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ATG Interviews Kristine S. Baker

Director of Digital Sales, YBP

by **Jonathan H. Harwell** (Head of Collections & Systems, Rollins College's Olin Library)
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JH: *DDA has really taken off in libraries over the past few years. It allows librarians to put our money where our mouths are, in terms of the data-driven decision making that we like to talk about. How are publishers thinking about it? What positive and negative things do you hear from their perspectives?*

KB: As publishers face the dynamics of declining print sales and more digital content purchasing, their concerns on the impact of DDA are valid. Publishers are anxious about DDA; but we're seeing a change now that we have statistical data and sales figures to better explain the impact of DDA for publishers. DDA is allowing for more publisher content to be accessible to a larger audience for possible use. Titles that may not have been bought outright by libraries, but rather sent as new title notifications, are now getting exposed to a large group of patrons who may trigger Short-Term Loans or Purchases. Publishers will receive a percentage of the book price for that loan, but it may or may not trigger into a purchase. There are publishers that have agreed to participate in demand-driven programs but are not agreeing to allow short-term loans. This varies by publisher, and it also varies by which aggregator platform the content is being hosted. Allowing access to the content by patrons but not allowing STLs, provides publishers the opportunity to push out more content to a larger audience and potentially trigger a purchase. And there are publishers that are not participating in DDA and have no interest in making their content available for this type of acquisition. The one take-away that publishers, aggregators, and book vendors can agree upon is that DDA is not the end-all solution for collection development. DDA serves as one means for collecting digital content, but there are other acquisition models that, when combined with DDA, provide a comprehensive approach to acquiring content. **YBP** has worked very hard, along with our aggregator partners, to encourage publishers to make more of their content available in digital format at the same time the print edition is published. It's important not just to digitize print material but to make it available simultaneously, so that libraries can make an educated choice on whether they acquire the print or eBook, or both depending on their needs. We have also spent a lot of time talking to libraries and to publishers about demand-driven acquisitions. In 2011 **YBP** developed an integrated DDA service with two of our aggregator partners, **EBL** and **ebrary**. We approached our development for this service in phases to allow for changes and improvements to be made after each iteration of the service. We first entered into an integrated DDA service with **EBL** in early 2011 as the aggregator had a DDA service already in place. We introduced demand-driven acquisitions with **ebrary** in the Spring of 2011 and made improvements to our existing DDA service with **EBL** to better meet the needs of our customers. One addition to our service that was unique to **YBP** was the ability to add titles to the DDA repository on a title-by-title level through **GOBI**, **YBP's** online database. This came to be known as Manual DDA. In the summer of 2012, we released Multi-Vendor DDA, allowing libraries to choose more than one aggregator to work with for DDA, a service unique to **YBP**. And in August of this year we added **EBSCO** to our DDA program.

JH: *Have any publishers started DDA and then stopped it?*

KB: **YBP's** DDA service is offered through **EBL**, **ebrary**, and **EBSCO**. The publishers that have agreed to participate in DDA varies by aggregator. Based on daily title feeds from each aggregator, we know which titles are eligible for DDA and which titles allow for Short-Term Loans. We use that information in tandem with the library profile criteria to identify titles available for DDA for each customer. To answer your question is a little difficult, because it will vary by aggregator. If a publisher decides to discontinue access via DDA, the aggregator will alert **YBP** in our daily title feeds and will alert those customers who have content within their DDA program that is no longer accessible for DDA. Each aggregator provides a "delete" file specific to the customer that provides the details on which titles are no longer available.

JH: *At this point, DDA has focused on monographs. I know that's where YBP's business mainly is at this point. Do you foresee a future for expanding DDA (perpetual purchase, as opposed to pay-per-view) in terms of articles (or even entire issues or volumes) and/or multimedia? Could distributors like YBP work with providers of discovery services, for example, in order to facilitate the use of DDA in the periodicals market?*

KB: It's an interesting question; at this point we have not explored expanding DDA to articles or multimedia. **YBP** has not participated in the journal market, and it would be a substantial change for us if we decided to go that route. Multimedia DDA is an interesting concept. Our parent company **Baker & Taylor** supplies multimedia content; down the road this might be an option if there is a demand for it. I feel that DDA is not going away; a few years ago it was a hot topic, and everyone thought it would be short-lived, but it is still here and growing in interest. I think it will be part of a library's overall collection development strategy.

