

# ERM Use Case - Managing 'conditions of access'

Developed with University of Wolverhampton (11 January 2011)

## Generic Description – UC4 + UC11 - “Subscription to a new e-journal – finalise license” and “Move to e-only”

The library needs to be able to record and easily retrieve the “conditions of access” associated with each resource. While this will mainly refer to information contained in the license, there may be related information such as cost of offering access to specific sets of users, definitions of terms such as ‘authorised users’ and other information that forms part of the contract.

## 1 – Use Case Description – What happens?

**Activity** – As electronic resources are acquired and managed by the institution the related contractual, financial and license agreements also need to be managed, and form part of the agreement between the institution and the supplier as to the conditions of access around the resource. Although the institution acknowledges the importance of the details of the agreement, from a customer service perspective the priority is to get access to the resource, leading the recording and management of agreements to take second place. However, at any point the institution may need to answer questions around these conditions of access, whether this is who is allowed to use the resource; what restrictions are in place on specific types of use; what access rights are post cancellation; or knowing if the institution is actually getting access to the resource as specified by the agreement.

**Volumes** – The volume of data relates to the total number of agreements in place around access to resources, which will be roughly equal to the number of licenses. This number will not increase rapidly. Currently around 160 databases subscribed to, so will be of this order of magnitude. A small number of resources may account for a disproportionate number of agreements as all titles in a large package may be covered by a single agreement.

The volume data is a key aspect of this use case. Data related to individual resources or titles can be handled on an individual basis, but this mechanism fails when you need to answer questions for a whole range of resources. Examples might include moving all print titles to electronic provision, or know what the overseas access is available for all subscribed resources.

**Actors** – While those involved in negotiating and managing conditions of access are within the library, the implications of such agreements affect the whole organization:

- ARLs (Academic Resource Librarians) are responsible for selecting resources (in cooperation with the Schools)
- The Hybrid Collections Team are responsible for recording and managing conditions of access
- Library Help desk staff may receive enquiries about use of the resource by specific users or for specific purposes
- Teaching staff may need to know whether resource can be used in specific ways (e.g. included in their online teaching material in the VLE)
- Senior staff in the library may need to answer questions regarding overall use and availability of resources

- Senior staff in the institution need to be aware of cost (in terms of price and staff time) of institutional strategy. For example, a move to offer courses to students based in Hong Kong may require renegotiation of agreements.

**Data involved** – The agreements that operate as regards to electronic resources can be seen as the sum of a number of transactions, financial and legal, between the institution and the supplier of the resource. Typically this will include license terms; financial information e.g. cost of going e-only, how much to do something like offer access to non-UK students; the contents of the resource; post-cancellation access or other aspects of long-term sustainability. Some aspects of the agreement may be ‘unwritten’, although tacitly agreed. Any changes to any aspect of these agreements also need to be recorded. In some cases changes will be made as part of the renewal of a resource, while in other cases changes may just be made by the supplier, often without any notification to the institution.

**Workflows** – Whether recording the initial agreement, or answering questions about existing agreements, the current workflows require multiple sources to be consulted, many of which are hard copy. To answer a single (often simple) question about conditions of access to a resource may require retrieving licenses from filing cabinets and reviewing, looking for information in spreadsheets, and contacting suppliers, agents, publishers.

**Current Examples** – The types of question that the library may need to answer as regards conditions of access to a resource range from:

- Can we include items from this resource in our virtual learning environment?
- Can we offer access to this resource to non-UK resident students?
- What will be the financial implications of moving a resource to e-only from an existing print or print+electronic subscription?

## 2 – Motivation – What are the pain points?

**What are the current problems** – There are simply too many sources to consult to answer simple questions about agreements relating to resources.

**Efficiency assessment** – The number of sources that need to be consulted, and the fact that several of these are still hard copy and cannot be queried quickly and easily make this very inefficient currently.

**Economy assessment** - Better efficiency would save money; having information relating to agreements easily available might enable the library to do better deals with suppliers and make the right decisions about titles on an economic basis.

**Effectiveness assessment** - Having information relating to agreements easily available might facilitate the institution exploiting resources more effectively. For example the library could start promoting resources for specific purposes (allowed by the agreements) or indicate where something can be used (e.g. by franchise institutions or overseas students).

## 3 – Intended Benefits – What is the business case?

**Library Service** – Efficiency gains; allow staff to spend time exploiting the data rather than simply managing data; spend less time maintaining the status quo; become proactive; enable strategic planning.

**Users** – For corporate users of the library (e.g. institutional management) delivers real benefits as it supports efficient decision making.

**Suppliers** – Less enquiries - don't need to repeat query on the same points; Knowledge of what libraries are planning is a form of market intelligence; Less inadvertent misuse by library.

#### 4 – Consequences of doing it 'above campus'

**The proposition** – A data "factory in the cloud". A service/store for recording relevant data in one place that would be Authoritative, Reliable, Robust and Consistent. This service would offer the ability to fine-tune data for local views (but still store data in the cloud). Local download of data could be offered for further manipulation or integration with local data sources.

**What will happen?** - Central service will hold common (cross-institutional) data and allow institutions to record (and share as appropriate) other relevant information

**Potential Risks** – Will only record generic information, that isn't specific enough to cover real life license conditions; scope too large; might be a great tool that costs too much.

**Potential Opportunities** – Centralised, cross-supplier, data store can help negotiation on specific conditions (supplier X already offers this); Combination with other relevant information at an above campus level (e.g. usage data) can provide data for strategic decision making.

**Consequences of not doing it** – Transformation inhibited; Need resources that can be delivered anytime anywhere; Dependent on 'library resources' as part of delivery - will be buying stuff in - so licensing this is crucial; About the control of license information for strategic decision making - lack of this mean strategic decision making suffers. Scale is problem - there is no chance of solving this by hand. New services inhibited because of time spent on these issues; Threat to library if it doesn't offer new services, or meet strategic targets.

#### 5 – Implementation Pointers

**Mechanism** – Data to be stored in 'Factory in the Cloud'. Shared data allows for provision of Authoritative, Consistent, Robust and Reliable data at a single point. Shared data/service to allow data to be easily queried, and some local refinement of data. Aim locally to spend less time 'managing' the data and more time exploiting it.

**Inputs & Outputs** – Inputs would be a variety of information from licenses, coverage (what resources are included in agreement), financial information. Outputs would relate to being able to view information on demand, with local refinements where necessary. A proposed 'dashboard' view for easy to read summary relating to resources. Also ability to download data for local manipulation/storage when necessary.

**Standards & Protocols** – Onix for licenses is probably a key standard, at least for indicating the structured information that needs to be recorded even if not used directly. COUNTER and SUSHI would be relevant if usage statistics also desired.

**Existing systems** – Spreadsheets; 'Knowledgebase' from Link Resolver, Federated Search, and Library portal/gateway systems; Manual filing systems; LMS (for recording orders and invoices, and some expenditure tracking); institutional finance system.

**Staffing** - No extra local staffing, aim to reduce local staffing (or staff time) spent on managing data (entering, retrieving). Local effort would be focussed on interpreting and making best use of data.

## **6 – Challenges & Costs – Direct and indirect**

**Set up and Transition** – This will require a minimum of a database, permissions, data entry forms, review / reporting and export capability. Possible to consider storage of usage data alongside other data. Would need to have both shared data (common to many sites) and local data (unique to specific institution).

**Ongoing** - Cost of maintaining centralised/above campus data store - requires recording on licensing arrangements, and ongoing dialogue with publishers, agents and others in the supply chain as well as institutions.