



The Acquisition of Electronic Books in the Area of Astronomy in the UNAM



B. Juárez¹

Abstract

The high cost of electronic books (e-Books) in the present in addition to the low budget of the Astronomical Libraries of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), led the three libraries in the area of Astronomy to become part of the Group of Libraries in the area of Sciences in 2011.

This Group was motivated by the need of purchasing e-Books, which due to their high costs, made it impossible to acquire materials of interest for each library. Therefore the Working Group in dedicated itself to the preparation of lists of e-Books to be purchased in order to avoid duplication and thus be able to acquire all needed titles while allocating to each library part of the budget from our combined resources. Our major goal was to purchase titles from the large publishing companies such as Springer and Elsevier, as well as title to title books acquired from different publishers such as Cambridge, Oxford University Press, World Scientific, Astronomical Society of the Pacific, etc.

It is through these joint purchases that Astronomy's three campus libraries: University City, Ensenada and Morelia, benefited by the acquisition of published e-Books from 2010 to 2013.

In this present document the way the Group works, the policies to be followed in regard to the selection and acquisition of e-Books, as well as the benefits at Library and Group level will be presented.

Keywords: e-Books, Specialized Libraries, Astronomy.

The e-Book in specialized libraries

The integration of e-Book at university and specialized libraries is becoming increasingly important, which is forcing us to modify selection processes of acquisition, access to content, and its dissemination.

In this light, we can point out that the UNAM is developing new models of education, such as distance learning based primarily on information technology, where the "e-Book is an essential element in the strengthening of this initiative, compared to the electronic journals or the scientific data bases that are more oriented to research activities."¹

The University and its specialized libraries have supported the activities of teaching and research by providing access to scientific information by the community, and with the arrival of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT), it has favored the quality of services and support in order to reach more users.

In this context, it is important to mention that there has been a "displacement of the place of the student, the teacher and the researcher, that is changing from the library and the classroom and physical spaces, to a virtual environment in which the most important aspect is the access to information".²

In 2010, the *Dirección General de Bibliotecas (DGB)*, which is the office which governs the Library System of the UNAM, through its Office of Specialized Information Services, summoned those responsible for the libraries that are part of the area of Scientific Research, to present a proposal from Springer Publishing Company to acquire some of its series. For its part, the libraries of the Institute of Astronomy and the Institute of Physics were interested in acquiring the series of Physics and Astronomy with titles of interest to both areas, as well as the collections of Computer Science, Mathematics and Statistics, and Earth Sciences which were of the interest of the libraries of the Institute of Mathematics, Institute of Applied Mathematics and in Systems, Faculty of Sciences, Institute and Faculty of Engineering, Institute of Geology, Earth Sciences, and Geophysics.

It is then that the library of the Institute of Astronomy acquired its first collection of e-Books in the area of Physics and Astronomy.

During the year 2011 the same collections as in 2010, were acquired when the libraries of the Institute of Astronomy and the Institute of Physics decided to go back and acquire the collection of Physics and Astronomy from the Springer Publishing Company.

At the beginning of 2012 the libraries of the Library System of the UNAM received through a grant issued by the *DGB*³, a budget of 5 million earmarked for the purchase of e-Books. From that moment on, there was interest on the part of those responsible for the libraries in the area of Sciences, to work together in the selection of titles of interest for each library with the aim of avoiding duplication of titles for better utilization of the budget.

Selection and acquisition of e-Books

Based on some policies suggested by the *DGB* and others raised by the Group of Libraries of Science, the selection of e-Books has been made on the basis of:

- The needs of existing and potential users and always with the support of the librarian. It is considered important to consider the lines and research projects, as well as the teaching curricula.
- The selection of complete collections of a topic of interest, as well as title by title according to the requirements of users, avoiding the duplication of materials.
- Book selection based on the models on the market which must be preferred to perpetuity and decided in favor of the subscriptions in specific cases like the purchase of monographic series.

