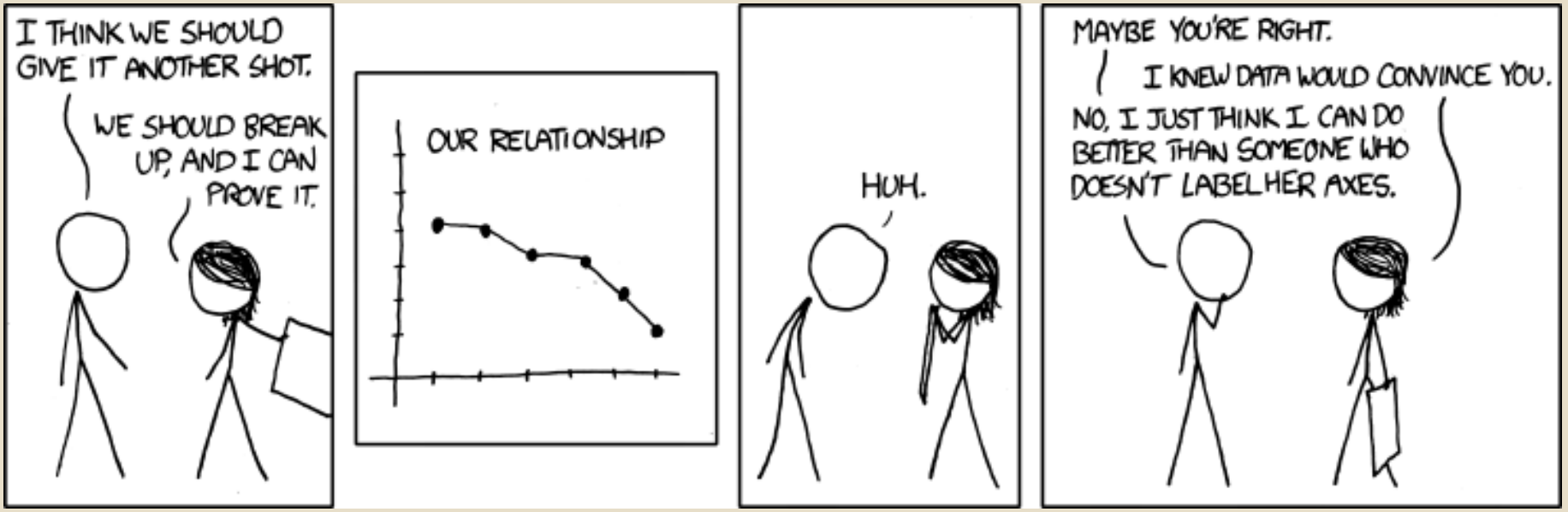
The Value of Purchasing E-book Collections From A Large Publisher

Aaron K. Shrimplin

Jennifer W. Bazeley

Miami University Libraries



http://xkcd.com/833/

by Randall Monroe

Overview

- Background
- User attitudes toward e-books at Miami University
- Springer e-book collections & SpringerLink
- OhioLINK's EBC
- Methodology
- Findings: titles used, the Pareto principle, the long tail, inflationary effect, downloads by book type, past usage as a predictor of future use, the value equation
- Conclusions
- Next steps
- Questions & Comments

Background & Context

- Miami University – public university, 16,000 students, known for quality teaching and learning, relatively small graduate student population (less than 10%)
- Transitioning to a mostly digital library
- Experimenting with a variety of providers, platforms, pricing and selection models
- OhioLINK (publisher deals), PDA pilot with ebrary, preparing a test of STLs, selectors are beginning to privilege e-books.

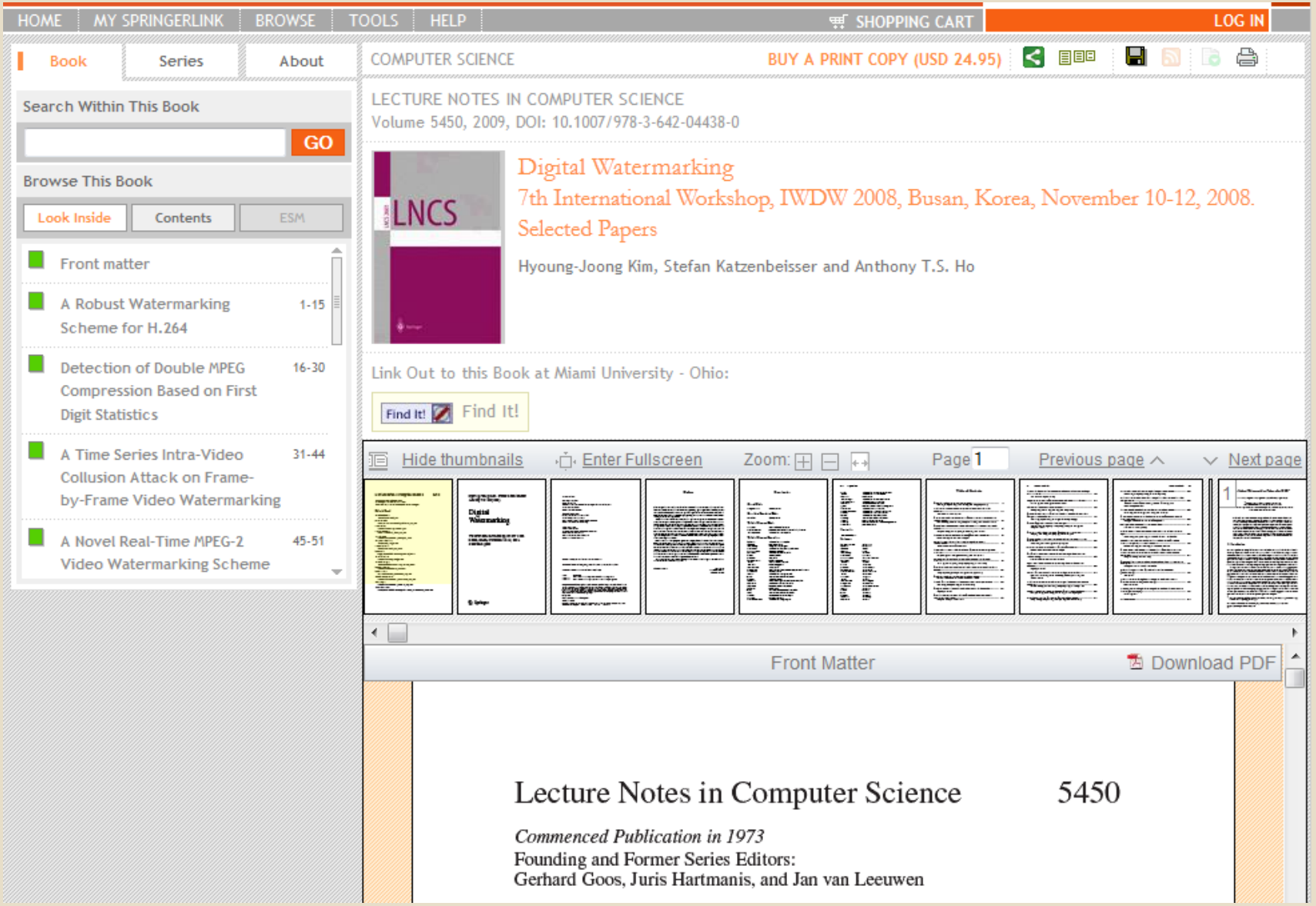
Q Methodology Study in 2008 & Large-n Survey in 2009 (n=735)

- Book Lovers (34%)
  - have an inherent affinity for the print form
- Technophiles (23%)
  - are strongly interested in the possibilities of new technology as regards the book
- Pragmatists (17%)
  - are the most neutral of the four, as they are most interested in content and see pros and cons of both formats
- Printers (26%)
  - printers prefer print books but are distinguished from Book Lovers in that they have specific difficulties with the usability of e-books

Where Do We Go From Here?

