Australian Catholic University

Greater Control Over Copyright and Improved Service to Faculty

ACU
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Needing a solution for managing copyright of course resources, Australian Catholic University (ACU) Libraries found it — and much more — with Ex Libris Leganto. ACU streamlined library workflows and improved service to faculty.

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"The Leganto End-user Interface was a leap between centuries."
Susan Lafferty, Australian Catholic University

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About Australian Catholic University

Australian Catholic University is ranked among the top three percent of universities worldwide and in the top ten Catholic Universities. While a young institution, it is an amalgamation of institutions with their origins in the mid-1800s. Its 35,000 students pursue their studies at seven campuses across southeast Australia as well as a campus in Rome, Italy. Six campuses have library sites, and the staff works cooperatively to serve students and faculty across all of the university's far-flung locations.

A Need for More Reliable Copyright Control

What started out as a search for a system to handle copyright tracking and reporting at Australian Catholic University turned into something else: a course resource list solution widely embraced by the faculty, and that supported more-transparent and collaborative workflows for library staff.

According to Susan Lafferty, Associate Director, Library Resources and Access, the former copyright solution had reached its effective end of life. "It was a digital repository that was configured for Australian copyright, but it was no longer supported by the vendor," she explains. "There was no more development, so it was a major risk. If it stopped working, we would have no support and no backup."

Thorough Search for a Solution

The university did its due diligence to find a solution. As Ms Lafferty relates, "We invited tenders and received a number of responses. We eliminated a couple right away, then we had demonstrations from Ex Libris and other vendors. The Ex Libris Leganto interface was much superior to what we had been using, which was very clunky, had a difficult dashboard, and looked old-fashioned, like something out of the '90s. So purely from an aesthetic point of view, going with Leganto was a leap between centuries."

But interfaces aside, there were other factors that came into play. Recalls Ms Lafferty, "It came down to functionality, integration with other systems, whether we could rely on their cloud hosting service, and whether the business was big enough to be able to take on new things and to implement new functionality in a timely way. It was helpful that we were already with Ex Libris Alma, so we had experience. We were used to the Ex Libris approach of monthly and quarterly updates devoted to enhancements. We knew that the product would develop."

According to Marianne Gration, Library Manager for Client Services, the tight integration with Alma was another plus. As she shares, "Leganto reads the information from Alma. With reporting and other functions all under the same software, it was a great solution going with a suite of Ex Libris products."

Popular Service for Academic Staff

While the previous system handled copyright well enough, it was limited to that function. To create reading lists, faculty added links to items in their online unit in the LMS. The library staff was responsible for activating all of the readings for all of the academics across all eight campuses. By contrast, Leganto presents nicely formatted lists for the faculty to work with. "We have received good feedback from the academic staff," states Ms Gration. "They definitely like Leganto. It's quicker to create a list, very quick, within minutes. We're offering them a good service."

Ms Lafferty shares one piece of feedback. "I'm based in Sydney, but I was at the Canberra campus," she reports. "I was in a tearoom doing some work and an academic from the Faculty of Education and Arts came in and asked who I was. I told her who I was, she said 'okay' and walked away. Then she came back and said, 'I just want to tell you; I love Leganto.'"

Common Workflows and Shared Efficiencies

John Eliot, Senior Library Systems Coordinator and member of the Digital Services team, likes how the workflows in Leganto and Alma create efficiencies. "One is the ability to put tags on the citations," he details. "The academics will tag citations — if they want it digitized, if they don't want it digitized, or a tag for a three-day loan which can help with the course reserves. Or they can use tags as instructions for students. We don't have to do much with those specific tags, but it's a part of the reading list and doesn't add to our [Systems team] workload at all". "Staff are already familiar with handling requests for transferring items, managing fulfillment, and moving the books to the places where they need to be digitized. People didn't have to learn new workflows. They can pick it up at any point in the process. It's nice that it's all integrated."

Visibility for Ensuring Copyright Compliance

According to Ms Lafferty, "Australian copyright provisions are different from everybody else on the planet. We were asking a system that's an international system to be configurable to meet copyright laws that no one else uses. I was quite pleased that we were able to get that done with Leganto."

The job of ensuring that the university is compliant falls to Vanessa Tuckfield, Copyright Manager. As she explains, "Every university in Australia is required to report on the material that we've copied under the Copyright Act. It requires a sample between two dates that are specified by an independent auditor. We have to report the bibliographic information, the number of pages, the date the item was originally digitized, and the department or teaching area using the material. We were the very first Australian university to do a sample using Leganto, and we did it successfully."

ACU takes its copyright responsibilities seriously and uses Leganto to manage compliance. As Ms Tuckfield states, "That's why it is so important to be able to run reports. The visibility from Leganto reduces the risk of breaching copyright, because we can spot the shortfall right away, and ensure that it's fixed".

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