JH: *What would you like Against the Grain readers to understand about DDA from your viewpoint as a*

distributor? Are there any common misunderstandings about it?

KB: Initially there was a lot of concern on what impact DDA would have on library budgets, how quickly money could be spent, and what type of content would be purchased if left in the hands of the patrons. As time has passed and with the integration of **YBP** profiling into the DDA service, some of these fears have subsided. Statistics are proving the amount of money spent is far less than expected and is saving the library money, and there is confidence in the content being purchased as good scholarly content that is being used. In the beginning, we often heard from libraries that they would like to see the amount spent on Short-Term Loans be deducted from the cost of the eBook when it triggers a purchase. The value of DDA is that it offers libraries the opportunity to present a great deal of content to their patrons at no cost until it is used. Libraries are spending a great deal less for the content even with the additional cost of Short-Term Loans added to the cost of purchasing the title outright. Many titles trigger into a short-term loan, but they never end up being purchased; this is saving money for libraries and allowing more content to be accessible to their patrons. I believe from the library's perspective, the idea of crediting the cost of the STL towards the purchase of the eBook was logical, but from the publisher's perspective this was not sustainable. Bringing the two together and helping libraries understand the needs of the publishing industry, and the publishing industry understand the libraries' needs, we've come a long way. **YBP** views DDA as part of the overall collection development/acquisitions solution for libraries; DDA should not be a substitute for materials in subjects or from presses that are historically heavily utilized by patrons, based on usage or circulation statistics, but should work in tandem with the overall collection development strategy of the institution.

JH: You've had to play a strong role as mediator there, it sounds like.

KB: **YBP**'s role has evolved as we entered into the eBook market. As eBooks became more available in the academic market **YBP** has worked hard to provide the same services for digital content that we've done for years with print content. **YBP** offers choice of content (print or digital), workflow support (collection development, duplication control, cataloging metadata and physical processing), choice of how to acquire content (approvals/autoships, collections, firm orders, DDA, continuations), and customer service that understands the needs of our library customers.

JH: So we've talked about where we are at this point with short-term loans, etc. We haven't mentioned manual DDA, which is also extremely helpful. Because otherwise, for example, if we had a request for an expensive reference book, it's much easier for me to justify saying, "OK, we'll do it as a manual DDA rather than outright purchasing the book." So it's good that we can build in manual options along with the approval plan options to get records. What about the future? What do you see as the next generation? Short-term loans have drastically changed the market; manual DDA has changed the market. Where are we headed next, any idea?

KB: Well, I think from our perspective as a vendor, what needs to happen next is there needs to be a means to gather all the data associated with all purchases made by a library. And that's across the board, whether it's print or digital, whether it was driven by an approval plan, a firm order, or a patron triggering a purchase. One of the development projects that is on our schedule for this year is to formulate what we're calling, a Management Dashboard that would reside in GOBI, where libraries could go in and see across-the-board activity — what they have acquired, what the usage is, providing usage data for eBooks, and potentially circulation statistics for print material. We want to give a full picture of what the library has collected, how it was acquired, and the usage; helping libraries with information and tools to formulate their strategies going forward. To help answer questions like: What is being used? What subjects or interdisciplinary topics are accessed frequently? Do we need to make changes to our profile for DDA based on this data? Should we revise our profile to better match usage? What have we spent for DDA, Short-Term Loans, Approval Profiles, Firm Orders, Continuations, and Collections, and how does this tie into our usage statistics?

YBP is also working on a development project to support consortia purchasing. We have seen a growth in consortial projects over the last few years and recognize we need to develop unique tools to support their needs.

