

## BSTF Report : UCSD Responses

**Round One Discussion: Which 3-5 of the 15 major headings do you think are the most important for UC to address? For these 3-5 headings, which of the sub-recommendations do you think should be given highest priority and why?**

UCSD's highest priority recommendations are:

- R1. Provide users with direct access to item**
- R5. Offer better navigation of large set of search results**
- R9. Create a single catalog interface for all of UC**
- R10. Support searching across the entire bibliographic information space**
- R11. Rearchitect the cataloging workflow**
- R15. Institutionalize an ongoing process of improvements**

These recommendations were selected based on discussions at the departmental level and at an open meeting attended by approximately 40 staff. Below is a more complete discussion of these and other recommendations, including our comments on the sub-recommendations included in the report. Numbers in parentheses reflect the number of staff at the open meeting who chose each recommendation as one of their top three. Recommendations without votes were not discussed fully at the meeting because they received so little initial support.

### **Enhancing search and retrieval**

#### **R1. Provide users with direct access to item (19)**

Quicker and easier is clearly better. Students would particularly benefit from providing a logical default choice. While both sub-recommendations have merit, our overall concern is that users are forced to make fewer *illogical* clicks. We think a clearer segmentation of UC E-links, perhaps into online/print/request, would make it easier for users to understand their options.

#### **R2. Provide recommender features**

Concern was voiced that recommender features are not well developed at present and possibly not worth the investment.

#### **R3. Support customization/personalization**

The value of customization and personalization isn't clear at this point. ITD expressed concerns that anything that requires a login might compromise user privacy; cookies would be preferable as a means to track user preferences.

#### **R4. Offer alternative actions for failed or suspect searches (11)**

There was particular support for spell checking which was seen as a low cost/high benefit option. In addition to the sub-recommendations suggested, we believe search tips and references from authority files would help the user.

#### **R5. Offer better navigation of large set of search results (21)**

Users need help in navigation as the world of information is growing and becoming more complex. The increase in formats is only adding to this complexity. We

support implementing FRBR concepts and faceted browsing. There was also some support for linking fields in serials. Those of us who had seen the NCSU implementation thought it had merit but was too “busy.”

**R6. Deliver bibliographic services where the users are (3)**

In our dispersed user base, it's important to take our information to our users. There is concern, however, about branding our resources so that users know they are being provided by the library (and are not free). There was also some concern about the political complexity of integrating our services with campus services such as WebCT

**R7. Provide relevance ranking and leverage full text**

One department thought this would provide more useful results to clients. Others felt it was unlikely that we could create a relevance system that would have wide appeal. Determining criteria that would match the needs of our diverse audiences would be challenging.

**R8. Provide better searching for non-Roman materials**

**Rearchitecting the OPAC**

**R9. Create a single catalog interface for all of UC (24)**

We feel there is much to be gained from this approach, including having more influence with vendors to get the kind of catalog we want and eliminating the need for users to learn two systems (local and system wide). There was concern that to achieve the full benefit of a single catalog interface, we might also need a single ILS. Based on what our users tell us, we think they will want to be able to “scope” the single catalog to see only material available locally.

**R10. Support searching across the entire bibliographic information space (15)**

Metasearch offers users the ability to simplify search and discovery of material; making our material available through metasearch will likely give users better results than they get on the open web. We like the option of pre-harvesting metadata. However, to make this truly useful, it will be important to pre-harvest metadata for our most valuable resources. Just adding the metadata we can get easily won't be enough, and we wonder if it will be possible to get access from database vendors to their metadata. Support was voiced for providing results sets arranged by format, even without metasearch. Another suggestion: “It would be great if Roger can have the Google style key match feature, pushing the most relevant title to the top of the list.”

**Adopting new cataloging practices**

**R11. Rearchitect the cataloging workflow (14)**

We think there is much efficiency to be gained by viewing UC Cataloging as a single enterprise and eliminating duplication, allowing us to concentrate our efforts on unique resources and new applications.

**R12. Select the appropriate metadata scheme**

Considerable opposition surfaced to the concept of selectively eliminating controlled vocabularies. Some felt this would be a disservice to users. A quote “Don't get me wrong, I'm for keeping keyword searches, but they aren't the best way to search

for material on a topic. Maybe undergraduates are accustomed to searching via keyword, but we also have graduates and faculty who have different research needs from undergraduates. Many of my graduates and faculty have and request advanced searching capabilities. A controlled vocabulary is the library's way of organizing material and one of our strongest pros, let's not lose it or we won't be offering anything different from Google.”

