

Why DDA is Here to Stay: An Analysis of the Demand-Driven Acquisition Model for Libraries

*Most libraries use it – and many who don't are considering it.
We explore why DDA continues to gain traction in the academic community.*



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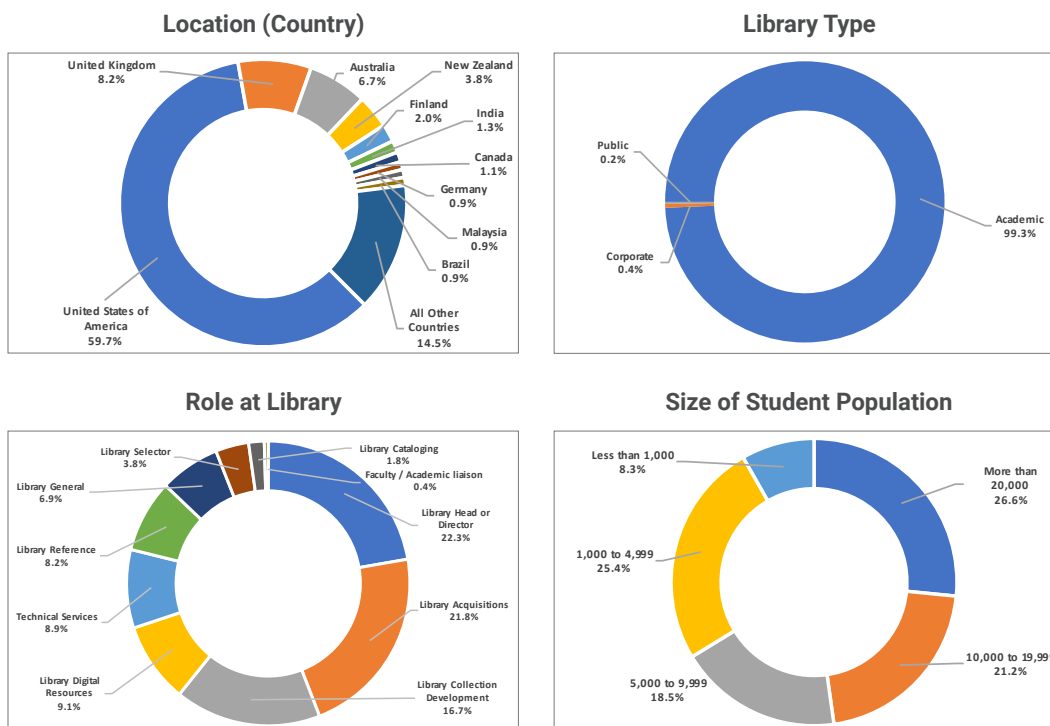
It's virtually impossible for any library to provide access to every book in the universe, even with a large budget.

Still, all libraries share the same mission – to build collections that meet the needs of as many users as possible. Today, libraries are working towards this goal by using a variety of flexible acquisition models that go far beyond simple title-by-title purchase.

This paper explores one of those models, commonly known as **Demand-Driven Acquisition (DDA)**. ProQuest has been offering DDA for ebooks since 2006, and we take a keen interest in how DDA resonates in the industry. From late 2017 through early 2018, we conducted extensive quantitative and qualitative market research on DDA, including an online survey and a series of recorded interviews.

In total, ProQuest received input from 449 librarians around the world. More than 99 percent of respondents work at academic libraries, hailing from institutions large (20,000+ students) and small (less than 1,000 students). Based on our analysis of the research, this paper delves into how DDA is being applied in today's libraries, its return on investment, and its overall long-term sustainability.

Respondent Demographics



The Benefits of DDA

DDA, also called Patron-Driven Acquisition (PDA), allows libraries to make acquisitions that are triggered by patron usage and demand, ensuring budgets are applied toward materials that are used. It's based on just-in-time inventory management: when a patron uses a title in a meaningful way (extended browse, download or print), the library receives a trigger notification to loan or purchase the book.

