

California State University San Marcos

Promoting Student
Affordability



California State University
SAN MARCOS

The University Library leverages the Leganto course resource list solution to save students millions of dollars annually and empower instructors to create and maintain lists of course materials in a timely manner.



“Leganto has transformed our course reserves into something so much better—a better experience for students, a better experience for faculty, and better usage of library materials.” Kelly Ann Sam, Reserves Coordinator



About California State University San Marcos

California State University San Marcos (CSUSM), with a 30-year history, is part of the California State University system. Located on a 304-acre hillside overlooking the city of San Marcos in northern San Diego County, the university is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Student enrollment is over 16,000 with 1,009 faculty members (including 284 tenured or tenure-track).

The University Library is an essential partner in teaching and learning, research, and community engagement at CSUSM. Using statistical gathering, various means of assessment, and in-depth studies, the University Library gains insight into its patrons' needs and evaluates its success in supporting those needs.

Leganto at CSUSM: Highlights

In the spring term of 2020 at California State University San Marcos, the Ex Libris **Leganto®** course resource list solution was used by nearly **400 faculty members** in over **800 courses**.

These numbers are accompanied by **Leganto** metrics demonstrating the library's robust support for learning affordability: In the first three years in which CSUSM used Leganto, the potential savings for the student body surpassed **four million dollars**.

Seeking to Streamline and Simplify Access

The Reserves department at the California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) University Library is responsible for ensuring that the library makes materials for courses available to faculty and students in a timely manner. Before the University Library implemented the Ex Libris Leganto® course resource list solution, students had to click one link for print reserves, another link for streaming media, and a third link for electronic reserves. This arrangement was frustrating for the students and unnecessarily complicated for the library.

In 2017, CSUSM had already been using the Ex Libris Alma® library services platform for several years, so the library decided to look into the Ex Libris Leganto solution, which enables faculty members to provide their students with materials of all types in one location in the learning management system (LMS). With the Leganto-Alma integration, the system automatically checks the library holdings for each resource that the instructor wants to include in a course list, and adds the library inventory information for both print and electronic resources. As a result, instructors and librarians can easily build and maintain lists of course materials, and students have streamlined access to the materials from the LMS. “We understood that Leganto would be the perfect product for us,” said CSUSM Reserves Coordinator Kelly Ann Sam. “We would be able to put all materials in one place, on the course page in the LMS, for our students to easily discover and access.”

Opening a New Chapter

The Leganto implementation proceeded smoothly, noted Sam, with the valuable assistance of the Ex Libris team. The Reserves staff found it easy to customize the solution to accommodate the routine processes of the faculty and librarians. In 2018, the CSUSM University Library went live with Leganto resource lists.

“Once we began receiving feedback from the instructors,” continued Sam, “we saw how pleased they were. Previously, in our reserves lists, only titles and authors were displayed, so one of the biggest points when we were promoting Leganto lists to the instructors and students was that they could see details about course materials, including book covers and real-time availability.”

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Many faculty members have commented that they are amazed at how convenient the Leganto solution is and that they appreciate the ease with which they can organize their resource lists and customize the content. In addition, instructors find the Leganto usage statistics extremely valuable. Knowing how many students are actually accessing the items on their course resource lists helps the faculty determine what revisions are necessary.

Supporting Students and Learning Affordability

The Leganto solution helps the library support affordable learning for CSUSM students by enabling the Reserves department to provide items that students would previously have had to purchase privately. Library inventory information, including real-time availability of physical resources and links to electronic resources, is automatically added to the Leganto interface, enabling students to view and access the library resources needed for their courses.

Leganto also makes it easy for the library to see which resources faculty members have selected for their courses. The teaching staff can flag a resource with a purchase request, triggering an integrated process between Reserves and Acquisitions. With stakeholders working on the same, shared platform, the library has been able to shift its collection-development strategy to focus on purchasing more course materials. This shift, in turn, has resulted in greater usage of the Leganto solution, as faculty members now realize that the library makes every effort to obtain the items requested for courses.

In addition, Leganto analytics provide metrics on the use of the library collection to support students' learning. Librarians can assess the financial impact of the library's collection on students in each course: "For every book that the library makes available to course participants," explained Sam, "we multiply the cost of the book by the number of students enrolled in the course to find the potential savings for the class. We use this data to show the dean how the library is supporting affordable learning at our campus." In the first three academic years in which the university used Leganto resource lists, the potential savings for the student body surpassed four million dollars.

Adapting to a New Reality

With the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the CSUSM Library began purchasing more electronic resources and streaming media, thus expanding its role in providing remote access to course materials. In cases where electronic access wasn't possible, a portion of the book was digitized within the limitations of fair use. The availability of the digitized material gave students more time to purchase or borrow a copy of the book at the beginning of the term.

The University Library also got creative about alternative discovery options. Communicating with students via the Leganto platform, librarians suggested looking at less conventional sources—for example, popular streaming media services (which students might already subscribe to) and the local public library.

New services introduced during the pandemic have included mail-to-home delivery and library lockers for physical resources. Both of these services are available for resources obtained through interlibrary loan. Of course, all the options for accessing materials are clearly visible to students in their Leganto resource list.



Supporting Users with a Data-Driven Library

Now that the Leganto solution has been operational for several years, the role of the library in providing access to resources in Leganto course lists is well known across campus. Instructors are making greater use of Leganto features to ensure that students will have affordable access to course materials. In addition to collecting data on student cost savings, Sam monitors Leganto usage. "We've been measuring the success of the Leganto rollout by determining the number of courses we're supporting with the Leganto solution, the number of faculty members who are using it, and the number of students enrolled in each course," explained Sam. "Because Leganto is our reserves system, this data is a way of showing how reserves are supporting the university."

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These figures represent an increase of almost 50% over the library reserves method in use before the Leganto implementation. Also, because of the ease with which instructors can identify relevant articles and add them to Leganto course lists, the number of articles placed on reserves has grown substantially.

The Reserves team presents these metrics in an annual departmental report provided to the dean of the University Library and the Associated Students, Inc., student organization, to demonstrate the value of funding library initiatives and expanding collections.

The University Library is looking forward to the rollout, in the fall of 2021, of some new Leganto features, which the library believes will help increase faculty satisfaction. In particular, Sam plans to launch a Leganto functionality that enables faculty and students to annotate PDF files. "When I saw this feature in the new release, I couldn't wait to share my excitement with the teaching staff," added Sam.



About Ex Libris

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