- Ramp up our e-book collections (local and consortial)
- Many more questions than answers: single or multi-user access? unlimited usage or a ceiling? owned or leased? local load or vendor/publisher platform? collection level, title-by-title, PDA, STL/PPV?
- Time to assess some of our experiments to-date. What does the data tell us?
- What's the value of purchasing e-book collections from a large publisher?
- Preliminary study that focuses on the 2008 Springer e-book collection and its use over a three-year time period.

Springer E-Books at SpringerLink

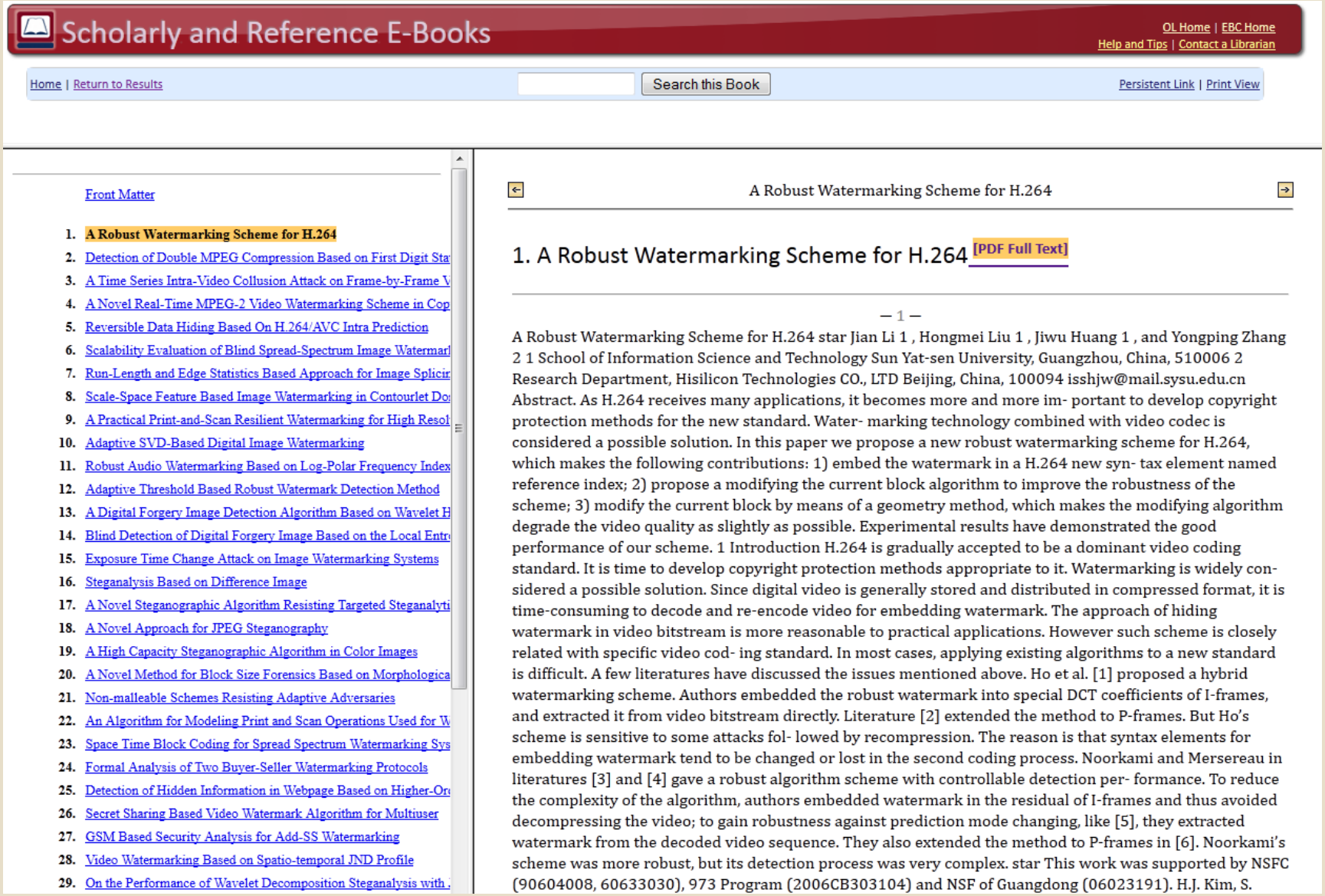


View E-Book at SpringerLink

OhioLINK Electronic Book Center (EBC)

- What is it?
- What's in it?
- What about the publisher's platform?
- What publishers are included?
  - ABC-Clio
  - Chadwyck-Healey (ProQuest)
  - Gale
  - Oxford University Press
  - Sage
  - Springer
- What else is in the EBC?

Springer E-Books in the EBC



View E-Book in the EBC

Methodology

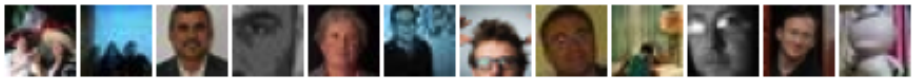
- Copyright year 2008 & added to OhioLINK's EBC in 2008
- n= 2,529 Springer e-book titles
- Compiled usage from 2008-2010 using Standard COUNTER BR2 reports & OhioLINK EBC download reports
- Springer's eBook Title List
- SPSS

@MikeBloomberg
Mike Bloomberg

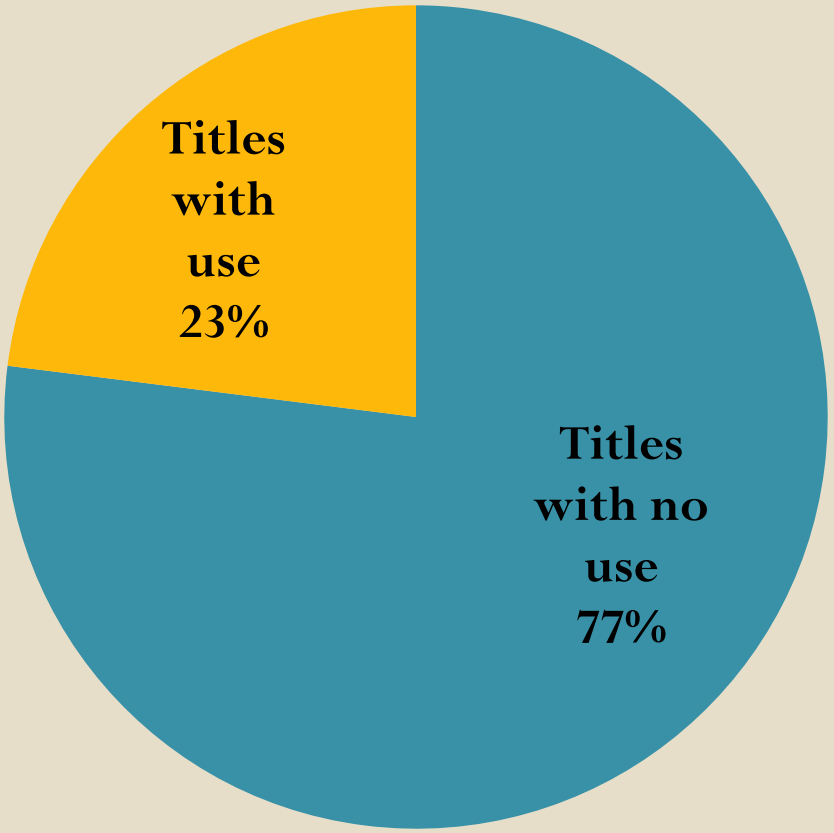
In God we trust. Everyone else, bring data: on.nyc.gov/oHMCKo #NYC #Smoking #PublicHealth

