Analysing value for money of journal bundle deals at the University of Strathclyde

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Session outline

- Why did we embark on this project?
- How did we decide what to do?
- What have we done?
- What are the outcomes so far?
- What are our next steps?
- Q&A

Background

- Little subscription analysis done previously
- Journals collections growing static
- New procedure developed
  - 5 year rolling cost-per-use analysis
  - Tracking trends in usage and cost-per-use analysis
- Flaws highlighted
  - No usage data for print titles
  - No comparable data for databases
  - Not directly applicable to bundle deals

Research / Literature Review

- Literature search done in 2 main databases
  - Library and Information Science Abstracts (LISA)
  - Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA)
- 38 articles read in total
- Not overly useful ☹
  - Generally lacking clarity on techniques used

Research / Literature Review

- Two interesting points to work with
  - Highlighting titles which are high, medium or low usage within the collections helpful
    - No real information on how usage bands were agreed upon
  - Formula to calculate actual cost of a title within a bundle
    - Super-useful!
    - Jurczyk, E. and Jacobs, P. (2014) 'What's the Big Deal? Collection Evaluation at the National Level'. Portal : Libraries and the Academy, 14 (4), pp. 617-631.

What are we trying to achieve?

- Crucial Questions:
  - How can we gather accurate and meaningful information to support informed decision making about our e-journal deals?
  - Can we develop a process which is **manageable** – which can realistically be embedded into the annual workflow with the staffing we have?
  - Can we apply a consistent one size fits all approach?

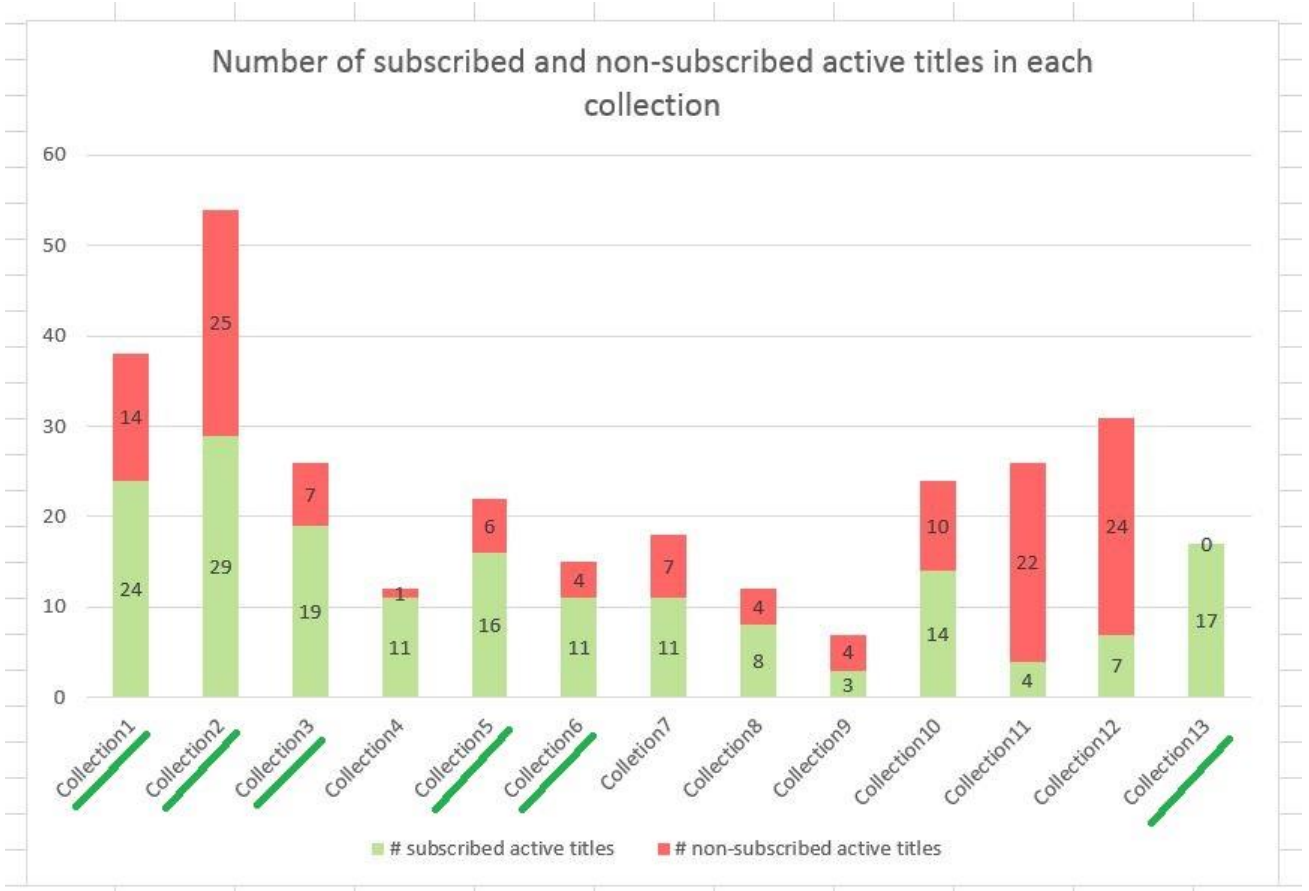
- Work in progress:
  - This presentation is about the process we are trying to develop, rather than the value of the deals themselves.

