

Common Suite Feedback Survey Results and Analysis

Survey Goal:

The purpose of the Common Suite Feedback Survey was to gather Partner Libraries' thoughts on the modified common suite proposal presented in November 2017. The proposal includes:

- A shared suite of resources consisting of (1) Academic Search Premier and Business Source Premier; (2) an upgrade to the Complete of each institution's choice (ASC or BSC); (3) CBCA [this product was retained in the proposal to meet the multi-vendor criteria; however, feedback on whether to include it in the shared suite was sought].
- No new spend is necessary.
 - Most Partner Libraries will pay their existing spend from this current year's ASC/BSC license with no increase. 13 institutions identified as paying significantly higher than their tier ideal will pay a new, reduced cost.
 - All Partner Libraries will continue to pay their current CBCA license cost, and commit to maintaining this license for 3 years.
 - 2.5% increases will be applied annually in years 2 and 3.

Survey Participation:

- 100% responded (33 Partner Libraries)
 - 2-Year – 17
 - 4-Year + Institutes – 16

Summary:

Partner Libraries were asked to choose one of the options below.

- Can agree to move forward with a common suite – 32
 - *A common suite that includes CBCA (10)*
 - *A common suite that excludes CBCA (3)*
 - *A common suite whether it includes or excludes CBCA (19)*
- Cannot agree to move forward with a common suite – 0
- Need more information – 1

Common Themes:

Respondents were offered an opportunity to ask further questions and provide additional feedback on the modified proposal. While a range of information, questions, and perspectives were provided, 3 common themes have been identified. These themes are not intended to be exhaustive but instead surface commonalities.

- CBCA
 - Some respondents questioned the necessity of the multi-vendor criteria that lead to CBCA's inclusion in the common suite. These comments came both from those who wished to exclude CBCA from the shared suite (3) and those who responded they could support the common suite whether it included CBCA or not (5 of 19).
 - Flexibility continues to be an issue. Feedback expressed concern that including CBCA in the common suite reduces flexibility by committing Partner Libraries to a 3-year contract.

- Content loss
 - While the modifications are an improvement, Partner Libraries acknowledged that the loss of content from the downgrade from Complete to Premier for one product has a negative impact.

- Review process
 - Many Partner Libraries recognized that their feedback was heard and incorporated into the modified proposal.
 - Some respondents had questions about the review process and would like to see further exploration of specific areas: continuing to address tier inequities and further clarification on how the BC ELN tier structure works.

Appendix A – Survey Responses

Q1. Please choose one of the following options. Space to ask additional questions and provide further feedback is provided at the end of the survey.

My institution can agree to the common suite:

*ASP and BSP (one of your choice upgraded to Complete), and **includes** CBCA. (10)*

- Camosun College
- Columbia Bible College
- Langara College
- Nicola Valley Institute of Technology
- Northern Lights College
- Northwest Community College
- Selkirk College
- Thompson Rivers University
- University Canada West
- Yukon College

*ASP and BSP (one of your choice upgraded to Complete), but **excludes** CBCA. (3)*

- Ascenda School of Management
- College of the Rockies
- Royal Roads University

*ASP and BSP (one of your choice upgraded to Complete) **whether it includes or excludes** CBCA. (19)*

- Alexander College
- BC Institute of Technology
- Capilano University
- College of New Caledonia
- Columbia College
- Douglas College
- Emily Carr University of Art + Design
- Justice Institute of BC
- Kwantlen Polytechnic University
- North Island College
- Okanagan College
- Quest University Canada
- Simon Fraser University
- Trinity Western University
- University of British Columbia
- University of Northern BC
- University of the Fraser Valley
- University of Victoria
- Vancouver Community College

My institution needs more information before making a decision. [Note: Selecting this option will prompt a phone call intended to answer questions; there will then be an opportunity to resubmit your survey response.] (1)

- Vancouver Island University

My institution does not want to move forward with a common suite. (0)

Q2. What questions are left unanswered?

For those who answered: *My institution can agree to the common suite: ASP and BSP (one of your choice upgraded to Complete), and includes CBCA.*

Selkirk College (G. Currie)	Why do 40% of Americans still approve of Donald Trump?
University Canada West (A. Mitescu)	All the concerns have been addressed. Most of them have been resolved; there are some outstanding issues (but they are mostly related to the tier structure of BC ELN - related to the Common Core, but out of scope for this discussion).
Yukon College (A. Goncalves)	Yukon College will probably opt for upgrading to Academic Search Complete. What is the expected impact in terms of costs if we decide to also upgrade to Business Source Complete?