Our International and Pacific Studies Library staff pointed out that LCSH offers at present “far the best and most efficient way to retrieve [CJK] materials together with English and other language materials.”

#### R13. Manually enrich metadata in important areas

The Acquisitions Department recommended NOT implementing structured serial holdings format. Given the push toward a single shared print collection and heavy reliance of users on electronic rather than print material, this does not seem worth the effort it would take.

#### R14. Automate metadata creation

Our Special Collections staff pointed out that many special collections materials are often not acquired from vendors capable of, or interested in, creating metadata.

### **Supporting continuous improvement**

#### **R15. Institutionalize an ongoing process of improvements**

In the interests of time, we did not discuss this item, but we feel that it is very desirable. One department commented that research on our newest student users needs to become institutionalized so that we don't just design our systems for the current Net Generation. Another suggested we add “Expedite implementation once decisions are made.”

### **Additional suggestions**

We need to include support for non-Roman databases in any customization or personalization strategies.

ADA compliance needs to be considered. Some of the recommendations (e.g. FRBR) may well make pages more complex, complicating accessibility issues.

### **Round Two Discussion**

#### **3. Section II.1 recommends creating a single public catalog for all of UC. Do we agree? If so, do we recommend creating a single UC OPAC or outsourcing the OPAC, or something else?**

UCSD is supportive of moving toward a single public catalog for all of UC. From the user's perspective, we feel this would be of great benefit. Users would only have one place to look for cataloged materials, and one system to train on. Interlibrary loan would be facilitated (no need to check Roger, our local catalog, as well) and Request could be simplified by using ISO standards. Users could get access to fuller records and, if scoping was provided, could see what their campus owns relatively easily should they need to do so. Staff (and indirectly users) would benefit as selectors would have better

information on other campus' holdings, and it would be easier to obtain system wide reports on the UC collection. We would likely benefit overall from economies of scale and might have more influence on the vendor community if we spoke with one voice.

We do have concerns, however. The user could be faced with a much more complex system; for example, scoping could become more complex as more choices would need to be offered. Similarly, the variability in campus access to electronic content might be quite confusing to users. Training needs could therefore increase. Some features we now offer locally, such as Circuit, could be lost, and features relying on customization might be hard to achieve without access to a local database of patron information. It was hard for us to envision how we could obtain all the potential advantages of a single OPAC without a single ILS behind it. The difficulty of trying to come to consensus in a 10 campus system is hard to underestimate; we might be faced with moving to the "lowest common denominator" approach and/or waiting a very long time for enhancements that are important to us to be implemented. If we rely on a single OPAC, we also have a potential "single point of failure."

We need to find out what our users really want. How homogenous a group are our users? And where do the differences lie (between disciplines or between campuses)? The OPAC needs to accommodate and present item-level metadata for unique library copies of a work. In other words, records should be able to be customizable for a particular campus and that special information needs to be retained and presented to users from that campus.

We felt that the two options offered, creating our own or outsourcing, were really points on a continuum. We could build our own (like the old MELVYL), use a vendor system (such as ExLibris), license pieces from a business like Google, or outsource the system entirely. In part this is a business decision, driven by considerations such as which path creates the least financial vulnerability for us, what are the tradeoffs between cost and loss of control, and whether we can find an outsourcing option with an entity that shares our values. The point was made that one does not usually outsource something that is core to one's business. In any case, the OPAC needs the ability to slice/scope the underlying data store for different campuses, groups of campuses, kinds of materials, etc.

#### **4. Section III.1 recommends rearchitecting cataloging workflow to view UC cataloging as a single enterprise.**

##### **A. Which of the 3 organizational options do you recommend?**

The recommendation to "view UC cataloging as a single enterprise" received strong support from the Metadata Services Department (MSD). Each item should only be cataloged once, and that metadata record can be enhanced as often as needed, to the benefit of all.

