Using JUSP to support renewal and purchasing decisions

Case study

JUSP is regularly used by its members to help them with decisions about renewing a subscription or deal or when choosing to purchase a resource. This case study outlines the ways that JUSP has been integral in the renewal and purchasing decisions in two academic libraries that are both long term JUSP users. It illustrates how JUSP can support renewal and purchasing decisions in a number of different ways, depending on individual institutional requirements.

How De Montfort University used JUSP to increase the value and relevance of its e-journal collection

De Montfort University uses JUSP heavily as a central part of their usage workflow for deals. Many members of De Montfort University library staff use JUSP encouraged by their Senior Information Assistant who is active in finding new uses for JUSP.

Part of the Senior Information Assistant's general routine is to work out journal costs per use over a number of years. He does this by exporting JUSP Journal Report 1 (JR1) data of the university's high and low use journals into Excel and comparing it with cost per subscription. The ease of exporting CSV files from JUSP into Excel makes calculating cost per use a fast and straightforward process. This aids regular decision making for subscription renewals.

In 2016, De Montfort University library undertook a

JUSP is "a central part of our usage stats workflow for deals"

one off project concerned with increasing the value of its collection. It was a library wide exercise to assess the educational and research value of all its resources. Part of the project dealt with an examination of journal subscriptions that De Montfort

University had with one major supplier. The agreement between the supplier and the University allowed for the exchange of "core" (subscribed) titles with "non-core" (Non-subscribed) titles as long as the total spend was maintained as in the original contract. They were able to compare the overall usage of originally selected core titles with non-core titles that had high usage by using JUSP JR1 usage data. At the start of the project ensuring that the correct core titles were chosen was considered vital so that retrospective access to useful and relevant articles could be maintained should the subscription be cancelled. The content delivery team worked with Subject Librarians to ensure that other factors were considered, such as any journals needed for teaching.

The Senior Information Assistant explained that he preferred to use JUSP for usage statistics rather than going into individual publisher sites because it is easy to harvest and capture data. JUSP JR1 data ranging from January 2012 to June 2016 were used for the initial analysis to pinpoint the high use journals and to separate core and non-core journals. JUSP JR1 figures over those years showed that certain non-core titles were downloaded over 1,000 times which was greater than for some core titles.

The data were exported into Excel in order to calculate cost per use when combined with cost data similarly exported into Excel from the supplier's website. Then Excel's VLOOKUP tool was used to merge both JR1 usage and cost datasets into one spreadsheet by matching on ISSNs.

As guidance on which journals should be exchanged a cost per use metric was applied to the journals (see image). This provided an objective and consistent method of identifying items that should be retained, those that needed further consideration and those that should be cancelled. With the evidence that the well-used titles were more relevant to the students' work than core titles from the original deal, the titles were swapped. The overall project was deemed to be a success. Ultimately, the subscription to the supplier was continued with access to high use titles retained.

Importantly, subscriptions to journals are one of the largest expenses of De Montfort University's library budget and improving the relevance of the content across all faculties meant that the collection is of higher value to PhD, graduate and undergraduate students. Overall, this benefits the university because the library resources offer better financial value and an increased source of valuable knowledge. A more detailed description of the process can be found on Mitchley's DMU Blog.

CPU < £1: excellent value, automatically retain title.

CPU between £1-£5: good to fair value, recommend retaining title.

CPU between £5-£10: fair to poor value, investigate reasons for low use, potential substitution.

CPU > £10: automatic substitution.

De Montfort University Library Cost per Use metric (from Mitchley's DMU blog, Mitchell Dunkley)

	Core	Open acce	Title		Publisher	Platform
2	Core	Open acce	Title		Publisher	Platform
3	Totals					
4			Journal H		Publisher A	Publisher A website
5	[KBcore]		Journal C		Publisher A	Publisher A website
6	[KBcore]		Journal T		Publisher A	Publisher A website
7	[KBcore]		Journal B		Publisher A	Publisher A website
8	[KBcore]		Journal R		Publisher A	Publisher A website
9			Journal E		Publisher A	Publisher A website
10			Journal W		Publisher A	Publisher A website
11	[KBcore]		Journal X		Publisher A	Publisher A website
12	[KBcore]		Journal O		Publisher A	Publisher A website

Figure 1: JUSP allows libraries to markup "core" titles in their electronic journal collections (table from Mitchley's DMU blog, Mitchell Dunkley)

Integration of JUSP data into Kings College London's e-usage spreadsheet

The organisational structure of roles and responsibilities within Kings College London library does not include the traditional position of subject specialist librarians. The tasks generally performed by subject librarians are shared amongst other teams and the usage data of e-resources are gathered, collated and disseminated by the subscriptions team. JUSP is used by the e-resource manager together with her team of eight other people in order to gather most of that data and calculate the statistics.

