

From book purchase request to  
client-ready delivery:  
*challenges to the existing supply chain*

Fides Datu Lawton

Director, Library Resources Unit, UTS

Richard Siegersma

General Manager, Thorpe-Bowker

Director, BookSurge Australia

# Outline of first half of presentation

- Background information
- Who are our clients?
- What our clients demand
- UTS:Library – Key Challenges
- Current acquisitions process
- Our current strategies
- Ongoing issues
- Why Print-on-demand: **Perceived advantages**
- Trial

# Who are our clients?

- staff FTE 2,484 (2003)
- 29,000+ students
- Ca. 50% part-time
- 5500 International students - many from Asia, Scandinavia, US
- Nearly 800 international students offshore
- 3 campuses
- Some offshore teaching programs

# What do our clients demand

- Effective and timely access to information
- Effective and timely access to services
- Immediacy in service delivery, regardless of time and location
- “I want it now” syndrome!
- A degree of personalisable and customisable services

# UTS:Library – Key Challenges

- To meet the needs of onsite and offsite/offshore clients
- To provide timely and effective access to information and services
- To push the value to our clients from developments in technology by pursuing innovative solutions
- To maximise the return from our significant investment in IT infrastructure

# UTS:Library – Key Challenges

- To maximise the value from our limited resources
- To ensure sustainability in our services
- To be efficient in our processes

# Current acquisitions process

- Centralised acquisitions-cataloguing-access chain
- Purchase of information resources in support of UTS teaching, learning and research programs
- Formula-based allocation of acquisitions funds
- Annual timeline for managing acquisitions \$

# Current acquisitions process

## ■ Collection development policy

- Shift to electronic serials
- Increase in e-books

## ■ Policy relating to Reading lists

- Formula-based approach
- Perceived demand based on number of students enrolled in a subject

# UTS: Library's information resources

## ■ Journals:

### – Mid 90s:

- 5700 titles in print

### – 2003:

- Ca. 4300 active print journals
- Ca. 17,000 electronic journals

## ■ Monographs:

### – 2002 : over 455,000 titles, mainly print

### – April 2004: ca. 488,000 of which 19,500 are e-book titles (July 2004: 86,000 on order)

# Our current strategies

## ■ Aims

- To improve our service
- To reduce our costs
- To increase our efficiency

## ■ Arrangements with suppliers

- Set up profiles
- Service from major suppliers

# Ongoing issues

- “Tyranny of distance”
- At the mercy of currency fluctuations and rising costs
- Challenge in ensuring timely submission of reading lists to the Library
- Out-of-print materials
- “Cancelled” publications

# Ongoing issues

- Challenge of supporting offsite/offshore clients
- Formula-based acquisitions method not always a reliable predictor of demand
- Urgency in replacing damaged, especially high-demand, volumes

# Why Print-on-demand

## Perceived advantages

- ✓ POD has been around for about 6 years
- ✓ Technology available to print high quality print from digital copy in a shorter timeframe
- ✓ Faster delivery
- ✓ Support direct delivery to clients
- ✓ Improved support for remote clients

# Why Print-on-demand

## Perceived advantages

- ✓ Faster replacement of damaged high-demand titles
- ✓ Reduced reliance on unreliable formula-based ordering - *Just in time*
- ✓ Reduced inactive stock on shelves - alleviating space problems and maximise return on investment
- ✓ Inclusion of some end-processing tasks

# Why Print-on-demand

## Perceived advantages

- ✓ Potential for cost reduction
- ✓ Encourage the publication of low demand titles
- ✓ Increase viability for shorter run titles
- ✓ Ease support for new, unknown authors

# Why Print-on-demand

## Perceived advantages

- ✓ Potential for supporting self-publishing among UTS staff and students
- ✓ Link to UTSePress – providing clients with print copies of e-resources
- ✓ Greater customisable and personalisable end-products
- ✓ Potential to extend to POD “bits” rather than the whole publication
- ✓ Capacity to enable clients to buy copies for themselves when desired

# Trial

- Discussions with BookSurge Australia
  - Other service providers on the market
    - Lightning Source
    - 1stBooks Library – which teamed up with Lightning Source in 1999
    - Xlibris.com
- Joint discussions with Wiley, a major publisher for UTS acquisitions

# Trial

- To test our assumptions re perceived benefits
- To clarify impact on workflows and processes
- To clarify impact on existing arrangements with suppliers
- To determine if % of titles available via POD will be sufficient to enhance our services

The big question is -

Is POD really as good  
as it's being hailed to be?

