Unsub CASE STUDY - State University of New York (SUNY) Driving $7 Million In Savings

? Situation:

With increasing budgetary pressures and the overall need to better understand journal usage and spend there is a drive to re-assess the Big Deals that have traditionally been purchased by Universities and Colleges around the world. SUNY is no exception. As a bit of background, the State University of New York is the largest comprehensive university system in the United States. SUNY has 64 institutions, including research universities, academic medical centers, liberal arts colleges, community colleges, colleges of technology and an online learning network. They serve nearly 1.3 million students, including nearly 600,000 in credit bearing courses and programs and more than 700,000 through continuing education and community outreach programs.

The Challenge:

SUNY is looking to reduce budgets across the board and journal access budgets are no exception. The cuts this year need to be deep as Covid has created a huge level of financial insecurity in the market. The big question is how do you reduce your Big Deal spend and minimize the impact on students and researchers at SUNY?

⚙ Solution:

Unsub! The Unsub solution has been designed to assist institutions like SUNY in their quest to right size their journal subscription budget. The solution provides a new way to organize, assess and forecast your journal subscription needs allowing for both a consorital/group view and individualized view per institution. Unsub helps institutions and consorita forecast, explore, and optimize their costs and fulfillment rates for academic journal subscriptions.

Key aspects of the solution:

Centralized data dashboard - get all the data you need, in one place. Upload your COUNTER JR1s (by institution) and we take care of the rest...for every journal, we gather citations and authorship from your faculty, OA percentages, ILL requests, backfile, a-la-carte pricing, APC and more. Setup takes just a few hours.

Key aspects of the solution:

Consortial & Individual institution access – At a centralized or consortial level all the data and statistics of participating institutions can be used to run analytics and forecasts. In addition, each individual institution that has a license can also upload their own data, manipulate it and identify the best scenario for them.

5 year forecasting – Confidently predict your costs and fulfillment in different cancellation scenarios going out 5 years, and find the best value for you. Our forecasting model is trained on data from thousands of universities, then customized using your unique data. Using Unsub you can predict the results of cancellation and subscription over the next five years.

Customizable scenario modeling - Try out different assumptions to compare best- and worst-case scenarios...everything in the model can be modified, from per-transaction ILL costs, to exclusion of subtypes of Open Access. This can be done at a consortial and individual institutional level.

Graphical representations - Communicate your message to peers and senior managers using our PowerPoint-ready graphics and stats to help you share an optimistic, well-researched message to campus stakeholders.

Tracks citations and authorships from your institutions to journals - So you can see not just what journals faculty are reading, but what journals they are citing and where they are publishing.

Understanding the effect of Open Access (OA) on usage - In many cases, you can cancel a journal but still fulfill most user requests by sending users to OA copies of articles in that journal. This makes cancellation much more attractive, and Unsub integrates this data into our model.

Tracking OA articles written in a wide variety of languages including English, French, German, Spanish, Arabic – We track anything with a Crossref DOI. This means we track OA for over 110M articles in all different languages.

Results:

Leveraging Unsub, SUNY was able to renegotiate their $9 million annual Big Deal with Elsevier with full financial transparency down to $2 million per year, saving $7,000,000 per year. This new deal sees SUNY reduce their Elsevier ScienceDirect journal subscriptions from 2200 to 248.

Quote: "Unsub is a game changer …and I don't think I am the only one who thinks that" (source: Mark McBride, SUNY's library senior strategist, (www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/07/tool-savings-universities-millions-dollars-journal-subscriptions))

More information about Unsub, including a walkthrough video, can be found on our website, https://unsub.org

Sources:
https://library.buffalo.edu/news/2020/04/07/suny-negotiates-new-modified-agreement-with-elsevier/
www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/07/tool-savings-universities-millions-dollars-journal-subscriptions