Libraries can set their own rules for DDA. They have ultimate control over which titles are included in their DDA pools, or they can choose to use mediation, ensuring their staff is ultimately responsible for approving all acquisition decisions. Additionally, they can control spending by implementing price limits for short-term loans and purchases, and by using automatic budget tracking to prevent overspending. And DDA isn't a one-size-fits-all model – it continues to evolve to improve its flexibility and value, and comes in several different flavors, including:

- **Conventional DDA**, where triggers lead to a purchase
- **Short Term Loan (STL)**, where triggers lead to a loan
- **Access to Own (ATO)**, where triggers lead to loans that are applied to the purchase price.

ATO, launched by ProQuest in 2016, enables libraries to grow their ebook collections by applying spend on loans toward perpetual purchases, so libraries grow their owned ebook collections while simultaneously broadening access. ATO also brings back frontlist content that may have been previously embargoed from short-term loans.

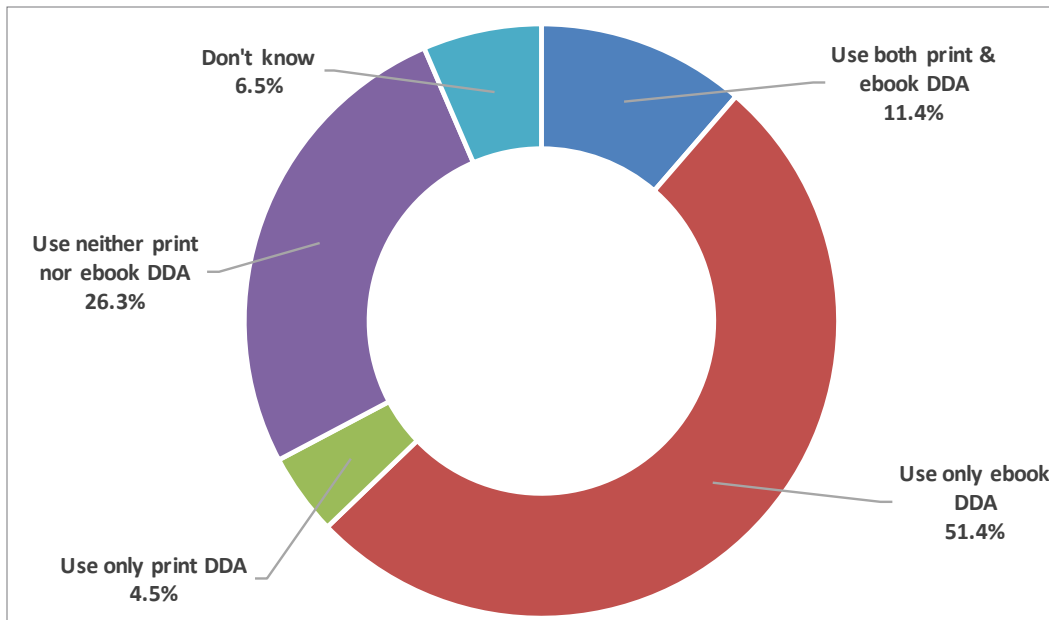
DDA is Important to Libraries; Many Use it Alongside Other Acquisition Models

DDA has been available since ProQuest launched the model in 2006, and today, most vendors offer it as an ebook acquisition option. Of nearly 450 librarians surveyed, a significant majority (63 percent) use DDA for ebook purchases, while 16 percent use DDA for print book purchases.

“DDA is our main collection tool... we're letting our users decide what it is our collection needs to be because they're the ones who use it and know what they require.”

- Arlene O'Sullivan,
Manager, Collections
& Access, La Trobe
University Library

Library's Use of Print and/or Ebook DDA as Part of Book Purchasing Program



When evaluating DDA alongside other acquisition models, DDA was the clear winner in frequency – given nine different acquisition models to choose from, more than 92 percent of respondents said that DDA was the acquisition model that their library used the most often for ebooks.