In addition it must:

- Seek to allow access to an unlimited number of users.
- Consider the option of downloading and reading e-Books on mobile computers in addition to acquiring the access online considered.
- Have the MARC records, provided by the publishers, for each of the selected books.
- Prefer buying the e-Books directly from the publishers.⁴

Taking into account the previous policies, it was decided to purchase the collections from the Springer Publishing Company as selected and purchased in previous years, as well as other important ones for the different communities of users of the Faculties and Institutes.

The first proposal of selected titles was presented to each of the Library Commissions of each institution. The following collections of the Springer Publishing Company were approved for purchase:

- Engineering, Mathematics & Statistics
- Medicine
- Physics & Astronomy
- Professional Computing and Applied Computing
- Biomedical and Life Science
- Computer Science
- Earth and Environmental Science and Chemistry and Material Science (see table 1).

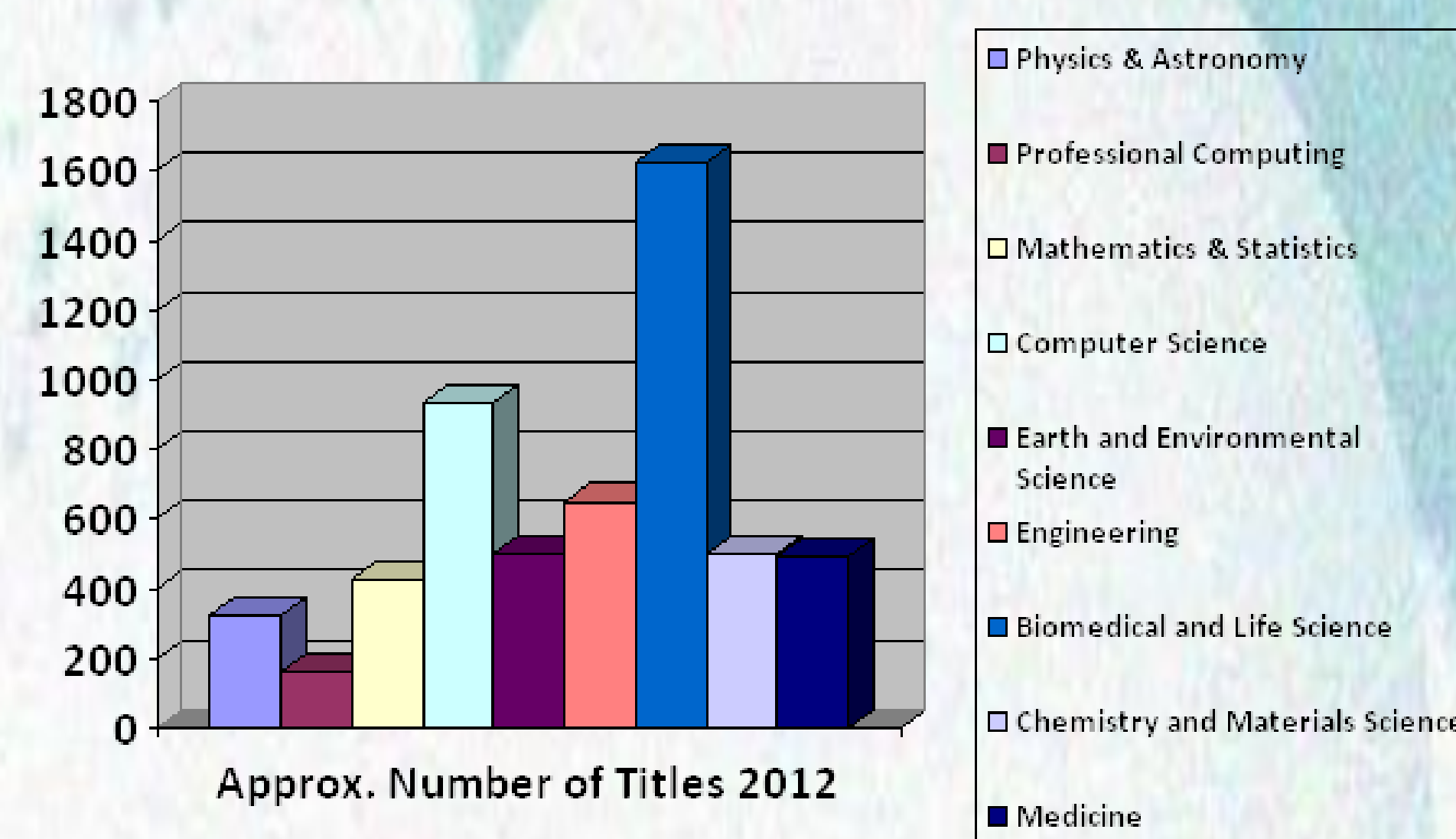


Table 1. Number of titles acquired from the collections of Springer

Also the following series were authorized for purchase:

- Contemporary Mathematics
- AIP Conference Series 1288 titles (1970-2012)
- Astronomical Society of the Pacific (ASP) 15 titles (2012)
- Society of Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM)

During the second half of 2012, the Group of Libraries of Sciences agreed that each library would work in the selection of title to title electronic books from various publishers, analyzing the information needs of each library, and finally a total of 1,581 titles.

This selection was presented to the *DGB* for acquisition. However, we were informed by them through ledger that there was not enough budget to authorize that each of the libraries in the Group the book budget to acquire the abovementioned 1,581 titles.

In this second selection of electronic books, the libraries of Astronomy requested 129 titles from World Scientific Publishing and 200 titles from Cambridge University Press.

As it can be seen during 2012, the three libraries in the area of Astronomy-University City Campus, Ensenada Campus, as well as the library of the Center for Radio Astronomy and Astrophysics in Morelia Campus benefited from the shared purchase with other libraries from UNAM (16 institutes, 4 faculties, 1 direction and 6 centers) reaching a total of 1,623 e-Books titles of complete series and 329 of title to title (see table 2).