Publisher 1 - approach

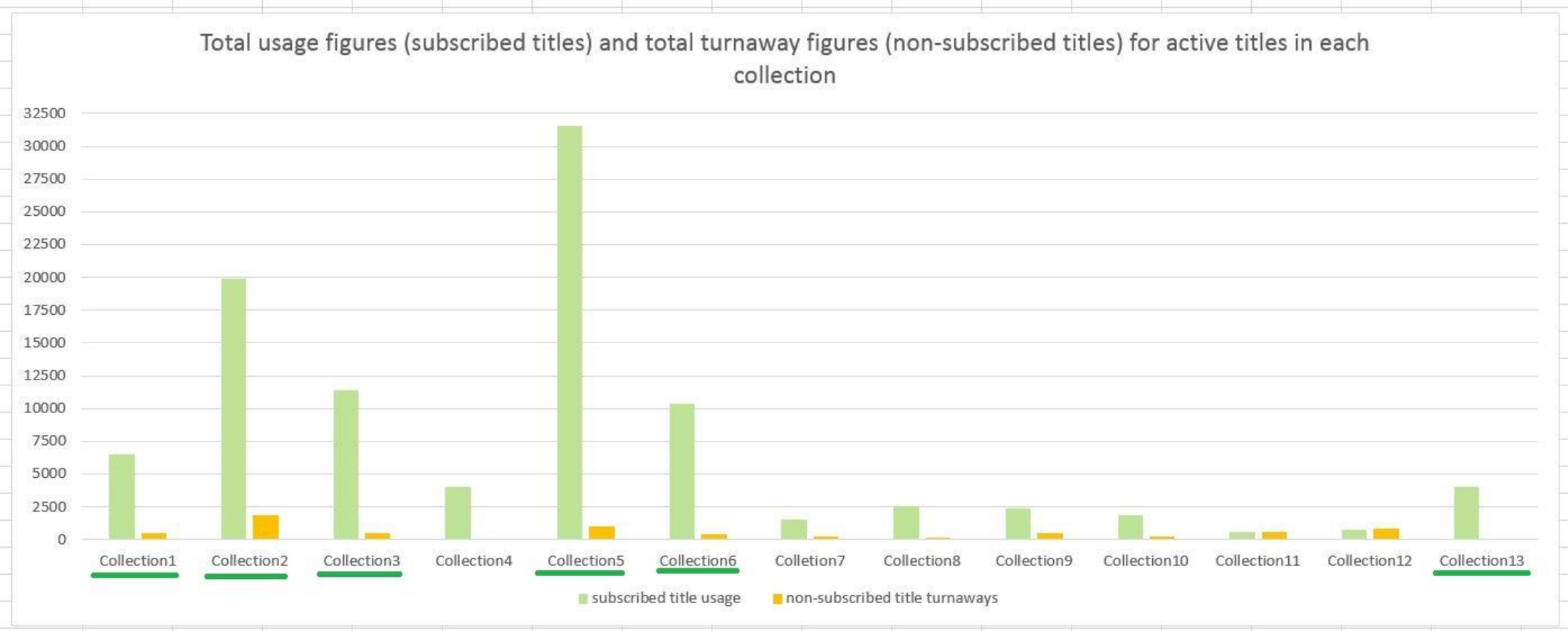
- Early attempt at analysis (pre-literature review)
- 174 subscribed titles
- Publisher model changed. Collection we took discontinued; smaller subject bundles now on offer. We could afford 6 subject collections.

