Notes on Operations

Promoting Interlibrary Loan in the Traditional Catalog and Discovery Layer

Two Pilot Projects

Rachel E. Scott and Gail Barton

This paper describes two projects that promote interlibrary loan (ILL) in both traditional online public access catalogs and discovery settings to address user frustrations with gaps in the collection. By creating and inserting OpenURL links into bibliographic records for titles held exclusively by external institutions, the authors leveraged the discovery capabilities of their shared catalog and promoted ILL as an alternative means of access. The second project targeted the overwhelming amount of content indexed in the library's discovery layer that was not locally available. To more directly translate discovery into access, the authors worked with EBSCO to create and enable ILL CustomLinks for this content indexed by EBSCO Discovery Service and not available to their users. This paper presents ILL data to investigate whether these projects are changing the ways our users find and access content not held locally.

Before the advent of publicly searchable, online union catalogs, requesting an item via interlibrary loan (ILL) was discrete from library catalogs and opaque to library patrons. Patrons completed forms by hand and submitted them to the ILL office, often without knowing how many libraries held the item or whether it was possible to quickly get the item. Now that WorldCat and other union or consortial catalogs are linked to local online catalogs, users may see which libraries have an item and they can request it via their library's ILL office or go directly to the holding institution. If an item is available elsewhere and is easily requested, discovering an item that is not available at one's library is made slightly less inconvenient.

The University of Memphis is an urban, public research university with a spring 2017 enrollment of 19,792. The University of Memphis Libraries comprises a main library and three branches and serves as the Federal Regional Depository Library for Tennessee. The University Libraries also shares its integrated library system (ILS) instance with three local institutions. However, the law school, community college, and small private college with whom the ILS is shared all have discrete budgets and do not have consortial borrowing or delivery agreements. The shared Innovative Interfaces Sierra database currently includes 1,428,946 bibliographic and 1,655,015 item records. The law school library shares an instance of Innovative's Encore Duet discovery service with the University of Memphis Libraries, and the two other institutions have separate instances of ProQuest's Summon discovery service. Throughout this paper, the term "partner" refers to the libraries or institutions with whom the authors' library shares an ILS.

The University of Memphis Libaries' users have expressed deep frustration that books from partner schools—particularly those that are not available

Rachel E. Scott (rescott3@memphis.edu) is an Integrated Library Systems Librarian, Systems Department, University Libraries, at the University of Memphis. **Gail Barton** (gpbarton@memphis.edu) is the Interim Head of Collection Management and Interlibrary Loan Librarian, University Libraries, University of Memphis.

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locally that must be requested via ILL—can filter into local online public access catalog (OPAC) results. To address this frustration, the authors inserted OpenURL links into the 856 Electronic Location and Access field of MARC bibliographic records for monographs held only by partner institutions. Inserting a direct link to the ILL monographic item request form enables users to springboard from traditional catalog records into ILL. It has allowed us to make the best use of our shared catalog by promoting ILL as a viable access alternative.

Similarly, the authors collaborated with EBSCO to customize Google Scholar and ILL CustomLinks, or buttons that launch a title search in Google Scholar or populate an ILL article request form. The authors decided to activate both of these access options for content indexed by EBSCO Discovery Service that was not available to their users. By adding these smart links to Encore Duet, which the University Libraries uses as the native discovery interface, they have made great strides turning discovery into access for their users. This paper describes how the authors planned and executed both projects and discusses the implications for ILL and public catalogs.

Literature Review

Mak notes that "self-service, discovery and integration" are essential to effective resource sharing.[1] Nonetheless, there is not much literature detailing the integration of ILL services into traditional OPACs. Part of the problem is specific to ILS and ILL systems infrastructure. According to Breeding, "finding ways for requests to automatically flow among interlibrary loan ILL systems and Integrated Library Systems is one of the great technology challenges to be solved."[2] However, another part of the problem is local, specifically, sharing a catalog with non-consortial partner libraries. The literature demonstrates that many libraries with shared catalogs also have consortial agreements; there are few examples of institutions that share an ILS instance without a consortial relationship. Bowen Ayre discusses the cost savings and other benefits of a shared library system but does not address the challenges of a shared system without consortial agreements.[3] Libraries that share a catalog among several branches within a single system or within a larger consortium often share resources via the ILS circulation function and, because of existing courier services, do not rely on ILL.