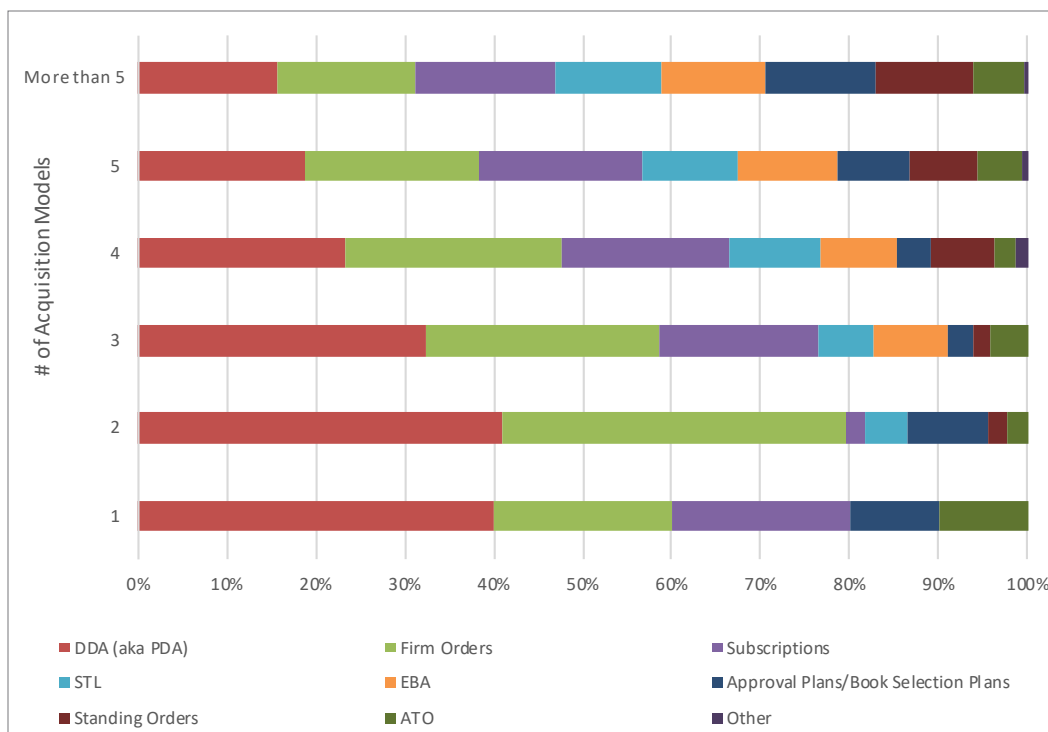
Further, 93 percent of respondents said that their library uses multiple acquisition models to obtain ebooks, with 35 percent reporting that they use four or more models. This is a significant increase from ProQuest's 2016 Global Purchasing Trends survey, where 70 percent of libraries reported relying on multiple acquisition models with 15 percent relying on four or more models.

"We have a wide range of acquisition models that we use... each have unique benefits that combine to make our collection building nimble and beneficial to our users," said one survey respondent. "The different models of acquisition are like pillars for our collection, so I can't see removing one as the whole thing could fall down."

92%

librarians surveyed who said DDA is the ebook acquisition model their library uses most

Acquisition Models Libraries Use to Obtain Ebooks (Type and Number)



