WorldCat Local in a Health Sciences Environment: One Library's Experience

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

PILOT PROJECT

Shannon Gordon • Public Services Librarian • Health Sciences Library • Memorial University

Background

In 2009, Memorial University Libraries embarked on a pilot project with WorldCat Local (WCL), an available discovery layer. As of May 2010, WCL remains in internal testing and will likely be released it in beta form in fall 2010. This poster will explore WCL in the context of:

- Interface features & customization options
- Access to health sciences information
- Project timeline & next steps

Local Context

The Health Sciences Library (HSL) includes 8 liaison librarians and 11 support staff. The HSL is one of seven libraries at Memorial University.

Core users of the HSL include:
Memorial University's Faculty of Medicine, the School of Nursing, and the School of Pharmacy. The following table outlines current enrolment and faculty counts.

	Undergrad	Graduate	Faculty	*Totals*
Medicine	248	208	192	*648*
Nursing	1065	68	23	*1156*
Pharmacy	156	7	15	*178*
Totals	*1469*	*283*	*230*	**1982**

Additional primary users include the Health Care Corporation of St. John's, and the Newfoundland Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation.
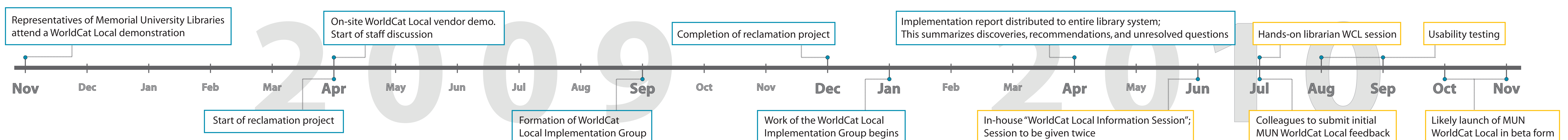
Defining characteristics of our users:
- Many already have a degree
- Very few reference questions are asked
- Perform substantial known item searching (i.e. specific text books or journal articles)
- Journal literature is very popular (Therefore, federated searching is very appealing)
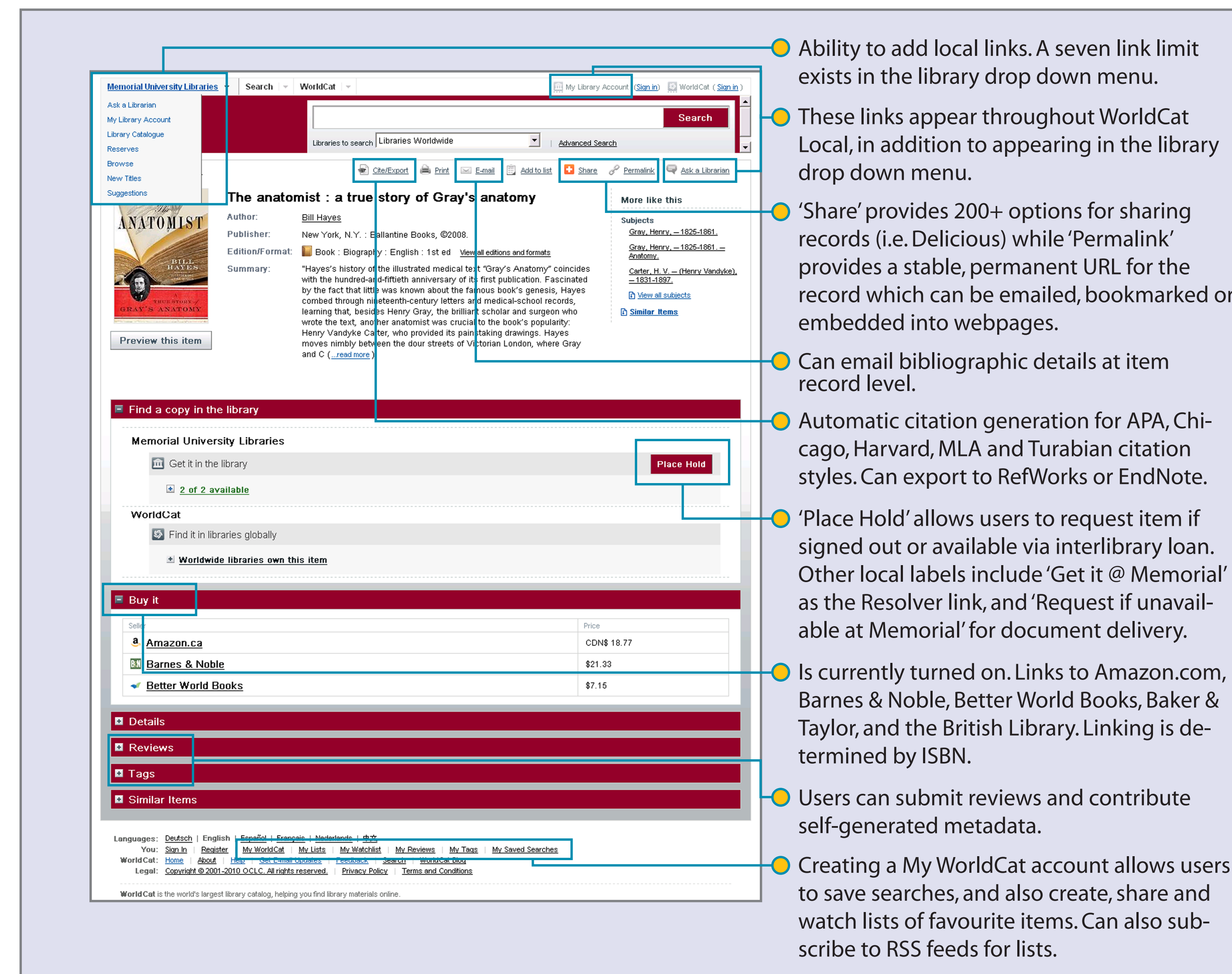
Canadian Scene

