Is Your Discovery Tool REALLY Better than Google?

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Our experiences and assumptions...

Our library pays for access to a number of indexes, aggregated databases, and full-text book and journal collections.

Our library has subscribed to the Ex Libris SFX OpenURL resolver service for 10 years. We are accustomed to being able to link between online resources with this tool.

Our librarians wanted to maximize use of our subscribed content and provide a one-search option for our users, (like Google, but selected by us...)

Key Steps to Setting Up a Discovery Tool

1. Provide access to content
2. Set up an OpenURL resolver
3. Select and configure a tool to discover your content
4. Market and test

Provide access to content...

Owned full-text content (JSTOR Collections, PsycARTICLES, individual journal titles)

Subscribed content (ebrary, ScienceDirect, Films on Demand, NAXOS)

Subscribed electronic indexes (America: History and Life, Philosopher's Index, MLA)

Subscribed aggregated full-text databases (Academic Search Premier, CIAO)

Open access resources (DOAJ, individual journals)
Set up an OpenURL resolver...
Concordia uses SFX (ExLibris) and 360 Linker (ProQuest)
Process to set up OpenURL resolver for communication:
• Locate item (collection, package, journal, etc.)
• Identify provider / vendor
• Turn on access to the package or collection
• Make sure content within the collection is turned on correctly

Select a tool to discover your content...
Purchase a product, set up federated searching of multiple collections, or provide access to a free tool.
Questions to consider
• Will the tool maximize access to your content? (competition between vendors can limit access to proprietary content.)
• Will the tool work with your OpenURL resolver (or vice versa)?
• What is the level of vendor support and timeliness of solutions?
• Is there an intuitive interface for suggesting updates to the knowledge base (KB) and are updates implemented quickly?

Our decision...
ProQuest's Summon using MnPALS API
Why?
• Search functionality (searches BOTH metadata and full-text content)
• Content (compatibility with and coverage of our current subscription resources)
• Consortial support (MnPALS)
• Price
Market
What we did at Concordia...

Created a brand

Planned for incorporating Mosaic into our instruction program

Planned for incorporation into library web pages

Notified faculty and students of new service through email

Test functionality...
Checked access to each database and each individually subscribed full-text journal in the A to Z list

Checked access from discovery tool

Asked for "Content Journal Analysis" from ProQuest

Concordia's analysis showed that 71% of our journals are findable through Summon. (Ebook content was not analyzed.)

Test usability...
After everything is configured, let your users try it out.

Focus groups with students
We invited a small group of students (varied class rank and major) to complete a series of prescribed tasks and give us their feedback.

Individual faculty testing
We scheduled brief interviews with teaching faculty. We also asked them to complete a series of prescribed tasks and share their thoughts.
Test satisfaction...

We created brief online surveys, one for our students and one for our faculty.

Student Survey

Faculty Survey
Analyze usage...

We thought usage of our subscribed content would increase with Summon ‘discovering’ content.

Questions & Discussion...

What questions do you have for us?

If your library currently provides a discovery or federated search, what testing (functionality, usability, etc.) have you done? What did you find?

How useful are ‘free’ discovery tools like Google Scholar or WorldCat Discovery (free for MN libraries through Minitex)?

Do you activate open access resources in your OpenURL Resolver? How do you decide which resources are good or stable?

All ‘one search’ options have issues and challenges. Are they worth the cost, both in time and dollars?