Web Scale Discovery Services
The Promise, The Hype, and The Reality

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Introduction

In summer 2011 the UAA/APU Consortium Library debuted the Summon Discovery service. This presentation will cover:

- What is Discovery?
- Why Discovery?
- Why Summon?
- Implementation
- Reception
What is Discovery?

Term used by library vendors to describe a single search box across multiple library resources.

- Single index of harvested content, not cross-database or federated searching
- Can include library catalog, subscription e-resources, digital repositories, etc.
- Technology and interface similar to search websites like Google, Amazon, etc.
What is Discovery?

Federated Search

- Speed dependent on underlying engines
- Searches filtered through engines
- Small set of records retrieved from engines
What is Discovery?

Single Index

- Content harvested & indexed from sources
- Fast searches of all metadata & fulltext
- Limits applied across all results
Why Discover?

Explosion of Resources

- +300 databases
- +60 vendors
- +60,000 journals
- +150,000 ebooks
Why Discovery?

- How to organize the explosion?
- Decision based on content type...
Why Discovery?

- And then more decisions...
Why Discovery?

- Over 200 databases and dozens of interfaces

- Imagine a different OPAC for each publisher in the print collection
Why Discovery?

- Students were frustrated
- They wanted a Google-like search box
- Faculty cited lack of metasearch as a hindrance
- So we implemented federated search in 2008
- It did not solve the problem :-(
Why Summon?

- Fall 2010 began to look at discovery services
- Narrowed to 3 products with journal coverage
Why Summon?

Evaluation Team

- Matrix of product information
- Demos for staff & survey
- Quick hands-on with students

Criteria

- Content coverage
- Search interface & features
- Price
Why Summon?

- WorldCat lacked journal coverage
- EDS & Summon equivalent in coverage
- EDS & Summon similar in pricing
- Both products looked good...
- But Summon more promising features
Why Summon?

Summon Features

- Search our library collection (+180M items) or entire Summon index (+600M items)
- Anyone can search from off campus, only login when retrieving subscription content
- Durable URLs, RSS feeds, no session time outs
- Database recommender, Lib Guides
- Discipline facets coming soon
- Full-text indexing for some titles in catalog
Implementation

Our implementation packet from Serial Solutions started with the phrase “Welcome to the dream..” and said we would be up in six weeks. We went live after 4 months in May 2011.

What Worked

- Already had link resolver with vendor
- Packages easy to turn on in Summon
- Importing records from library catalog

Problems

- Linking through to full-text content
- Knowing exactly what's in Summon
- Realtime availability against Web2 OPAC
**Implementation**

Linking Issues = Variance in Metadata

- Prioritize link targets
- Report problems
- Turn off bad targets
- Improving over time, addition of direct linking
# Implementation

## Questions / Incidents

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Reception

- Debuted in May 2011
- Search box on home page and LibGuides
Reception

• Integrated search box with Find Books & Articles in Dec 2011
Reception
Reception
Conclusion

- People are using Summon
- Linking a problem but getting better
- Experienced researchers may be frustrated with full-text searching
- Librarians are figuring out how Summon fits into instruction and at reference desk
- We need to do a better job of marketing Summon's features & capabilities