Carnegie Mellon University Libraries

Approval Plan RFP

May 15, 2007

Carnegie Mellon University Libraries provide creative, expert and technologically advanced information services designed to be responsive to the present and continually changing information needs of the university community. The Libraries’ more than one million volumes are augmented by extensive digital resources including full-text electronic journals, databases, historical and research electronic collections, as well as media.

Carnegie Mellon University Libraries requests proposals from companies that can provide a complete Approval Plan.

Carnegie Mellon University Libraries would like to enter into a one year contract commencing July 1, 2007 with the bidder who, in its judgment, best meets or exceeds the requirements set forth in this RFP and offers the best total evaluated cost for their products and services. We seek the best combination of superior technology, service, and value.

The contract may be extended for one-year renewal periods at Carnegie Mellon University Libraries’ discretion. Contract extensions will be put into effect by mutual agreement and shall be contingent upon satisfactory performance evaluation by the Head of Acquisitions.

Costs and expenses incurred by bidders for developing responses to this RFP are entirely the responsibility of the bidder and shall not be chargeable in any manner to the Carnegie Mellon University Libraries.

Questions about this RFP should be submitted to: dn22@andrew.cmu.edu. The deadline for questions is May 25, 2007

Proposals must be sent as a Word attachment to: dn22@andrew.cmu.edu. The deadline for receipt of proposals is 5:00 pm EST on June 4, 2007

To learn more about Carnegie Mellon University Libraries, visit our website at www.library.cmu.edu.
MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

• The vendor must have an established record of providing approval plans to academic libraries. The vendor must provide a description of the company including: brief history, ownership, subsidiaries, location of offices, number of staff, and turnover rate. Name the top executives and their length of time with the company.

• The vendor must provide a comprehensive approval plan that offers books and online notification service for new titles, primarily English language monographs published in the U.S. and Europe. The plan must be suitable for a research university offering a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programs. Respondents must describe the approval service and provide a clear indication of its scope of coverage. Please include strengths and any exclusion in publishers and/or subject coverage.

• The vendor must provide a list of U.S. and non-U.S. publishers covered in the approval plan and include the following information:
  • Number of publishers
  • Number of publishers with whom you have placed active orders in the past 12 months
  • Percent that are University Press
  • Percent that are Trade publishers
  • Are firm orders regularly placed for titles distributed by publishers that are not on your publisher plan? If so, what is the fill rate for these publishers within 30 days; 60 days; 90 days?

Electronic Delivery of Basic Services

• The vendor must provide a database of approval/new title information.

• The vendor database must be accessible to authorized Library personnel.

• The vendor must offer and describe options for the electronic delivery of catalog records for books and invoicing data. The description should address the delivery of
  • machine readable “packing lists”
  • MARC catalog records with books shipped on approval
  • MARC catalog records with titles firm ordered or sent on standing order
  • Invoices for each automatic approval shipment that are compatible with the local ILS-based system.

Returns

• All titles supplied on approval must be returnable without permission.

• All titles from major Trade and University Presses ordered through online notification service must be returnable without permission unless the notification specifically indicates “non returnable.”

• Any title damaged in transit to the Library must be returnable without permission.
• Any physically defective title must be returnable within 180 days of receipt. Such merchandise must be eligible for exchange or credit at the option of the Library.

• Any title supplied due to the vendor's error must be returnable without permission.

• The vendor must be able to supply the Library with standard credit memos with which the Libraries may initiate credit documentation for returns.

**Invoicing and Statements**

• Each approval plan shipment must include a packing slip with the invoice number or copy of the invoice. Three copies of the invoice accompanying the shipments are preferred.

• All firm order and standing order invoices and correspondence must have reference to a specific purchase order number(s).

• If a printed invoice is supplied, it must contain an original and two copies.

• The invoice must show the purchase order number, the Fund ID, number of copies, ISBN number, author, title, list price, discount, and net price for each title shipped.

• The vendor must be able to provide a monthly statement of account. Credits and other activity must be clearly listed and linked to their relevant transactions. All outstanding invoices must be clearly indicated.

• Set up separate accounts for each account type, such as monographic orders and standing orders.

• Is a deposit account necessary? If so, what, if any, benefits does it have?