For those who answered: *My institution can agree to the common suite: ASP and BSP (one of your choice upgraded to Complete), whether it includes or excludes CBCA.*

Alexander College (S. Marsden)	This seems straightforward enough and addresses the larger concerns of most of the members, particularly with the removal of Canadian Newsstream. We will probably still have to upgrade the other version of the remaining EBSCO product as well, but this is more manageable.
BCIT (A. Griffin)	<p>BCIT feels strongly that we need to retain access to both ASC and BSC, so the option to include an upgrade to one of them in this package is definitely an improvement in our view. We will also continue our subscription to CBCA whether it is included in the Common Suite or not, so are fine with either option (especially since the price is the same regardless). The fact that we should qualify for some harmonized credit means that we really won't end up very far from where we started in terms of price and content, and therefore we are happy to endorse the revised proposal and support the Common Suite. (The removal of Canadian Newsstream Complete was also a wise move in our view.)</p> <p>Furthermore, we support our role in the consortium, and therefore can see value in having some shared content that is accessible to all post-secondary students in the province. This will help provide a base level for all students regardless of location or institution, ease transfer for students who change institutions, and assist with other shared services, such as AskAway. Especially because we can do this without significantly impacting our own students, we want to support the effort.</p> <p>Many thanks to ELN for their continued work towards a solution that hopefully can benefit everyone.</p>
College of New Caledonia (K. Plett)	I wonder if someone has done a comparison of journal titles in CBCA vs Canadian Reference Centre lately? i.e. unique title lists. It would be helpful to us...
KPU (A. Richardson)	Is the inclusion of CBCA affecting the cost of the whole common suite?
North Island College (M.A. Guenther)	Answered so that vendor diversity criteria can be met though I am not convinced diversity is needed.
UNBC (H. Empey)	What is the timeframe for the offer/license? Timing will impact our analysis on levels of ASP/BSP to determine potential upgrades as well as analysis on the value of CBCA.

<p>Vancouver Community College (S. Lew)</p>	<p>Although this suite works for us, I know some institutions will find this solution challenging. I would appreciate hearing those concerns with all partners in the room so they can be considered before a final decision is made.</p> <p>For information only, it would be helpful to have some data on the impact of not having a common suite at all. I think it would help reinforce our commitment to this approach.</p>
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For those who answered: *My institution needs more information before making a decision.* [Note: Selecting this option will prompt a phone call intended to answer questions; there will then be an opportunity to resubmit your survey response.]

<p>Vancouver Island University (J. Blackburn)</p>	<p>The modified proposal addresses one concern we expressed in the last survey - losing access to BSC - but does not address other substantive concerns we raised. After consulting with our team of librarians, we are opting for “My institution needs more information before making a decision”, not because we need more information about the Modified Common Suite Proposal, but because we need information about alternatives to the proposal in order to make a decision that is responsible both to VIU, and also to the system. Unfortunately, in seeking this information, we seem to be presented with choice among outcomes that are more limited than need be, under pressure of time that might have been avoided through more timely execution of specific actions arising from the all partners meeting in 2016.</p> <p>The survey presents a choice between the proposal (with or without further modifications) and not moving forward with a Common Suite. However, lacking information about a scenario in which there is no Common Suite, we are not adequately equipped to engage with this complex problem to the clearly apparent benefit of all. If ELN members had participated in a rigorous and inclusive process focused on nuanced and sustainable understanding of member needs for coordinated licensing of resources, we have little doubt that more than one creative solution could be found. Interest in the “common good” of ELN members, and concerns about the Common Suite approach, shouldn’t be viewed as mutually exclusive. Perhaps common good does not equate to products in common.</p> <p>The “Proceedings of the Common Suite Facilitated Session” document – which articulates support among the all-partners group for a detailed investigation into the feasibility of a Common Suite, rather than support for a Common Suite per se – calls for an investigation and report to include multiple options for a common resource suite, along with related costs. So far we have not seen such a report, and have only seen one option for a Common Suite, with a subsequent modification. We would like to see other options. These options would ideally include offering Academic Search and Business Source via regular ELN tiered-pricing consortial licenses, with negotiated discounts related to number of license participants, rather than via a required-participation model. To us, such an approach would adequately support certain stated goals of the Common Suite model such as providing continuity for AA providers and transfer students, because most ELN member institutions would continue to license some combination of AS, BS, CBCA and Newsstream at the levels that they actually need. This is a legitimate option to explore, and we would like to see it added.</p> <p>Assessing a tiered-pricing opt-in licensing approach would also help make the problems with equitable access to resources among ELN members more transparent and easier to understand. ELN’s own description of Common Suite describes historical inequities arising from the model, and difficulties with the model because it’s not based on the usual tiered pricing structure. If this is an inherently problematic, inequitable model, it would be worth exploring a return to a tiered pricing model where most ELN partners would opt in to most products, with variation among a few institutions according to local program needs. If funding for libraries in our post-secondary system is so inequitable that this approach would leave some libraries without the most basic resource mix needed to support their</p>
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	<p>programs, it would be good to surface rather than obscure that reality by redistributing “system money” in a way that is removed from institutional context and accountability. It seems to us that such a structural problem, if it exists, should be resolved, rather than addressed obliquely through a Common Suite that should be focused on authentic content requirements.</p> <p>We were asked how committing to the Common Suite is different than committing to a 3-year CRKN license. A key difference is that if at the end of a license term a CRKN product is no longer giving adequate return on investment (based on our internal rubric comprising several quantitative and qualitative measures), we can opt not to renew the license without necessarily calling into question the viability of the license for other participants. Since the unbundling of the CNSLP and DCI years ago, CRKN licenses do not require participation by all CRKN members. Also, CRKN negotiates opt-out clauses for many multi-year agreements.</p> <p>We agree with comments offered by Royal Roads in the last survey that the continued primacy of EBSCO in the Common Suite investigation / proposal process is problematic. We still do not have, and cannot seem to get, transparency around EBSCO’s pricing for Common Suite products. The fact that some ELN (and e-HLbc) members also license EDS, and associated ERM and link resolver tools, appears to make it difficult to achieve that transparency, and also provides incentive for some members to commit to a common suite of content that performs well in that discovery environment. At VIU, we have made a deliberate choice to license a discovery tool (Summon) that is platform-agnostic in terms of displaying content results, and it is important to us to try to avoid being unduly dependent on or beholden to a single vendor for our range of services and collections.</p>
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Q3. Please share any additional comments about the modified common suite proposal.

