

Assessing the Impact of Joining *Libraries Very Interested in Sharing*

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BACKGROUND

Interlibrary loan

Get items from other libraries

Interlibrary loan (ILL) is a free service that enables students, faculty, and staff to access items not held at UC Merced Library. Any costs associated with ILL are absorbed by the library but we continuously seek ways to lower these costs. Expenses can include:

- ~ Borrowing fees
- ~ Shipping costs
- ~ Staffing

We participate in a consortium (University of California libraries) that facilitates access at a lower cost but there are still items not available within this consortium. In order to facilitate greater access and lower costs we sought to join another group.

Joining *Libraries Very Interested in Sharing*

On November 2016 we joined Libraries Very Interested in Sharing (LVIS) a group of libraries that are willing to lend to one another for free. There was no cost associated with joining this group as we were already a free lender. However, there was one major issue of concern:

- ~ Would operational lending costs increase and offset any savings found in borrowing?

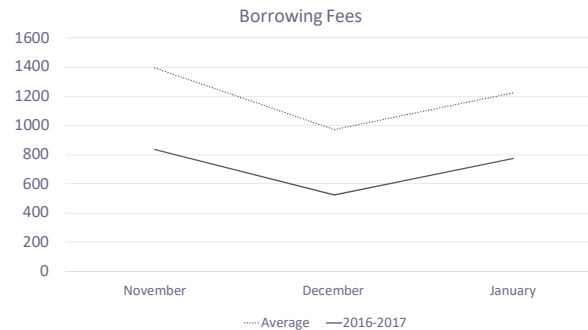
In order to answer this question, the number of requests, FedEx costs, and borrowing fees were tracked between November 2016 to January 2017.



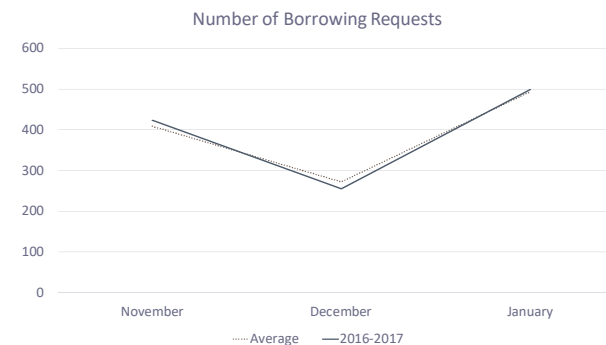
Interlibrary loan hold shelf at UC Merced Library

BORROWING COSTS

UC Merced ILL borrows items from other libraries on behalf of our students, faculty, and staff. Borrowing costs include borrowing fees assessed by the lending library.



After joining LVIS, there was a 68% (about \$1,458) decrease in borrowing fees as compared to the average of the previous two years.



Additionally, the number of borrowing request were gathered to rule out a decrease in borrowing requests as the reason for the decrease in borrowing fees. There was virtually no difference in the number of borrowing requests.

BORROWING & LENDING COSTS

Staffing - The average student hours was 3,110 for the two previous academic years. We are projecting a 1% (about 37 hours) increase for this academic year.

LENDING COSTS

A condition of joining LVIS is to freely lend to other libraries. We were already a free lender however we were concerned about a significant increase in lending requests.



There was a 43% increase in lending requests. To gauge the costs of this increase we gathered the FedEx information below.



There was an 8% (about \$235.25) increase in FedEx costs. However, this increase was minimal compared to savings in borrowing fees.

RESULTS & CONCLUSIONS

Overall, we saved about \$1,223 even with the 43% jump in lending requests. A majority of lending requests were for digital items which can explain the relatively low increase in FedEx costs.

Of course, we still need to monitor both lending and borrowing as this does not include our busiest period of August through October.