Overall, where is DDA going? I think DDA will continue to grow and remain one part of an overall process in the way that libraries acquire content. Residing alongside approval or autoship plans for materials that are heavily utilized by patrons, based on usage or circulation statistics, makes for a balanced approach to acquisitions and collection development. In addition, I could envision working more closely with the discovery layer and web-based management services to help libraries streamline their workflow. The one thing that we hear is the challenge of managing all the e-content, the amount of staff time it takes to get the content into the system, access issues, and guiding students on how to access the different platforms and find material. How can **YBP** play a more significant role to help simplify that process?

JH: Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

KB: I think what I'd like to hear from you as an academic librarian is, what have you faced in going into the digital world, and what are some of the challenges that your library is dealing with? What are your thoughts on DDA?

JH: That's a good question. Well, I just recently changed institutions. My previous institution actually had started doing DDA just recently before I left. We were doing it with ebrary through YBP. That was working very well, and we found that we were spending much less money than we anticipated that we might. We were very selective in the titles that we got into DDA. We were working with it through our approval plan. But we were only getting the current year's titles to begin with, and only in selected subject areas. We started out with a pilot, and

only doing the subject areas where we had online graduate programs, which were several. My current library is in a different situation. We don't really have distance or online programs to deal with here. So we're buying some eBooks, but we have not gone to DDA at this point. We're considering it, thinking through our options. But as we're buying more eBook content, we're thinking of at least manual DDA, if not building it into an approval plan. That would be a big help to us. Part of that also is building in support from the faculty to do more experimentation with eBooks, because some of our faculty are still very tied to print. However, I am hearing from some unexpected disciplines, like Philosophy, that they are really eager to get eBook content.

KB: That's interesting. Great.

JH: But in History, for example, some of our faculty are very tied to the print. So we're thinking through our options right now. We haven't gone there at this library yet, but I would anticipate in the near future we'll be doing something with DDA. I'm just not sure how extensively we can do it at the outset. But I was very pleased with how it was working at my former institution. Like I said, it was very helpful for me to be able to do manual DDA in some cases, in addition to getting those automatic updates.

KB: Jonathan, you're at Rollins [College]?

JH: That's right.

KB: Where were you before?

JH: At Georgia Southern University. So I've worked with John Laraway for years. He's been excellent. Glad to still be working with him.

KB: Yes, he's wonderful.

JH: So I'm very eager to get something started here. But of course we need to talk with the faculty about it and make sure we've got their support in what we're doing, trying to be as transparent as possible. We're going to be doing a colloquium with our faculty, probably in the spring, to talk with them more about eBooks and platforms and the ways we can purchase eBooks, etc., and just make sure we have their support and see which disciplines are more interested in eBooks and which aren't. That will also tell us how to proceed. But I see a lot of possibilities for this, and I think it's a great, great step forward.

KB: Rollins College will benefit from your experience with DDA at Georgia Southern. You have an understanding of how it works and of the benefits. I think you bring a lot of value to Rollins.

There's one topic of discussion to which I've heard various responses from libraries. Do you still feel that collections have a place in the digital world? At one point, the big collections dominated, and certainly a lot of libraries bought large perpetual access collections from the major publishers. Do you think that will continue? Do you see any interest in and benefits of using a subscription collection at Rollins? Do you think it's beneficial to have a subscription collection where you can get mass quantity for a limited amount of cost to your library?

JH: I'm looking at two recent experiences at two different institutions. At Georgia Southern, we actually had a couple of ebrary subscription collections that we were continuing. But we were seeing probably decreasing need for those, once we started doing more automatic purchasing of eBooks. We were doing e-preferred through our YBP approval plan for some subjects. Some books in those subscriptions are not covered in DDA, so that's part of the picture too. Here we actually have the full Academic Complete subscription package at Rollins; which is very helpful, and, of course, it's where a lot of our eBook content comes from at this point. But at many libraries who are facing severe budget challenges, it's really hard to justify any sort of ongoing annual cost. And it's a lot easier for us to justify purchasing a collection of books, if we're just doing it as a one-time expense rather than saying, "This is what we're gonna spend on this collection every year." That's much harder to budget for, and much harder to justify in the long run. We can justify larger expenditures as a one-time thing, rather than ongoing expenditures at a lower cost.

