



# International library lending practices for digital titles

Webinar presented by Brian O'Leary (BISG)

14/12/2023

[livrescanadabooks.com](http://livrescanadabooks.com)

# Project overview

- Study digital library markets in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Spain, and the United States
- Hear directly from the organizations managing library sales in these international markets
- Share information about library purchasing decisions
- Provide information that will help Canadian publishers with discovery and sale of their titles
- Respond to questions from the Canadian marketplace

# International advantages

- Global interest in English- and French-language content, both direct and through libraries
- Ability to use metadata to market books to libraries
- Fulfillment costs lower than those for physical books
- Increasing interest in digital reading
  - Not the replacement for print, as once thought
  - Highest in the U.S. and U.K., growing elsewhere

# International challenges

- Partners differ by market
- Business models also vary by market
- Digital sophistication varies, although the gaps are closing over time
- IT infrastructure can be a block to innovation
- Digital book uptake is lower in some markets

# About BISG

- Oversees standards and best practices for managing the supply chain in the U.S.
- Works closely with BookNet Canada to align practices across the two markets
- Works with international organizations such as EDItEUR on global standards and best practices
- In regular contact with library organizations

# General principles for digital sales

- Metadata matters (even more than for physical books)
- Meet the needs of local trading partners
- Understand the business models in place
- Get the timing right

# Library sales in the U.K.

- Metadata to Nielsen BookData (nielsenbook.co.uk)
  - Accurate information for the U.K. and Ireland
  - Note the supplier, pricing, include Thema codes
- Also provide metadata to BDS Live (bdslive.com)
- Use CILIP (library professional body) as a resource
  - [www.cilip.org.uk/page/SupplierPartnersDirectory](http://www.cilip.org.uk/page/SupplierPartnersDirectory)
- ProQuest, EBSCO, Ingram, and Gardners are distributors
- U.K. libraries have local budgets and may use local bookshops or specialty suppliers, such as Holts

# Library sales in France

- Critical to get robust metadata into the supply chain via Dilicom, the French clearinghouse
  - PNB (Le Prêt Numérique en Bibliothèque) digital lending service
- Partner with a distributor that sells English language titles in France / the EU
  - Gardners has a distribution center in France ([gardnerseu.com](http://gardnerseu.com))
  - Pollen / OLF are also options; can liaise with Dilicom



# Library sales in France (continued)

- Via PNB, Dilicom also provides metadata to French-speaking Belgium and Switzerland
- In Canada, DeMarque is active in understanding and working with French organizations to sell digital books
- Libraries get their budget from local authorities and may spend at local bookshops or distributors
  - Makes metadata important for discovery

# Library sales in Spain

- DILVE supplies metadata to libraries
  - <https://web.dilve.es/dilve/dilve-para-bibliotecas/>
- Libraries may use local sources to obtain physical books
- Libranda (owned by the same company as DeMarque) can be a resource for digital sales

# Library sales in Germany

- “Due to its history, Germany’s library infrastructure, as its cultural, economic and political set-up in general, is highly devolved.”
- Critical to have a partner for local supply, e.g. Lehmanns
- MVB plays a central role in supply chain management; Libri is a large wholesaler /distributor in the market
- Divibib.com (Digital Virtual Library) can be a resource

# Library sales in the U.S.

- Baker & Taylor, ProQuest, EBSCO and others distribute to libraries; OverDrive and Bibliotheca manage access
- Increasing complexity for lending models
- Experimentation with different ways to sell
  - Bundles (e.g. [readMichigan.org](http://readMichigan.org), a geographic model)
  - Unlimited simultaneous lending
  - Permanent fixed prices
- American Library Association can be a resource

# Library sales in the U.S. (continued)

- Digital lending models a contentious topic for some publishers and libraries
- “Frictionless” lending concerns publishers, who see libraries as a threat to book sales
- “Exorbitant” ebook prices concern libraries, whose budgets are constrained while demand grows
- Mostly a debate between largest publishers and public libraries

# Comparing the various markets

- Central metadata repositories, except the U.S.
- Active national organizations
- U.S., U.K. may be the most innovative / evolved
- Other markets provide significant local control
- In all cases, quality metadata and a reliable partner are often required

# The value of differentiation

- An increasingly crowded marketplace
- Single titles may get lost in the mix
- Bundling, innovative business models can help
- May require development in certain markets
- The U.S. and the U.K. can help test ideas

# Questions for market experts

- How do libraries learn about available ebooks?
- Do publishers market digital books in unique ways?
- Is there a preferred period during which libraries research and order books?
- Are there trends in demand for content from international publishers?
- Are there any common mistakes that publishers make in selling digital books to libraries?



# Questions from Canadian publishers

- How to navigate markets as a small niche publisher?
- Pricing models are of particular interest
- Are libraries using the accessibility metadata available in MARC records?
- How can a publisher increase discoverability, visibility, and digital sales in library markets?
- How do universities or high schools buy ebooks for their students?

# Next steps for this project

- Deepen research in the target markets
- Document the supply chains for discovery and purchase in each market
- Identify other partners of value to Canadian publishers
- Prepare a final report due in March 2024
- Return with a second webinar outlining new findings

# Q&A

Please type your questions in the Q&A panel



# Thank you

Please fill out an evaluation:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BGNW5Z3>



To watch videos of our previous webinars, visit our website:  
<https://www.livrescanadabooks.com/Webinar-Archive/>

Funded by the Government of Canada  
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada

Canada