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# The Biggest Winner: Using Statistics to Assess the Effectiveness of an E-Resources Promotional Campaign

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The Biggest Winner: Using Statistics to Assess the Effectiveness  
of an E-Resources Promotional Campaign

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### Abstract

In the fall of 2011, librarians at Bowling Green State University were given the opportunity to compete for a \$100 Amazon.com gift card by promoting an underused database. Usage statistics were tracked throughout the semester and compared to those for the same time period from the previous year. Eight of the twelve databases promoted rose in use. This article discusses the project methodology and uses its outcomes to assess the effectiveness of a range of marketing techniques for electronic resources, present hypotheses to account for some declines in usage, and demonstrate the value of distributed, personalized promotion for library resources.

*Keywords:* marketing, e-resources, usage statistics, Summon

### Introduction

Most academic libraries recognize the need to market their collections and services, but struggle with the ongoing demands of creating, implementing, and maintaining a marketing plan. Libraries often lack the personnel and expertise to promote their services effectively (Germano, 2001; Vasileiou & Rowley, 2011), and the pressures of being short-staffed often mean that marketing takes a back seat to instruction, collection development, and other core activities.

One way to respond to these challenges is to leverage promotional activities across positions. However, it is still important to create a plan and coordinate marketing activities so they have coherence, are spaced appropriately and timed to what is happening during the semester, and are integrated into the teaching and learning that occurs in the library. It is also crucial to maintain the motivation and accountability of the group of people involved.

To accomplish these objectives, Bowling Green State University librarians decided to make promoting resources into a game. In the fall of 2011, librarians with public service responsibilities were given the opportunity to compete for a \$100 Amazon.com gift card by choosing and promoting an underused database. Usage statistics were tracked for each resource throughout the semester and compared to that resource's statistics for the same time period from the previous year. The librarian whose resource experienced the biggest percent gain in use was declared the "biggest winner" (a spoof on the NBC reality television competition show *The Biggest Loser™*, in which contestants compete to see who can lose the biggest percentage of their body weight during the course of the show).

BGSU's promoting databases competition was unique not only because it was a game, but because assessment was built in to the project and progress was evaluated throughout. Only some libraries that have promoted their resources and services have had a plan to assess the effectiveness of their marketing strategies. BGSU's study provides data on which to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of a range of marketing tactics for electronic resources. Its outcomes also illustrate the frustrations

inherent in relying on vendor-provided usage statistics to measure the reach of a resource, the power of games to build relationships and increase motivation, and the enduring value of the traditional role of the library liaison.

### **Literature review**

While a number of surveys of library marketing activities have been published, there are fewer studies of marketing e-resources specifically or of libraries using usage statistics or other measurable outcomes to assess the effectiveness of a marketing program. Marketing in libraries has been described as “ad hoc:” normally practiced without strategy and not designed to “achieve specific measurable objectives” (Germano, 2007, p. 6). Thus, as Vasileiou and Rowley concluded in 2011, “Empirical studies on marketing in academic libraries are surprisingly few” (p. 628).

Respondents to a 2011 survey of marketing in academic libraries listed communications (blogs, websites, newsletters), branding, giveaways, orientations, events, displays and exhibits as methods for promoting resources and services, with events being most common (Carter & Seaman, p. 164 & 167). Libraries have also reported using their websites, instruction, and email for promotion; flyers, blogs and bulletins have also been used, but less often (Vasileiou & Rowley, 2011). A few libraries have also used Facebook ads (Alford, 2009; Schoenberg, 2008) to promote databases. Unfortunately, however, many activities librarians have reported as marketing are, as Vasileiou and Rowley say, “part of service delivery and points of customer contact” (p. 636) and not marketing at all: for example, the presence of databases A-Z and databases-by-subject lists on a library’s website or the activity of loading MARC records for ebooks into a library’s catalog (p. 631; Kaur, 2009; Thompson & Schott, 2007; Welch, 2005). Vasileiou and Rowley interviewed 25 academic librarians and found that none of their institutions “had a formalized strategy for the marketing of any e-resources” (p. 630).

Of library resources and services, Kim claims that subscription databases in particular are “underutilized” (2006, p. 1715). Rather than merely providing training and assistance with databases,

librarians also need to provide “support to promote positive beliefs about the utility of the databases” (p. 1725). Wisniewski and Fichter recommend choosing a resource to promote that has broad appeal and crafting a message focused on how it can benefit the user, then looking at usage statistics to gauge effectiveness. “What matters is use,” they write (2007, p. 56).

