Are you familiar with parasitism?

Outrage and negotiation of library resources

“I’m not sure how much you know about parasitism. Sometimes when I’m out in the wilderness I come across a carcass. The animal wasn’t a victim of predation. It had accumulated too many ticks or the roundworms in their guts were too prolific, draining the animal of its vitality until it succumbed. I think nature has a lesson for us to consider. This rate of increase is unsustainable. The cost of this product is impacting the database budgets for our other programs. We’ll finish out the remainder of our subscription period, as per the terms in our contract, and find alternatives from other vendors.“

What am I talking about today?

Librarians are too cozy with vendors.

Vendors are taking advantage of us.

The taxonomy of sales interactions

- Bread and Salt
- Your Friend the Vendor Rep
- Corporate Mutual Aid
- The Immutable Value of Intellectual Property
- Librarians as a Sales Appendage

Bread and Salt

Free food isn't free

You're bound to social rules of conduct

Hi Joey,

Just a follow up that I will be in Kamloops this Friday meeting with TRU folks and hope we can have lunch. Let me know when you might have some time.

Best regards,

[redacted]

Sorry [redacted], not interested.

Joey da Costa
Collection Services Librarian
Thompson Rivers University
jdacosta@tru.ca

You wouldn’t be receiving “free” meals if they didn’t generate sales

Your Friend the Vendor Rep

Salespeople are usually quite pleasant (stark contrast to some faculty).

Offering vs. asking

I just tried leaving a message in hopes of connecting with you regarding meeting with our local [redacted] team while on campus. I know that Libraries are now making the space more flexible and wondering if you have any projects that we can assist with. Our local team can help with planning, pricing, and design as well as offer complimentary site assessments. Attached is a link highlighting our products and projects that we have completed.

Corporate Mutual Aid

We purchase products and services

We have no power to dictate business decisions to vendors

If we're in a "partnership" they're completely one-sided

Data Planet conducted a survey of librarians' sentiments on vendor relations at the 2014 Charleston Conference. The survey revealed a disconnect in the librarian –vendor relationship. It found 71% of respondents view vendors as partners rather than adversaries or competitors. Yet when asked in the same survey, "How did you do in your most recent difficult negotiation?", 60% of respondents were unhappy with the results

Sign of success: Library key contact understands the procedures for asking about policies such as ID/password restrictions or extensions. Vendor key contact understands such items as the procedures for arranging classes or product demonstrations for faculty or students.

"Qualities of an Ideal CALR Vendor-Library Relationship, with Benchmark Signs of Success." 2003. *Law Library Journal* 95 (Issue 4): 572–78.

The Immutable Value of IP

Value is arbitrary.

Bending the interpretation of *savings* doesn't create a bargain.

I had a couple of questions regarding this invoice. The price is listed at $2822.40, which is a 62.5% increase over what we paid last year ($1764.00). Is that correct? Has there been a change to the service that we were accessing?

Joey

Good afternoon Joey,

Let me show you what prices we would normally charge for an account exactly like yours:
[redacted], **Ip License + up to 40 readers access: $7,999 plus taxes**

Here's the amount that you were quoted with the invoice :

[redacted], **Ip License + up to 40 readers access: $2,688 plus taxes**

As you can see, your price is heavily discounted.

I'm confident that the proposed price would hopefully also fit your needs.

The Librarian as a Sales Appendage

The natural outcome of the rest of the taxonomy functioning in favour of businesses.

Librarians evangelize for a product or service.

The taxonomy in practice

So just so I understand completely.

You are not interested in renewing LMA or moving titles to the TTA collections?

[redacted]

[redacted]
Account Director, Canadian Government
Thomson Reuters

To confirm:

We are not interested in renewing the LMA or moving titles to the TTA collection.

Thanks!

Joey da Costa
Collection Services Librarian
Thompson Rivers University
jdacosta@tru.ca

The state of scholarship

2015

Cooperation is Key: How Publishers and Libraries are Working Together to Achieve Common Goals

Michael A. Arthur
University of Alabama, maarthur@ua.edu

Stacy Sieck
Taylor & Francis Group, stacy.sieck@taylorandfrancis.com

The state of scholarship

Co-authored and co-presented *vendor-library relationship* pieces seem common.

Fawning praise of publishers - essentially corporate propaganda.

Groveling for a better price?

Your representative ≠ their employer

English

On a scale from 0-10, how likely are you to recommend ProQuest to a peer or colleague?

Not at all likely — Extremely likely

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please tell us the primary reason for your score

Because I'm not a boot-licking corporate shill.

Clarivate owns like half the library market, why would I even need to recommend ProQuest to a colleague?

“Clarivate has been on an acquisition frenzy and I don't see that benefitting anyone other than Clarivate shareholders. When you look at the history of concentrated markets, monopolization tends to drive the quality of products or services into the ground while extracting ever-greater proportions of capital from consumers. “

Remedies

- Limit conversations to email
- Leave a paper-trail
- Recognize acts of manipulation
- Have one library contact for vendors - mention who on the library website
- Ignore solicitation until you need something
- Use your delete key judiciously
- Keep vendors and students separate
- You don’t owe explanations for internal decisions

References

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