KB: We have found that a blend of how eBooks are acquired provides libraries with a comprehensive collection of econtent that meets the needs of the library and patrons. Starting with a large subscription collection, such as ebrary's Academic Complete, provides a library with a wide-ranging eCollection of breadth and size at minimal cost per title for the library, including eApprovals and firm orders for content the library knows is heavily used, and implements a DDA program to allow access to a great deal of content that the library may not want to purchase out-right but will if there is demand for it.

JH: Because you never know what the budget's going to look like from year to year at most institutions these days, and oftentimes we're facing budget cuts every year. And so we're trying as much as possible to reconsider all of our ongoing costs and make sure which ones are the most essential.

KB: At Georgia Southern or at Rollins, how is it working as far as budgeting for digital content? Is it a separate budget, or are you pulling from an overall budget that incorporates both print and digital? And if you're doing that, how is it impacting your print purchasing?

JH: Well, in terms of books, they're all coming from the same budget. We're treating eBooks the same as print books as far as that goes. As far as journals and databases, we're paying for print journals in a very similar way that we're paying for e-journals and databases. We don't really differentiate very much in the budget lines between print and electronic. It's understood that we're getting more electronic items in some subject areas, and in some

disciplines that format makes more sense. So we don't really budget separately for those.

KB: Although the cost of an eBook can be higher than that of the print edition, there are many benefits of an eBook that quickly diminish the higher cost. The accessibility to the eBook 24/7 from within the library or remotely, searching capabilities within the eBook and linking to other sources, multi-user access, automatic citations, and download capabilities to personal computer or portable device are just a few of the benefits of acquiring eBooks.

JH: *That's true. We find increasingly that a lot of people are much more likely to open a book or article online rather than go to it on the shelf — particularly in terms of journals, but increasingly so in terms of books as well.*

KB: It's the reality of what we're facing. How do you manage that and make it work? Until we're 100% digital, and I don't believe we'll ever be 100%, there will always be that combination of the print and the digital world. It's a balancing act in supplying those formats.

JH: *That's really what we're trying to figure out. And each individual library has a different clientele, of course. So we work with the people we have and figure out what their needs are. We know that if we have online programs, for example, that we have to be serving those students with e-resources as well as we're serving our on-campus students with print resources. And increasingly, even the on-campus students are demanding the online resources just because of convenience. They're not on campus all day long. Sometimes they're doing their papers at 2:00 a.m., and they need what they need then. So we're finding that the convenience of electronic is becoming almost expected by a lot of people, even if they're here on campus.*

KB: A lot of libraries in recent years have added coffee shops and common areas for students to meet. Have you added a coffee shop to your library? Has this helped bring students to the library? Or do you find that you are seeing fewer students as more content is available in e?

JH: *Not by any means, no. Both libraries I've been at recently have just undergone major renovations, and as soon as those renovations are complete, the people just flood in. We have cafes in both libraries, with food and everything. And the students are there at all hours of the night, and it's the place to be, and in each case they call it Club Henderson or Club Olin, because it's the popular hangout on campus as soon as the library gets renovated and is a cool place to hang out. But that doesn't necessarily mean that they're going there to use the print items on the shelves. Even if they're there in the building, they'd much rather pull it up on their laptop or on one of our terminals than go find it on the shelf and make scans of it, for example. It's just so much more convenient to work with it at their station. So that's really what they prefer in a lot of cases. The one exception is when a student is looking to check out a book for pleasure reading, they often want that in print. If they're just looking for information in a book for research papers, they prefer the convenience of the online. But if they want to read it cover to cover, take it to the beach with them, for example, they often just want a print book they can check out and not worry about anything electronic. But we also circulate Kindles and Nooks at our library, and we do get some requests for books to be added to those, but it doesn't happen very often. Maybe once every several weeks or so, we'll get a request for a Kindle book.*

KB: That's interesting. I've talked with a lot of people who prefer the e, but there's something really great about holding a book in your hand. It seems that's still the case. However, as much as I travel, I see a lot of eBook readers on the airplane. You don't see that paper book as often.

JH: *I appreciate you talking with me and making the time.*

KB: Thank you for reaching out to YBP. It was a pleasure talking with you today.