- Analysis
  - Publisher's title list of titles within each subject collection (excel spreadsheet); title list exported from Alma to indicate titles within our current deal; usage figures (JR1 minus JR1a and GOA) and turnaway statistics from JUSP.
  - Consolidated data from different lists using excel VLOOKUP.
  - Wanted to present **accessible** information as well as the raw data.
  - Focussed on usage only rather than cost per use.

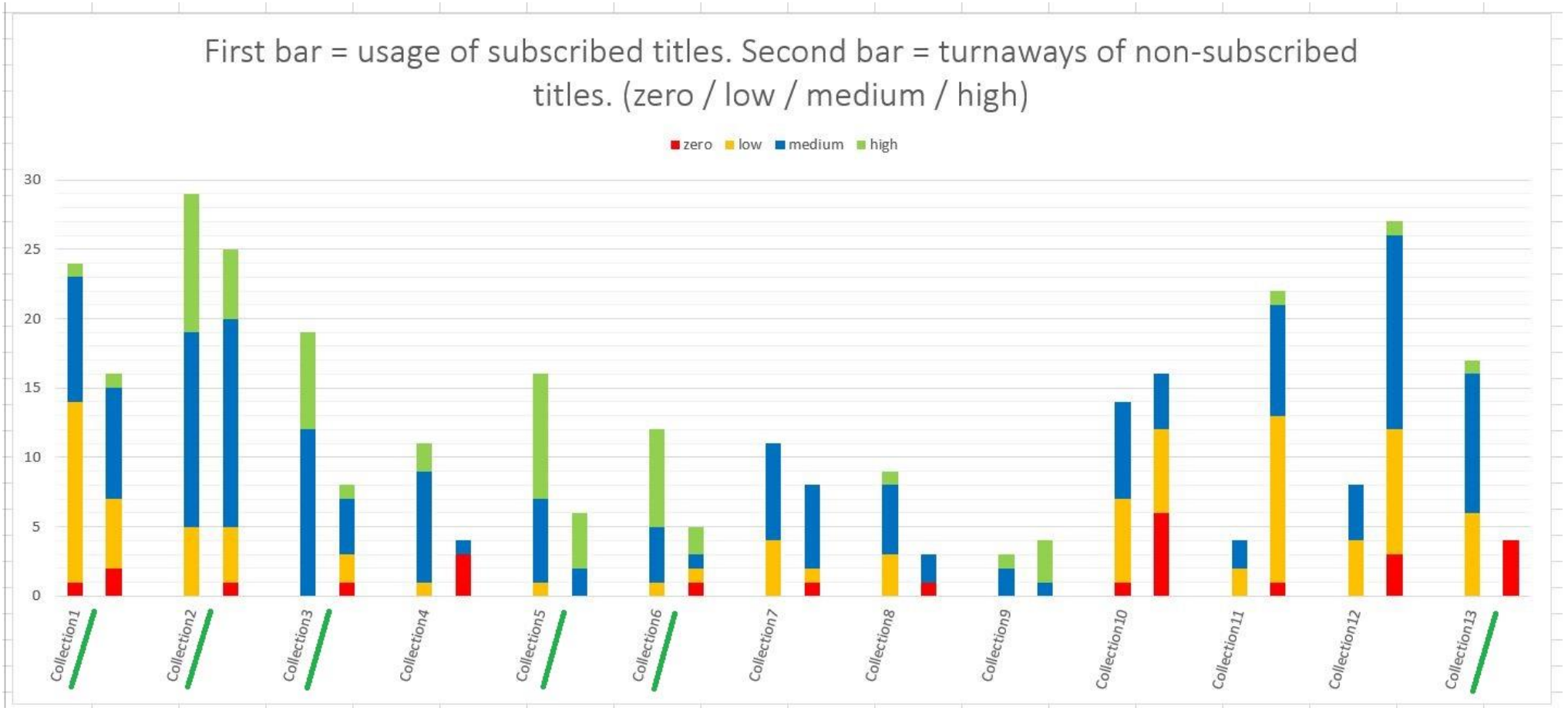
Publisher 1 – subscribed and non-subscribed titles in each collection



Publisher 1 – usage and turnaway statistics



Publisher 1 – low/medium/high usage and turnaways



Usage
LOW 1-99
MED 100-699
HIGH 700 and above

Turnaways
LOW 1-19
MED 20-99
HIGH 100 and above

Publisher 1 – stumbling blocks and outcomes

- Stumbling blocks
  - Why is VLOOKUP not working? Formatting / hidden characters copied over from publisher's spreadsheet – clean all this away before working with the data.
  - Titles not activated in Alma and therefore missing from the catalogue – impact on both analysis and discovery/usage
  - How do you categorize high, medium and low usage thresholds?