For those who selected: *My institution can agree to the common suite: ASP and BSP (one of your choice upgraded to Complete), and includes CBCA.*

<p>Northern Lights College (D. Turcotte)</p>	<p>I support the first option, if this is the group decision. While I would prefer to stay with the existing common suite, and I do recognize that we are a very tiny college, I appreciate that we are able to piggyback on the larger universities for our database costs.</p> <p>CBCA is a very expensive database for the cost and abysmal amount of use we get from it. Stats from Sept 2016 - April 27 are as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="407 1423 1451 1482"> <thead> <tr> <th>Searches</th> <th>Database</th> <th>Cit/Abstract</th> <th>Any FT Format</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>32</td> <td>CBCA Reference & Current Events</td> <td>2</td> <td>15</td> <td>17</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>works out to approx. \$68 per search.</p> <p>I recently spoke with our EBSCO rep and she asked me how I would feel about a 20% discount on the ASP & BSP Complete I said it would all depend on what BCELN will charge us and what my limited budget will allow. According to EBSCO, SFU & UBC are the main institutions that are affected by the current common suite fees.</p>	Searches	Database	Cit/Abstract	Any FT Format	Total	32	CBCA Reference & Current Events	2	15	17
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<p>Northwest Community College (M. Wilke)</p>	<p>Thank you for listening to the concerns and ideas and making something good come out of it!</p>										
<p>Thompson Rivers University (P. Haggarty)</p>	<p>I have consulted with Brenda Mathenia, the UL and we are in agreement on our response. Thanks!</p>										

University Canada West (A. Mitescu)	Many thanks to the Office staff for all the work in updating the proposal and for the opportunities to provide feedback.
Yukon College (A. Goncalves)	It looks in fact like a better proposal. We see more value in maintaining CBCA as part of the suite and giving libraries the choice to whether or not subscribe to Canadian Newsstream.

For those who selected: *My institution can agree to the common suite: ASP and BSP (one of your choice upgraded to Complete), and excludes CBCA.*

Ascenda School of Management (A. de Haan)	I am not exactly thrilled at this option but I don't think there is a better one, for anyone. It still feels like we're losing content while paying the same amount and it's hard to see the value in that; especially when you are as small as we are. Like I said not thrilled but I think I can make it work.
College of the Rockies (S. Rashid)	In order to have access to current level of content COTR has to upgrade both AP &BP to complete level which is going to effect my current spent i.e. need to spend extra \$2582US. As a result we have to give up subscription to CBCA. COTR subscription for CBCA is the highest among Tier 1a i.e. \$4,929. I would like you to look into this please.
Royal Roads University (R. Croft)	It's difficult to see how this latest offer has an overall positive ROI for any member, even for those who will get money back (not RRU) as I am not sure that the amounts that they recover would enable them to go back to the two "completes" level of content that we all have currently. I objected to this somewhat forced upgrade when it happened 3 years ago because I neither saw the added content as valuable nor wanted to increase our expenditure in aggregator content - content that has eroded dramatically over recent years and has no lasting value for our institution. It was, at the time, too daunting a proposition to completely break off from the consortia arrangement by ourselves given our small size and lack of leverage. There was also a potential political cost that felt too difficult to bear; that such considerations come into what should be straightforward institutional collections ROI considerations around a vendor's product demonstrate, I think, that the interest of ELN as an organization touting this 'all-in' nature supersedes ensuring best negotiation value for all institutions. The all-in model is antithetical to good negotiation power.

