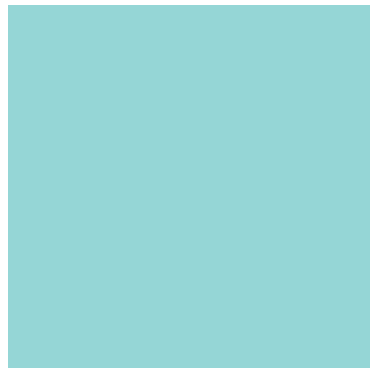
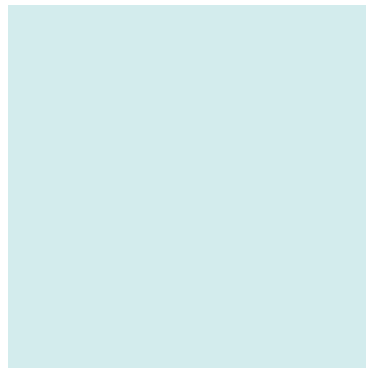
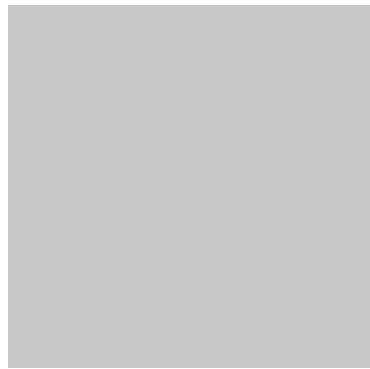
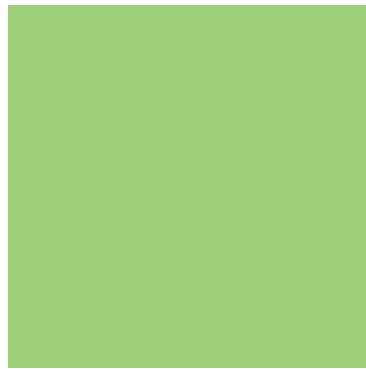
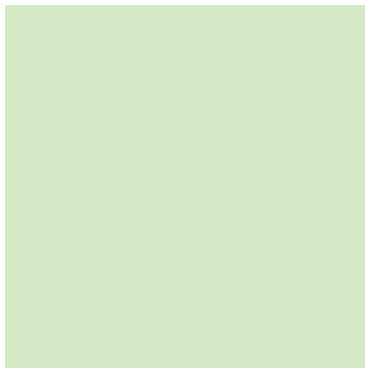
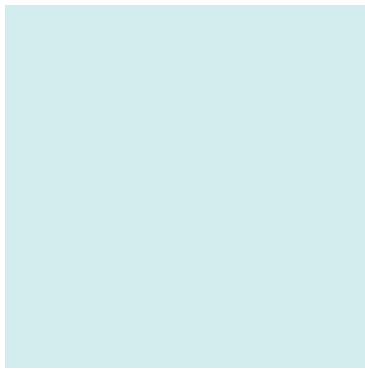
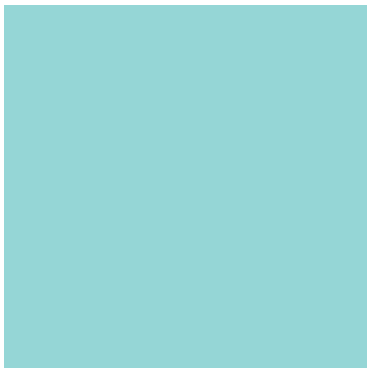




THE NEED FOR INTERLIBRARY LENDING IN AN EBOOK ENVIRONMENT





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The need for interlibrary lending in an ebook environment

Canberra ACT, Australian Library and Information Association, September 2014

www.alia.org.au

THE NEED FOR INTERLIBRARY LENDING IN AN EBOOK ENVIRONMENT

The ALIA Interlibrary Lending Advisory Committee carried out research to find out if interlibrary lending and document delivery would still be important in the ebook world. The questions to be answered included:

- Can libraries find material from other sources (publishers, vendors, commercial suppliers) to satisfy their clients' information needs?
- What sources are libraries using for Australian material and for overseas material, and are the suppliers in Australia or overseas; commercial or library-based?
- And finally, what access do libraries think they will need five or 10 years down the track?