Some researchers have found that advertising a resource on the library’s home page can lead to an increase in use for that resource (Castaldo, 2008; Ellis, 2004; Leong, 2007). At Purdue, Dugan found that promoting business databases via direct email to faculty led to “an increase in usage ranging from temporary to sustained” for the majority of those that were promoted (2011, p. 168). Woods used both methods at Brock University and assessed her marketing efforts by looking at usage statistics (2007). So did Smith, who promoted databases through direct email, brochures and electronic messages at Adelphi University (2011).

When librarians at Texas A&M felt their collection of NetLibrary ebooks was underused, they partnered with a group of students to implement a marketing plan that used posters and flyers that featured the NetLibrary logo. Statistics showed that use more than tripled that semester and continued to increase in subsequent years (McGeachin & Ramirez, 2005).

Other studies have examined statistics to assess the effectiveness of library promotions for resources and services other than databases. Librarians at San Francisco State University used LibGuides statistics to show that promoting LibGuides increased use of some of the guides, especially those promoted via instruction and direct email (Foster et al, 2010). Texas A&M compared statistics for its virtual reference service to demonstrate the success of its promotional campaign: use of that service increased by 120% over the same period the previous year (Macdonald, van Duinkerken, & Stephens, 2008). Librarians at the University of Northern Iowa examined reference desk, circulation statistics and library instruction attendance statistics before and after implementing a marketing plan at their institution, but found

statistics to be flat or, in the case of the reference desk, still falling, despite their efforts (Neuhaus & Snowden, 2003).

Many libraries sponsor game nights to build community or use games in information literacy instruction (library scavenger hunts, etc.). Others have used them for general library promotion (Jennings & Tvaruzka, 2010; Zitron & Drew, 2011). Fewer have used them to enhance staff activities, though the Appalachian State University library created a game to train staff and student workers for the reference desk (Rice & Gregor, 2010).

### **Methodology**

Researchers recommend that librarians do the following when developing a marketing plan:

- describe target groups
- identify relevant resources and services to promote
- create a marketing plan and calendar or timeline
- define marketing goals that are quantifiable, and set strategies for achieving them
- plan how to monitor outcomes
- assess effectiveness using statistics
- establish sustainable procedures

(Smith, 2011; Wisniewski & Fichter, 2007; Woods, 2007; Woodward, 2009).

Dillon recommends featuring a database on the library homepage, offering training, mentioning it in library publications, communicating directly with key stakeholders about it, highlighting it in library instruction, and using posters and handouts. Users should be able to “easily place [the resource] within their existing mental model of the library,” he writes (2002, p. 121). At BGSU, librarians made an effort to follow all of these recommendations.

All BGSU librarians with public services responsibilities were invited to choose a database to promote in July 2011. To be eligible, the database had to have measureable usage that was compiled according to

the same standards in both Fall 2010 and Fall 2011, could not be a database the library had already chosen to cancel, and had to represent a certain threshold of use compared to other databases supporting the same broad subject area (1% in a category or 500 uses over the past three years). To help them decide, librarians were given a list of eligible databases divided into twelve different subject categories that included their usage statistics and percent change in use for the previous three fiscal years.

Twelve different databases were chosen for promotion by fifteen participants: eleven individual librarians (including the author) and one team of two librarians and two staff members. The resources chosen are listed in Table 1. The participants reported choosing the resources they did for a variety of reasons, including the fact that they were local paid subscriptions, that their low use might result in future cancellation, or because their interdisciplinarity might give them lots of opportunity to use them with students. The choices made reflected the librarians' passion about their disciplines but also a desire to ultimately win the competition.

Each participant met with the author and another public services staff member to establish a promotional plan for his or her chosen database. Together, this group brainstormed potential target audiences and methods of promotion and developed a calendar for promotion that included dates for the database to be featured on the library's home page and digital sign, timed to a relevant assignment or campus event when possible.

The participants ended up using thirteen different promotional methods, the most common of which were offering instruction or training on the resource (either in course-related sessions or special workshops), featuring the resource in a visual ad on the library's home page (called a "rotator"), and featuring the resource on the library's blog. All promotional methods are listed in Table 2; these also included:

- Posters and signs hung in the library and around campus



- Using the databases with patrons at the reference desk
- Flyers/handouts
- Featuring the database in a LibGuide
- Giving away promotional items at the reference desk and in instruction sessions. Librarians both contacted vendors for materials (pens, brochures) and made their own giveaways (magnets and bookmarks). Several vendors were quite generous with their response to this request, including Thomson Reuters, ProQuest, and ARTstor.
- Creating in-library displays like bulletin boards and tabletents
- Direct email to faculty or graduate students
- Internal marketing to fellow librarians (this is a strategy Vasileiou and Rowley (2011) recommend and which Kennedy (2011) organized her project participants to do).