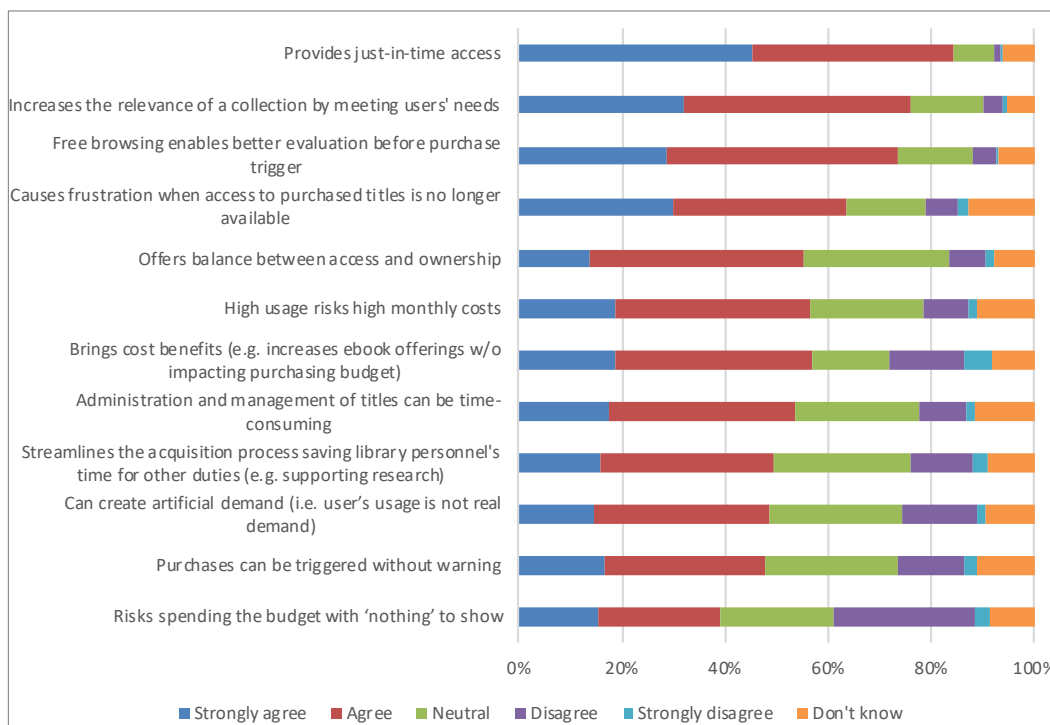
Who Isn't Using DDA – And Why Many are Considering the Switch

Less than 30 percent of libraries reported they aren't using DDA for ebooks. Those libraries cited budget pressures, that DDA "does not meet our needs" and that they use an "alternative process/model" for purchasing as the key reasons for not using DDA. "We don't see a need," said one librarian, who ran a pilot DDA project that had very low use. "Also, we do not have the staff (time or expertise) to manage maintaining catalog records for large ebook packages." Another stated, "With a small book budget, there has not been a need to add new forms of acquisition. Faculty request enough titles that we spend our entire budget."

However, several libraries surveyed are considering adding DDA to their collection development strategy. Nine percent of free-text respondents indicated that their libraries may make the move to DDA, including one librarian, who said "We're considering moving further away from title-by-title purchases and setting up further DDA profiles to reduce the number of ebook purchases which are never accessed by our users."

Across all survey respondents, perceptions of DDA were positive, particularly related to DDA's ability to provide just-in time access, to increase the relevance of a collection by meeting users' needs, and to provide better evaluation before purchase trigger.

Agreement or Disagreement with Perception Statements on DDA



DDA Saves Costs Through Usage-Based Purchasing

Arlene O’Sullivan, Collections & Access Manager at La Trobe University Library in Australia, reported that 100 percent of her library’s DDA-acquired content was being used, while only 20 percent of what librarians had selected was being used. And Tony Davies, Deputy Director, Library Services at Swinburne University of Technology in Australia, said that usage trends for aggregator journal databases were flat to declining, while ebook usage had grown 700 percent. But are these trends unique?

When asked to evaluate statements on DDA, 41 percent of librarians said that DDA enabled them to develop a relevant, practical collection that meets users’ needs, while 36 percent said this was likely true. Overall, it appears that librarians perceive DDA to be essential in developing a high-quality collection that’s used by as many patrons as possible. Some librarians even set up their DDA plans to pinpoint very specific needs: “[We are] adding a DDA plan for ebooks in the health sciences, because we are adding new programs and most of the students do not live on campus,” said one respondent.

Alison Neil, Associate Director Electronic Resources at the University of New South Wales Library, described how she conducted a title-matching exercise with ProQuest a few years ago to determine how many of their print books could be purchased as ebooks to avoid duplication and gather metrics. Ultimately, her library decided to move about 30,000 print titles over to DDA, increasing their DDA-available titles exponentially. Now that these print titles are also available in ebook format, library staff can accurately identify which are being used by patrons.

