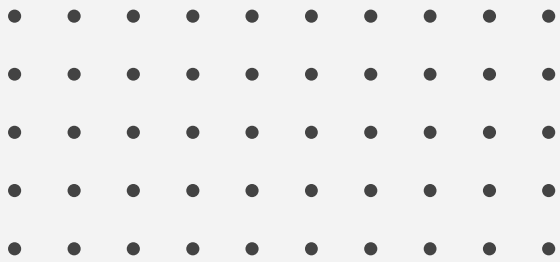


Advice

- Early & often
- Different channels & audiences

"Communicate **early**. Don't try to use a **one-size-fits-all** approach because people who work in different disciplines have very different ways of-very different relationships to data and evidence."

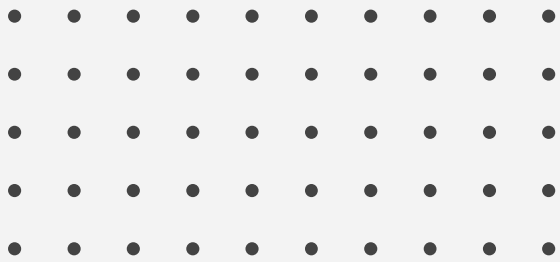
P11



Advice

- Transparent & track it
- Reassure & redirect
- Clear, concise, consistent (it's complex)


“Being as **transparent** and **proactive** and as **informative** as possible without overwhelming people with information is critical.” P10



Advice

- Keep your chin up
- Keep communicating

“do the best you can and don't be mortified if you don't achieve perfection.” P11

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Application of Results

Timeline

Prepare

(March – June 2019)

share
information

analyze
collection

establish
strategy

Survey

(June – Aug 2019)

survey faculty
& grad
students

identify high
priority
journals

update
campus

Decide

(Sept – Dec 2019)

opportunity
for further
consultation

determine
titles for
resubscription

update
campus

Implement

(Nov 2019 – Jan 2020)

notify
publishers

negotiate with
publishers

set up new
subscriptions

Assess

(Jan 2020 –)

analyze ILL &
turn-aways

gather
feedback

adjust
titles

Current Academic Publishing Model



Balancing the Collections Budget @ USask

Contents

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Related information

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DEC 23, 2019

Journal titles kept through perpetual access

The University Library will keep more than 1,660 titles through perpetual access agreements after "big deal" cancellations.

DEC 23, 2019

Additional journal titles retained after "big deal" cancellation

Negotiations have concluded with Taylor & Francis and Wiley-Blackwell for the journals that the library will maintain access to after Jan. 1, 2020.

DEC 16, 2019

Accessing journals lost through subscription cancellation

There are alternate ways to obtain access to a needed article.

[More News](#)

Message from the Dean of the University Library

As a direct result of the unsustainable rising costs of subscriptions set by publishers, in addition to the fluctuating value of the Canadian dollar and the monopolization of publishing companies, the University Library is facing growing constraints to its collections budget. As such, we are forced to evaluate our e-resource subscriptions in an effort to maintain a balanced budget.

[Read More](#)

FAQ

[> Why is this action necessary?](#)

<https://library.usask.ca/collections-budget/>




Hindsight 20/20

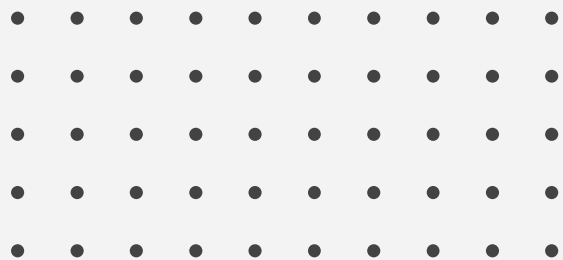


Final Thoughts

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“Yes, we have to make these decisions. **They're tough.** But we have a **process.** We're going to be **thoughtful** about it.” P5



Notes

Phase 1 results presentation (OLA Super Conference, 2018): <http://hdl.handle.net/10388/11518>

Phase 2 results presentation (EBLIP 10, 2019):
<http://hdl.handle.net/10388/12139>

Article in College & Research Libraries (passed peer-review, to be published Jan 2021),
postprint: <http://hdl.handle.net/10388/12696>

The Evolution of Big Deal Analysis (CLAW, 2019)
(with Ken Ladd)
<http://hdl.handle.net/10388/12412>

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) for supporting our research through the Research in Librarianship Grant for Practicing Librarians (2017)

Extra special thanks to all of our participants who took the time to share their experiences and knowledge!



THANKS!

Jaclyn McLean (@superjax)
DeDe Dawson (@dededawson)
Charlene Sorensen (@charlenereads)



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Questions & Discussion