

Report: Calendar Year 2000
Statistics for reQuest ILL
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Introduction

This report examines statistics for reQuest Interlibrary Loan (ILL) for the period January 1, 2000 to December 31, 2000. These statistics are for the entire reQuest ILL system and include both original and copy lending requests.

	Books	Copies	Totals
Requests	69979	1001	70980
Requests Rejected			
Cancelled	154	3	157
Not in collection	2005	362	2367
Not on shelf	16149	201	16350
Not lendable	6625	0	6625
Not responded to	11410	636	12046
Not copyable	0	72	72
Requests filled	34033	409	34442
Items received	32958	394	33352
Total Unfilled			37234

Table 1: Summary of reQuest ILL lending statistics for the year 2000

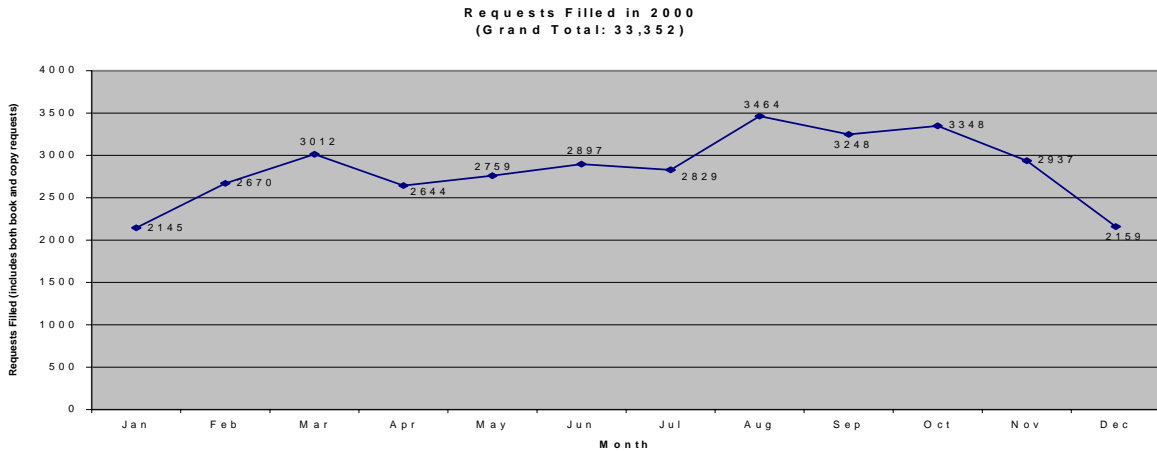


Chart 1: Requests filled by month for the year 2000

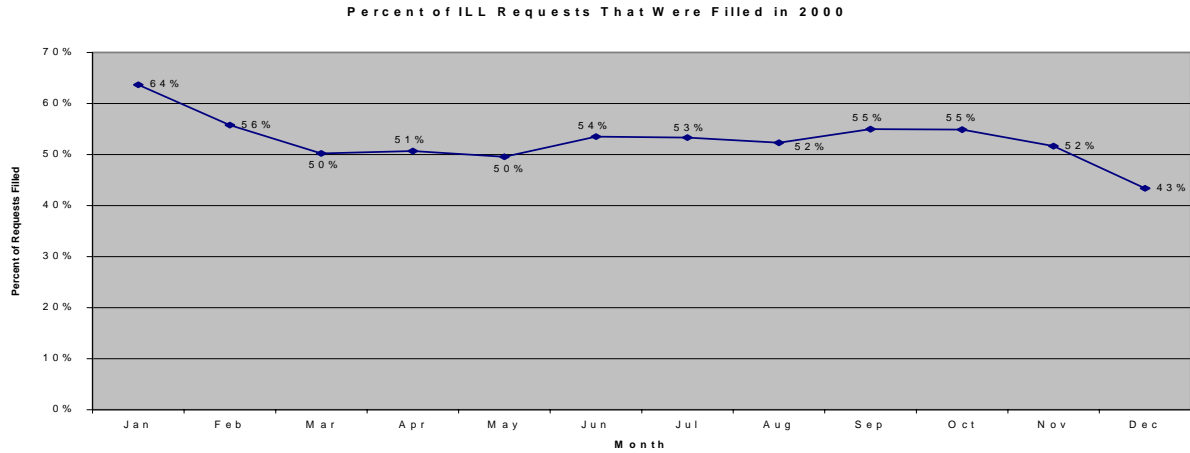


Chart 2: Percent of requests filled by month for the year 2000

Requests Filled

Requests Filled (Chart 1, previous page) shows the number of requests that were filled by month for the calendar year 2000. *Percent of Requests Filled* (Chart 2, above) shows the number of requests filled per month compared to the number of requests unfilled per month. reQuest ILL began rollout statewide in August 1999, therefore no statistics are available for calendar year 1999. We will be able to compare year 2000 statistics with year 2001 statistics next year to see what trends develop. For example, we will be able to see if the decrease in December's number of requests and decrease in percent of requests filled is unique to 2000 or is standard for the month of December.