**Communication and Training**

• The vendor must provide a designated customer service representative who will be responsible for customer assistance, either directly or by referral to the appropriate parties of the vendor. The vendor must list the representative, toll free telephone number and electronic mail address.

• The vendor must provide a field representative who will visit the Library annually and be available for inquiry about the products and services of the vendor.

• The vendor must provide adequate on-site training for Library staff, as determined by the Library.
REQUIRED SPECIFICATIONS

Profiling

• The vendor should have a sophisticated, flexible system for profiling the Library’s collecting interests. The system should allow for the creation of separate approval plans in addition to separate sub-profiles, each with its own unique combination of publisher exclusions, subject descriptors, and non-subject parameters. Vendor should supply a sample profile as supporting documentation.

• The Library should be able to make or request profile changes at any time. Describe the process to change the profile, including:
  • How frequently can a profile be changed
  • How may changes be initiated (email, phone, online)
  • How quickly a change is reflected in the profile
  • The availability of cost projection reports reflecting requested changes

• The vendor should describe how a subject profile could be adjusted to narrow or more specifically focus a subject area.

• The vendor should describe how a profile for an interdisciplinary fund such as Environment Across the Curriculum or Gender Studies would be handled.

• The vendor should describe the profiling process for a new customer.

• The vendor should describe the process for reviewing subject profiles with selectors, including frequency.

• The vendor should describe the process used to match titles to the approval plan. Please include responses to these questions:
  • Is book in hand used to improve and edit information in the approval system?
  • What fields are edited?
  • At what point in this process is the title considered “treated” for the Library?

• The vendor should describe who does the selection and matching of books to profiles. Please include remarks on the following:
  • Level of staff doing this work
  • Educational background
  • Subject expertise
  • Training
  • Pre-requisite work experience

• The vendor should supply a choice of subject profiling options and clearly explain the various profiling options available (e.g. LC or Dewey classification; subject thesauri)
• The vendor should provide a clear explanation of all non-subject parameters.

• Does the vendor system provide recommended adjustments to the profile based on returns and firm order history?

• The vendor should have a process to “force” books to come on approval that for whatever reason, have not or do not come on approval.

• The vendor should have a process in place for the delivery of paperbacks on approval, when new titles are available in both cloth and paperback. This process should not be limited to one type of publisher (e.g., University Presses). Respondents should describe this process (including timing differences in availability of cloth vs. paperback) and indicate the rate of discount for such paperbacks.

• When new titles are available in both U.K. and U.S. editions, the vendor should have a process in place for the delivery in the approval plan of the least expensive edition. Respondents should describe this process.

• One of the objectives of a new approval book vendor plan for the University is to move to a single source supplier. In this context, the successful vendor would need to provide coverage of Canadian, and UK, imprints. Describe how your company currently sources this material and how this need would be met.

• Vendor should describe how it handles e-books in detail, and how the Library can access them.

• The vendor should describe the cataloging available for e-books, including the source and quality control of these records and when these records are or will be available.

• Vendor should describe their ability to provide materials in non-print formats, such as e-books, CDs, DVDs.

Approval/New Titles Database
• The vendor should indicate whether authorized library staff may have guest access to the vendor database (including any profiling tools) as a trial of its features during the evaluation period.

• The vendor's approval/new title database should be accessible via the Internet and should be up at least 20 hours a day, seven days a week.

• The approval/new title database should provide bibliographic records and supplementary book information.

• The vendor should describe all charges associated with full-range of access to the approval/new titles database. Does cost vary with type or level of access? If so, how are costs and access levels determined?
The basic bibliographic record should include, but not be limited to:
- Author
- Title
- Publisher
- Price
- Updated price
- Country of origin
- Date of publication or date of expected publication
- ISBN
- LCCN
- LC class
- Publication status
- Series title
- Pagination

The approval/new title database should provide access to:
- Table of contents
- Descriptive summaries or abstracts
- Reviews
- Information from the book jacket
- Author affiliations

The record for each title should include the vendor’s assigned subject and non-subject parameters.

The record for each title should include an indication of the title’s treatment for the Library, i.e. whether it matched the profile or not.

The record should indicate if the title will come on the Library’s standing order or if the title has been firm ordered by the Library.

