A Fight to the Death: Two Catalog Search Interfaces Battle it Out

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Two Catalog Search Interfaces Battle it Out

A Fight to the Death

Todd King  Cristina Tofan
Systems Administrator  Web Specialist
Eastern Kentucky University Libraries
The need for a new interface

Getting started = learning curve

Has that card catalog feel

Opac not aged well
The battle begins

Encore “oooooo”

WorldCat Local “aaaaaa”
Usability planning

Students
(individual sessions, “think-aloud” protocol)

Faculty
(focus group)

TEST WITH:

Staff
(tasks, brown bag)

Different groups, Different approaches

Jakob Nielsen: “The best results come from testing no more than 5 users and running as many small tests as you can afford.”

http://www.useit.com/alertbox/20000319.html
Usability w/ Students

Pre-test
(demographics, library instruction, used catalog before?)

Session
(8 tasks)

Post-test
(assessment of each interface)

Data collected in Google forms

Free food + [whatever] = 😊
Students: questions

1) Is the book “Pyres” available for checkout?
2) Does the library have the journal, “Physical Geography”? If it does, what years are held in print, and what issues are available online?
3) Find an article on the death penalty.
4) Does the library own Macbeth on DVD?
Usability w/ Faculty

Free food + intellectual discussion = 😊

Focus Group

Lunch

Laptops

Show Interfaces

Observe Activity

Group Discussion

Open-ended activity: just try them out
Usability w/ Staff & Web Visitors

We know catalogs!

“Brown Bag” w/ staff to introduce the interfaces

Gave them tasks to try on their own

Collected feedback in Google form

Discussed results at follow-up brown bag

Just passing through

Visitors to our website

Online feedback form (surveyMonkey this time)
Encore – positive

New design
Nice touch

Tags by library & user

Just gimme one box

Articles, too

Refine by Tag:
- botany
- claims
- cowboys
- English ballads
- English folk songs
- English language
- English poetry
- English sermons

Refine by Tag:
- children
- disabilities
- education
- English language
- English poetry
- geology
- gray wolf
- great Britain
- law
- liberty
- private bills
- public gray

Search:

Articles and more:
- Get more results:
  - Academic Search
  - Premier
  - Business Source
  - Complete
  - MLA International Bibliography
  - Web of Science
  - ProQuest Central
I didn’t search Bikini, honest

Where articles? oh ...

That’s not SFX!

Encore – negative

No Advanced Search?

Available or not? Click again?
WorldCat Book Search

Search results for "pyres" limited to EKU Libraries

Is it checked out?
WorldCat Book Results

Had to click again
Two of the same title – what now?
WorldCat Journal Results

Physical geography.
Publisher: Silver Spring, MD : V.H. Winston, ©1980-

Find a copy online.
Check for online access at your library
Get More at EKU

Links to this item
EKU Libraries (0)
No Links were found
Other libraries (2)
Show all links from other libraries (2)

Find a copy in the library
Please visit your library to get this item.

EKU Libraries
Get It In the library
1 copies
Location Status Call number

Elec. Holdings not very obvious

Found the print
Didn’t make it this far
Results of Usability

**Students**
(19 students)
Books: Encore > WorldCat
Articles: WorldCat > Encore
Overall: WorldCat >> Encore *

**Faculty**
(20 faculty)
Books: WorldCat >> Encore
Articles: WorldCat >> Encore
Overall: WorldCat >> Encore

**Staff**
(17 responses)
Books: WorldCat > Encore
Articles: WorldCat >> Encore
Overall: WorldCat > Encore

We liked WorldCat ... we think
The Backend

**Encore**
- Export records from Voyager
  - Locations?
  - Suppressed Records?
- Format the files for Encore
  - Different record format
  - Display holdings info?
- Import records to Encore
- Automate daily updates
  - Additions
  - Changes
  - Deletions
- No Admin module
- Patron load for login
- Hosted own server – own backups
- “Turnkey”?  

**WorldCat Local**
- Complete Customization Form
  - Make search groups
  - Change colors
  - Add links
  - Wanted more changes, but not avail.
- Integrating SFX, ILLiad, Z39
- Any probs in WorldCat are here
  - OCLC Numbers
  - Batch Load – confusing way to fix it
## Decision (no win by knockout)

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Compared major features of all products and how good/bad they were at important tasks

* Encore also has a star-rating system
* WCL can have patron reviews
And the winner is ...

... it’s a draw (i.e. neither)
What now?

- Use current Opac: tweak it/upgrade it
- Get “WorldCat Local Quick Start”
- Continue usability studies
- “Wait and See”

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