Libraries at these universities are currently using WorldCat Local: Dalhousie University, McGill University, Memorial University, Mount Saint Vincent University, Saint Mary's University, University of Alberta, and the University of New Brunswick.

The Interface

- Ability to add local links. A seven link limit exists in the library drop down menu.
- These links appear throughout WorldCat Local, in addition to appearing in the library drop down menu.
- 'Share' provides 200+ options for sharing records (i.e. Delicious) while 'Permalink' provides a stable, permanent URL for the record which can be emailed, bookmarked or embedded into webpages.
- Can email bibliographic details at item record level.
- Automatic citation generation for APA, Chicago, Harvard, MLA and Turabian citation styles. Can export to RefWorks or EndNote.
- 'Place Hold' allows users to request item if signed out or available via interlibrary loan. Other local labels include 'Get it @ Memorial' as the Resolver link, and 'Request if unavailable at Memorial' for document delivery.
- Is currently turned on. Links to Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, Better World Books, Baker & Taylor, and the British Library. Linking is determined by ISBN.
- Users can submit reviews and contribute self-generated metadata.
- Creating a My WorldCat account allows users to save searches, and also create, share and watch lists of favourite items. Can also subscribe to RSS feeds for lists.
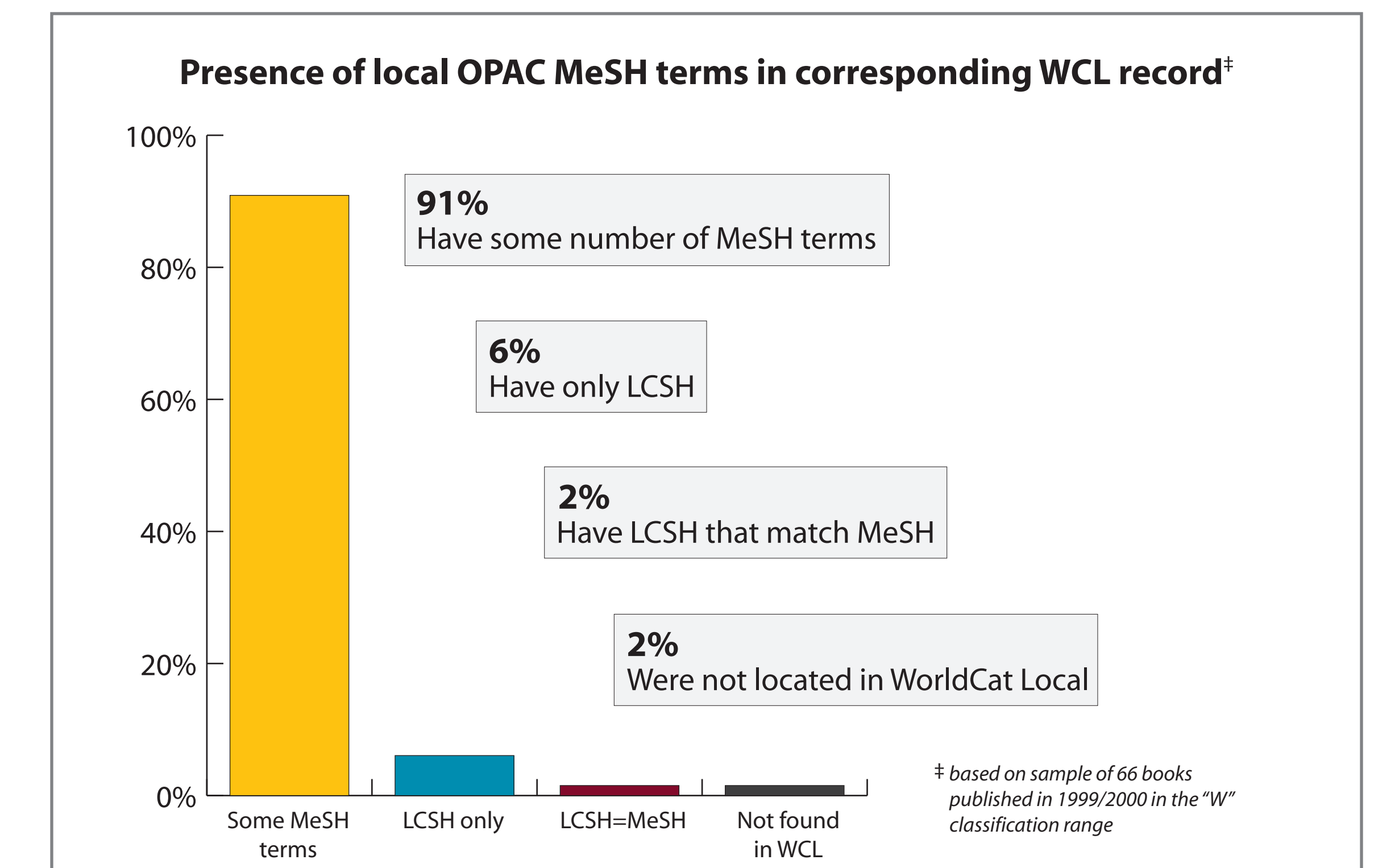
Advantageous Features

