
Document Delivery Service

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Enhancing faculty research with same-day book and article delivery.

Why document delivery?*

The harried professor drew a large red circle around the citation. Right on the mark, he thought. A colleague in Virginia had published the article, one very closely related to his own work. He looked at his watch. An advisee was due in three minutes, his class in eighteen minutes, and no time to go to the library. Calmly, Professor Smith picked up his phone and called the Document Delivery phone number. At the tone, because Paul was making prints from microfiche on another floor, Smith read his citation, gave his name and department, and hung up. The advisee rapped on his door.

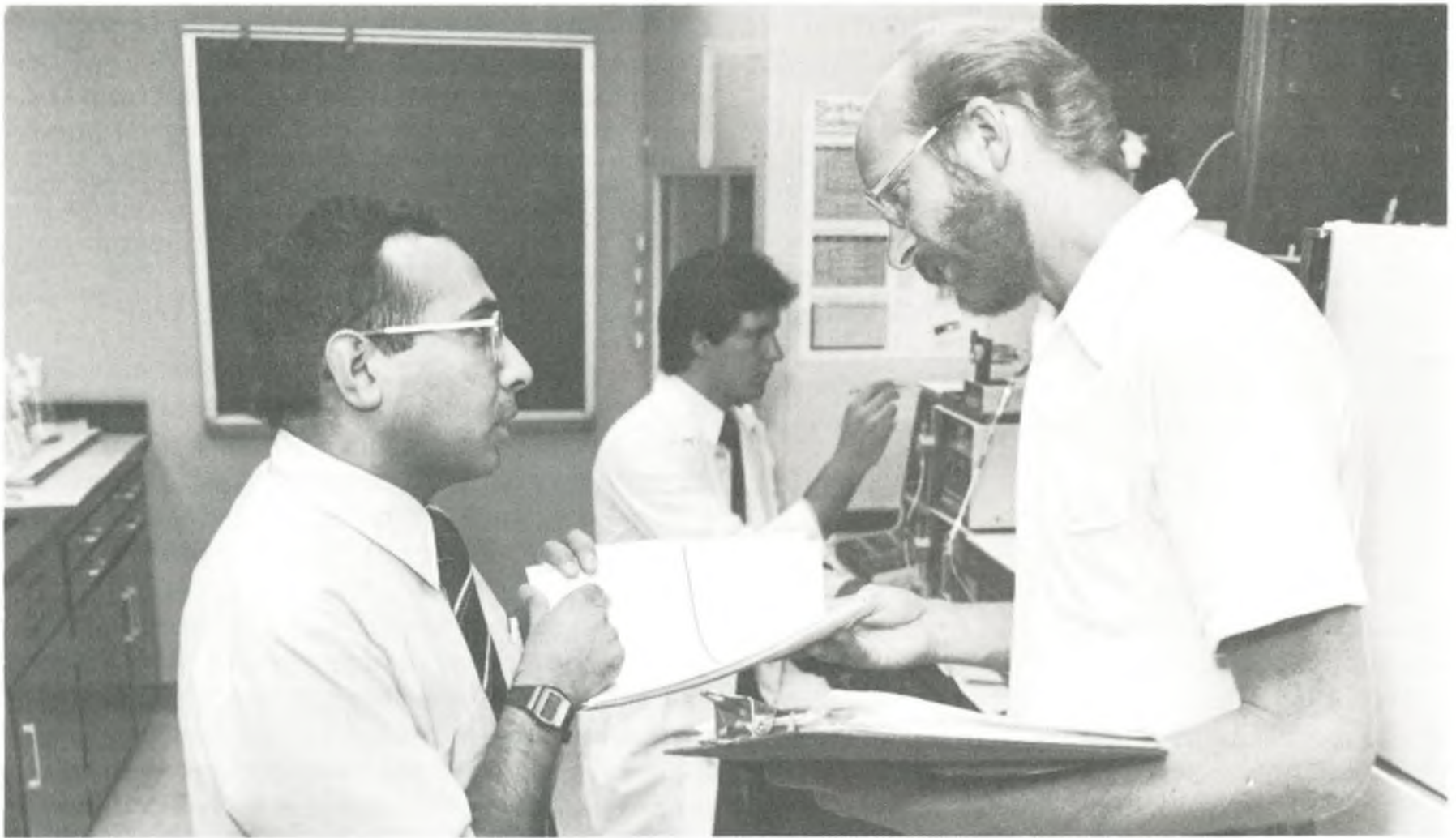
Turning off the microfiche reader/printer, Paul went back to his desk. After transcribing his phone messages and picking up more requests in the office mail, Paul set about organizing his day's work. First he went to the online catalog and LINX (automated serials control system) for his monograph and serial call numbers—the easy ones first. They would be dealt with quickly. For other requests, containing incomplete citations, the detective work began. Because Paul has had experience in