Self-service has been a standard feature of resource sharing since the 1980s. In 1986, Potter found a correlation "between the installation of the user-friendly IBM PC terminals and the almost threefold increase in interlibrary borrowing over three years at the UIUC Library."[4] By opening the request process to users, libraries dramatically increased ILL use. In 1999, Copeland, Long, and Mundle discussed the creation of Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries Virtual Library resource sharing software, which included an auto-populating user resource requesting component. In the subsequent decades, self-service has become a user expectation, as have resource sharing software integration and discovery.[5] Mak suggests that "technology has moved borrowing from staff-mediated to self-serve requesting."[6]

Most of the literature on ILL integration addresses integration into union catalogs such as WorldCat or discovery layers such as Summon or the EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS). Many academic libraries that are OCLC partner institutions have embedded ILL request forms in that platform and there is significant literature documenting that process. Ward, Shadle, and Mofjeld report that the University of Washington saw a significant increase in ILL activity after implementing WorldCat Local.[7] Deardorff and Nance explain how the integration streamlined the ILL request process for University of Washington users. Instead of searching siloed local, consortial, and union catalogs for relevant content and submitting ILL request forms on a separate platform, users could now place direct requests in WorldCat Local.[8]

Many current OPACs provide opportunities for integrating external library services into the platform. Widgets for virtual reference software, library hours, citation management software, and other services have been seamlessly integrated into traditional library catalogs. However, because the catalog typically only showed items owned and provided request and recall options for items that were currently checked out or otherwise unavailable, no development was needed to incorporate ILL into the traditional online catalog. In their paper comparing WorldCat Local and Innovative's WebPAC (OPAC), Thomas and Buck note that even users who are familiar with ILL did not necessarily understand how to place a request: "This is especially true when searching in the WebPAC since there is no link within WebPAC results screens that allows them to place an ILL request."[9]

In the past decade, several academic libraries have successfully integrated ILL into burgeoning discovery environments. In 2011, Vaughan suggested ILL as an access solution in the discovery era: "Simply knowing of an item's existence is better than not knowing, assuming that appropriate delivery options (e.g., ILL) are available."[10] Fawley and Krysak emphasized that discovery layers provide instruction librarians with an opportunity to emphasize ILL services to undergraduate students.[11] More recently, Bryant and Ye described how integrating ILL, the ILS, and consortial borrowing with discovery allows them to "meet dramatically increased requests while costing less."[12] Discovery systems continue to

improve options for ILL integration and to promote these solutions to their users.

Method: CustomLinks in EDS

The impetus for this project was the frequent patron complaint that partner school results should not show up in local search results. The traditional catalog has been configured to default to the local institution if a search is initiated within the institution's IP range. However, users frequently search remotely and can easily change the default search setting. Accordingly, they frequently encounter items that are not locally available. Reference librarians at the University of Memphis Libraries frequently reported this problem to the Integrated Library Systems Advisory Council (ILSAC). ILSAC comprises members from each partner institution and most University Libraries units. The group discusses all major changes to the bibliographic database and related systems. The ILL office staff received calls, email, and in-person visits from patrons who were curious about these books in the catalog that were not held by the University Libraries. Patrons expressed frustration that the books they wanted appeared to be available in the library, but were actually held by another institution's library. ILL staff attempted explanations and assured patrons that the book would be requested promptly. Unfortunately, a satisfactory solution was not identified until a new discovery platform was implemented, presenting a different way of approaching the problem.