For those who selected: *My institution can agree to the common suite: ASP and BSP (one of your choice upgraded to Complete), whether it includes or excludes CBCA.*

College of New Caledonia (K. Plett)	Thank you for the extra effort made to satisfy everyone's different circumstances, really appreciate it!
Douglas College (C. Guillou)	We will certainly upgrade to Complete. I like the idea of giving the choice of subscribing or not to CBCA. We will certainly subscribe to CBCA Complete that it is part of the common suite or not.

<p>Emily Carr University (S. Rackover)</p>	<p>Business Source is pretty low on our priority list so the premier level is sufficient for us. We'll likely opt for the ASC upgrade. I'm not certain that the emphasis on having multiple vendors in the Common Suite really makes a difference. It hasn't given us increased flexibility and it hasn't translated into greater savings for our institutions. If the decision is to remove CBCA from the common suite I would support that as well. We subscribe to it anyway.</p> <p>The three year subscription makes sense, I would rather see ELN staff move past this for a while and focus on other projects.</p>
<p>Quest University Canada (V. Wallsten)</p>	<p>We're very uncomfortable with the reduced access to full-text content from losing one of the Ebsco Complete levels, for the same amount of money paid, but it's the best option on the table at this time.</p> <p>Also, for future common suite negotiations, I'd like to see more discussion among the membership on how the tier system is organised, and to address inequalities between tiers in regards to pricing and FTE.</p> <p>Quest would have been happy to stick with the current UFC.</p>
<p>Simon Fraser University (P. Gallilee)</p>	<p>-- Concern that the current offer has less content for the same price. Although it was the will of the membership to have more than 1 vendor's resources in the suite, does it still make sense given the current proposal.</p> <p>-- If CBCA is included, more of my collection content (dollars) is 'locked-in'. This gives me less control over cancellation decisions for example.</p> <p>-- Disappointed that historic spend has not been addressed. As the suite was being negotiated afresh it seems like a great opportunity. Reasons given to me were: a) not enough people were concerned about the inequities in tiers, b) many institutions couldn't afford to increase their spend. No concern: the potential for concern about inequities is always there as long as inequities exist. For example a new library director or head of collections could start in 6 months time and they may feel this is a problem. Affordability: a long term plan to move towards equitable costs per tier might be manageable by all?</p> <p>-- to manage internal budgets, line item invoices are needed (a cost for each resource in the suite)</p>
<p>UBC (M. Burton)</p>	<p>Itemized billing would be useful for our funders and resource expenditure tracking and forecasting - transparency is our friend.</p> <p>We have to justify all costs on a line by line basis.</p> <p>Tier alignment is always good.</p>
<p>UFV (K. Isaac)</p>	<p>We will continue to license CBCA regardless of whether it is included in the Common Suite. Inclusion of products from more than one vendor is not a priority for us. We are happy to see that Canadian Newsstand has been removed from the proposal, as this was not a useful product for UFV.</p>
<p>UNBC (H. Empey)</p>	<p>The modified proposal addresses most of my concerns. I look forward to the discussion in person.</p>
<p>Vancouver Community College (S. Lew)</p>	<p>Thank you again for all the work.</p>

For those who selected: *My institution needs more information before making a decision. [Note: Selecting this option will prompt a phone call intended to answer questions; there will then be an opportunity to resubmit your survey response.]*

<p>Vancouver Island University (J. Blackburn)</p>	<p>We articulated a concern around information literacy in the last survey, and since we were the only ones to do so in the survey results, we're assuming that the related FAQ on the Common Suite Web is in response to that comment. If that's the case, we feel that our concern has been misrepresented in the FAQ. We were not suggesting that aggregator resources do not contribute to information literacy, or that publisher packages are better for information literacy than aggregator packages. While publisher vs. aggregator concerns do arise for us in the context of making cancellation choices in tough financial circumstances, that has nothing to do with the comments we submitted re: information literacy. Rather, our point, affirmed by our public services librarian group and our own AskAway providers, was that information literacy goals are not necessarily well served by trying to ensure that students encounter similar interfaces and content across different institutions. The environment of information is more complex than that, collections and interfaces should authentically reflect local program offerings and needs, and it is not a service to simplify unduly. With our support, students need to build resilience and transferable IL skills that will serve them well no matter what information environment they find themselves in, throughout their post-secondary career and in life.</p>
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