

Chapter 21

Implementation and Acceptance of a Discovery Tool: Lessons Learned

David Dahl

Towson University, USA

Patricia MacDonald

Towson University, USA

ABSTRACT

Discovery tools have the potential to disrupt the workflows and established practices of libraries, which can lead to resistance in their use. In 2009, the University System of Maryland and Affiliated Institutions (USMAI) consortium acquired WorldCat Local (WCL). Survey and interview instruments were developed to examine staff's reasons for resisting and motivations for accepting discovery tools. All librarians and staff at USMAI libraries were invited to participate in a Web survey and interviews were arranged with key individuals who were involved with the implementation of WCL at their respective institutions. Results indicate that technical issues are the most common reason for resistance, but other factors have an impact as well. The state of "perpetual beta" in which most discovery tool applications are developed requires continued attention and dedicated staffing and resources to ensure acceptance.

INTRODUCTION

New technologies have the potential to disrupt the workflows and established practices of an organization. As complex organizations in an evolving information technology environment,

libraries are subject to these disruptions as well. Discovery tools represent a new type of disruptive technology in the library environment. Because discovery tools can create significant interruptions in the practices of library staff and librarians, organizations should expect a degree of resistance from staff.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-1821-3.ch021

Implementation and Acceptance of a Discovery Tool

The University System of Maryland and Affiliated Institutions (USMAI) consortium was an early adopter of the WorldCat® Local discovery tool. The adoption across the majority of institutions in the consortium created an ideal test case for understanding the implementation, use, and resistance of a discovery tool in an academic library environment. A survey of library staff at thirteen of the institutions in the USMAI consortium was conducted, as well as interviews with ten library staff involved in the implementation at their institutions.

The purpose of the present study is to examine staff's reasons for resisting and motivations for accepting the use of discovery tools in order to improve internal acceptance of these and perhaps other new search technologies. The results are used to establish best practices for libraries to follow when implementing a discovery tool, as well as identifying types of adoption issues of which libraries should be aware.

BACKGROUND

Evaluation & Acquisition of Worldcat Local by USMAI

USMAI is a consortium of libraries that serves sixteen public universities and colleges in Maryland. The University System of Maryland includes a range of universities, law schools, a medical school, and professional and health schools as listed in Table 1, along with two affiliated institutions. Thus, the libraries in the consortium also vary from a large research library at the College Park campus to several libraries that serve a mix of undergraduate and graduate programs, special libraries, and a library that provides primarily online resources for distance education. While these libraries operate independently as part of their respective institutions, they also have a long history of collaboration in order to collectively acquire and share information resources, including

a shared library catalog, link resolver, and many electronic databases.

The consortium is governed by the Council of Library Directors (CLD), which consists of the director from each library. Technical support for shared systems is provided by the University of Maryland Libraries Information Technology Division, located at College Park. A number of task groups that deal with concerns related to shared resources, such as cataloging, electronic resources, and user interface issues, also exist.

In an initiative to transition to a next generation catalog and discovery tool, CLD began communication with OCLC regarding WorldCat® Local in late 2007. In 2008 OCLC developed a test database using selected USMAI holdings for a trial of WorldCat® Local, and CLD called for USMAI librarians to serve on a WorldCat® Local Review Group in order to evaluate this new discovery tool. The group gathered feedback from their respective libraries and submitted a report to CLD on the strengths and weaknesses of WorldCat® Local. Although the Review Group had some reservations about the viability of WorldCat® Local, CLD decided to fund a one year subscription beginning in April 2009 as the library directors considered WorldCat® Local an opportunity to introduce a discovery tool without a long-term commitment. An implementation support group was formed at College Park to continue working with OCLC on functional problems and to provide information on the configuration and branding of WorldCat® Local to other USMAI libraries. Each library made its own decision on the implementation and use of the new discovery tool. The degree of interest in WorldCat® Local varied greatly among the institutions: College Park provided sustained support for implementation; other institutions added a link to WorldCat® Local but did not actively promote it; and some libraries that served special populations such as the health professions or distance education students, decided that WorldCat® Local had little value for its community and did not implement it. The adoption across the majority of institutions

20 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/implementation-acceptance-discovery-tool/67831

Related Content

Building National Collections of Internet Publications

Jasmine Cameron and Margaret E. Phillips (2000). *World Libraries on the Information Superhighway: Preparing for the Challenges of the New Millennium* (pp. 6-20).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/building-national-collections-internet-publications/31487

The Impact of the ISI Convention of Relying on only the Name of the First Author on ACA Results: An Empirical Investigation

Sean Eom (2009). *Author Cocitation Analysis: Quantitative Methods for Mapping the Intellectual Structure of an Academic Discipline* (pp. 62-90).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/impact-isi-convention-relying-only/5442

Hooligans in the Archives: Easing Restrictions and Partnering with the Users

Laurie Gemmill and Jane Wildermuth (2012). *E-Reference Context and Discoverability in Libraries: Issues and Concepts* (pp. 209-218).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/hooligans-archives-easing-restrictions-partnering/57925

Patron Base

(2013). *Public Law Librarianship: Objectives, Challenges, and Solutions* (pp. 21-40).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/patron-base/69939

Out of the Ordinary: Collection Development in Support of Business Curriculum and Research

Leslie Farison and Georgie L. Donovan (2013). *Library Collection Development for Professional Programs: Trends and Best Practices* (pp. 33-52).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/out-ordinary-collection-development-support/67932