This report highlights the findings and the information generated will help inform the work of the Advisory Committee. It will be of great value in discussions with library vendors, publishers, authors, government and other stakeholders.

ABOUT INTERLIBRARY LENDING

Interlibrary lending has been a core service for libraries handling print media.

How it works. A library user requests a book from their home library. The home library does not have a copy and there is insufficient demand for the title for the library to buy a copy, or the title is out of print, or it is not easily available through supply channels. The home library identifies another library which has the book, orders it, and pays an interlibrary lending fee. Document delivery is a similar service but instead of borrowing books, the user requests copies for items such as journal articles, copies of reports and book chapters.

ABOUT THE ALIA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The ALIA Interlibrary Lending Advisory Committee advises the ALIA Board on policy for interlibrary lending and document delivery, runs the Share It wiki (shareit.alianational.wikispaces.net), and manages the Interlibrary Resource Sharing Code. The committee comprises Margarita Moreno (Chair), Margery Barnes, Robyn Hull, Sharlene Louey and Sharon Nicol.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The ALIA Interlibrary Lending Advisory Committee ran a survey in May 2014 of national, state and territory, university, special, TAFE and other libraries. There were 119 responses representing all sectors and every state and territory. In addition, also in May 2014, ALIA surveyed public libraries, resulting in 72 responses, representing 480 public libraries across Australia (approximately one third of the total).

KEY FINDINGS

1. Overseas vendors dominate ebook supply and libraries find it difficult to source the Australian content they seek in ebook format.
2. While over half the participants are currently able to supply their library users with the ebooks and electronic documents they need without relying on interlibrary loans and document delivery, for a substantial minority (43%), this is already an important element of their service.
3. In the future, when more books are published electronically, participants see the need for interlibrary lending of ebooks and document delivery of electronic materials escalating, with 80% saying it will be an important element of their service.
4. Current book licences vary enormously and participants lack clarity about what can and cannot be achieved in the areas of interlibrary lending and document delivery. The majority of respondents are unable to provide these services under their licence agreements.
5. Looking to the future, respondents overwhelmingly feel that interlibrary lending and document delivery will be important for library users, but there are concerns about affordability and publishers' licensing restrictions.
6. Some respondents are optimistic that options such as purchase on demand and consortia to provide access to a broader scope of material for their users will offset the need for interlibrary lending, but the majority are concerned that there will be a significant impact on service levels.

THE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

The survey attracted a good response rate from collecting institutions, university and special libraries. There were fewer responses from TAFE (as a percentage of the total number of TAFE libraries), and 'other' responses came from a very small sample of schools, which would not be statistically significant but provided useful insight into the situation in the education sector.

Participants included libraries with a broad range of interests, including health, research, science, law and government.

Fig 1: which best describes your library?