Nearly all the website ads and blog posts were created and posted by the author, as were the posters, flyers and handouts. Vendor-supplied customizable materials were used as templates when available and appropriate (for example, the posters for American Periodicals Series Online and the bookmarks for DRAM); when not, the author used vendor-supplied imagery or appropriately credited open-source or Creative Commons-licensed images. Most often, the same imagery was used on all promotional materials and all were released simultaneously in order to create brand recognition in the target audience, as Mathews suggests (2009). Posters and flyers were hung outside of the library where members of the target audience were likely to see them: for example, DRAM posters were hung in the Music Building and CLCD posters in the Education Building. The database and/or vendor logo was featured prominently on all print and digital visual promotional materials, and the text included a bit.ly url that took users to a blog post or (less often) the database itself. Bit.ly urls were chosen because they are short and customizable and because bit.ly provides usage statistics.

At the beginning of the project, the author created a wiki where she posted each database's historical usage statistics, the promotional plan agreed upon for the database, and links to any promotional materials available from the vendors. Each month of the five-month project, she updated each database's wiki page with its latest use statistics and percent change in use so participants could monitor their standing in the competition. She also emailed these statistics to all the participants. By keeping people informed of their status and continually communicating about the project, she was able to maintain enthusiasm among the participants.

### **A Note on Statistics**

Available measures of use included COUNTER searches, sessions, and full-text downloads as well as non-COUNTER equivalents such as accesses and streams. Because use was not being compared across resources (but across time for the same resource), it was not important that uses for the different resources be equivalent to each other. To calculate each resource's percent change in use, all usage counts for each database from August through December 2011 were added together and compared to the sum of the same counts for August through December 2010.

One problem throughout the project was the unreliability of obtaining statistics for certain databases. The COUNTER standard specifies not only which uses should be counted and how, but also when and how they must be made available (Shepherd, 2004). Therefore providing regular status updates for databases from COUNTER-compliant vendors was easy to accomplish. But many vendors still do not provide COUNTER-compliant statistics: approximately 1/3 of all BGSU databases in 2011 fell into this category, including six of the databases in the project. Two of these databases' vendors only provided statistics by request, and replies to requests for statistics were not always prompt. One vendor's statistical software was non-functional for most of the project, while two provided statistics that were inaccurate (though one was able to eventually provide corrected statistics). These anomalies made it impossible to provide accurate status updates through the project, and at least one participant

reported being so discouraged by the (incorrect) numbers that she did not work as hard to promote her database as she might have otherwise.

Another problem with the statistics was that of artificial inflation of the number of searches and sessions for databases searchable simultaneously on a given platform. In Fall 2011, BGSU subscribed to 56 databases on the EBSCO platform. When a patron chose to search all of them at once (by checking “choose all” in the platform’s “select databases” option), searches and sessions were tallied for each database on the platform, even though not all of those uses represented intentional choices that could provide meaningful results for the user. BGSU estimates that as many as 16,000 searches and 4,000 sessions are added to each EBSCO database annually as a result of this bump. This inaccuracy was meaningful during the project because it affected EBSCO databases’ percent of use in their subject categories and the perception of whether they were underused or not.

Therefore, the author filtered out the bump for each month by subtracting the number of searches and sessions of BGSU’s lowest-use EBSCO database (usually the French-language business periodicals database *Vente et Gestion*) from the use of each other EBSCO database, then adding a percentage of that number back based on each database’s share of the total use of the platform (about 70% for the multidisciplinary Academic Search Complete but less than 1% for most subject-specific resources). This calculation was made for EBSCO searches and sessions for 2010, 2011 and 2012.

### **Results**

Eight of the twelve databases in the project rose in use, some by triple-digit percentages.

To determine whether these gains were really a result of the librarians’ promotional efforts, the author compared change in use of the databases that were promoted to those that were not. Again, only counts that could be compared accurately across both semesters were analyzed. The results were startling: 77 of these had risen in use and, as a group, use of the 150 databases not included in the promotional project rose by 10%. What could account for such a change?

