Chapter 1

VLIR-UOS Workshop 'E-Info Discovery and Management for Institutes in the South':
Presentations and Conclusions, Antwerp, 8-19 December, 2014

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ABSTRACT

The authors present the results of the workshop 'E-info discovery & management for institutes in the South' organized by Hasselt University Library for VLIR-UOS at Antwerp University. The workshop brought together the practical experience in the South with the technical expertise in the North. This paper gives a summary of the presentations of the workshop. It also presents an overview of tools and software for information management and discovery in the context of usability in the South. Finally, this type of workshop helps to define the role of libraries and librarians. Libraries are moving from an acquisition management to an access management role. The debate about the relevance of discovery tools and library catalogues is only starting. Other challenges are the result of changes in scientific communication and evaluation. Which role can librarians play in the upcoming scientific social networks? Which role can they play in the research information systems that universities and other research institutes are installing?

INTRODUCTION

The workshop 'E-info discovery & management for institutes in the South' (Antwerp, 8-19 December 2014) is an initiative of VLIR-UOS organized by Hasselt University Library and Antwerp University.

VLIR-UOS (http://www.vliruos.be/) is the organization of the Flemish University Board that supports partnerships between universities and university colleges in Flanders (Belgium) and the South looking for innovative responses to global and local challenges. The main goal is to strengthen higher education in the South by setting up long term cooperation projects with universities and networks of universities in the South. VLIR-UOS also organizes long and short term training on infrastructure development for the partner universities (VLIR-UOS - About us, 2015). The workshop 'E-info discovery & management for institutes in the South' fits in the VLIR-UOS training strategy. The workshop created a website containing the power points of the different presentations and background information on the topic (E-info Discovery Tools - https://uhdspace.uhasselt.be/discovery/, 2015).

This chapter starts with the description of the goals of the workshop followed by the summaries of the major presentations and workgroup activities. The experiences during the workshop provide the authors the opportunity to comment on the evolution of access to information resources and information management in institutes in the South and the changing role of librarians. The chapter closes with annexes containing a list of tools and software for discovery and information management and a list of the participants of the workshop.

GOALS AND PROGRAM OF THE WORKSHOP

When it comes to making higher education more research-oriented, access to scientific information is one of the main challenges, especially in the South. Such accesscan be very expensive and difficult to organize. When resources are available through programs like PERIof INASP, Research4Life or EIFL, institutes often don't have insight into the available resources and how to subscribe to them, let alone how to make access easy and effective.

In modern western libraries there are several solutions, e.g. 'link-resolvers' that help to find the full-text of a document found in the catalogue, a database or a search engine. (e.g. LinkSource by EBSCO). Other solutions are the (very expensive) all-comprehensive discovery systems[1] offered by the major library system providers (e.g. Primo by Ex-Libris). Some open source software are being developed, e.g. VUFind, Blacklight, the 'LibreCat' tools at UGent. Can they deliver the same services as the commercial products? How can websites like Mendeley, Zotero, CiteULike or Research Gate with their social platforms be used to access, manage and share resources on the institute level?

There is a lot of experience in Flemish academic libraries with these different solutions and a high need in the South to learn about it. The project brought together the experts in Flanders, project experts working in the South and information managers from institutes in the South.

The information managers invited for the workshop needed to have expertise or at least relevant experience in the domain. In that way the workshop was different from a classic training. Therefore, the members of the selection committee decided to take into account the following elements when they made the selection of the participants:

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