searching a wide range of bibliographic tools, as well as the University Libraries' collection, he is an unusually successful sleuth. If there are errors in citations, such as incorrect journal title abbreviations, he checks *Periodical Title Abbreviations*, or *Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory* may be consulted to verify the existence of a cited journal. If there are book titles to locate, he checks the *National Union Catalog* to verify bibliographic information. Requests for items not found to be owned by the UW Libraries are returned to the faculty members who may request that items be obtained through ILL.

Back at the desk he finds more requests. Three requests were referred to Document Delivery from Interlibrary Loan. The requests were for materials already owned by UW Libraries and located by ILL staff. The items had not been found by the requestors and delivering these surprises is often very interesting. Faculty members are appreciative but sometimes sheepish because they typically resign themselves to a two or three week wait for ILL requests. They recognize the value of persons who really know how to search out citations.

Paul takes the retrieved material and checks it out on the requesting faculty member's card. Duplicate library cards for some faculty members (those who have given written permission) are held by the Document Delivery staff, but no circulation policies are circumvented by the service. Periodical articles are found and photocopied and Paul loads his backpack and heads for the Science Library,

*"Document delivery" may be defined in several ways. It is used to describe how Interlibrary Loan provides materials to users. It is often associated with the delivery of documents electronically. "Document delivery" is also used to describe a service designed to place materials in users' hands without requiring that they visit the library. "Document delivery" in this article refers to the latter definition.



Ray Baweja (left) of the University of Wyoming's Pharmacy Department and co-author Paul D. Dickey (right) discuss the importance of the Document Delivery Service to Dr. Baweja's cancer research. (Credit: Joe Locurto)

then the Geology Library, and sometimes the Rocky Mountain Herbarium. Articles and books from the William Robertson Coe Library (Document Delivery headquarters) are delivered to departmental offices on the way or, if out of the way, held for delivery later in the day. Materials are retrieved at the Science Library, checked out or photocopied and it's time to deliver again. Materials are even delivered to offices in the same buildings as the Science and Geology Libraries or by van to several sites which are 3–4 miles from campus. Generally, all requests received by noon are delivered the same day. There are no restrictions on the number of items requested, although delivery of longer lists is delayed by a day or two.

When the round of deliveries is completed, it's time to record the requests on the microcomputer. Records are kept with PFS:File and PFS:Report and printouts are prepared for monthly reports. Number of books loaned, articles and pages copied, faculty served by department, and turnaround time are recorded. The data collected is useful in analyzing use and evaluating the service. Requests are received daily by phone, delivered in person by faculty members, or received through campus mail—and the service is provided completely without charge to faculty or departments.

How is it funded? Entirely by indirect cost funds allocated by the University's Research and Graduate Studies Office. Staffing is provided by one full-time staff member and some part-time hours worked by a skilled ILL employee.

Finished with three advisees, a class, a lab, and a committee meeting, the tired Professor Smith checks his mailbox. There, along with a larger than

usual assortment of notices and memoranda, is the article by a colleague in Virginia whose work is potentially the missing piece to years of research. The article had been tracked down (one of the easy ones), photocopied, and delivered while Smith was busy with other matters.

Is Document Delivery useful? Ask Dr. Smith and a large number of his colleagues on campus at the University of Wyoming. Is it used? During the first four months of operation, faculty in twenty-nine departments received 2,814 articles (13,769 pages) and 71 books.

The Service, in its pilot stage, was announced to a limited number of departments in order for the Libraries to work out the bugs. Word-of-mouth has extended knowledge of the service to more faculty and a major publicity campaign took place this autumn. It is expected that more faculty will take advantage of the service. Faculty members are still encouraged to come to the Libraries but, as Dr. Smith can attest, Document Delivery hits the spot.

The Service was first considered by the Libraries during the summer of 1985. After lengthy discussions in the Libraries and on campus about the importance of the libraries to research, a convincing argument was made for the Libraries to receive indirect cost funds generated by research grants. Because of the impact on collections and staff, the Libraries received an allocation of approximately \$20,000. Alternatives for using the funding, such as subsidizing database searches and purchasing highly specialized materials were considered, but the decision was made that the expenditure of those funds had to make a noticeable difference to researchers. A plain and good-old-fashioned-shoe-

leather document delivery service was thought to make the most directly identifiable impact on research faculty and planning proceeded in September.