In August 2011, at the same time the promoting databases project began, the library also went live with the discovery layer Summon and made a Summon search box the default search on the library's home page. Implementing Summon can make database and e-journal usage statistics rise, particularly COUNTER-compliant sessions and full-text downloads for some resources (Way, 2010; Fry, 2013). Therefore, in order to gauge the true effectiveness of the promotional methods employed at BGSU in Fall 2011, it was necessary to isolate the effect of Summon on all of the library's database use statistics and adjust the review of the numbers accordingly.

How might Summon impact database use? Each library's implementation of Summon searches an index based on that library's active collections in the Serials Solutions global knowledgebase. The library's selections in the knowledgebase inform Serials Solutions which journals its users can access and in which databases. If those journals' publishers have agreed to be Summon partners, users will find articles from those journals in the results of their Summon searches and be able to link to those articles in the library's databases or e-journal subscriptions (Vaughan, 2011). Therefore, while searches in Summon don't impact any database usage statistics (because these users are searching the Summon index and not in a database itself), if a user clicks on an article and links to its citation, abstract, and/or full text in a database, that click will register as a session and possibly a full-text download in that database's usage statistics.

Summon can only impact the usage statistics of an individual database *if* a user can click through to it from Summon. At the time of the project, almost none of the library's multimedia databases or index-only databases could see any rise in use from the implementation of Summon (the biggest exception to this being the database Web of Science, which was, from the first, included in the Summon index despite the fact that it does not contain any full text). Because the Summon index is built from agreements with publishers and not by coverage of databases, usage of some full-text databases would

also not rise after Summon implementation simply because their content was not part of the Summon index.

To determine if each of the library's database's usage statistics could rise as a result of users clicking through to its content from Summon, the author used Serials Solutions' "Key Databases and Packages" list<sup>1</sup> and tested specific titles in Summon to see if a Summon search could result in a clickthrough to a specific database. Some were easy to categorize (for example, at the time of the study, it was clear that no user could begin a search in Summon and end up in the databases ARTstor, CLCD, or DRAM), but others were more difficult (American Periodicals Series Online, despite being a product of Serials Solutions' parent company, a full-text database, and a database designated as 100% included on the key databases and packages spreadsheet, was classified, after testing, as not available in Summon). The 162 databases whose statistics were analyzed for this article can, therefore, be put into four categories:

- Group A –databases whose content was accessible from Summon and which were not included in the promotional project (51 resources);
- Group B – databases whose content was not accessible from Summon and which were not included the promotional project (98 resources);
- Group C – databases whose content was accessible from Summon and which were included in the promotional project (5);
- Group D – databases whose content was not accessible from Summon and which were included in the promotional project (7).

The total use for the databases in each category and the category's percent change in use are shown in Table 3.

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<sup>1</sup> This list is produced by Serials Solutions and continually updated; previous versions are not available. A version originally downloaded in 2011 along with title testing done in 2011 and early 2012 was used to determine databases' Summon availability for the purposes of this article. In June 2013, the most recent version of the Key Databases & Packages list could be found at <http://www.serialssolutions.com/en/resources/detail/summon-key-databases-and-packages-full-text>, but this version does not reflect Summon coverage at the time of the project.

As a group, use of the library's databases in Group A rose by 13% between Fall 2010 and Fall 2011. It is possible, then, to attribute any gains in use of the databases in Group C that exceed 13% to the library's promotional efforts for that database. Westlaw Campus Research, Environment Complete and Web of Science fall into this category.

The databases in the project whose use could not have been impacted by the library's implementation of Summon (Group D) had both much more significant gains and much greater losses than those in Group C. Three of these databases experienced the three greatest percent gains in use of any promoted in Fall 2011: GeoRef, American Periodicals Series Online, and CLCD. The fact that use of the library's databases whose content was not accessible through Summon fell by 2% overall (Group B) makes these three databases' gains even more striking.

What, then, were the most and least successful strategies for promoting databases, as measurable by actual patron use?

#### **Winning Strategy: Contacting Faculty**

Two participants decided to focus on promoting their databases to faculty contacts, and these databases (GeoRef and Westlaw Campus Research) experienced gains in use far above average: 226% and 78%. In fact, Ed Weiland, who, as of Fall 2011, had been a science librarian at BGSU for over 20 years, chose to use no other promotional method for GeoRef. After the competition was over, he explained that faculty in his departments familiar with his communication style knew he only contacted them when something was "really important," so when he warned them that the core database in their subject area had been threatened with cancellation and the library was examining usage statistics for it, they were concerned enough to make an effort to use it.