- Relevancy ranking
- Ability to limit search to specific libraries via branch scoping
- FRBR-esque behaviour
- Simpler document delivery requests
- Resolver integration into item level records
- Facets for search refinement
- International and wider scope of search
- Showcases collection on an international scale

Areas of Concern

- Location issues
- Records without MeSH terms
- Ability to find desired edition of a text
- Reserve functions not supported
- Current lack of comprehensive federated search
- Learning curve for library users and staff
- Book reviews tend to have high relevancy ranking
- Two day time delay for new and modified OPAC records
- Anticipated increase in document delivery requests

Initial Findings

Presence of local OPAC MeSH terms in corresponding WCL record[‡]

- **91%** Have some number of MeSH terms
- **6%** Have only LCSH
- **2%** Have LCSH that match MeSH
- **2%** Were not located in WorldCat Local

‡ based on sample of 66 books published in 1999/2000 in the "W" classification range

In the above sample, almost all WCL masters have at least some of the MeSH headings present in the HSL's catalogue records. Work is currently underway on a similar analysis of 2009/2010 publications, as well as a comparative analysis for the 1970s.

Conclusion

It is expected that future WorldCat Local upgrades will influence the advantageous features and also features of concern, particularly federated search. It is yet to be determined how users of the Health Sciences Library will respond to WorldCat Local, and will be better understood following usability testing and the planned beta launch set to happen this fall. Whether or not WCL is fully launched at Memorial, usability findings will be invaluable for providing direction in selecting a suitable discovery layer.

Acknowledgments

Special thanks is in order for **Paul Ivany** (Library Assistant, Lending Services, HSL) for his work compiling the statistics used above in "Initial Findings".

References

Arcolio, A., & Poe, F. (September 8, 2008). *WorldCat Local at the University of California usability testing*. Retrieved from http://libraries.universityofcalifornia.edu/about/oclc_docs/WCL_ Summary_03Sept2008.pdf

Deardoff, T., & Nance, H. (2009). WorldCat Local implementation: The impact on interlibrary loan. *Interlending & Document Supply*, 37(4), 177-180.

Memorial University Libraries WorldCat Local Implementation Team. (April 2010). *Report of the WorldCat Local Implementation Task Group*. Unpublished report.

Shadle, S. (2009). Electronic resources in a next-generation catalog: The case of WorldCat Local. *Journal of Electronic Resources Librarianship*, 21(3), 192-199.

Singer, R. (2008). In search of a really "next generation" catalog. *Journal of Electronic Resources Librarianship*, 20(3), 139-142.

Ward, J. L., Shadle, S., & Mofield, P. (2008). *Usage and impact of WorldCat local. Library Technology Reports*, 44(6), 24-25.

Ward, J. L., Shadle, S., & Mofield, P. (2008). User experience, feedback, and testing. *Library Technology Reports*, 44(6), 17-23.

Project Timeline

2009 *2010*

Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | **Apr** | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | **Sep** | Oct | Nov | **Dec** | **Jan** | Feb | Mar | **Apr** | May | **Jun** | **Jul** | **Aug** | **Sep** | **Oct** | **Nov**

- Representatives of Memorial University Libraries attend a WorldCat Local demonstration
- On-site WorldCat Local vendor demo. Start of staff discussion
- Completion of reclamation project
- Implementation report distributed to entire library system; This summarizes discoveries, recommendations, and unresolved questions
- Hands-on librarian WCL session
- Usability testing
- Start of reclamation project
- Formation of WorldCat Local Implementation Group
- Work of the WorldCat Local Implementation Group begins
- In-house "WorldCat Local Information Session"; Session to be given twice
- Colleagues to submit initial MUN WorldCat Local feedback
- Likely launch of MUN WorldCat Local in beta form