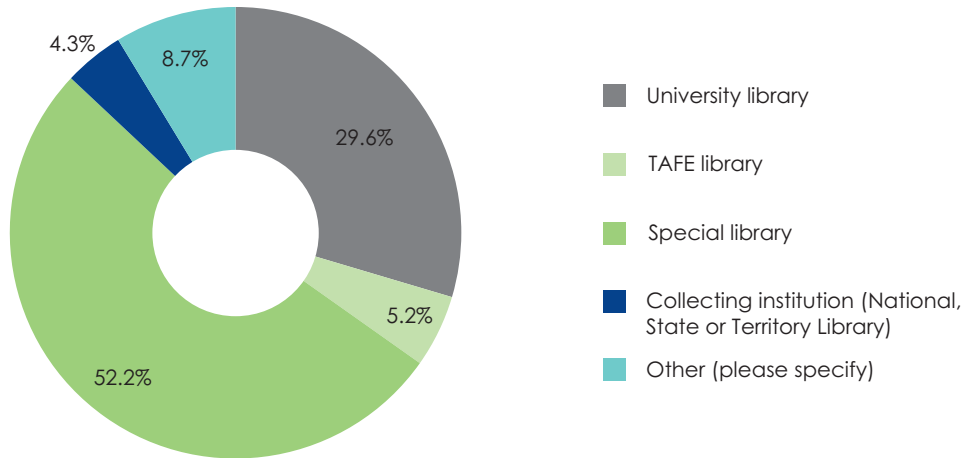


Fig 2: Where are you located?

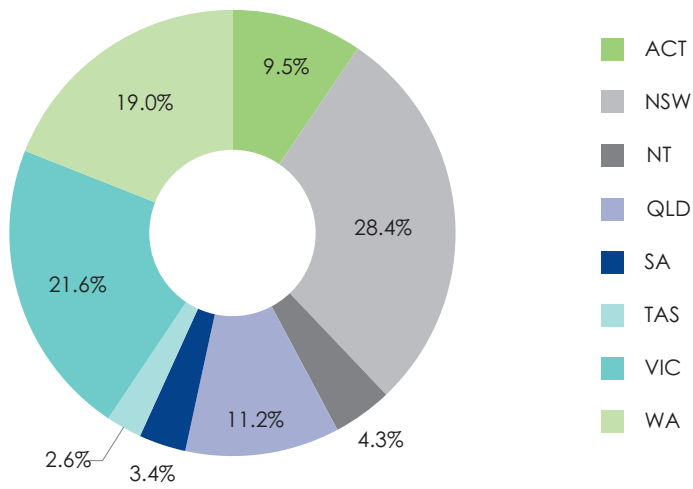
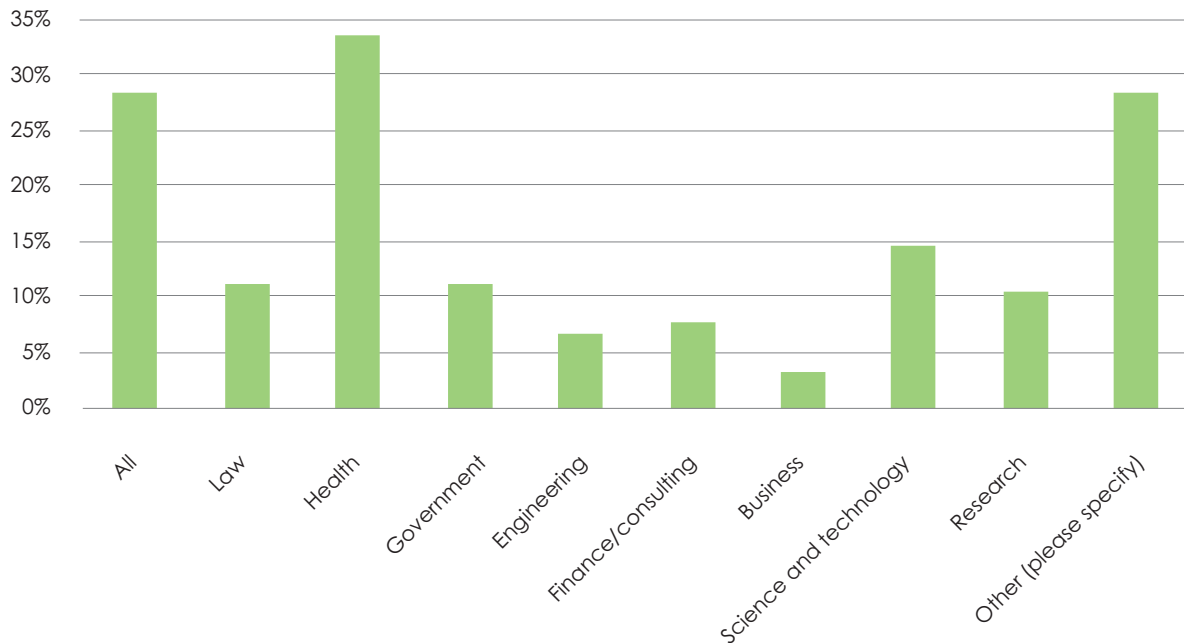


Fig 3: What is your area of specialisation?