Linda Rich felt that contacting faculty was the only viable strategy for Westlaw Campus Research, because there is no law school or pre-law program at BGSU and legal studies classes are scattered across

different schools and departments. This made her target audience harder to reach with posters hung around campus or through library instruction.

Despite the fact that ARTstor experienced an overall drop in use in Fall 2011, it showed a gain during the month of November, during which the author met with the School of Art's faculty liaison and spoke with her about ARTstor's falling use.

These results provide powerful validation of the role of individual relationships between subject librarians and faculty liaisons as well as the importance of faculty relationships to maintaining the use of library collections.

#### **Winning Strategy: Saturating a Service Point**

The BGSU Curriculum Resource Center, as a branch library, was in a position to marshal every part of its library to promote the Children's Literature Comprehensive Database, and nearly doubled use of that resource during the project. All four full-time employees (Linda Kramer, Jennifer Nyiri, Vicki Seifert and Kathy Yoder) worked together to promote the database from their reference desk and in instruction sessions. They positioned tabletop signs near all their public computers, assembled a bulletin board, and put a button linking directly to the database on their homepage. At the reference desk, they set up a candy jar of giant Now & Later™ candies with a sign that said, "Try Children's Literature Comprehensive Database NOW – you will thank us LATER" and allowed patrons who tried the resource to take a piece of candy. When they told their student workers that both the student worker and the patron could take a piece of candy if the patron used the database, they saw an even greater rate of increase, because their student staff were more motivated to promote the database as well.

#### **Winning Strategy: Teaching Through Active Learning**

Rob Snyder, whose database American Periodicals Series Online experienced a 187% rise in use, had become the instruction liaison for the Journalism program shortly before the project began. He had already scheduled instruction sessions early in the semester with three sections of a History of

Journalism class, whose assignment involved using 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century American newspapers and magazines over the course of the semester, and therefore chose a database that could be used with those classes. American Periodicals Series Online immediately showed triple-digit percentage gains, and use remained strong through November.

Rather than merely demonstrating the database, Rob designed in-class activities in which each student actually connected to and completed searches in it. In the past, the databases OregonPDF and Gale Literature Resource Center have more than doubled in use after being taught to classes by librarian Amy Fyn, who is now the instruction coordinator at Coastal Carolina University. She also used instruction to promote Web of Science in Fall 2011, which rose in use by 15%.

### **Why Did Some Databases Fall in Use?**

Just as it is important to think about which promotional strategies were successful, it is also important to think about what might prevent use of a database from growing. Four databases fell in use despite being promoted – Passport GMID, ProQuest Congressional, DRAM (a streaming audio database), and ARTstor. Why? While many factors can affect use, the following are worth considering.

**Barriers to use.** Users of Passport GMID had to click through the database's license agreement before they saw a search box and content, while ARTstor required users to create a personal account within the database before they could download images. Both scenarios are potentially off-putting to users, who, when presented with a barrier like a click-through license or additional login, may abandon the resource for one that is more accessible. "When multiple information sources are available," Kim wrote, "perceived accessibility will exert an influence on a user's choice of information sources" (2006, p. 1719). Users who have already logged in with campus credentials because they are accessing the database through a proxy server may not have understood they needed to set up a personal account in the database, and ARTstor's interface did not make it clear how to do this or why. BGSU saw a similar effect on use when the chemistry database SciFinder began requiring users to create a personal account



in its system for access in 2010. Annual accesses of SciFinder at BGSU dropped over 60% between 2009-10 and 2011-12, despite the fact that the database became accessible from more locations.

**Name changes.** Two databases that fell in use experienced name changes between Fall 2010 and Fall 2011: GMID became Passport GMID and LexisNexis Congressional became ProQuest Congressional. While the library makes an effort to cross-list databases under their former names, it is possible that name changes confuse users and affect use. Usability testing of BGSU's database webpages (A-Z and database-by-subject lists) completed in 2010 showed that users tended to look for and choose familiar resources by name on the library's website (Fry & Rich, 2011).

**Unreliability.** DRAM, which appeared to fall in use (though it was also affected by statistical problems), may have also had its use affected by the fact that it was unavailable for a week during the second month of the project due to technical difficulties. In a world where web users increasingly experience and expect seamless connectivity, library systems and resources lag woefully behind commercial search engines and websites, plagued by failed links, poor interoperability, inadequately applied standards, and warring proprietary platforms. Despite patchwork homegrown solutions and workarounds, library online resources remain somewhat unreliable, and impatient users may turn elsewhere for their information needs. This is an industry-wide problem.