The University Libraries implemented Encore Duet, an Innovative and EBSCO discovery layer, in April 2015. The University Libraries had previously used Encore Synergy, a limited discovery tool composed of selected article databases and the local bibliographic database, the contents of which were not fully integrated. EDS implementation is well documented in both the scholarly literature and vendor-provided materials and will not be discussed here.[13] However, discussing those unique aspects of the Encore Duet implementation relating to ILL may be helpful. Encore Duet and EDS have different interfaces and either interface can be used natively. The University Libraries currently uses Encore Duet as the native search interface, and has worked to customize both platforms. Depending on their needs, patrons can search WebPAC, Encore Duet, or EDS. Catalog records are automatically added and updated in the Encore Duet interface, but the records have not yet been loaded into EDS. For both of these interfaces, EBSCO can create CustomLinks, buttons with customized text, to link dynamically and directly to articles in various databases or to article-specific, fully populated ILL request forms.

Figure 1. ILL Request CustomLink in Encore Duet

The authors were surprised to learn that the initial ILL and discovery integration was not comprehensive. In addition to providing basic ILL information (platform, URL root, etc.) during the EDS implementation, EBSCO also needed to create a separate collection of local holdings information. This local collection data, paired with the serials information tracked in EBSCO Holdings Management, provided a complete picture of our print and electronic serials holdings. Without accurate local print holdings information uploaded into EDS, the ILL CustomLinks appeared when the University Libraries held the print content. The University Libraries Collection Management Librarian provided an updated and accurate list of print holding information in the format EBSCO required. The EBSCO discovery layer implementation specialist worked with technical support to create a new "local collection" within the authors' instance of EDS. This successfully generated a clickable, automatically populated ILL article request form for most of the EDS-indexed content that is not locally available at the University Libraries (see figure 1).

The ILL CustomLinks provided a way for users to gain access to content not locally available. However, it was not necessary to request some of the articles through ILL since they were freely available in individual or institutional repositories. Thanks to growing use of open access article repositories, an increasing number of ILL requests can be filled from personal, institutional, or subject-specific repositories.[14] Because many articles are now posted to repositories and are therefore findable via Google Scholar and other search engines, the authors wondered how Google Scholar results might be incorporated into their library's discovery search results screen.

Libraries have approached this problem in different ways. Some provide a Google Scholar widget to their discovery layers and others have created a failed-search alternative in their link resolver software. Although both solutions are functional, their results are not integrated into the native platform's results screen. Public services staff and users expressed satisfaction with the ILL CustomLinks; accordingly, the authors asked EBSCO to create a Google Scholar CustomLink to complement the ILL CustomLink. EBSCO provides directions on linking from EDS to Google

Scholar.[15] However, Encore Duet customers must have this feature activated within both their EDS and Encore Duet profiles.

Method B: ILL URLs in OPAC

With the apparent ease of having CustomLinks created for distinct collections, the authors thought that perhaps the long-standing problem might be solved. If CustomLinks were created for items held by partner schools, but not held locally, leaving patrons could seamlessly request items via ILL without leaving the results screen and navigating to the library's homepage or ILL landing page. However, after discussing the possibilities with various EBSCO support, implementation, and developer personnel, the authors learned that they could only create Encore Duet CustomLinks for titles indexed by EDS and not those indexed in the local database. Perhaps this was for the best, as CustomLinks appear only in the discovery layer and would not be present in Innovative's WebPAC or bibliographic MARC records themselves.

The authors were nonetheless inspired by EBSCO's CustomLinks and realized that they could easily insert links into bibliographic MARC records for those items held only by partner institutions. What they did not know is the extent to which these URLs could be customized. In June 2016, they tested the concept to discuss how best to approach the project.

EBSCO's CustomLinks use OpenURL encoding to find and access the designated resource. EBSCO defines OpenURL as "a standardized format of Uniform Resource Locator (URL) that provides a mechanism for passing metadata and data, providing patrons with a way to obtain data from the best source with a single search from one provider."[16] By parsing CustomLinks, they learned a great deal about these links and how they work. For example, EBSCO CustomLinks included source information that indicates to ILL staff where the user found the citation or from which online interface they made the request. For example, "sid=EBSCO:edsebk" indicates that the desired resource is in the eBook Index (edsebk) database in EBSCO Discovery Service. By appending characters to the URL in the MARC record, the authors could populate the ILLiad software's loan request form to distinguish these requests from others. The authors used the tag "sid=SIERRA:ill" to indicate that these requests were generated in the library's ILS. This enabled them to collect statistics on ILL transactions that were initiated using the links embedded in ILS bibliographic records. They also discovered that they could link directly to the book request form rather than link only to the ILL landing page by adding "genre=book." Saving the user the step of selecting the appropriate form streamlines the process and saves inexperienced users the challenges of distinguishing between article, loan, and book chapter (see figure 2).