15 Sep via web

Retweeted by patmmccann and 100+ others



Title Use: 2008-2010, n=2,529



Benchmarks

Galvin, Thomas J. and Allen Kent. "Use of a University Library Collection: a Progress Report on a Pittsburgh Study." *Library Journal* 102, no. 20: (1977): 2317-201

- 40% of print books are unused six years after purchase

Springer e-books: an average of 194 titles accessed for first time each year

- 2008 – 209 titles used for the 1st time
- 2009 – 240/308 titles used for the 1st time
- 2010 – 133/213 titles used for the 1st time

Trend shows that 54% of our e-books will be unused after six years

More Benchmarks

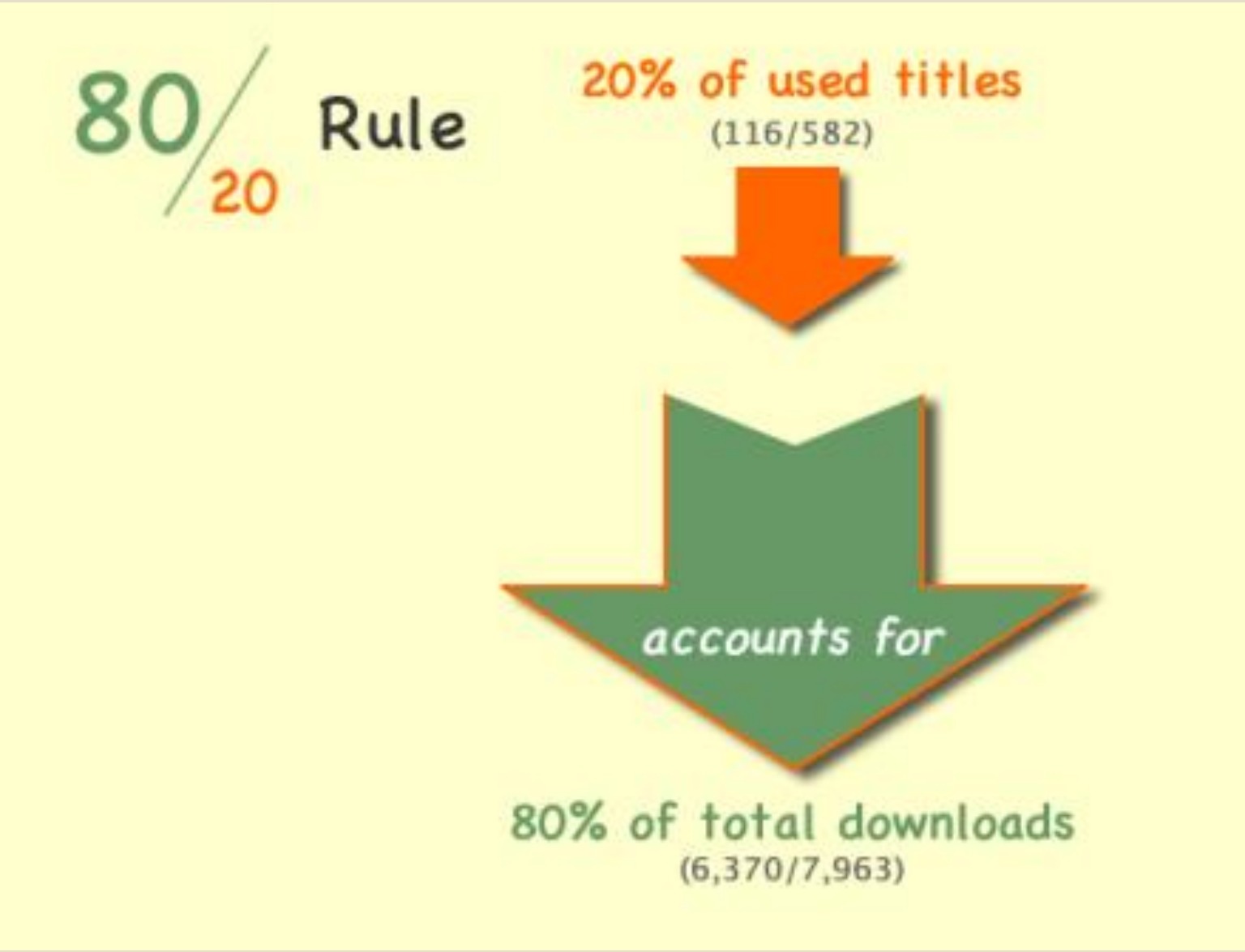
Bucknell, Terry. "The 'Big Deal' Approach to Acquiring E-Books: A Usage-Based Study." *Serials* 23, no. 2 (2010): 126-134.

- fewer than 40% of the purchased Springer e-books have not been used within two years of purchase

Sprague, Nancy, and Ben Hunter. "Assessing E-Books: Taking a Closer Look at E-Book Statistics." *Library Collections, Acquisitions, & Technical Services* 32 (2009): 150-57.

- ~19% of e-book titles have been accessed at least once
- 43,723 books from NetLibrary & Ebrary