The team gathers all the usage data for every e-resource from a range of sources on a daily basis. The data are collated into one very large spreadsheet which can be used for a variety of purposes. JUSP usage statistics form a key component of that spreadsheet.

The subscriptions team uses the spreadsheet to make calculations for regular statistical reporting.

They produce a trend analysis and a quarterly report for the Head of Collections Development which is then summarised for other university teams. The data are also used for other purposes: producing monthly database usage reports; making upgrading, renewal and purchasing decisions whenever required; and answering ad hoc questions from other teams.

JUSP does not cover each and every e-resource that

"For an institution that has very little time JUSP is a life saver"

Kings College London uses. However, between 50%-60% of the journal usage data in their e-resource spreadsheet is from JUSP which the e-resource manager believes "makes my life easier". The e-resource manager considers that JUSP is a constantly accessible, single source of data which has a support service that responds to issues promptly on behalf of all the JUSP community. The speed and ease of exporting data from JUSP into Excel with a csv file is "a big advantage".

Kings College London Library run free trials of collections and because the team monitor JUSP usage data on a rolling basis, the number of times that the collection is used can be easily checked at the end of any particular trial period. The recorded usage then becomes a factor in the decision to proceed with a subscription of the trial collection. Similarly, the e-resources manager makes routine renewal decisions for journal subscriptions based on information from the e-usage spreadsheet. "Current usage" of journals is calculated by the spreadsheet subtracting Journal Report 1 Archive (JR1a) data from the JR1 data and also taking into account gold open access figures. It is done this way because the spreadsheet contains data that has been gathered from other sources as well as data from JUSP. The resulting figures are then used to work out which journals are considered to provide value for money.

The e-resources manager consults JUSP Journal

Report 5 (JR5) reports to find out which publication years of journals that users are currently using. This is ensure that the back files of relevant and used journals would remain accessible when their subscription ceases by making arrangements with the publisher. The information that is calculated from the spreadsheet is relayed in monthly or quarterly statistical reports to the Head of Collections and Development who makes the final decision for renewal and purchasing. Relevant report details can then be used by team managers to justify purchases or cancellations at meetings with academics.

Ongoing data gathering from JUSP and other sources, and integration of that data into the e-resource spreadsheets, provides essential information for renewal and purchasing decisions. This process benefits the university as a whole by making the subscriptions team quick and efficient, and always ready to answer questions.

Kings College London use JRI data with other figures to assess the usage of trial e-resources (Nadia Casagranda)

Summary

This case study shows that JUSP is a valuable tool that is used by e-resource staff to help make renewal and purchasing decisions. The two examples of JUSP being used in this way cover:

♦ A member of a cross library team who used JUSP usage statistics to improve the value of the collection for a one off exercise. The JUSP usage data provided the evidence to cancel low usage core titles and to substitute high use non-core titles.

♦ A subscriptions team of a large university with many e-resources who use JUSP usage data as a key component of their ongoing usage data spreadsheet. The spreadsheet is used as a constant source of information that can be immediately used for renewal and purchasing decisions as well as for other reporting purposes.

In each case, the JUSP usage reports provided evidence of the usage value of the journals under consideration, although usage was not the only factor in decision making. The relevance and usefulness of the resources to teaching and learning as well as cost per download were additional factors which were considered.

The participants in this case study all stated that using JUSP to gather usage data saves them a great deal of effort. JUSP collates data from multiple publishers and suppliers into a single portal and removes the need to visit each publisher's platform individually to collect and merge reports. As a result it is considered that it is extremely worthwhile collecting JUSP usage statistics because it makes the whole process faster.

The fact that JUSP users are supported by a technical team checking the data from publishers is highly valued by the participants. This is because solving an issue that one user may have with one publisher often also resolves the issue for the rest of the JUSP community. The e-resource staff believe that by using JUSP their respective institutions benefit through their own increased efficiency, better use of library budgets and better access to relevant information and knowledge for staff and students.

What you can do now

♦ Use JUSP JR1 reports:
  ◊ To look at the usage of an individual publisher over a range of years
  ◊ To look at usage across the full range of titles from a publisher
  ◊ To monitor the usage of journals on free trial
♦ Use the JUSP reports "JR1 reports including gateways and intermediaries" and "JR1 reports excluding backfile usage and GOA" to get a more complete picture of your usage of journals for each publisher
♦ Use JUSP JR5 reports to see the number of monthly requests for each title with the year of publication from a selected publisher over a period of time
♦ Look at the Guides to Reports on our webpages to find out more about the reports that we have available (http://jusp.jisc.ac.uk/guides-to-reports/)

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