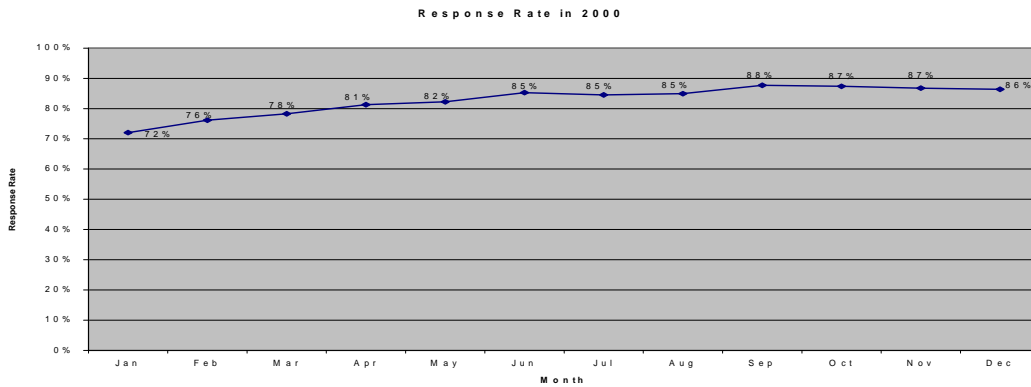


Chart 3: Response Rate for the year 2000

Response Rate

Though we are unable to compare this year to last, we can note a couple of interesting trends in these statistics. The statistics demonstrate that the *Response Rate* has increased over the past twelve

months (Chart 3, previous page). The response rate comes from comparing the number of lending requests that the library responds to, either as "filled" or "unfilled", with the number of requests that they have not responded to at all. In other words, it compares the numbers of lending requests that libraries act on with the number of lending requests that libraries ignore. The reQuest ILL system is set so that any request that is "not responded to" (i.e. not acted on by the library) after a minimum of three days automatically goes to another library that owns the material. No request should sit idly in a library's pending file indefinitely and the system is set to deal with this situation. Ideally, all participating libraries should be acting on and responding to all of their incoming lending requests.

In fact, more libraries are responding to requests they receive as the trend to a higher response rate indicates. The reason for the increase through the past year may be that library staff have become more familiar and comfortable with the system and have become more adept at responding to lending requests in a timely manner. Also, periodically I send reminders to libraries. I ask them to check their settings to make sure that the system will automatically adjust to cover vacations and holidays which helps prevent requests from automatically going to another library. Still, more work needs to be done to keep libraries from not responding to lending requests since the response rate ideally should be at or near 100% for all libraries.

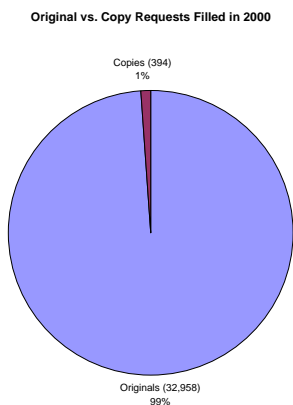


Chart 4: Filled requests original vs. copy for the year 2000

What is lent through the system?

ILL lending requests for originals outnumber requests for copies by a margin of 99 to 1 (Chart 4, previous page). There is very little copy request activity on the reQuest ILL system. This might be due to

the number of bibliographic databases that libraries offer to their patrons. It will be interesting to see if the Connecticut Digital Library has any impact on the number of copy requests transmitted through the reQuest ILL system.

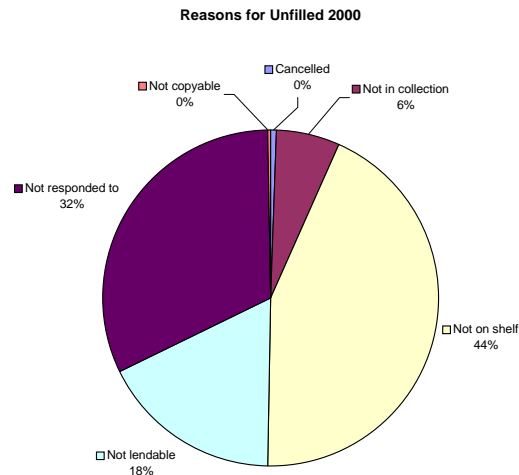


Chart 5: Reasons for unfilled requests for the year 2000

Why are requests unfilled?

The top three reasons requests go unfilled in the reQuest system (Chart 5, above) are:

1. the requested item is not on the shelf,
2. the request is not responded to by the lending library, and
3. the requested item is not lendable.

The system allows the ILL staff to select a reason for refusing a lending request from a predefined list. While the system does allow for the unique Not Responded To number, the categories for the unfilled statistics are inadequate. For example, if an item is not available for loan because it is checked out, which is somewhat common reason for refusing an ILL lending request, ILL staff must use either Not on Shelf or Not Lendable as a reason for not supplying the loan. For the statistic to become more helpful, more categories, such as the ISO or IFLA approved lists of ILL response codes, should be made available on the system.

Future Statistics

Auto Graphics polled users for input into enhancements of the statistics generated from their products. CLN, working with suggestions from libraries participating in reQuest ILL, offered numerous suggestions. Auto Graphics is working on compiling the results and incorporating suggested enhancements. reQuest ILL

participants will see the enhancements in Impact/Online 2, which should be available in the second half of 2001.

This is the first attempt to compile system wide statistics on reQuest ILL. As enhancements to system statistics are implemented by Auto Graphics, we will be better able to monitor the progress of libraries that work with the ILL system. As noted above, we are unable to compare this year to past years, as the system is so new. It will be interesting to note the trends that develop by comparing monthly and yearly data. By periodically examining statistics, we will be able to better gauge the impact of outside factors on the reQuest ILL system, such as the Connecticut Digital Library.