- Outcomes
  - Subscribed to 6 bundles, plus 15 individual subscriptions.
  - Positive feedback from Faculty Librarians about this approach to analysis.
  - This analysis aimed to give accessible overview of usage and demand within subject collections – cost per use not included.
  - Achievable scale – one day's uninterrupted work (NB relevant factors – small deal; consistent information and metadata from this publisher; did not include pricing in this analysis).

Publisher 2 - approach

- Deal:
  - 1787 titles – 266 core titles; 1521 collection titles
  - Deal terms: core title prices based on capped yearly % increase on list price; pay additional fee to access bundled 'collection' titles.

- Approach
  - Serials team applied same process they use to provide stats and cost per use for individual journal titles (using Microsoft Access to combine separate spreadsheets with titles, pricing and usage info)
    - Title list (held by serials team)
    - Usage stats from JUSP (JR1 minus JR1a + GOA)
    - 2017 list prices from publisher

- Challenges when working with deals vs individual subscriptions
  - More titles, more changes – harder to keep track
  - More data sources – more scope for metadata mismatches and problems with excel matching
  - Determining pricing for bundled titles within a deal

‘The Formula’

NB – VAT (+20%) included at every stage

- Core titles
  - Capped % increase as per terms of deal
  - Serials team provided both list price (non-deal price) and price we paid via deal

- Formula to calculate ‘notional deal price’ for individual collection titles:
  - Take the sum total of the list prices for the bundled collection titles
  - Take the price we actually paid for the collection bundle

- Notional deal price for each collection title:

$$\boldsymbol{NOTIONAL\ DEAL\ PRICE} = \frac{\boldsymbol{TITLE\ LIST\ PRICE}}{\boldsymbol{SUM\ OF\ LIST\ PRICES}} \times \boldsymbol{OUR\ TOTAL\ COLLECTION\ BUNDLE\ PRICE}$$

Publisher 2

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Titles	Core or Collection title	Print ISSN	Online ISSN	2017 Online list Price incl. VAT	2017 deal price (for Core titles = capped price ; for collection titles = formula price)	2017 Usage - JR1-JR1+GOA	Cost per use [JR1-JR1a+GOA] with non-deal price	Cost per use [JR1-JR1a+GOA] with deal price
38	Publisher2 Journal 0152	Core		0000-0000	£2,497.20	£2,286.29	725	£3.44	£3.15
39	Publisher2 Journal 1787	Collection	0000-000X	0000-0001	£178.80	£2.34	711	£0.25	£0.00
40	Publisher2 Journal 0212	Core		0000-0002	£1,263.60	£1,248.73	707	£1.79	£1.77
41	Publisher2 Journal 1702	Collection	0000-00XX	0000-0003	£2,136.00	£27.92	674	£3.17	£0.04
42	Publisher2 Journal 0266	Core		0000-0004	£0.00	£3,751.06	664	£0.00	£5.65
43	Publisher2 Journal 0211	Core		0000-0005	£1,180.80	£1,166.39	657	£1.80	£1.78
44	Publisher2 Journal 0258	Core		0000-0006	£300.00	£266.09	639	£0.47	£0.42
45	Publisher2 Journal 0208	Core		0000-0007	£1,138.80	£1,112.15	625	£1.82	£1.78
46	Publisher2 Journal 0236	Core		0000-0008	£666.00	£651.01	620	£1.07	£1.05
47	Publisher2 Journal 0191	Core		0000-0009	£1,298.40	£1,267.15	612	£2.12	£2.07