Is it a new publishing model?

Stay tuned for the next instalment!

Thank you!

# Paradigm shift

**“The single most significant technological development to affect publishing since, arguably, the paperback revolution, is the maturing of print-on-demand technology....publishers need not put a book out of print or overprint it by the hundreds or thousands. Presses can now simply meet demand as it rises, whether a single copy or a hundred. Print-on-demand technology renders the economies of scale that have so fettered publishers, largely obsolete, to the advantage of all.”**

***Niko Pfund of Oxford University Press, writing in  
The Nation, May 20, 2002***

# Numbers dictate the trend

**2% of publishers worldwide have integrated inventory-free distribution into their business models. Over 65% of global publishers are considering a move to greatly reduced or zero inventory models.”**

*- Xerox presentation at the 2002 Frankfurt Book Festival*

**“Nearly 30 of every 100 books a publisher pays to print will go unsold.”**

*-PMA Report on Returns 2001*

**“7 out of every 10 books published are unprofitable for the publisher.”**

*- Xerox presentation at the 2002 Frankfurt Book Festival*

# Book price factors

**4 Excessive inventory levels result in excessive capital costs, obsolescence, damage, shrinkage. Some publishers hold over 300 days of stock.”**

- Michael Cairns President RR Bowker Frankfurt Book Fair 2003

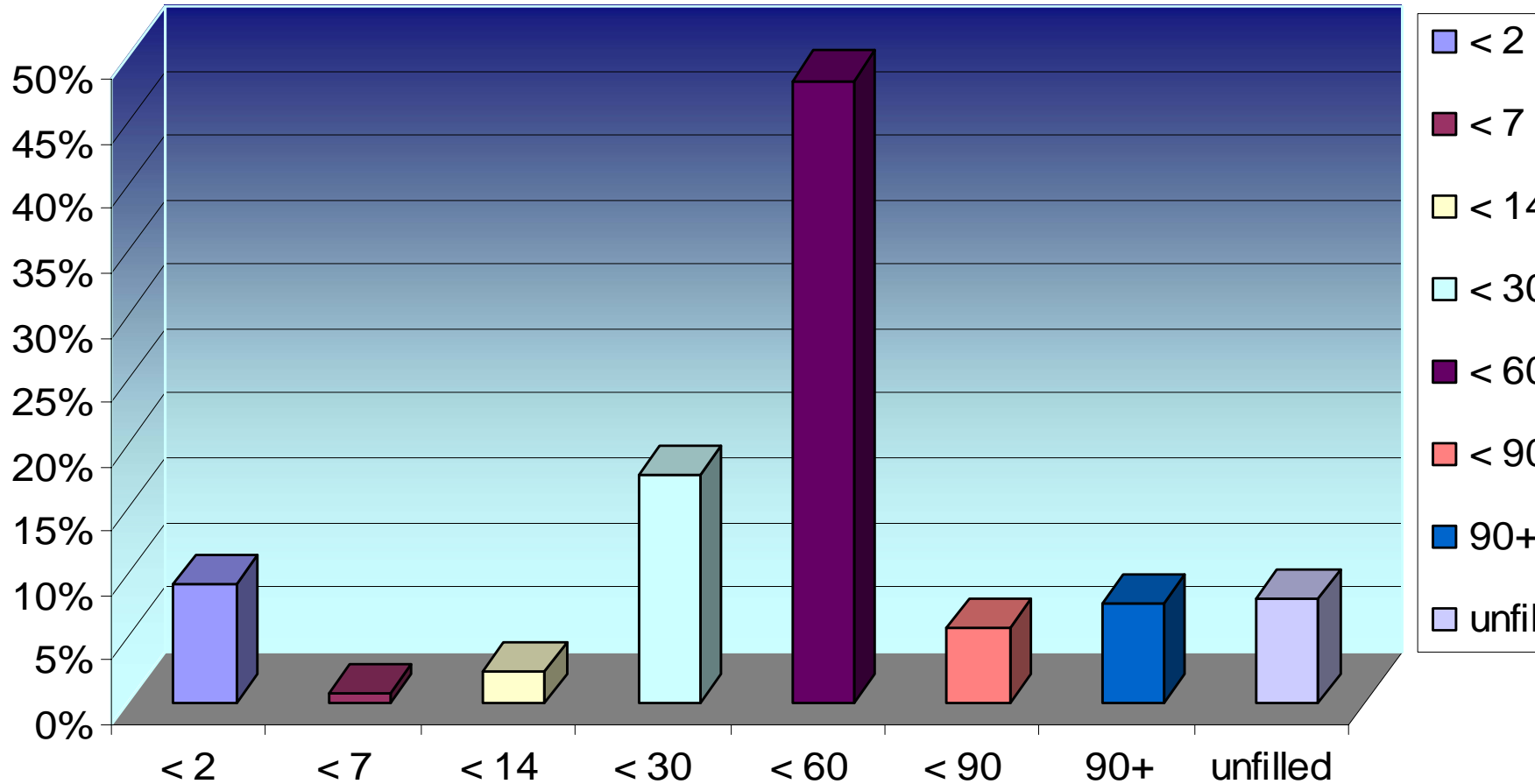
**Publishers have learned to cover the cost of returns by inflating the retail price of books, so that book buyers pay not only for the copies they buy but a proportionate share of the copies returned to the publishers' warehouses to be destroyed or recycled. In the technological future, the problem of returns will be eliminated to the extent that books are printed on demand in response to customers' orders rather than printed in quantity and consigned to retail bookstores awaiting buyers who may not want them.”**