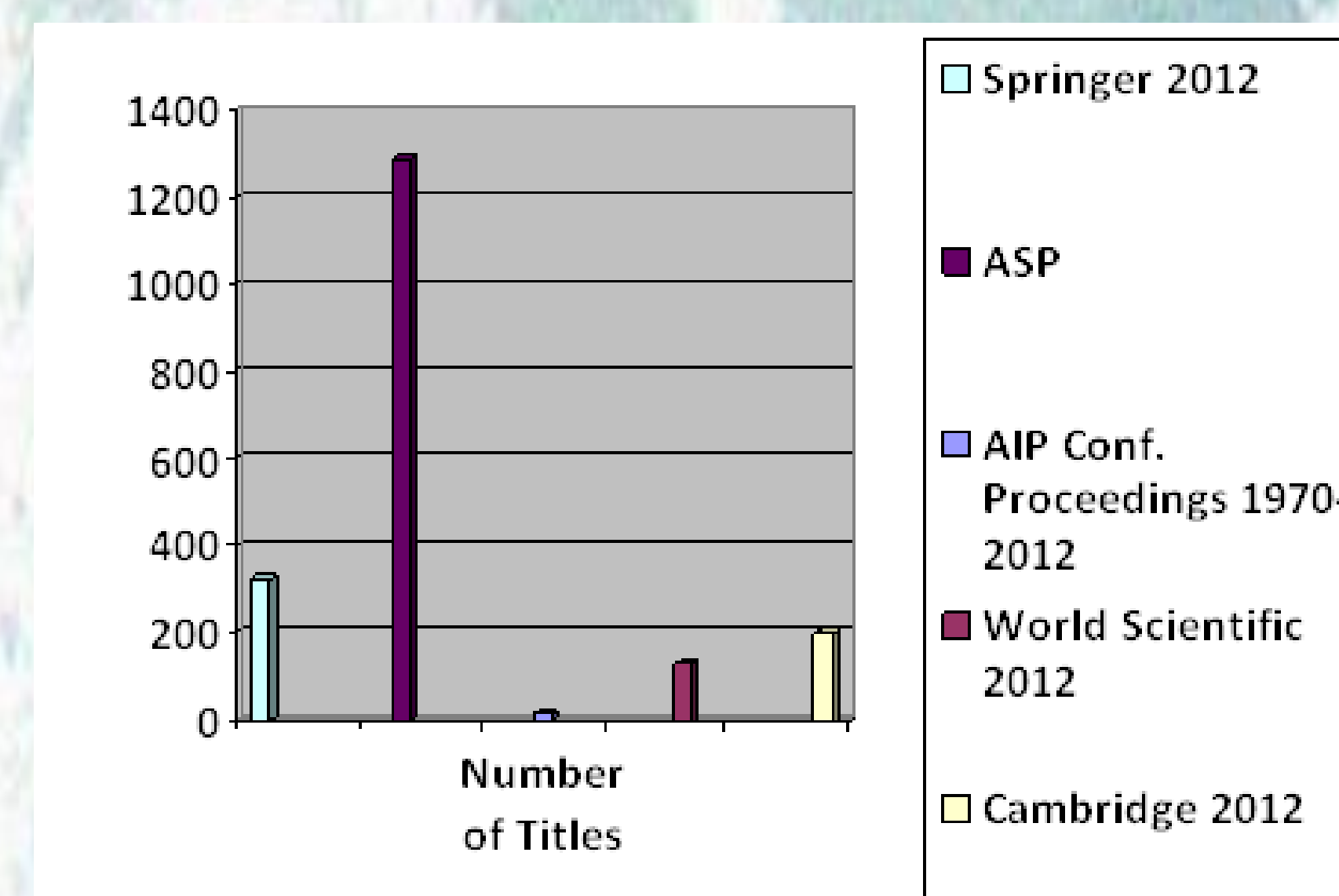


Table 2. Number of titles in the area of Astronomy acquired from publishing companies in 2012

Currently the 22 libraries that comprise the group of libraries of Sciences continue to work on the selection and acquisition of electronic books in 2014. In this current 44 titles from Cambridge University Press and 9 from World Scientific Publishing, have been acquired for the area of Astronomy.

Conclusion

Electronic resources, in particular the e-Book, is an essential part of the new educational model that UNAM is developing, with the purpose for an increasing number of users to have access to the information with the support of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

The community of users of the libraries of the area of Astronomy have benefited more from the purchase of e-Books since it has formed part of the Group of Libraries of Sciences. From 2010 to the present a total of 2,005 titles of e-Books in the area of Astronomy have been purchased. In addition a considerable number of books in printed format have been acquired, by being able to share the budget resources with the Group of Libraries of Sciences.