The record for each title should include ordering, shipping, and invoicing information for the Library, updated to reflect changes.

Please describe the frequency of updates to information in this database.

The vendor should provide e-mail notification of prospective publications within the profile, but not sent on automatic approval.

The approval/new title database should contain at least five years of the vendor’s new title/approval information. The vendor should describe how soon or under what circumstances titles are purged from the database.

The approval/new title database should include both an inquiry and an order function. The order function should include:
- Approval orders for titles not yet published
• Firm order function for any title in the approval/new title database
  • A request option, which can be converted to an order option by the Library.
  • Note: Of particular interest is the ability to place a firm order with the instruction “do not duplicate on approval.”

• Respondents should describe the way the Library would place orders through this database.

• Respondents should indicate the number of notes fields available to the Library staff within the approval/new title database order function.

• Describe availability of other web-based services such as claims, cancellations, status inquiries, or other queries with respect to the approval plan, firm orders, and standing orders.

• The approval/new title database should offer a wide spectrum of access points. Respondents should provide a list of the approval/new title database's search types. Access by series title search is desirable and respondents should describe this functionality.

• The vendor should explain how ongoing series (both numbered and unnumbered) and sets could be handled in the approval plan and be specifically excluded from the approval plan (if there is a current standing order on file).

**Customer Services**

• The vendor should provide a summary of the support offered for the array of current services described in their response to this RFP.

• The vendor should describe the procedure for RUSH orders. What service charges, if any, are associated with RUSH orders?

• The vendor should describe the out-of-print/out-of-stock services that are provided. What costs are associated with those services?

• The vendor should specify the general qualifications and training of staff who would be working with this library’s account (for example, individuals who select, buy, and profile titles for the approval plan).

• The vendor should specify how many accounts each customer representative handles.

• The vendor should specify how quickly customer services representatives are expected to respond to questions or problems from the Library.

• The vendor should indicate how short shipments of new approval titles are avoided.

• What is the overall firm order fill rate for academic library customers, within 1 week, 2 weeks, 30 days, 60 days, 90 days?
• The vendor should describe the process to prevent duplication of firm order requests and standing orders against titles being sent in approval shipments.

• The vendor should indicate the length of time from the publisher release date to receipt of book by vendor to shipment to the library. What is the average amount of time between the publisher release date of a title and the date it appears in the approval plan shipment to the customer?

• What is the average turnaround time for firm orders from receipt to fulfillment?

• The vendor should describe the frequency of shipments, method of shipment, and ability to track shipments. What provisions are made for shipments in major holiday periods (e.g., July 4)?

• Are the books shrink wrapped or do you use other recyclable packing material to ship?

• The vendor should specify the time frame allowed for return of non-selected approval books. Is there a penalty if books aren’t returned in designated time frame?

• The vendor should describe the procedure for issuing credit memos.

• The vendor should describe how shipping charges for approval plan, firm orders, and standing orders are calculated.

• The vendor should specify who is expected to pay freight charges for returns.

• The vendor should state the average return rate in approval plans for libraries comparable to University. The vendor should describe their acceptable return rate in an approval plan.

• The vendor should state the return policy for standing order titles.

• The vendor should describe cancellation policy and procedures, including the following:
  • Can approval shipments for either selected funds or all funds be cancelled on request?
  • Can all shipments be cancelled on request?
  • Is additional profiling needed to restore shipments, or can shipments be reinstated without loss of profile data?
  • How much lead-time is required for cancellation and reinstatement of shipments?
  • What is the firm order cancellation policy?
  • What is the standing order cancellation policy?

• The vendor should describe claiming policy and procedures, including the following:
  • What is the firm order claiming policy?
  • What is the standing order claiming policy?
• Vendor should provide separate invoicing for charges related to cataloging records and processing of approval books.

**Vendor-Assisted Processing**

For each point listed below, the vendor should specify whether the service described is available immediately. If the service is not available immediately, the vendor should state whether the service is planned and estimate a start date. For services available now the vendor must list a library customer able to serve as a reference. The Library is interested in the availability, process, and pricing for vendor-supplied services. If your company outsources these services, please describe how this is done and provide information about that company. If you do not provide these services, indicate “N.A.”

• The vendor should offer and describe options for the delivery of shelf-ready materials and the full set of data needed in advance to prepare for the receipt of the materials.