- BOOK BUSINESS: Publishing Past Present and Future by Jason Epstein

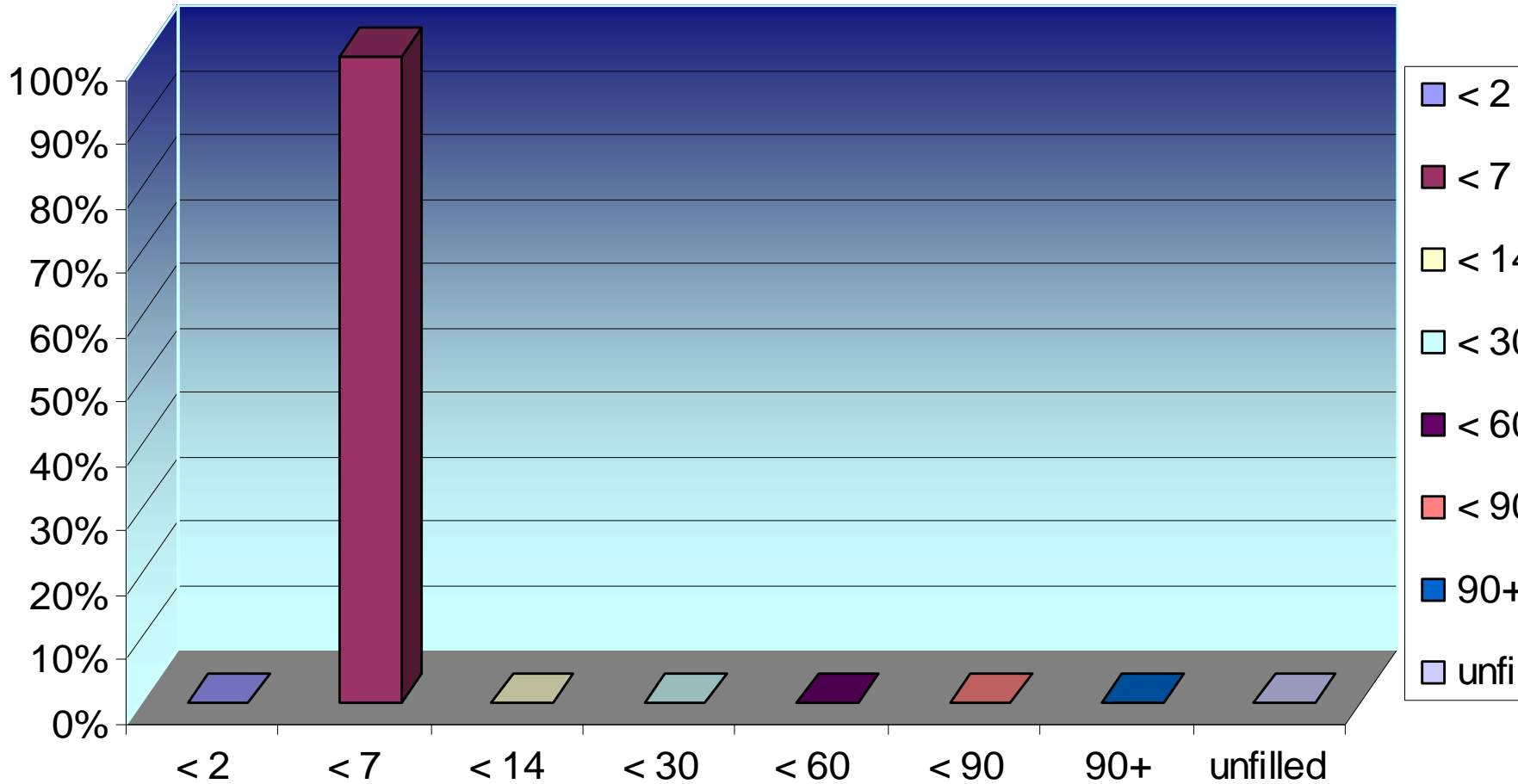
# Book Discovery

- New title awareness services
  - BIP Alert
    - service on Global Books in Print
  - Library suppliers
- Australian Bookseller & Publisher
  - Book Buyers Guide
- BookSurge Website
- WBN Media Extra
  - (Books featured in the media each week)

# Delivery times today



# Delivery times POD



# Scenario's

- Publishers provide files to Print on Demand POD facility
- POD facility manages order processing, royalty payments, printing and fulfillment.
- Library orders from POD facility based on generic book discovery tools
- Extra copies ordered and delivered within 7 days
- Single copy delivered POD facility to off-campus student/staff.

# Will quality suffer in POD world?

“Publishers can focus on their core competencies of talent identification and editing.”

“Quality is threatened by everything, but it survives. Quality takes care of itself. It can't be expunged. It can't be lost in the shuffle. There will be a lot of terrible books in the marketplace as a result of this technology, but they'll go away.”

- Jason Epstein Transformations of the book, MIT communications forum

# POD is here today!!

- BookSurge Australia launched July 2004  
Member of BookSurge Group printing and fulfillment global
  - USA (40,000 book per month)
  - Canada
  - UK
  - Netherlands
- Pilot with Melbourne University Publishing funded by Victoria Government ( Results will be discussed)
- John Wiley Australia OOP title brought back into print.

# Weaknesses

- Availability of electronic files
- Publisher agreement to store/release files
- Formats (eg coffee table books)
- Royalty compliance
- High volume print runs

# What the future holds

**The ultimate goal is to fill every request for a book and deliver to patrons in a timely manner.**

- Manual processes can be integrated into the printing process.
  - Library Barcode
  - Ownership Stamps
  - Library labels
- National OOP register to aggregate non filled orders re publishing using POD
- Small publishers being profitable
- More niche publishing

# LONG BET

Bet 6

« return to On the Record: Bets

Status: **Recorded Bet**

members: sign in »

**By 2010, more than 50 percent of books sold worldwide will be printed on demand at the point of sale in the form of library-quality paperbacks.**

AGREE

17 (26%)

DISAGREE

48 (74%)

AGREE

**Jason Epstein**

(jepstein)

predictor

DISAGREE

**Vint Cerf**

(vcerf)

challenger

[www.longbets.org](http://www.longbets.org)

Future

Profitable Publisher