LIBRARIES AND EBOOKS

Of the survey participants, 72% purchased or licensed ebooks. Half of the libraries sourced their ebooks from a mix of Australian and overseas suppliers, with 43% buying from mainly overseas companies and only 7% from mainly Australian. This was reflected in a significantly lower level of satisfaction in terms of the Australian content available in ebook format. The highest level of satisfaction was with research publications.

Fig 4: Does your library purchase ebooks?

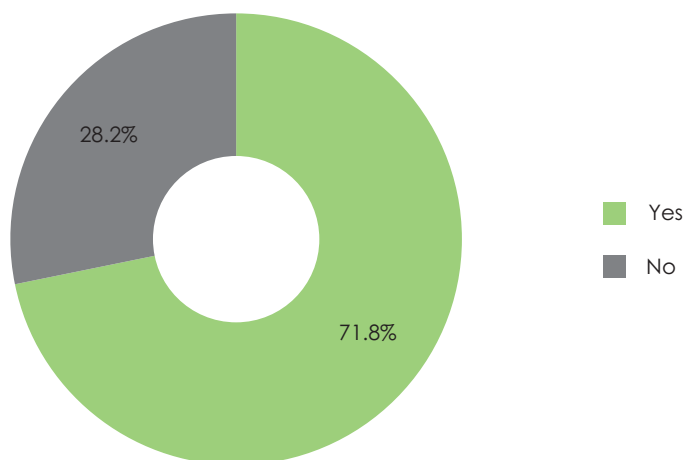


Fig 5: Are your ebook providers

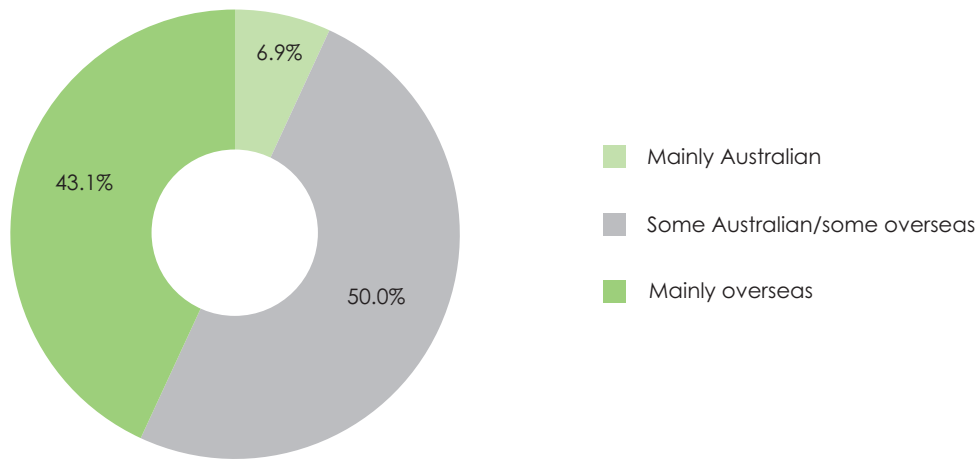
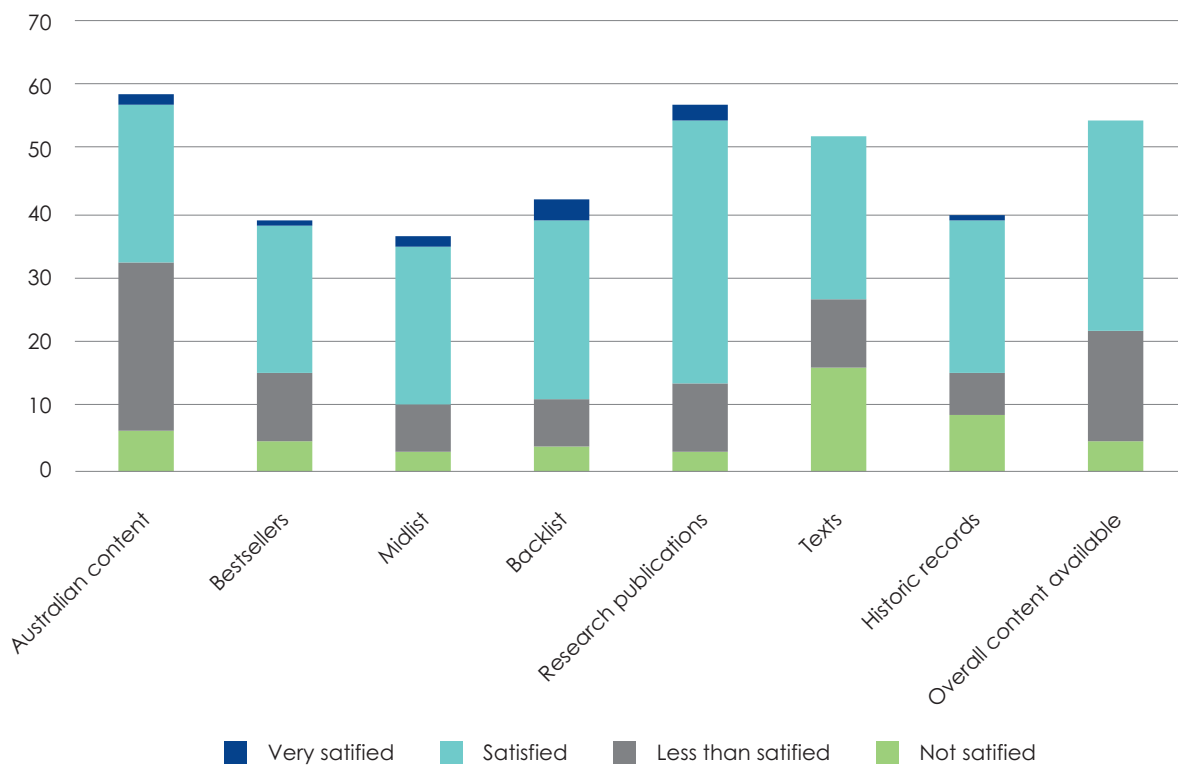


Fig 6: Are you satisfied with the choice of ebook titles available through your service provider?



THE NEED FOR INTERLIBRARY LENDING AND DOCUMENT DELIVERY

