How are Catalan University Libraries Coping with the Economic Crisis?

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Summary

1. A short overview about CBUC
2. 2010: “soft” impacts of the economic crisis
3. 2011: the crisis is really here!
   1. Building a strategy
   2. Which is our core collection?
   3. Working with different scenarios
4. Now what?
CBUC

- 15 members (mainly Catalan public universities)
- 1996: first project was the union catalogue (CCUC)
- Digital Library of Catalonia (BDC):
  - Began in 1998-9
  - Expenditure approx. 9M€
    - 10,000 e-journals
    - 15,000 e-books
    - 20 databases
  - Funding from members (+Catalan government)
  - Most licenses include nearly all CBUC members
  - [Also support several OA repositories]
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2010: BDC economic situation

- Less incomes for CBUC 2011 license renewals:
  - Catalan government = 2009 funds + 0%
    - (but a 5% decrease in salaries!)
  - CBUC members = 2009 funds + 3.5%

- More expenditures:
  - Costs = 2009 cost + 5% (average)
  - Higher VAT: 16 → 18%

Result: -200,000€
First steps (February 2010)

- Acquisitions librarians’ group meeting
  - Mandate: to preserve e-journals subscriptions!
  - Conducted an analysis about BDC “redundant” content:
    - BSE/Econlit/Factiva
    - JSTOR/PAO-PIO
    - Mathscinet/Zentralblatt Math
  - Parameters: usage, overlapping with full text resources, costs, etc.

- Vendors’ meeting at CBUC Office
  - EBSCO, Swets, Ovid, ProQuest, DOC6, GreenData
  - Several proposals, but no pricing in most of them ...
  - Some discounts from a couple of vendors (if we renewed their products)
Objective: keeping as much (full text) content as possible!

- No new incomes available, though we tried
- And tried to move some costs to other budgets, but didn’t succeed
- Also asked e-journal publishers to reduce price increases as much as possible (0%?), got some positive answers (which was good, but not enough ...)

→ In the end, Business Source Elite was cancelled
“This crisis is so annoying ...”
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2011: economic situation

- Worse than the year before:
  - Again, costs increased more than incomes = -120,000€ approx.
  - 3 more cancellations: ABI Inform, Safari Tech Books Online, VLEX
  - And in March 2011: 10% reduction on budgets in the Spanish public sector (universities included)

- But the worst of all has been uncertainty
  - 80% of BDC expenditure is paid by libraries to publishers directly (inside consortial licenses)
  - Universities have committed to preserve their economic contribution to the consortial agreements
    - but … (on average) 41% of their budget is tied to BDC!
2011: building a strategy

Just in case (and to be prepared to cope with any situation at any time) …

- Endorsed ICOLC and SELL positions about the crisis
- A letter explaining our situation (and asking for a 5% decrease on costs) was sent to all BDC vendors and publishers
  - Many of them were sensitive and flexible
    - on average, final price increases are now between 0% and 3%
  - In several cases, license period is now shorter than it used to be
- CBUC acquisitions librarians’ group evaluated our shared digital library in order to assign each e-resource a value and also a level of strategicness
Which is BDC “core collection”? Results of the analysis

- 14 CBUC members analyzed 34 consortial subscriptions according to:
  - Usage statistics (+price per download)
  - Estimated impact on users and research
  - Is it a strategic resource in your institution?

- **Highlighted results:**
  - Best valued e-resources at BDC are the most expensive too!
  - BDC can be sliced into 4 parts, according to the level of strategicness of its e-resources
Most valued e-resources are the most expensive too

From left to right: best valued BDC e-resources according to CBUC members. Height of the bars shows the cost of each e-resource.
BDC Core Collection

Height of bars shows how many CBUC members think the e-resource is strategic in their libraries.
Working with 3 different scenarios

- **Scenario A**: -10% cut “only” affects central money
  - Cancellations already agreeded (databases): ABI Inform, Safari Tech Books Online, VLEX

- **Scenario B**: -5% reduction on CBUC members’ contributions
  - This would mean -450.000€ (=cancel a big deal?)

- **Scenario C**: -10% reduction on CBUC members’ contributions
  - This would mean -900.000€ (=cancel a big deal +something else?)
4. Now what?

- A lot of meetings have been done
  - But still no clear instructions …

However:

- CBUC members need a relief in their budgets!
  - And we already have some “jokers” just in case …
- Reductions on price increase have been obtained from most publishers
- We are best prepared to deal with next years’ situation
- And now we better know our collection (and ourselves)!
Some final thoughts …

- Cancellations are not a solution
- Try to preserve as much licensed content as possible, but also:
  - Look for new partners to help you pay the bill
    - CBUC is working to include Catalan research centers in its projects (including the digital library)
  - Explore open access
    as a user and also as a content producer
Thanks!

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