Pareto Principle



Long Tail: Infrequently Used Titles

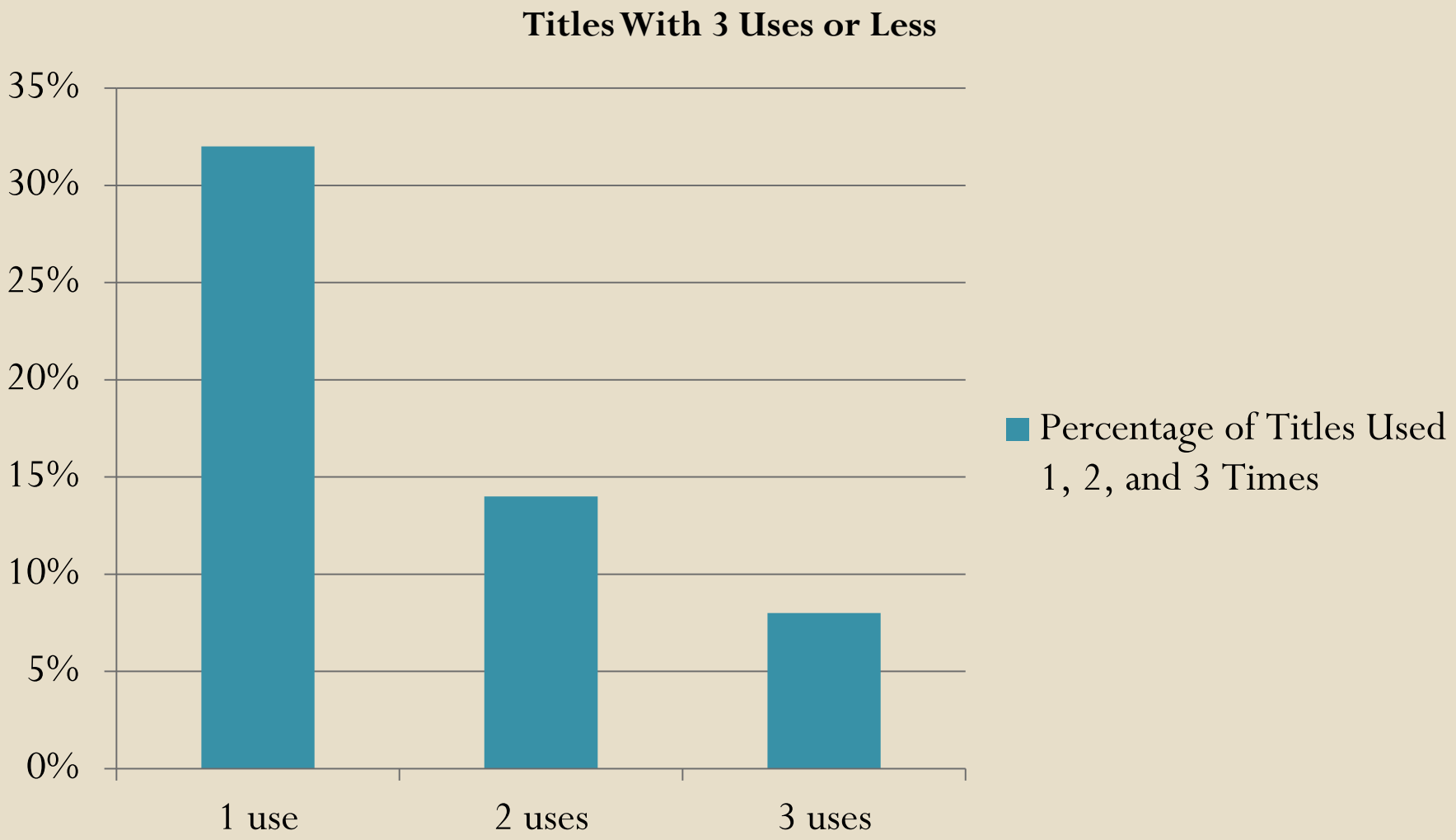
- 188/582 titles had 1 use
- 82/582 titles had 2 uses
- 48/582 titles had 3 uses

OR

318/582 titles had 3 uses or less (54.6%)

Constitute 6.2% of the total downloads (7,963)