For 43% of participants, interlibrary lending and document delivery were important or very important for their users. The 57% of participants who said ebook interlibrary loans and document delivery were not currently very important or unimportant were able to purchase the materials their users needed, either independently or through consortia arrangements, or their users preferred print.

The increase to 80%, when participants were asked to estimate their users' needs in five years' time, saw similar reasons cited, but a decrease in their impact.

Fig 7: How important is access to the ebooks of another library for your library users now (document delivery and loans)?

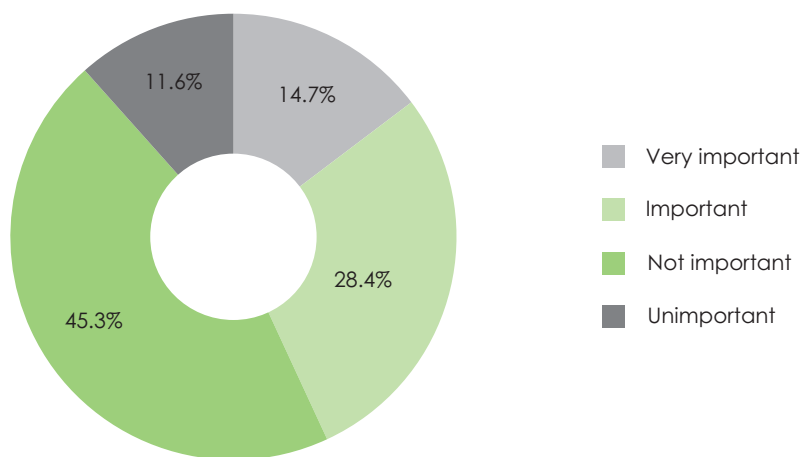


Fig 8: Reasons given why access to ebooks for interlibrary lending and document delivery is not very important or unimportant. Results taken from 53 free text responses.