“Whereas we were getting purchases of about 5 to 10 DDA titles a week, we’re now seeing something like about 100 a week,” she said. “So, people are actually using the service, which we’re quite pleased about because again we’re choosing what people need.”

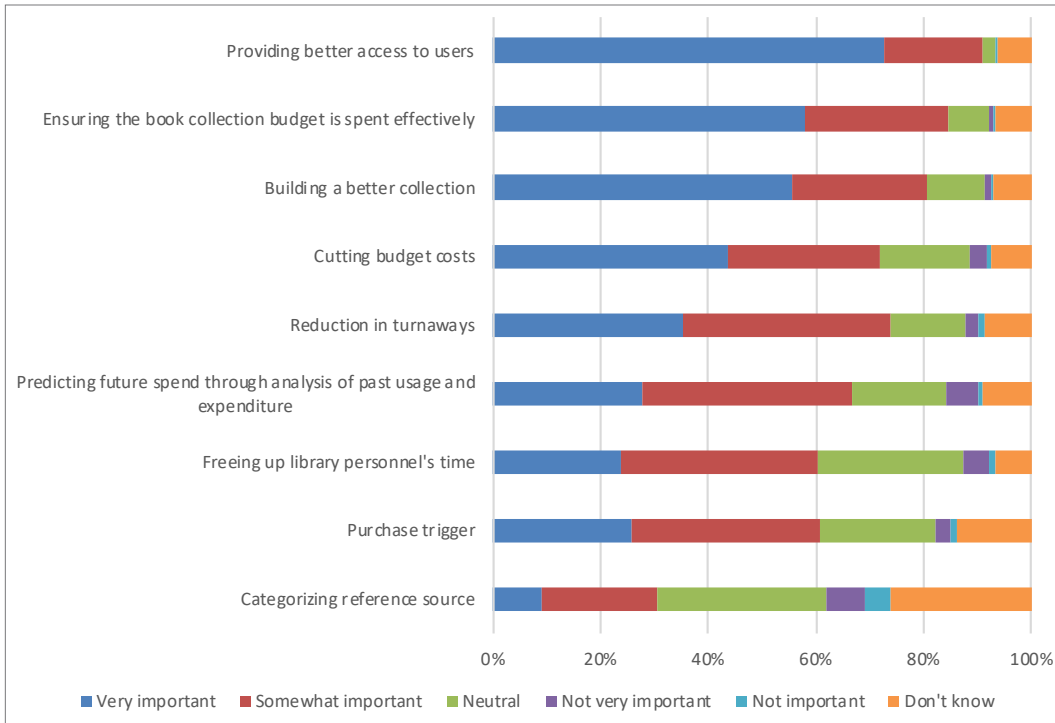
Budget, Improved Access Used to Evaluate DDA’s Success

How are libraries determining whether DDA is working? Most respondents ranked better access to users as “very important” when measuring the success of the DDA model, followed by ensuring the budget is spent effectively. One survey respondent said, “We have compared usage/ expenditures of DDA purchases and short-term loans with past spending and usage patterns. So far, we have found that while spending is slightly increased, usage has been greatly increased.”

“Using DDA allows us to understand patron needs more directly, which means we are spending our funds on content that better fills their needs and that is ultimately what is important.”

