Staying relevant in the Google age: the technological and cultural challenges of implementing vertical search

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Aims

- Context at Manchester
- Implementation approach
- Technical challenges
- Cultural/perception issues
- Lessons learnt
- What’s next
Context

- Library strategy
- External systems review
- Student experience focus
- Value for money
“Google makes it easy and library systems make it hard”

But Google is not the only answer either:
• Not targeted (too much information)
• Gaps in coverage (not enough of the right information)
Implementation Approach

- February 2010 – February 2011
  - Procuring and implementing
  - Building a portal interface
  - Embedding into website
  - Ensuring content coverage
  - Decommissioning systems
Implementation Project

- February 2010 – September 2010 Requirements gathering and procurement
  - Consultant’s report
  - Requirements agreed
  - Further market survey
  - System testing
  - Vendor presentations
  - Site visits
Implementation Project

- October 2010 – February 2011
  - Sign contract with vendor
  - Set up implementation team
    - Data migration
    - Look and feel
    - Portal integration
  - Impact on other Library systems/decommissioning
Data sources included

- Catalogue data
- Eresources data
- IR
- LUNA
- Elgar
Technical issues - infrastructure

- Cloud solution
- Meets University IT Strategy
- Reduced support costs
- Limits access to backend (APIs)
- Don’t have a Manchester specific URL
Technical issues - integration

- Talis not integrated before
- Real time availability not yet available
- Data export Talis – exLibris solution
- Nightly updates
Integration – eScholar

- Fedora Commons
- Data supplied in Marc 21
- Only key data exported
- Full record then available
Integration - LUNA

- Not fully OAI – PMH compliant
- Harvesting problem
- Fixed in next LUNA release – July
- LUNA display
User interface issues

- Initial implementation quick – 3 weeks
- Hosted allows limited customisation
- Search embedded in Lib homepage, portal
- Mobile friendly version
- Non-Roman character display
- Editions display – latest
Authentication

- Shibboleth integration
- Portal access issues
- Primo – Talis problem
Search

- Uses Solr platform
- Focus on post search filtering
- Speed of results good
Management information

- Google Analytics not available
- Primo MI tools
- Limited data
- March 2011 – 205, 445 searches
Cultural considerations

- Initial user perceptions
- Staff feedback post implementation
- Student feedback post implementation
Student feedback -

- Email survey done
- 12% response rate
- What do you like about vertical search?
- What do you dislike?
- How can we improve?
- How does it compare with Google and the Library catalogue
Student survey results

- 83% had used Library Search
- 33% said it was very simple to use
- 56% said it was simple to use
- 89% said they found what they wanted
Likes/dislikes

Like
- Fast
- Easy to use
- Journal access
- Very clear

Dislike
- Too many results
- Unrelated materials
- Difficult to locate a particular paper
- Not all books have images
Improvements/comparisons

How can we improve?
- More images
- Extra search options

Compared to google and catalogue
- Faster
- Simpler
- Library search better for in depth search, google for quick background search
- Very alike
- Find journals I can’t find in google in Library Search
Staff feedback

- What were your expectations?
- What were your concerns to
- What has been the response from schools?
- Benefits and drawbacks
- What worked well/less well with the project
- What needs to improve?
Staff views before and after

Before
- Pessimistic
- Excited
- Good way to compete with google
- Would produce more relevant results
- To look and work like Amazon
Library staff feedback

+ve
- Faster
- Easier for students
- Promotes visibility of repository content
- Range of resources
- Alerts valuable
- Preferable to Google
- Less intimidating
- Makes searching intuitive

-ve
- Students need to understand it has limitations
- Too much content
- Facets variable value
- Different results to catalogue
- Not suitable for researchers
- Not ideal for SC materials
Staff feedback - improvements

- Boolean searches
- Search history
- Improved search filtering
- Work better with Talis Aspire
- Managing user expectation,
- Expanding content coverage (Bus, Law)
- More databases
- RTA
Lessons learnt - technical

- Stay in project window
- More usability testing
- Metadata mapping is key
- Realistic scheduling
- Timing of implementation
Lessons learnt - cultural

- One size doesn’t fit all
- Need to still offer different routes
- Need to work closely with users in the integration
- Manage staff expectation
- Clear marketing
Next steps

- LUNA, Elgar, others
- Focus groups
- Pre filtering options
- Buy in from Lib subject teams
- Recommendations tab
- User created content
- Review in relation to other tools
- Marketing/Communication
Questions