Fig 9: How important might access to the ebooks of another library be for your library users in five years' time (document delivery and loans)?

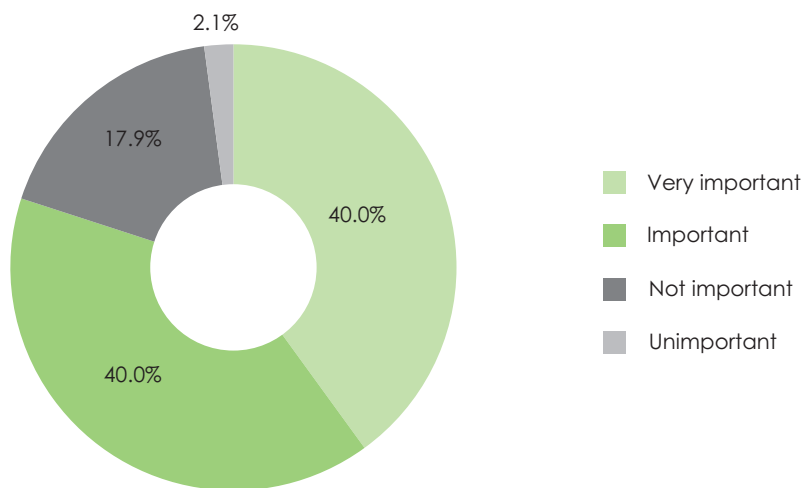
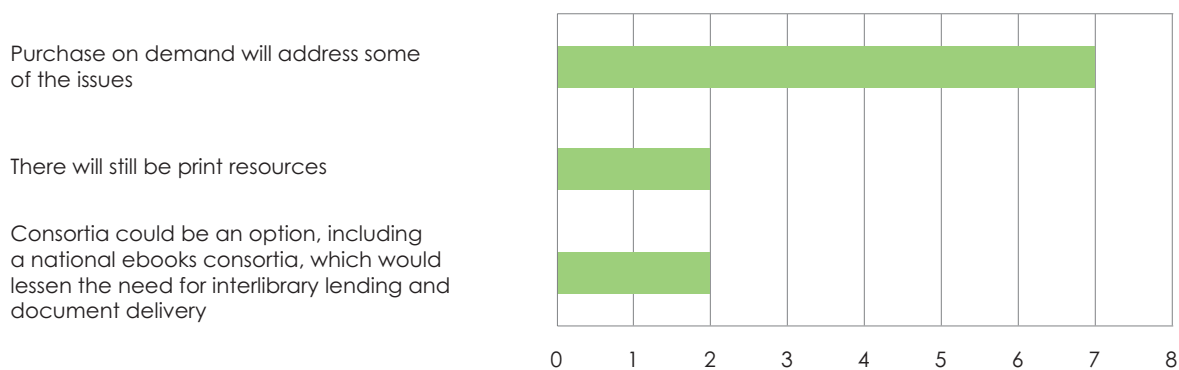


Fig 10: Reasons given why access to the ebooks of another library might not be very important or could be unimportant. Results taken from 42 free text responses.



LICENCING, RESTRICTIONS AND FUTURE CONCERNS

Current book licences varied enormously and lacked clarity about what could and could not be achieved in the areas of interlibrary lending and document delivery. The majority of respondents were unable to provide interlibrary loans and document delivery.

Looking to the future, respondents overwhelmingly felt that interlibrary lending and document delivery would be important for library users, but there were concerns about affordability and publishers' licensing restrictions.