Long Tail: Infrequently Used Titles

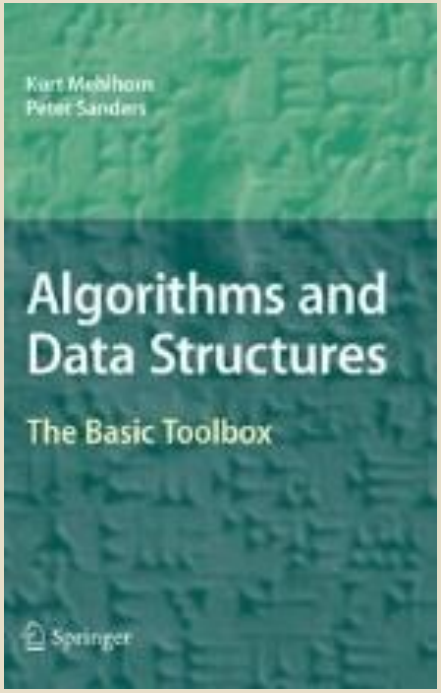


Few High Use Titles Dominate

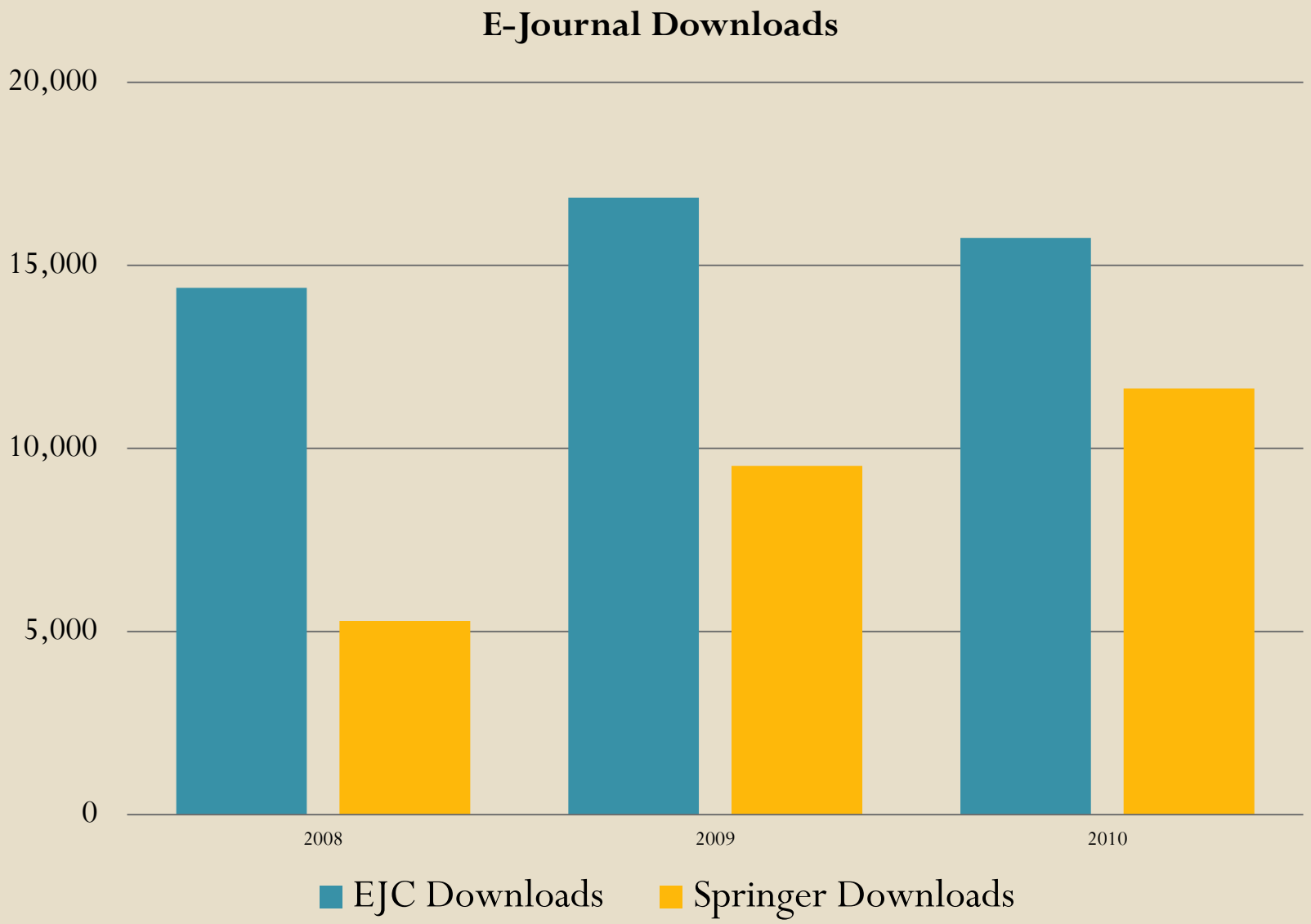
#1 Title

Algorithms and Data Structures

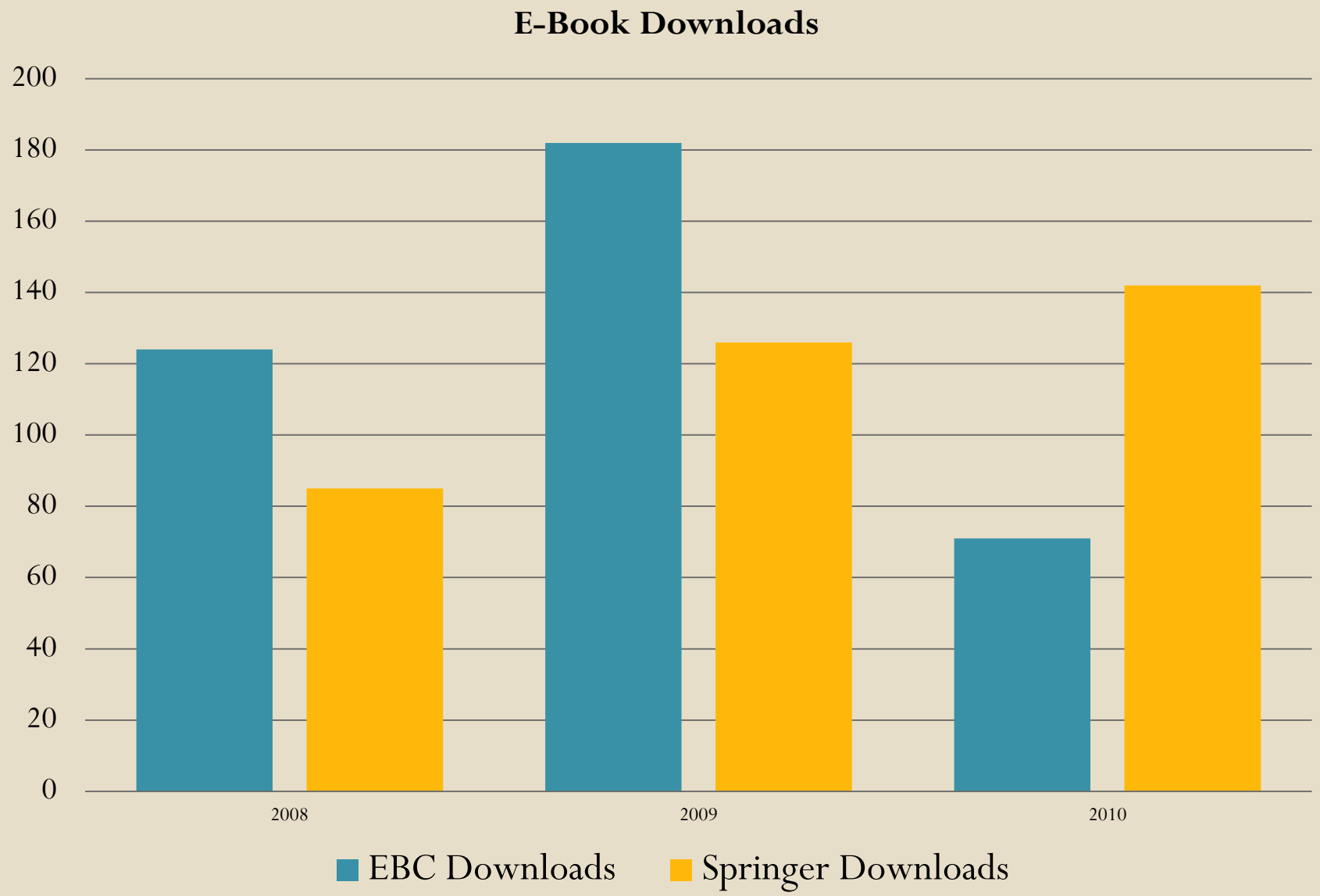
2,264 uses (or 28.4%) of the total uses over 3 years



