Why Pay Twice?Using Overlap Tools and Reports

Abstract: For most institutions, money is a precious and finite commodity. We simply can’t afford to pay for the same thing twice. In an age of increased corporate consolidation, however, it may be happening more than people realize. This poster highlights the importance of overlap tools and reports and discusses how best to utilize them. It also reviews the pros and cons associated with using conventional overlap tools and with creating your own custom overlap reports. Having overlap information offers a clearer picture of what the institution is truly paying for so we can better manage our collections and budgets.

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Importance and Background

Out of the over one million distinct, online titles cited in the Library Journal’s 2019 Periodicals Price Survey, approximately 14% are duplicated. That is nearly 400,000 duplicate journals and over 100,000 ebooks found to be found in more than a single location. Considering the prices libraries currently pay for their collections, it is important to understand the overlap information about these resources that can be readily found in the literature. For example, Biological Abstracts high overlap with the public domain allowed the University of Arkansas to determine that it could be included in more specific information. Additionally, there may be peer-reviewed research that compared the overlap of specific titles. For example, the study, "Overlap Analysis of SciVerse, Web of Science, and ScienceDirect Databases," written by Rusty Kimball and published in Science and Technology Libraries.

Creating Custom Title-level Overlap Reports

The first step in creating a custom title-level overlap report is to determine what is included? Should subscriptions be included? May some overlap be included if the person creating the report has the option to choose what is most important to them? After all the decisions have been made, the various spreadsheets will need to be combined into a single comparison resource. For example, using Ex Libris’ 360 Overlap Analysis Tool that comes with its 360 line of products including the Summon Discovery layer, overlap reports are available for databases, journals, and ebooks, but not for A&I databases or anything else. This created a “bare” title database. It also offers coverage at the holdings level rather than the title level. This tool is capable of creating several hundred resource reports, as one can do a full browse of the library’s entire collection.

Overlapping academic databases (A&I) are all proprietary and may be associated with abstracting and indexing (A&I) databases. It makes sense that this author discovered there was approximately 60% title-level overlap between the sources indexed in the institution’s Biological Abstracts subscription and the Library Journal’s 2019 Periodicals Price Survey (called tables in Access). The steps for Microsoft Access are as demonstrated in the article, "Journal Overlap Analysis of GeoRef and Web of Science Databases," written by Rusty Kimball and published in Science and Technology Libraries.

Utilities

Conventional Overlap Tools

Benefits
- Relatively fast & easy
- Can potentially compare resources at the holdings level
- Can potentially compare many resources at once

Limitations
- Potentially proprietary and may require subscription
- May not include detailed abstracts or data

Custom Overlap Reports

Benefits
- No subscription required
- Can include any resource with a title and held local data as well

Limitations
- Substantial time and effort required
- Limited number of resources
- Harder to compare holdings

Overlap Tools and Reports

![Overlap Tools and Reports Diagram](image)

The next step is to standardize the data point that will be used to match up the various spreadsheets. In this case, this is titles. Most likely going to be titles. So, if the title also has a hyphen and the other title does not, then hyphen needs to be removed from the Hyphen. The person creating the report will need to decide what other fields will be retained in the final product. In addition to titles, fields, and coverage, should holdings and publishers be included? Should additional resources like ILL requests and turnaways be included? The beauty of any overlap report is that it’s the creator has the option to choose what is most important to them.

Creating custom overlap reports may potentially require more time and effort, but offers additional analysis. For example, you can obtain a title or more with some type of standardization, unique identifier on many cases, an ISSN or ISBN, a custom overlap report can be created for any type of resource or product. This includes A&I databases, media, etc. Specialized information related to the product also can be included in the report. An example of this might be the number of turnaways and ILL requests.

Creating a Custom Title-level Overlap Report

1. Open the Microsoft Access database and choose the appropriate database.
2. Choose the desired fields for the final overlap report in Access. Click Create Query and follow the instructions. Click OK. Create, and Close.
3. Click the desired file from the final report from each table and follow the steps above in step 2. The author prefers to include the ISSN or other identifier. For each table, a report can be generated.
4. Create the form and report. Click on New. Click the desired file from the final report from each table and follow the steps above in step 2. The author prefers to include the ISSN or other identifier. For each table, a report can be generated.
5. Export the finished report to Excel. Click External Data and select Excel. Once exported, the author prefers to change the exported fields to "find" to indicate resource coverage and add “No” in all blank fields.