

Chapter 30

Impact of Discovery Layers on Accessing E-Resources in Academic Libraries: A Case Study of Central University of Bihar

Mayank Yuvaraj

Central University of South Bihar, India

ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the implementation of the 'CUB E-journal One Search' tool as an alternative solution to commercial discovery services, which was designed using Google Custom Search by the Central Library, Central University of Bihar and its impact on the library users. A descriptive survey method was used for the study. The present study found that library users found CUB E-journal One Search as a useful tool to get their desired information out of 9000 subscribed e-resources in the university. Most of the users used CUB E-journal One Search frequently in order to find relevant articles, write their assignments and research articles. The study indicated that the library users were influenced by Google like single search boxes and wished to have same features. Further, users expected features like document recommendation, search filters, RSS and on-screen help from the discovery tool. The paper is a first attempt to study the impact of open source discovery tools on the library users. It will further give confidence to the librarians in developing countries to deploy open source search solutions using Google Custom Search in the libraries.

INTRODUCTION

Libraries have long played an essential role in containing, preserving and sharing information. At each step along the way, libraries would have failed in their efforts without Information Technology (IT). The use of IT in organizations is a dynamic interaction between the process of technological innovation that leads to new IT applications and reinvention of existing applications, and the process of organizational

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innovation that consists of the actual adoption and implementation of an IT application in an organization, the use of these applications and the effect this has on the work and communication in the organization. Libraries acquire “content” from many different sources in many different formats. While the library’s catalogues has traditionally been the tool for searching for information owned by the library, the catalogue normally does not include the capability of searching at the article level for materials that have appeared in magazines, journals, newspapers and other collected works. Moreover, with the wider availability of electronic resources in recent decades, academic libraries constantly face the problem to make it easily accessible and highly used. In order to make these resources easily approachable there is a need to create a discovery layer that brings in something of a Google-like simplicity along with a broader reach into information resources. The discovery layer approach involves moving to a single search box for users to enter their searches, faceted browsing, and relevance ranking on the results page commonly referred as discovery services. Discovery service comprise of a pre-assembled index that covers many library electronic resources, the single search box having advanced search features to limit, sort and refine searches and lastly a display of consolidated search results where the results are displayed by relevance.

The simple interface of Google, its richness of content and the ability to provide quality results has set a benchmark among library users. In contrast to Google, the nature of library research with its silos of content spread among hundreds of databases with dozens of different interfaces seems both antiquated and daunting (Way, 2010). Acquainted with the problem, libraries have sought solutions to allow library users to provide access to the library resources with Google like One Search system, eradicating the problem to browse a specific database or library catalogue to find information. Academic libraries, like the one at Marist College, used federated search to compete against the simplicity and popularity of Google, while providing users with access to more scholarly resources (Way, 2010). Moreover, Grand Valley State University (GVSU), a comprehensive university in Allendale, MI, with approximately 24,000 students had implemented two different federated search products since 2004 (Way, 2010). The overall impact of discovery layers is much more appealing to patrons and more inclusive of the vast information resources available through the library, both licensed and free. Major ILS vendors as well as open-source options are available to place a more attractive front end on the existing library system, the back end of which remains in place. Innovative Interfaces offers Encore for its Millennium ILS. The Summon Service is available for sale by Serials Solutions to add onto many existing systems. EBSCO Discovery Service can likewise be incorporated in a variety of settings. OCLC offers WorldCat Local as its add-on, and Ex Libris has a product called Primo. On the open source end there is VuFind, Apache Solr and Blacklight which attempt to change the look of the standard catalogue. However, for a developing country like India deploying these technologies involves technical skills as well as cost. The present paper is based against this background which attempts to find out the level of impact of ‘CUB E-journal One Search’ on the usage of library resources.

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Through the Central Universities Act, 2009 the government of India established Central University of Bihar in 2009. The University is presently running temporarily in a rented building at Patna and Gaya which will be relocated to Panchanpur (Gaya) once the construction of the building is completed. The library services of the university started at Patna in 2009 and at Gaya in 2013. Running in a rented building although the library has a space crisis yet the library is fully automated using Koha and cre-

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