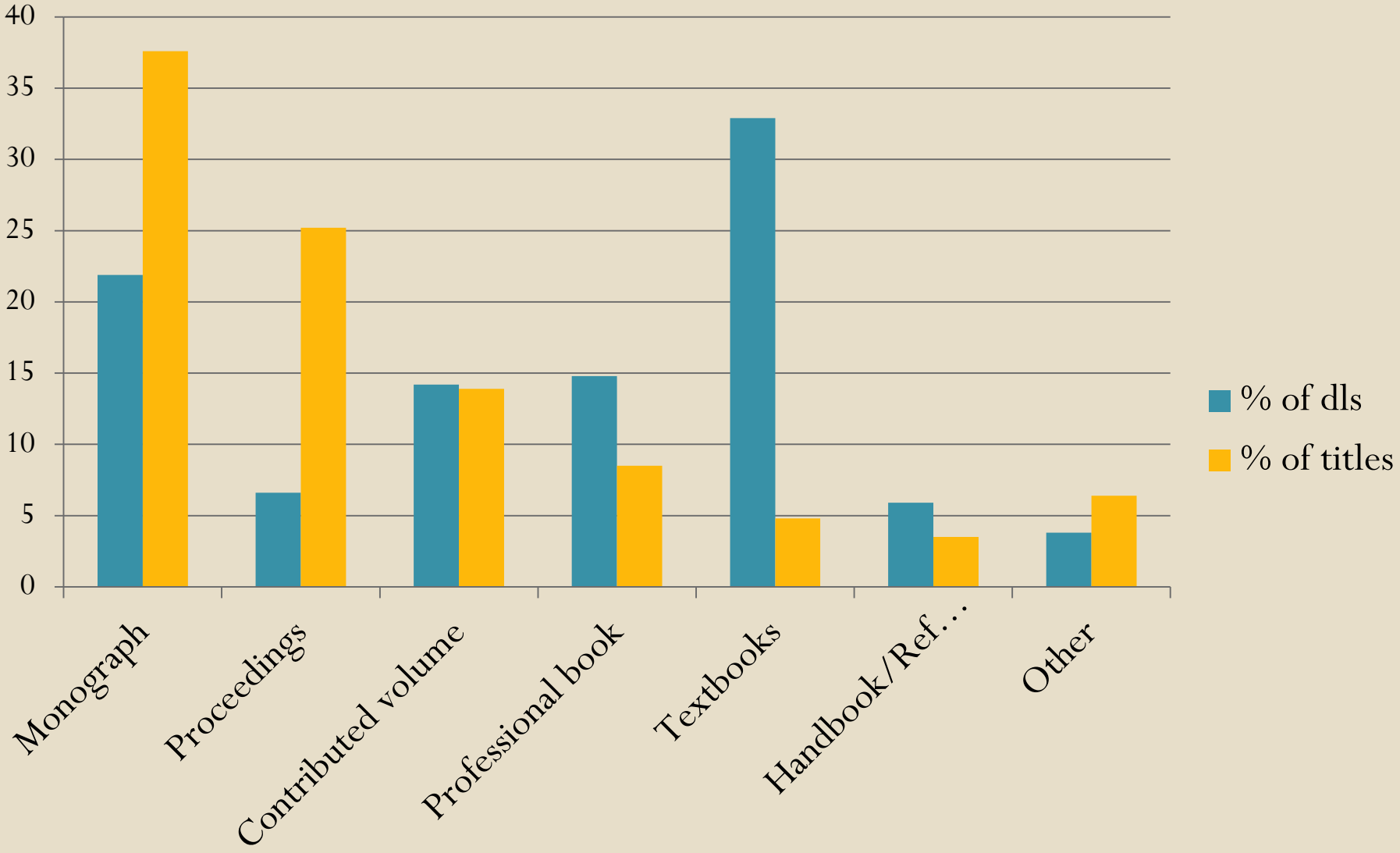
Inflationary Effect: E-Journals



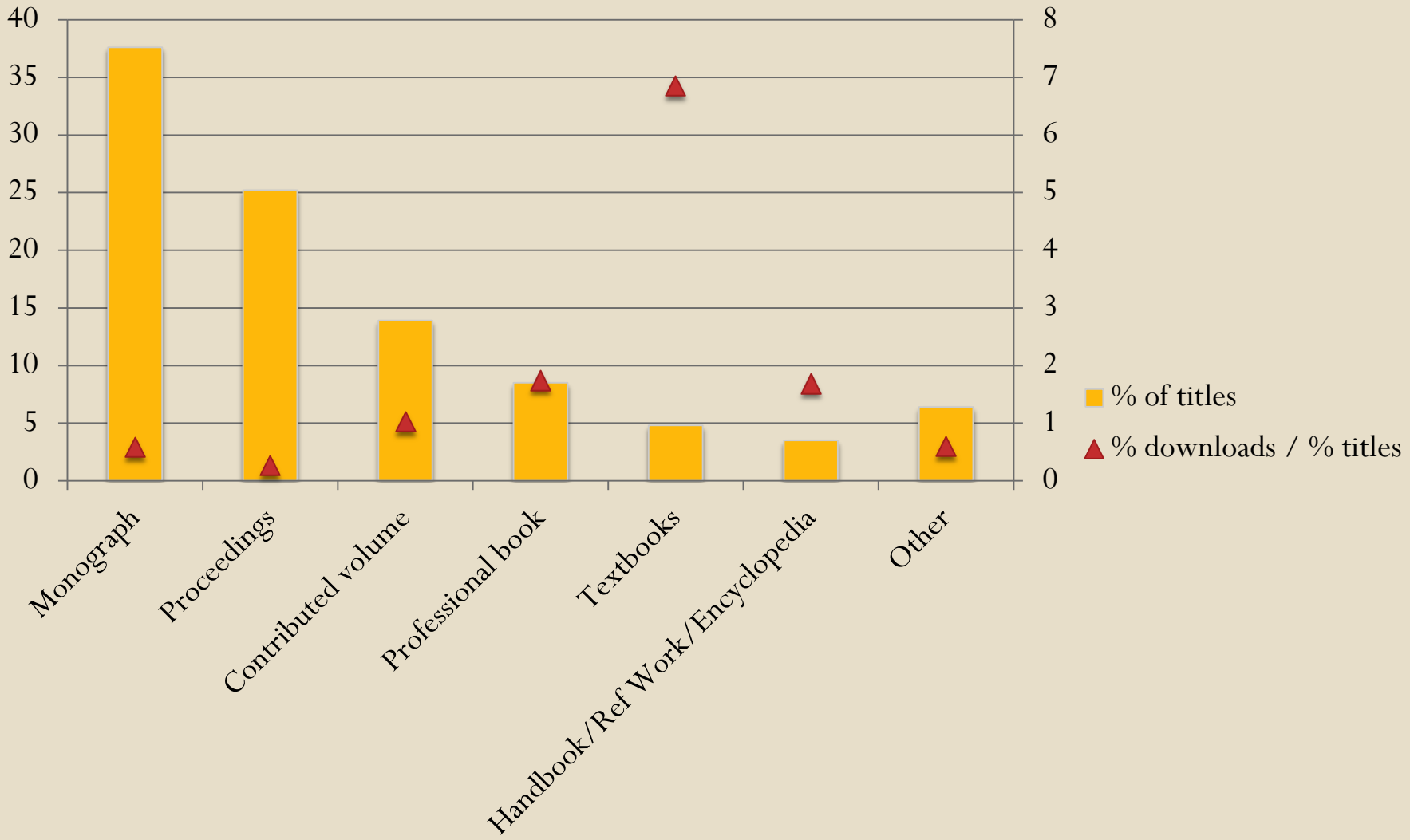
Inflationary Effect: E-Books



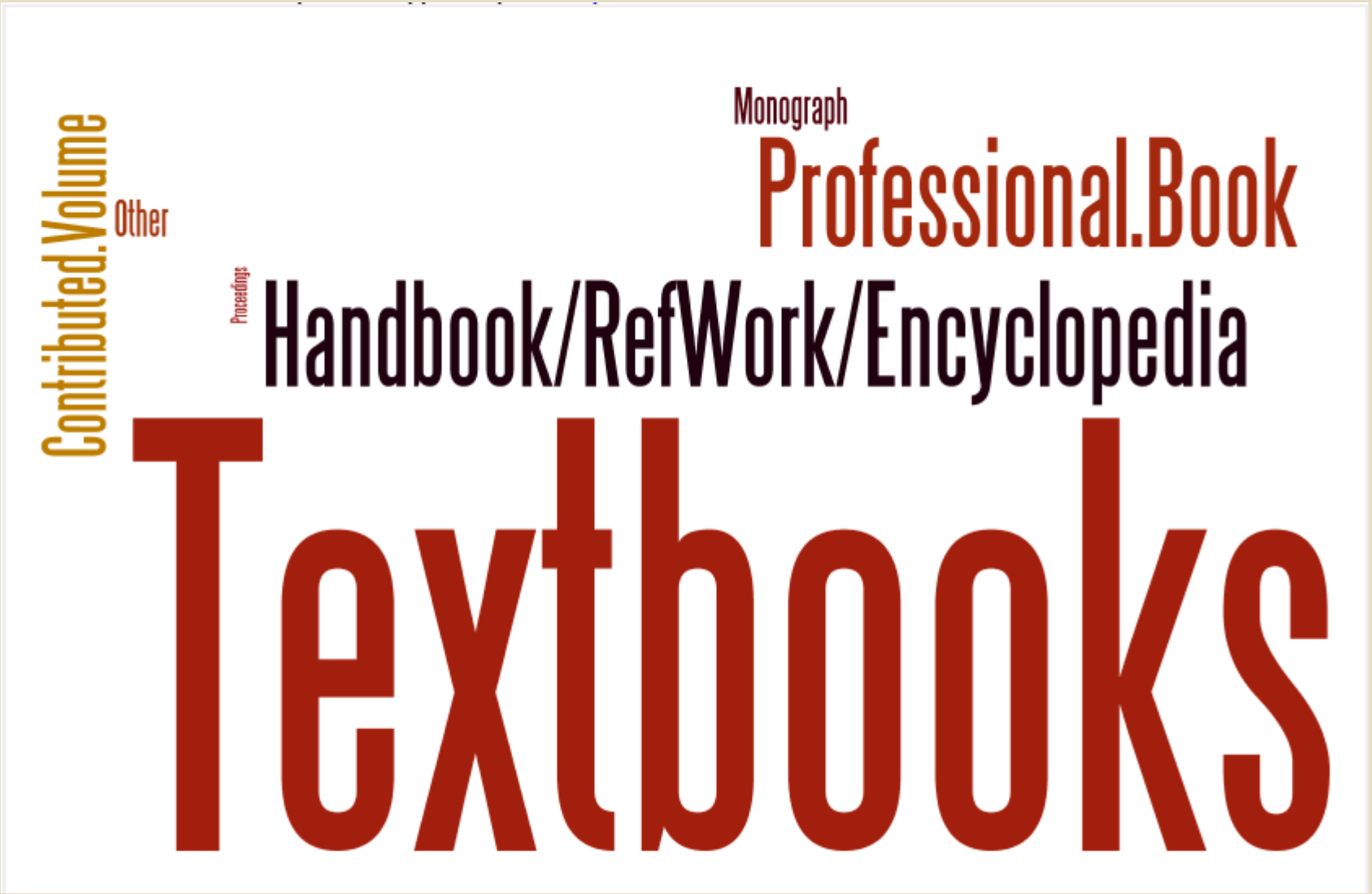
Downloads by Book Type



Number of Downloads by Book Type

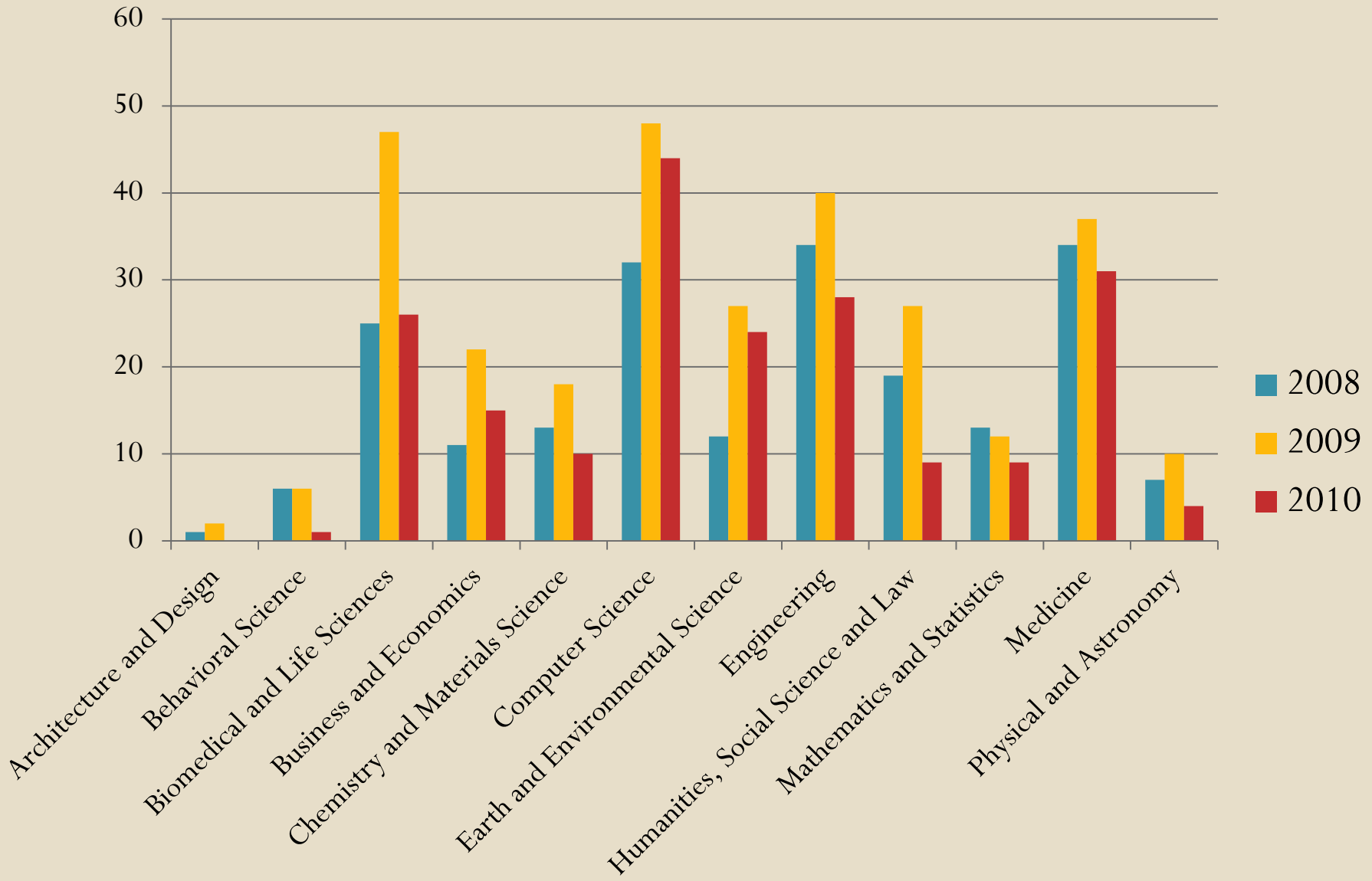


Book Type Word Cloud

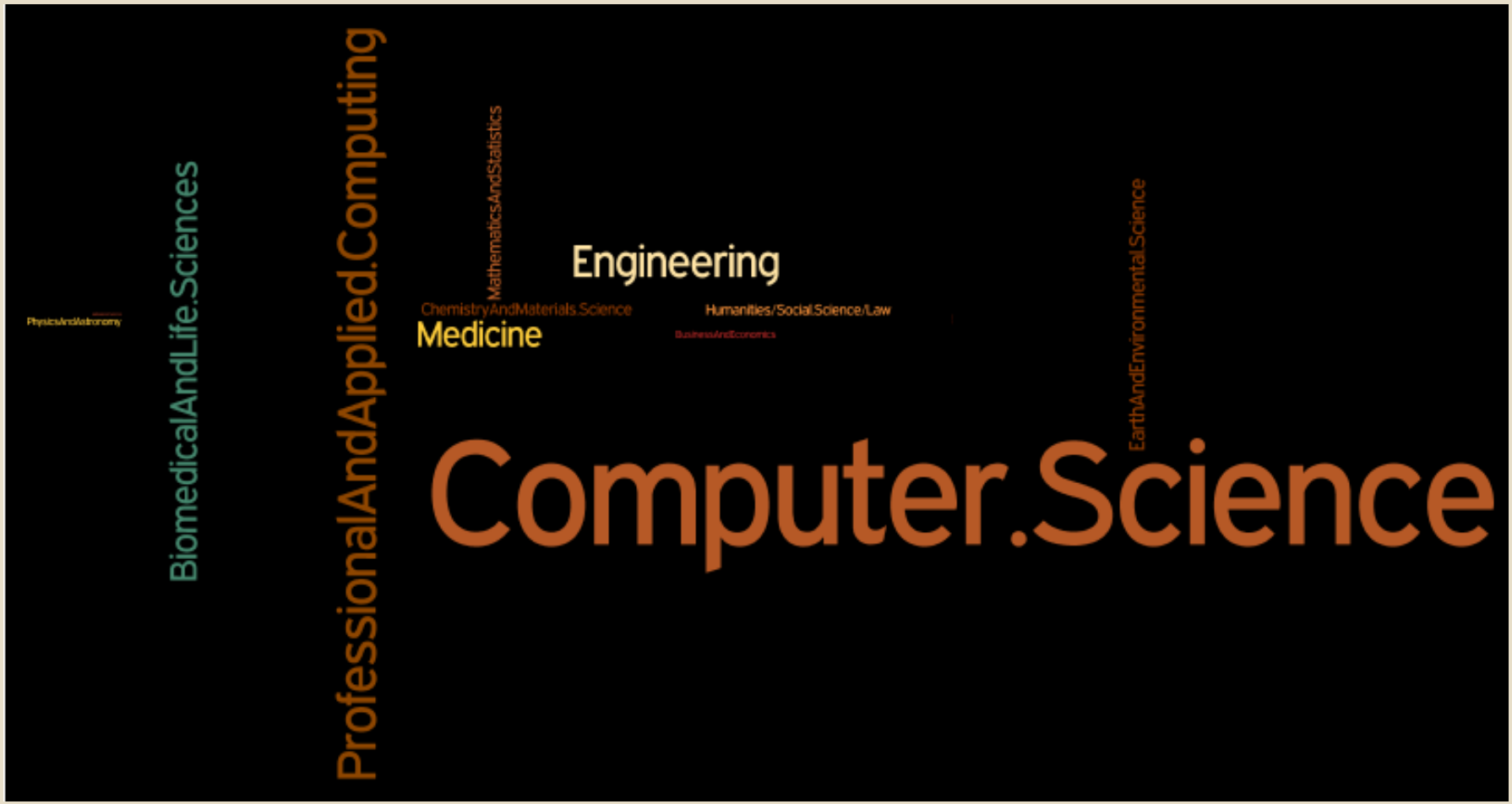


Book Type Word Cloud at Wordle

Number of Titles Used by Subject Area



Subject Area Word Cloud



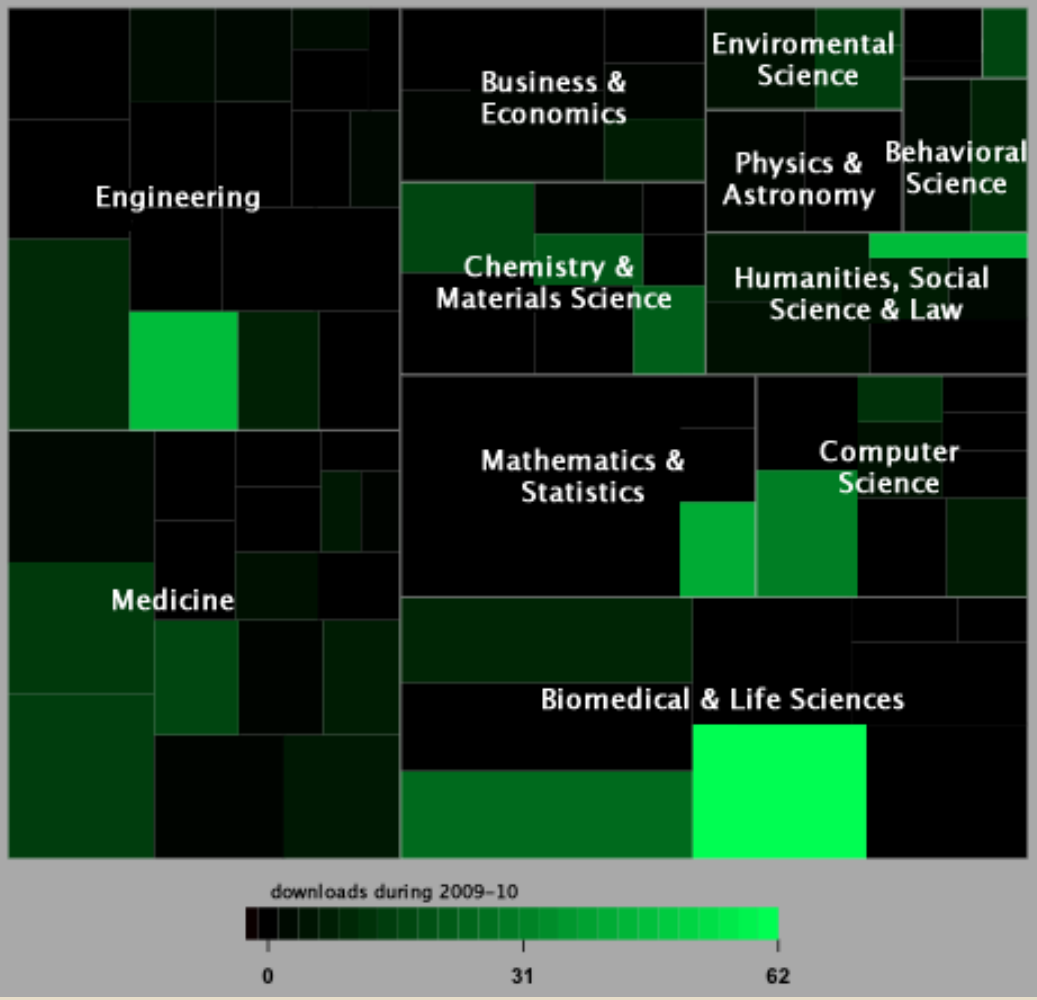
View Subject Area Word Cloud at Wordle

Past Usage Predicts Future Usage

- Usage pattern shows that many titles that were well used (4 or more) in 2008 received additional usage in 2009 and 2010.
- There are 87 titles with 4 or more uses in 2008.
- Of these 87 titles 35 or 41.2% had 1 or more used in 2009, and 20 or 23.0% had 1 or more uses in 2010.

Past Usage Predicts Future Usage

Below are heavily used titles (4 or more downloads) during 2008. Each rectangle represents a book (87 in total). Size represents number of downloads in 2008 and brighter green indicates more usage during 2009 – 2010.