With the idea of a "shoe-leather" service in mind, related literature was reviewed and ideas gathered from colleagues within the Libraries and elsewhere around the country. A preliminary budget and an implementation strategy were prepared and approved by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies. From the beginning of discussions about the value of the Libraries and the need for funding, the following steps were taken to implement the service:

Activity

January 1984–May 1985: Presented a sound argument that the Libraries should receive indirect cost funds.

May 1985: Received notice that the Libraries would receive indirect cost funds in the amount of 1% of the sum received by the University.

Explored alternatives for the expenditure of indirect cost funds.

September 1985: Decided to establish a document delivery service.

October 1985: Developed budget.

Wrote job description.

Contacted the Research Office to determine which departments had grants.

Investigated copier rental.

Completed position description questionnaire for University Personnel Services.

Ordered office equipment and supplies.

Developed document delivery policies.

Developed document delivery procedures.

Developed document delivery forms.

Developed publicity aimed at specific departments.

Worked with circulation department heads to develop checkout procedures.

Developed record-keeping system.

Worked with Audio Visual Services to schedule the use of their delivery van.

Investigated full-text databases.

November 1985: Sent letter describing the proposed service and brief questionnaire to all vice presidents and deans, and to faculty in selected departments.

Installed phone line and answering machine.

Obtained needed office equipment and supplies.

Projected earliest hire date: November 14.

January–March 1986: Sent letter announcing availability of service to all who received the first letter.

Monitored the number of requests, evaluated and changed procedures as needed.

Provided service to any faculty member who requested service.

Depending on the demand: *Heavy usage:* Re-evaluate staffing levels; add part-time if possible. *Moderate usage:* Increase the number of depart-

ments served; letter to departmental faculty. (Note: Because demand was judged to be moderate, plans were made to expand the service and begin a publicity campaign. Part-time staff from ILL were called on as needed.) *Low usage:* Launch publicity campaign (Campus News Service).

April–May 1986: Evaluated the service and reported to the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies.

Established plan for new academic year.

In an effort to both inform and gather advice on the proposed service, 114 administrators and faculty in eighteen departments (primarily the sciences because those departments generate the most indirect cost funds) were sent brief questionnaires in November (Figure 1). Survey results demonstrated that the service was wanted and 91% of those who responded said that they would use the service. Those who said they would not use the service generally have offices near branch libraries in their subject areas. Most who said they would use the service also said they would allow designated graduate and research assistants to check out books in their names. Most respondents felt that the phone would be the most used means of transmitting requests. Some could not believe we were serious about offering the service without charge to the faculty. Although initially announced only to deans and to faculty in selected departments, the intention was to serve all faculty and none have or will be refused service. Accounting and economics faculty, for example, have used the service more than many of the sciences.

Excerpts from unsolicited letters include one from a professor who had requested material through ILL only to find that the verification process had located it at UW and referred it to Document Delivery. He wrote, "Imagine my delight to receive, delivered to my department the next day, exactly the articles I needed. Your Interlibrary Loan people are to be commended. How you found staff, budget, and time to convert for it is one of the miracles of library administration which I'll never comprehend." Another letter adds, "The faculty in Zoology are in uniform agreement that Document Delivery is the most important program since buying books and journals."

Why document delivery? Indirect cost funds often go towards funding programs which do not directly affect research faculty. Document Delivery is a direct visible service which is worthy of faculty support and service has not detracted from other library services but has, in fact, enhanced ILL services. The program was initiated in a deliberate manner, allowing for successful relationships to be developed with faculty users of the service. The Libraries are confident that the service will continue to attract new users and will provide faculty with those materials which they need but do not have time to retrieve.

Why document delivery? Because it works! Because it is needed!

Figure 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

The Document Delivery Unit will begin taking requests for articles and books in the near future and begin delivery of those materials to departmental offices. Your assistance in answering a few questions will help us finalize planning of the service.

NAME (optional)

DEPARTMENT:

Do you think, based on the little we've told you about the service, that you would make requests?

YES

NO

Do you often come across citations for articles or books and wonder if the Libraries have the material?

YES

NO

If you were able to submit your requests by campus mail, would you be likely to do so?

YES

NO

If you were able to submit your requests by phone, would you be likely to do so?

YES

NO

If you could do both, which would you do most often?

MAIL

PHONE

If you could have others working with you benefit from the service, would you be willing to give us their names?

YES

NO

Would you be willing to permit those individuals to request books and have those books checked out in your name?

YES

NO

LOOK FOR AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE BEGINNING OF THE DOCUMENT DELIVERY SERVICE

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