

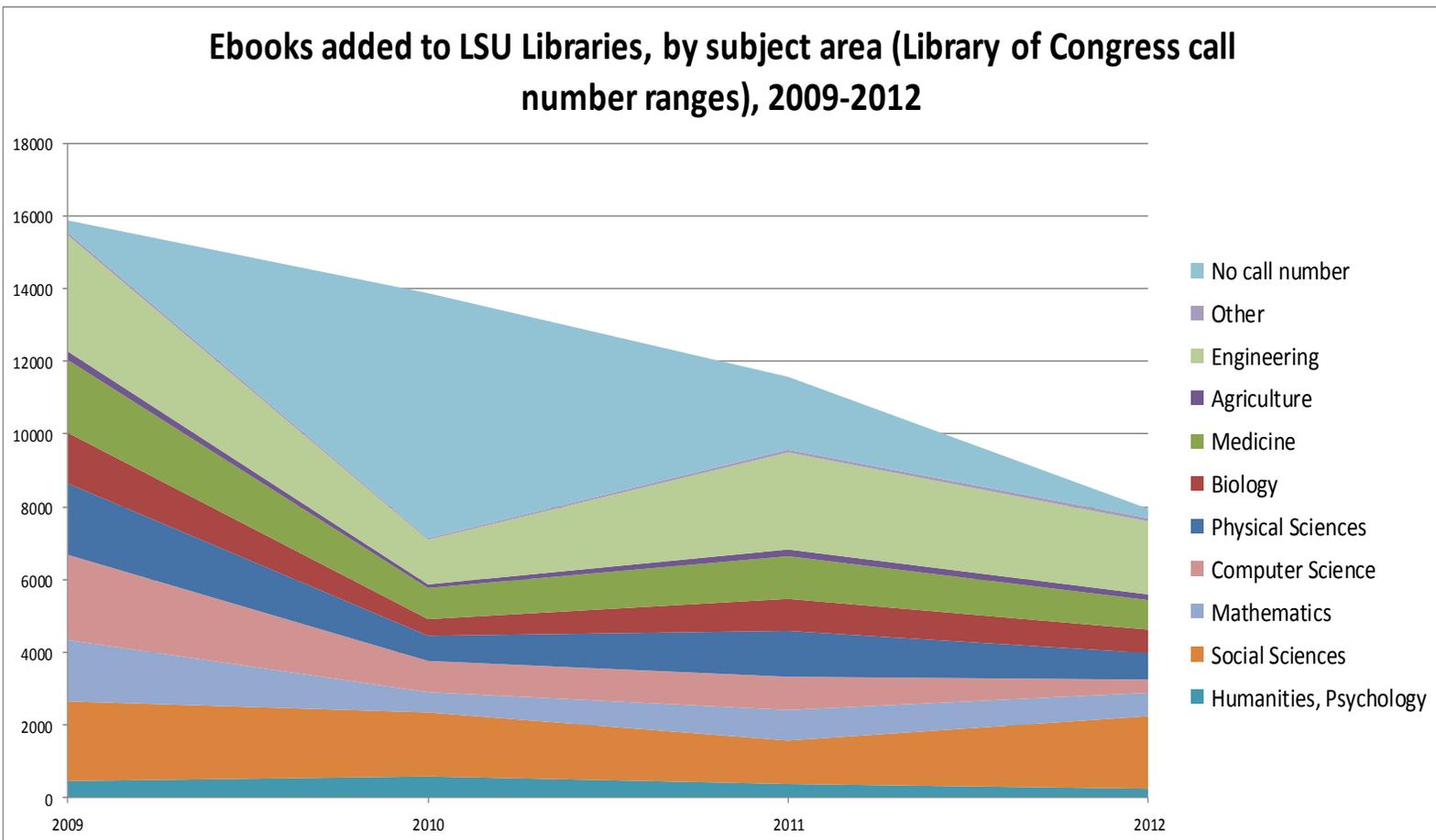
Mathematics library news 10 April 2013

There have been big changes in how LSU Libraries buys books. LSU still buys some books one at a time, but the shift to ebooks allows new efficiency. For ebooks, access is what matters, rather than outright purchase. The Libraries are buying access to ebooks in bulk, both directly from major publishers and indirectly via aggregating vendors that deliver from multiple publishers.

Ebook access agreements with aggregating vendors allow the LSU Libraries to purchase access inexpensively. Ebooks appear in the LSU Libraries catalog. LSU then pays more if ebooks are used. With greater usage, LSU’s commitment shifts from rental to rent-to-own.

No one can predict exactly what people will want. Libraries have always purchased books that are never read. But now we are paying less for unread ebooks.

The chart below shows the ebooks accessible from the LSU Libraries catalog, by subject as categorized by Library of Congress call numbers, and by the year these were added to the catalog. I thank my colleague Michael Waugh for assistance with data retrieval.



If you want to request a particular title, or other library services, contact Aaron Lercher at alrachel@lsu.edu.

Two views on ebook usage are given in the charts on this page. One shows usage of a single large publisher's ebooks. The other shows usage of a variety of publishers' ebooks, to which LSU Libraries purchases access from an aggregating vendor.

The first chart shows total usage of Springer ebooks, including page views and downloads, over three years. Ebooks are categorized by Springer collections. I thank my colleague, Alice Daugherty, for her analysis of Springer data.

The second chart shows usage of ebooks LSU purchased in 2012 from Yankee Book Peddler, which is an aggregating vendor of books from many publishers. LSU buys library catalog records from YBP at a low cost per record, so the catalog contains links to the ebooks. When the ebooks are used heavily, additional charges are incurred. Usages in this sense are usages sufficiently heavy to trigger a charge. This chart, ebooks are categorized by Library of Congress call numbers.