Value of the Big Deal

- Our price tag to OhioLINK is a good value and becomes a better value over time with additional usage

- Cost per download also seems to be a good value when compared with others (e.g. Elsevier study of ScienceDirect e-books which determined cost per use is $5.10 per chapter).

- Having the choice to select only a subset of subjects might be useful

80/20 – 116 titles @ $100.00

318 titles with 494 downloads @ $6 per download

~$14,500

Conclusions

- 77% percent of the titles in this study were not used from 2008-2010
- Underperforming asset?
- Pareto rules!
- A few high use titles dominate & the long tail accounts for a very small percentage of the total downloads.
- Platform matters -- e-books that are cross-searchable with e-journal content is appealing (SpringerLINK is a dream come true for Pragmatists and Technophiles)
- One word: textbooks
- Title use peaks across all subject areas in 2009 and it's all about STEM with Computer Science as the most used collection.
- Heavy use begets more use as time goes on …

Next Steps

- Continue to evaluate different e-book purchasing and pricing models.
- No single approach
- PDA & PPV/STL
- Marketing
- Easy access and better usability (comprehensive search)
- Look for solutions that provide even more e-book titles, available at the time of publication, with multiple purchasing and pricing models
- Continue to investigate the Springer collections with more years and more titles or at the consortial level
- OUP

- Questions or Comments?

Works Cited

Bucknell, Terry. "The 'Big Deal' Approach to Acquiring E-Books: A Usage-Based Study." *Serials* 23, no. 2 (2010): 126-134.

Galvin, Thomas J. and Allen Kent. "Use of a University Library Collection: a Progress Report on a Pittsburgh Study." Library Journal 102, no. 20: (1977): 2317-20.

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Miami University Libraries

Aaron K. Shrimplin

Assistant Dean for Reference and Collection Services

shrimpak@muohio.edu

Jennifer W. Bazeley

E-Resources & Serials Librarian

bazelejw@muohio.edu