The "coordinate cataloging expertise and practice" option (which was referred to in MSD discussion as virtual centralization) received significant and positive discussion as both a practical and beneficial approach for leveraging expertise, reducing duplicate work and maintaining a high quality database. Although coming to agreement on common cataloging policies would take time, our perception is that our differences are due to

choices about what is most important to a campus and thus what receives the most resources. These differences shouldn't be problematic in a collaborative approach because individual campus enhancements or augmentations of records would benefit the entire system. Staff at the open meeting supported the MSD view and expressed interest in coordination that would provide us the time to enrich the records for items of high priority/importance on our campus and give us the ability to pick which areas get that treatment. Practical concerns for virtual centralization include the challenge of coordinating prioritization across campuses. It was noted that UC is already increasing coordination, for example through the Shared Cataloging Program and the newly-established CONSER funnel. It seems that UC needs to achieve a balance between simplification and customization of processes; both were noted in and valued by this report. It may not be possible to achieve both.

There were strong concerns about the possibility of physical centralization of cataloging despite the strong support for the idea of reducing redundant work. It was felt that physical centralization would reduce the valuable local expertise that communication with subject experts in a campus environment fosters. There were questions about the practicality of separating the normally close working tie between acquisitions and cataloging. Staff voiced concerns at the delays that might result from physical centralization and the lack of control over priorities. The disadvantages outweigh the advantages, and all of the advantages could be achieved without physical centralization.

There were also strong reservations about outsourcing as a large scale answer to the challenge of coordinating UC wide cataloging. We know from our existing outsourcing (e.g., languages where we have no staff expertise) there are still internal workloads, such as developing vendor relationships, contract monitoring and compliance, staff coordination, etc. It makes sense to outsource tasks outside of an institution's core competencies; business models have shown, though, that outsourcing is not cheaper and it increases your management overhead. Outsourcing on a smaller scale was supported by staff at the open meeting. Even better, we suggest that rather than outsourcing to vendors, we "insource" to ourselves. For example, hire or designate one UC-wide Korean cataloger to do all of UC's Korean cataloging.

#### **4b. Which of the three architecture options that the Task Force analyzed would you recommend and why?**

In the open meeting we focused on the option to create a single ILS, since most of us understood what this meant. Many of the values we attributed to a single OPAC (above) would also apply to a single ILS: a single place for users (including staff users) to look for information, a single system to train people to use, more complete information for selectors who need to know where else an item is owned, more complete and informative UC collection analyses, and, as a result of these and other likely features, savings in cost and time. There were other potential advantages identified for a single ILS, including making it easier to select items for the RLF, eliminating the need to duplicate records, vendor files, etc across the campuses. A single ILS would permit us to make true comparisons among the 10 campuses and allow us to share strengths and unique skills, such as linguistic expertise, more easily.

As with a single OPAC, there were concerns voiced over loss of local control and the ability to customize the ILS to meet local needs, the possibly overwhelming complexity of

an ILS which has data from all 10 campuses, and a concern that we would need to implement a strategy of using the “lowest common denominator” in order to have a system that would work on all 10 campuses. Additional concerns voiced were the possible loss of confidentiality of data, the difficulty of designing a system that would successfully interact with billing policies on each campus, and the length of time it might take to agree upon internal policies, such as cataloging policies for notes, across the entire system. We wondered whether any vendor would bid on a system as complex as this, and even if they did whether, based on past experience with VDX and TAOS, we could trust them. How we could insure quality control for such a huge system was another concern.

We briefly discussed the alternative of creating a shared central file with a single copy of each bibliographic record. There were concerns expressed over how this might work: Would the bibliographic data live in one system and the other data (acquisitions, circulation, etc) live in another? How would we unite them? Concerns were also expressed that this might lead to batch rather than real time workflows, creating delays in access for users. One suggestion was to see this approach as an interim step to creating a shared ILS and OPAC. Our circulation, acquisition, etc. systems could remain separate and we could download, upload and merge records in a central file.

Using OCLC was also seen as problematic. Local records are not all in OCLC and making them OCLC ready would be a large workflow. We wondered if OCLC is capable of handling all of our record types. However, we saw advantages in taking MELVYL out of the workflow for bibliographic data; there would be one fewer silo to deal with. We might be able to invoke the OCLC standard for all 10 campuses.

In spite of our misgivings, we would like to move forward with creating a single ILS. As a group, we are ready for change. We recommend small steps rather than a single leap into the unknown.