**Type of content.** Of the four databases that fell in use, three were perhaps also affected by the fact that the kind of material they provide – streaming audio, images, and government data – is more frequently and easily found elsewhere online than through library databases.

Mi suggests that “libraries are not under-valued but they may be over-priced in terms of the cost in time and effort to use them” (2006, p. 416). After applying the Technology Acceptance Model on user acceptance of library databases, Kim concluded that “simplifying the login procedure to access each subscription database” is necessary and important to aid acceptance (2006, p. 1725).

### **The Value of Decentralized Promotion**

BGSU's project supports the idea that individualized promotion and personalized outreach may actually be more effective at producing the desired outcome of promotion – in this case, increased use of a resource by patrons – than traditional advertising. While the author coordinated certain promotional activities, like hanging posters and flyers and placing each featured database on the library's home page, few of these activities can be tied back to a quantifiable impact on use for each resource. The bit.ly urls on the posters got almost no use – the highest-use bit.ly url was the one for CLCD, which received seven uses. The data shows that users did click on the rotator ads: each rotator connected users to the blog post promoting that database (with the exception of ProQuest Congressional), and each database's blog post received the vast majority of its hits while its rotator was featured on the library's home page, making it likely that the rotators were noticed by users. However, even though each blog post included a link to the resource record, Table 4 shows that few connections to any of the databases' resource records were referred by blogs.bgsu.edu, and not many clicks to the resource records occurred during the dates the rotators were live, suggesting that the ads did not, in and of themselves, often lead to actual use of the resources.

The exception to this is Project MUSE. The rotator for Project MUSE, which was featured on the library's website during week 13 of BGSU's 16-week semester, used the tagline, "Tight deadline? Try Project MUSE!" Over half of the hits on the Project MUSE resource record occurred during the dates this ad appeared on the home page, and a high percentage of hits on the resource record during Fall 2011 were referred by blogs.bgsu.edu.

The message on this ad was meant to appeal to users' immediate needs. Getting sources for an assignment with a fast-approaching due date is a common need at that time of the semester. By contrast, many of the other rotators' messages merely described the resource or encouraged a target audience to explore it – suggesting the resource's usefulness rather than relating its utility for a specific task.

BGSU's experience with the Project MUSE rotator supports Spalding and Wang's assertion that "carefully analyzing what personal benefit that is important to the user would be gained by use of a library service and explaining the service in terms that capture the user's motivation will result in the most successful marketing of the service and the greatest benefit to the user" (2006, p. 501). Kim says "the user's positive beliefs about usefulness are key to their acceptance of an information system" (1724): in other words, it's better to get someone to believe something will be useful and relevant to the job at hand than that it is easy to use.

### **Where Are They Now?**

Did the project have any lasting effects on database use? Vendor changes, changes to how statistics are calculated, and changes in Summon availability make it impossible to know for sure. Table 5 shows that only three of the winning databases continued to rise in use in 2012, but one, GeoRef, became available through the popular EBSCO platform and another, American Periodicals Series Online, became discoverable in Summon; both of these changes would be expected to boost use in and of themselves. In the absence of promotion, two databases that saw large gains in use during Fall 2011, Westlaw Campus Research and CLCD, experienced significant drops in Fall 2012, but not quite to former levels. Changes to the Summon interface meant that clicks that had been routed directly to Web of Science in Fall 2011 were redirected to the library's openURL results page in Fall 2012, and the gains Web of Science saw during the project evaporated. ARTstor changed its method for calculating usage statistics in Fall 2012, making these statistics incomparable to those from the past. Passport GMID and ProQuest Congressional statistics continued to fall in 2012, and ProQuest Congressional's rising cost-per-use led the library to cancel its subscription to this database in Spring 2013.

### **Conclusion**

While many factors can impact the use of resources, examining usage statistics closely remains a meaningful way to assess the effectiveness of marketing and promotional activities. At BGSU, e-resource

usage statistics showed that, though traditional marketing activities like web advertisements, posters and displays can have value, teaching using active learning and communicating with faculty are more effective ways for academic libraries to increase the use of electronic resources. These and other personalized activities carried out by subject librarians had the greatest impact on database use, supporting a decentralized approach to marketing. While a calendar and marketing plan are necessary for successful promotions, it is also crucial to create accountability and foster collaboration, something BGSU's approach also helped to achieve. By distributing marketing activities across many individuals in the library and demonstrating their effectiveness using actual usage statistics, BGSU's project further demonstrates how libraries can increase staff acceptance of the idea that promoting library resources and services is important, impactful, and everyone's responsibility.

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