I believe that this team work has given us positive results by increasing the digital collections for the benefit of the whole university community of the UNAM.

Bibliography

1. Arévalo, Julio Alonso, Cordón García, José Antonio, Gómez Díaz, Raquel. "El libro electrónico en la biblioteca universitaria y de investigación". En: *Biblios*, No. 42, Ene-Mar, 2011, p.3-21.
2. Oficio No. DGBI.024/2012 emitido por la Dirección General de Bibliotecas el 23/Febrero/2012.
3. Políticas de selección y adquisición del Grupo de Bibliotecas de Ciencias (documento interno).
4. Oficio No. DGBI/277/2012 emitido por la Dirección General de Bibliotecas el día 28/Agosto/2012.

1. Arévalo, Julio Alonso, Cordón García, José Antonio, Gómez Díaz, Raquel. "El libro electrónico en la biblioteca universitaria y de investigación". En: *Biblios*, No. 42, Ene-Mar, 2011, p. 3.

2. *Op Cit.* p.2.

3. Oficio No. DGBI.024/2012 emitido por la Dirección General de Bibliotecas el 23/Febrero/2012.

4. Políticas de selección y adquisición del Grupo de Bibliotecas de Ciencias (Documento Interno).

CONTACT: B.J. bjuarez@astro.unam.mx

Library and Information Services in Astronomy VII (LISA VII) 17-20 June 2014.