Figure 2. ILL Request URL in Catalog

In July 2016, the authors presented the project to the University Libraries' Research and Instructional Services (RIS) group. This group comprises those faculty and staff who provide reference services at the main library's public services desk. The group helped to create concise and descriptive language for the public note. The note initially read "University of Memphis users—request via Interlibrary Loan." It was updated to include information about the wait period: "University of Memphis users—request via Interlibrary Loan (allow 5–10 days)," which clarifies that this is a different process than clicking on a link to immediately view an e-book. While users may expect to get the book right away, the average delivery time is five to ten days. The RIS group expressed concern that the ILL request form would not be automatically populated in the same way as the Encore Duet CustomLinks. Otherwise, their feedback was positive.

Once the authors decided how they wanted to customize the link and gathered input on language for the public note, they immediately set to work on updating the bibliographic records. They used Sierra's "Create List" function to generate lists of items that were available at partner libraries that were not held by the University Libraries. Since they wanted to ensure that the item would likely be loanable, they limited their search to find circulating monographic books that were not reference materials or on reserve. They also limited by item status to ensure that at least one item attached to the bibliographic record was available. The initial list generated 119,747 bibliographic records that met these criteria. Using Sierra's "Global Update" function, the ILS librarian inserted the customized links into the MARC 856 subfield u with a public note explaining that University Libraries users could request the title through ILL.

Upon receiving requests generated from the CustomLink, ILL staff view the "Cited In" field within the ILLiad ILL software client. The field indicates that the transaction was generated from the ILS (Sierra:ill). Regardless of the source of the monographic request, the ILL staff search the local database for the requested item. Staff confirm that the

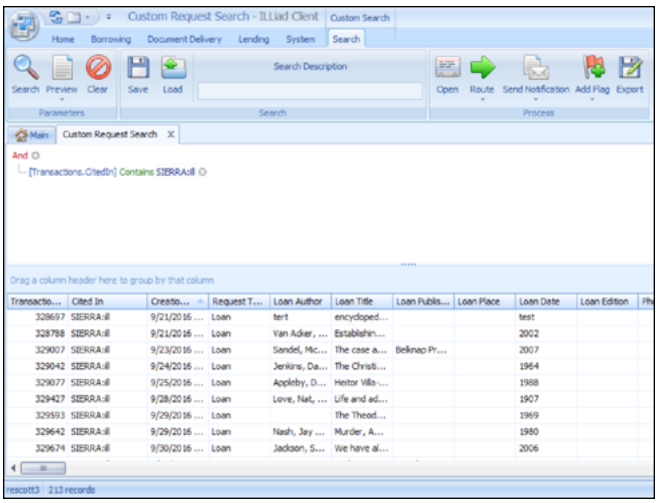

Figure 3. ILLiad Custom Request Search for ILS-Generated Requests

title is not held at their library and note the bibliographic information as needed in the partner library's record. At that point, the ILL staff process the request, directing it to the quickest, most dependable lending libraries. The ILL staff search OCLC holdings and select partners with whom the library is in a consortial agreement that also show holdings for the item (see figure 3).

Results

Statistics were generated using the ILLiad Client's Custom Request Search. ILL CustomLinks from Encore Duet and EDS are still relatively new; in the first year after implementation, 6,111 of 26,068, or 23.4 percent, of all requests were initiated from EBSCO databases. Prior to implementation, 3,994 of 27,689, or 14.4 percent, of all requests were initiated in EBSCO databases. This marks a 9 percent increase in requests for EBSCO content in one year. In the second full year after implementation, the numbers continued to climb: 7,649 out of 26,414, or 29 percent, of requests were initiated in EBSCO databases. The CustomLinks were not established in other EBSCO databases, only EDS and Encore Duet. However, the "cited in" field for all EBSCO-indexed content is qualified EBSCO. Accordingly, it is easier to track down all EBSCO content than EDS content only. Remaining ILL requests come from WorldCat, Google Scholar, other databases, or are manually entered. Considering the overall decline in University Libraries ILL requests, this increase from 14.4 percent to 29 percent over two years is worth noting.

