

## Chapter 29

# The Long and Winding Road: Implementing Discovery at Indiana University Bloomington Libraries

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### **ABSTRACT**

*In early 2010, Indiana University Bloomington Libraries became a beta tester for the EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS)<sup>TM1</sup> product, and subsequently selected it in September of that year. After working through various issues with library content and staff expectations, the IUB Libraries launched EDS<sup>TM</sup> - branded as OneSearch@IU, in August 2011. This case study provides an overview of the decision-making process and challenges encountered in the process of implementation of a Web-scale discovery tool. Specific topics such as working with a vendor Application Program Interface (API) to integrate a discovery tool within a library website, formulating an effective extract of library catalog records to import into a discovery tool, customizing a vendor discovery interface, and assessing use and user satisfaction with a discovery system are described. Broad concepts addressed in this chapter include information technology project implementation and library information systems.*

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## INTRODUCTION

As an institution, the Indiana University Libraries are committed to the idea of facilitating discovery, and as a Web-scale discovery tool, EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS)<sup>TM</sup> is one part of an overall effort to unify the Library Web presence and present the Libraries' collections, services and resources in a way that enables a more holistic approach to supporting teaching, learning and research in the Indiana University community.

In an article, published in 2006, Dempsey describes a leveraged discovery environment (a vended solution, one outside the library's control) – a concept quite familiar to us now – and cites as its primary goal to bring users back into the local library catalog. For library users, the gap between any library collection that is findable (cataloged) and the portion of the collection that is available or obtainable in a networked environment is “the difference between discovery (identifying resources of interest) and location (identifying where those resources of interest are actually available).” (Dempsey, 2006)

In recent years, the IUB Libraries have prioritized providing broader access to catalog data through new discovery tools with powerful, user-friendly interfaces. In early 2010, Indiana University Bloomington Libraries became a beta tester for EDS<sup>TM</sup>; it was selected in September of that year and launched in August 2011, branded as OneSearch@IU. A related project in the works is the implementation of an open-source discovery layer (Blacklight) as the primary OPAC interface overlaid on the existing SIRSIDynix<sup>®2</sup> ILS system. Scheduled for a summer 2012 launch, the transition to a new public interface will be followed by a complete migration from SIRSIDynix<sup>®</sup> to the community-sourced Kual<sup>®3</sup> Online Library Environment infrastructure (currently in development) sometime in the following year. (Kuali Foundation, 2010)

While the ability to integrate catalog results in EDS<sup>TM</sup> provides one more means to lead users

back to IUCAT, the IU Libraries' shared catalog, at this time there is no single tool with an interface that simultaneously meets existing needs relating to discovery to the Libraries' satisfaction. Indiana University Libraries feel strongly that discovery is a key area for investment of library resources; the library catalog and a Web-scale discovery system, such as EBSCO Discovery Service<sup>TM</sup>, Summon<sup>TM4</sup>, for example, or discovery interface (such as Blacklight or VuFind), are seen as complementary tools that work together to better meet the needs of the broadly diverse user group – undergraduates (primarily novice users), scholars & faculty (discipline experts who also typically have more expertise in research), graduate students & interdisciplinary researchers (somewhere in between the other two groups).

As with any new endeavor, there are competing priorities and areas of uncertainty: how to display data that is meaningful and helpful to users in a number of different systems and interfaces; how to balance the needs for attention to detail and to the user experience with the realities of constrained resources & staff time, while scaling up to deliver data to multiple systems; and, how much can be accomplished through post-processing catalog extracts, and in which areas must local practices be carefully re-examined?

This case study provides an overview of the decision-making process that led to the selection of EBSCO Discovery Service<sup>TM</sup> by the IU Bloomington Libraries, and its subsequent implementation, focusing on the integration of EDS<sup>TM</sup> into the library Website, and the challenges encountered in working to optimize display and search of catalog data.

When embarking on a project of this kind, goals exist at different levels: first, and most simple to define and later assess, is the goal of successful implementation – that is, to complete the steps necessary to select a product, load the data, customize the interface, then make the product available to end-users. Despite this seemingly straightforward process, numerous unforeseen

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