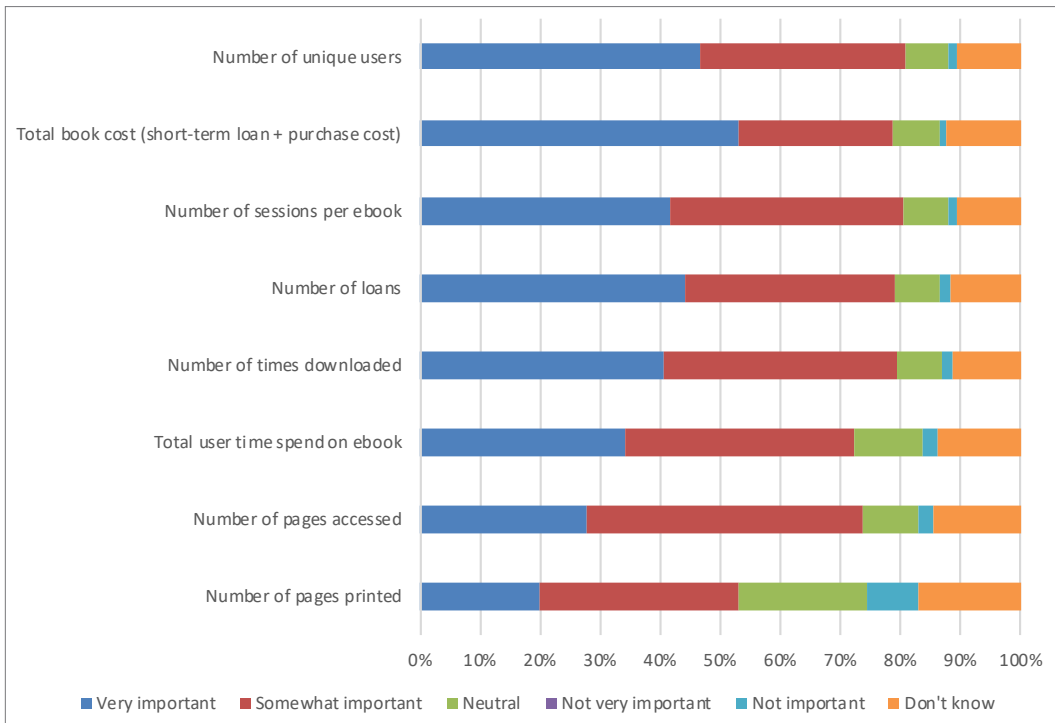
- Elizabeth Mengel,
Associate Director of
Library Services, Scholarly
Resources & Special
Collections, Libraries
Johns Hopkins University

Evaluating DDA Success: The Most Important Criteria



More than half of respondents indicated that they monitor and track DDA spend using reports from their book vendor. Others review invoices, use data in the administration model, and regularly check purchases against account balance.

Evaluating DDA Success: The Importance of Usage Elements



Evaluating DDA Success: What Methods of Monitoring and Tracking Do Libraries Use?

Expenditure reports from vendor	56%
Review invoices	44%
Data in administration module	42%
Regular checks of purchases against account balance	37%
Checking usage vs. spend	37%
Accounting reports	36%
Other	19%

Elizabeth Mengel, Associate Director of Library Services for Scholarly Resources and Special Collections at Johns Hopkins University, said DDA provides her organization with more detailed information and data about how and what users need. “This then allows us to look at our collection development policies and plans,” she said, “and fine tune them in ways that we were unable to do prior to having DDA.”

Tony Davies explained how he tracks usage of owned books in his school’s DDA program. Initially, his library owned about 8 percent of their 260,000 to 280,000 available ebooks. In the first three years of using DDA, usage of owned books increased to 25-30 percent, but what surprised him that this figure kept increasing over time, and today stands at about 85 percent.

DDA Responds to Librarian and Patron Needs

DDA plays a significant role in maximizing budgets by enabling libraries to offer the broadest selection of titles to users, with every purchase tied directly to usage thereby reducing spend on underused resources. This highly efficient model improves libraries' overall return on investment.

As DDA continues to gain traction, many tools and services have been added to provide librarians with more control over their DDA programs – including price limits, limits per patron, and librarian mediation. In addition, libraries can track their DDA spend to the dollar with real-time expenditure reports, budget tracking and customizable alerts, combined with granular usage reports.

DDA has also evolved into new, related acquisition models to improve its flexibility and value. For example, ATO, launched by ProQuest in 2016, enables libraries to access frontlist titles at an initial cost below list price and grow their ebook collections by applying loan spending toward perpetual purchases, so libraries grow their owned ebook collections rather than just spending money on access.

Together, these usage-driven tools help libraries to respond to the constantly changing needs of their patrons.

ProQuest is committed to DDA to ensure every reader has a book – and every book has a reader. New to DDA? For more information, contact your ProQuest representative or visit proquest.com/go/ebooks.