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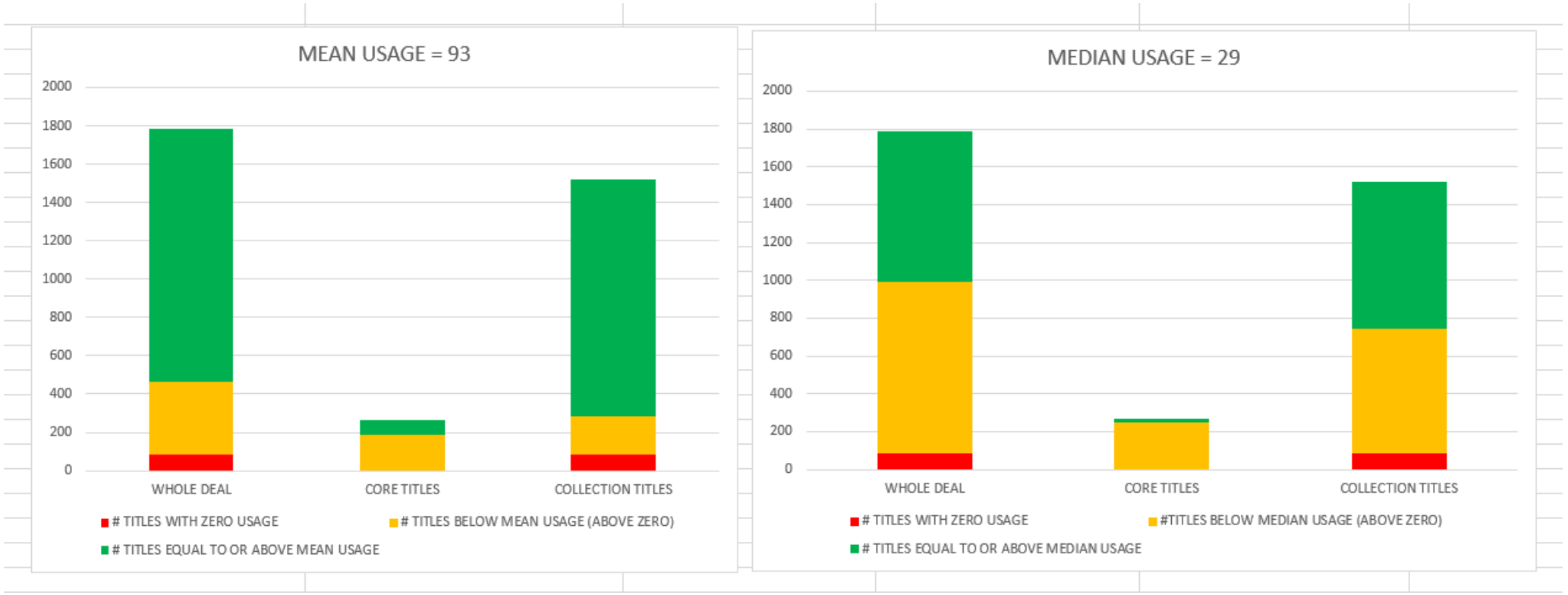
	MEAN PRICE (ALL TITLES)	MEAN CPU (ALL TITLES)
DEAL	£160.63	£2.05
NON-DEAL	£925.57	£59.28

Publisher 2 [average usage – mean vs median]



Mean = sum of all the values in the set, divided by the number of values in the set

Median = the middle point of the values (half will be above and half below)

Challenges and queries

- Challenges - at best these are a delay and a nuisance, in the worst case scenario they can severely skew the figures and analysis:
  - Incorrect or missing information and metadata (ISSN / pricing / usage / inaccurate title lists)
  - Format of publishers' list prices – PDFs; excel formatting; presentation of pricing for different countries/sizes of institution; handling of package/combination titles
  - Consolidating data from different sources (Print or eISSN being used)

- Queries:
  - How to define 'high', 'medium' and 'low' usage/turnaways
  - Which usage statistics to use? We used JR1 minus JR1a+GOA to reflect paid for current content – is this the best approach? For non-JUSP publishers, additional effort to calculate.
  - If titles do not appear in usage statistics does this equal zero usage?
  - Obtaining title lists and list pricing for previous years can be difficult, making any retrospective analysis a challenge. What information do we want to collect in preparation?

Next steps

- Continue looking at the queries that have been raised throughout the project.
- Review our various analysis projects with other Acquisitions staff and Faculty Librarians to see which elements we think are useful or unnecessary to pursue.
- Discuss with serials team to gauge what could realistically be absorbed into their workflow.
- Repeat for a BIG publisher and monitor timescales more closely.
- Consider whether any of the data gathering is work we would want to, or could, ask publishers to compile for us rather than trying to title lists, list prices, and usage statistics in-house.
- Start using SUSHI harvesting of usage statistics into Alma (this will free up staff time currently spent gathering statistics).

Questions & Answers

- Any questions?
- Or (preferably) any fantastic answers to the questions we have raised, or suggestions on a better way to do this?

Contact Details

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