Fig 11: What provisions, if any, are there within your ebook licences regarding interlibrary loan or document delivery? Summary of 64 free text responses.

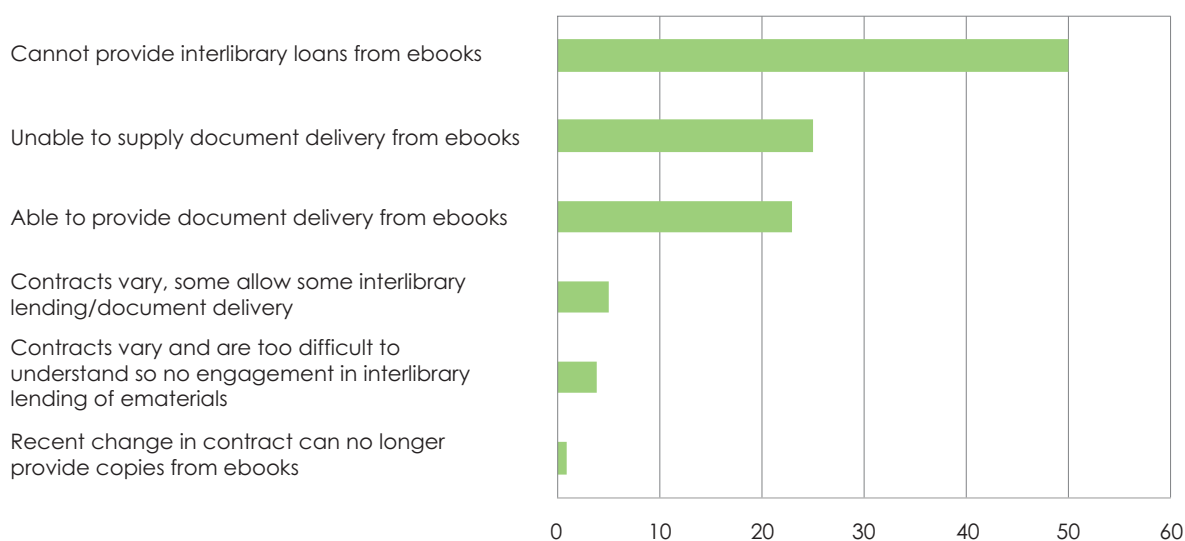
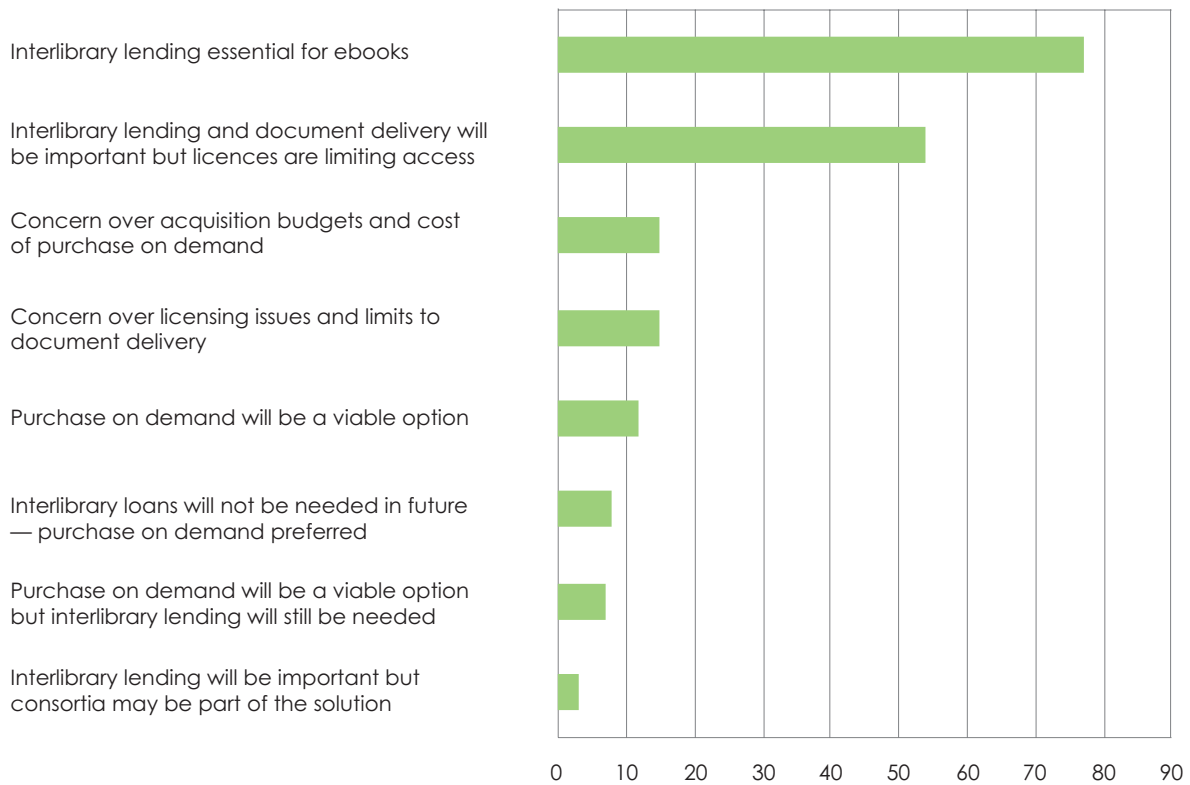