• The vendor should offer delivery of cataloging records in full bibliographic USMARC format, with full ALA character set, in compliance with the LC authority file entry format for names, subject headings, series and uniform titles, which comply with OCLC Level I input standards.

• The vendor should specify the source database(s) of cataloging copy and what constitutes a matching record.

• The vendor should describe the process for adding the Library’s holding symbol to appropriate OCLC records.

• The vendor should offer and describe a procedure for upgrading CIP records.

• The vendor should be able to describe the process used to assign a unique Library of Congress classification number to each record provided. The description should address the ability to customize to the Library’s specifications the classification of bibliographies, series classed collectively, and collected works/sets.

• The vendor should offer and describe a procedure for adding holdings and/or barcode information to each cataloging record.

• The vendor should offer and describe options for full physical processing of books supplied on approval, on standing order, and on firm order. The Library estimates this to be approximately [#] titles/year. Book processing should include:
  • Affixing spine label
  • Affixing barcode label
  • Inserting tattle tape
  • Stamping book with the Library’s property stamp.

• Vendor should provide itemized pricing information for vendor-assisted processing.
• Vendor must describe handling orders, processing and shipping of fully catalogued materials to an international campus, i.e. Carnegie Mellon University Qatar.

**Interfaces with Integrated Library System**

• The vendor should provide a summary of their system interfaces and applicable relationships with the ILS, Sirsi/Dynix. Describe any necessary modifications required to use the vendor’s interface with the ILS acquisitions module.

**Management Reports**

• The vendor should provide Order Status reports electronically.

• The vendor should be able to provide easily comprehensible management reports no less than four times a year, by sub-profile, by classification, by publisher, outlining the quantity of titles purchased and returned in the category, the total list cost for the time period, and the same information for the year to date. The vendor should provide author/title information in these categories upon request.

• The vendor should be able to prepare cost projections based on the Library profile(s), indicating the number of books and title notifications to expect in a year and the anticipated costs. Describe content and frequency for regular cost projection reports for the approval plan broken down by sub-profile, classification, publisher, historical activity reports, and customized reports on customer’s request.

• The vendor should be able to deliver an annual cost and coverage study that reflects statistical information on all approval titles handled during the past year. The study should be customizable to meet the Library’s needs. Please supply example(s) of cost/coverage study as supporting documentation.

• The vendor should describe what reports can be generated by the Library on its own.

**INFORMATION CONCERNING FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

Describe future plans to enhance services, develop new programs, develop or refine customer base.

• Although University has provided an overview of its needs, it is not intended to limit the respondent’s innovations or creativity in preparing a proposal to accomplish these goals. Innovative ideas and new concepts, other than those suggested in this request shall be considered. Please indicate any other value-added arrangements that will be made available to University.

**COST AND FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

• How many academic libraries has your company added as customers in the past two calendar years: in 2006? In 2007?

• How many academic library customers have you lost in the past two calendar years: in 2006? In 2007?
The vendor should indicate if a uniform discount percentage is applied to all approval books. If so, does this uniform discount also apply to all firm orders and standing orders?

If the proposed plan applies a uniform discount percentage to all books, the vendor should state that percentage. If the percentage is not uniform, please provide complete information on how discounts are calculated and applied.

The vendor should describe the process for monitoring customer business and revising a customer's discount. The vendor should describe the conditions and process under which the discount rate or pricing structure would change.

The vendor should state the discount on offer to University Library for:
- Approval plan titles
- Firm order titles
- Standing orders
Include specifics on any exceptions to the rate(s) quoted and specify how long these discounts remain in effect.

**Firm Order Questions**
- Jobber supplies reports on availability (status) of titles ordered if they cannot be shipped within a month.
- Vendor shall provide EDI (electronic data interchange) ordering capabilities
- Vendor shall provide order confirmation.

**Standing Orders Questions**
- What is your experience with serials titles?
- Information about how your company handles Claims and Title Changes, Splits, Mergers and Cessations
- What assistance do you provide for the transition from our old sources? Explain your ability to set up a new account without gaps in coverage.
- The Contractor shall accept orders for continuation titles ordered at varying frequencies such as: (1) every edition published, (2) every other edition, (3) every third edition.