In the first semester of the bibliographic record links pilot in fall 2016, 63 of 3,329, or 1.9 percent, of loan requests from University Libraries borrowers originated with the new links in the nearly 120,000 MARC bibliographic records updated. In the second semester of the pilot, the number of requests increased to 89 of 4,098, or 2.2 percent. In summer 2017, the numbers have continued to rise, with 62 of 2,254 loan requests, or 2.8 percent, originating in the ILS.

Discussion

In a shared catalog setting, making all institutions aware of projects and automated changes to any category of record is extremely important. The first rule and minimum standard is that no harm be done. The authors reached out to the partner schools to ensure that they would not be inconvenienced by the project. Discussions concerning the wording of the public note to clarify intended user group, time, and process included both ILSAC and the local RIS group. Those offering feedback agreed that inserting appropriately qualified MARC 856 fields sufficiently signaled to users at external institutions that the link is not for them.

Another important question is related to workflows. This process originated with the ILS librarian and involved her work on the back end to select and process appropriate titles. Although the authors are in different departments within the University Libraries, this project is coordinated with input from ILSAC, which involves representatives from Library Systems and Collection Management, both of their departments. The Cataloging Department is also represented in ILSAC; that department's role in this project is to remove ILL URLs from MARC records when a title is being added to the University Libraries. The ILS librarian identifies records that need to have a URL added and removed on a scheduled basis and uses Global Update to make these changes.

This project did not create additional work for ILL staff. Indeed, it folded nicely into existing workflows and most requests can be filled using a consortial courier. As a member of the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL), the authors' library shares the cost of the Kudzu Resource Sharing Program, which includes a courier system. Requests from other Kudzu libraries are expected to be processed and sent within a day of receipt, resulting in deliveries in two to three days. If the book is requested from one of the partner libraries, it is delivered instead through the US Postal Service and takes longer to arrive. Because there is no courier agreement among the partner schools, books arriving from out of state often arrive more quickly than those in the immediate area.

The authors' library has not experienced a significant amount of increased ILL requests since implementing both of these projects and does not anticipate a large increase. Nonetheless, any project that facilitates user interest in ILL

asserts the importance of the library in academic research. The steady, if modest, increase identified for these two types of ILL requests indicate that a growing number of patrons are willing to make use of the links.

Although the number of requests has not increased significantly, the authors will continue to maintain CustomLinks in the discovery layer and OpenURLs in bibliographic records for materials held only by partner libraries. Both these projects are still early in their inception and will likely be reconsidered on an ongoing basis. Public services personnel and partner libraries have not expressed frustration with either the CustomLinks or MARC 856 links, and the authors have not fielded complaints from any users. The ILL staff no longer receive visits or calls from irritated patrons concerning books held only by a partner library. They do, however, take note of occasional patron comments that are provided in the notes section of the ILLiad request form. For example, one patron asked, "I see that both [two partner schools] have a copy of this book; could we loan it from those collections?" Based on experience, patrons do not actually have an interest in getting books from a particular location; they just want the title. Providing the embedded link has removed the barrier to access and assures the patron the title displayed is within reach, albeit in a few days.

Conclusion

Both pilot projects promote ILL use by making the service more visible and convenient. Piloting both projects has required communication and collaboration across technical and public services and among all partner schools. Otherwise, very little work was involved, and minimal maintenance is required. For a small investment in time and planning, the University of Memphis Libraries has been able to promote ILL in both traditional and discovery interfaces. More important than the number of ILL requests originating in the WebPAC or Encore Duet is the opportunity to transform a dead end into an access opportunity. Inserting OpenURLs into the MARC records and CustomLinks into the discovery layer created a bridge between resource discovery and access. It creates a strong visual cue and reminder to our users that the University Libraries can provide them with access to the information they need.

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