Fig 12: Looking to the future, what are your thoughts about the need for interlibrary lending of ebooks?
Summary of 87 free text responses.



SUMMARY

It appears that libraries still believe interlibrary lending and document delivery are important in an ebook world, although they are very aware of the limitations in licences. Some are hopeful that there will be options such as purchase on demand and consortia to provide access to a broader scope of material for their users and that these will suffice; others are concerned that there will be reductions of service or high costs limiting access to material.

APPENDIX: INTERLIBRARY LOANS AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

We ran a separate survey of public libraries and their approach to ebooks and elending in May 2014. The full report is available to download here www.alia.org.au/sites/default/files/APLA-Ebooks-and-Elending-2013-vs-2014.pdf. Public libraries focus on popular fiction, unlike university, TAFE, special libraries and collecting institutions.

97% of the 480 public libraries represented by respondents offered ebooks. 87% said that interlibrary loans of print books were important or very important and 60% felt that this would still be the case in an ebook environment over the next 3 years.

Fig 13: How important is interlibrary lending (ie access to a print book belonging to another library) to your library users?

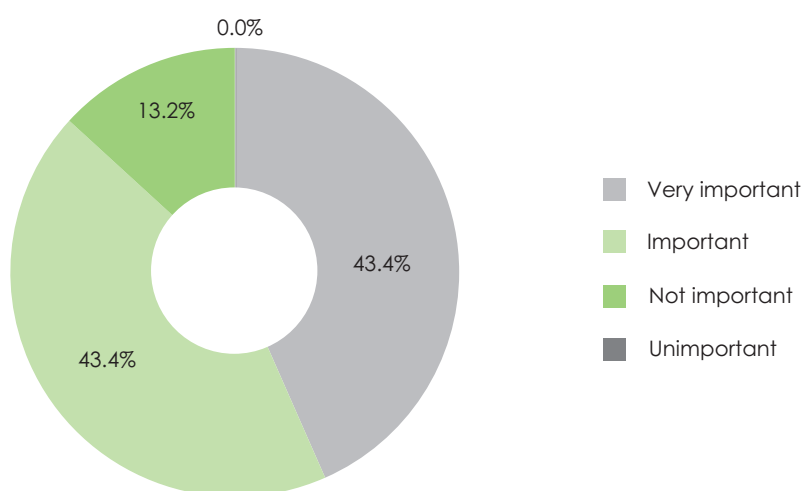


Fig 14: How important do you think interlibrary elending (ie access to an ebook belonging to another library) will be to your library users over the next three years?

