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8-27-2002

E-Sources: Challenges for Librarians, Students, and Teachers

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Recommended Citation

Rozum, B., Brewer, K., Shrode, F., & Wolcott, L. (2002, August 27). E-Sources: Challenges for Librarians, Students, and Teachers. Presented at the 14th Annual Instructional Technology Institute, Logan, UT.

E-Sources: Challenges for Librarians, Students, and Teachers

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Presentation at USU Instructional Technology, Summer Institute, August 27, 2002

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Purpose

- Identify the challenges librarians face in the e-sources world
- Promote and facilitate a discussion about potential solutions that are based in the IT world

Points Addressed

- Where we were and where we are
- Challenges facing the Library
- Challenges facing the Library End-user
- Conclusions, questions & answers

E-Sources:
Where Are We Today?

E-journals at USU

- **Spring, 1997**
  - USU starts linking to e-journals
- **December, 1997**
  - Project MUSE with 40+ e-journals
  - 48 e-journals, free with a paid print subscription
- **April, 2002**
  - Library introduces E-journals Database
    - 15,000+ e-journal records
      - E-journals via paid subscription
      - E-journals free with a paid print subscription
      - Free e-journals
      - E-journals via aggregators, i.e., EBSCOHost

Journal Indexes

- **95% of USU journal indexes now online**
  - Print indexes:
    - Article citations
    - Citations and abstracts
    - Physically located in library
  - Online Indexes:
    - Combination of citations, abstracts, and full-text
    - Links to full-text journal articles
    - Links to freely accessible Web Sites/Pages

E-books

- USU Subscriptions:
  - *NetLibrary*
    - Over 2,500 titles available via a UALC
  - *Early English Books Online*
    - 125,000 titles covering everything published in English from 1475 to 1700
- Free on the Internet:
  - *National Academic Press*
    - *National Academy of Sciences*, *National Academy of Engineering*, *Institute of Medicine*, and the *National Research Council*
  - *Project Gutenberg*
    - Books published pre-1923

Fiscal Challenges

- New Subscription Model:
  - American Geophysical Union
    - E-journal is the version of record
    - Print is by-product and lags in production
    - AGU uses Digital Object Identifier (DOI)
    - New Pricing Model
      - Academic subscription based on top diploma issued
      - USU subscription goes from $6,400 to $13,444
        - Increased production costs associated with e-journal
        - Decease in number of personal subscriptions
        - Decease in number of institutional subscriptions

Fiscal Challenges

- New Subscription Model:
  - *Journal of Biological Chemistry*
    - Print subscription = $1,900/yr.
    - Online subscription = $1,500/yr.
    - Print and online = $3,400
  - *Wiley Publishing*
    - Print or online cost the same
    - Print and online cost extra

Design Challenges

- Journal Indexes:
  - Providers develop own search interface
    - SilverPlatter, Ovid, Cambridge Scientific Abstracts
  - Arcane names for indexes
    - Current Contents, ERIC, Professional Development Collection, PsycINFO, Web of Science
  - Library Home Page is usurping librarian's role in assisting users to locate *best* resources

Navigational Challenges

- Quality Control
  - Library subscriptions
    - Access by USU IP range
    - Appears to be "free on the Internet"
      – JSTOR
      – Full-text linking
- Branding
  - Database providers begin using subscriber logos, name, or acknowledgement on resource
    – "Your access to JSTOR is provided by Utah State University Libraries"
    – UTAH STATE UNIV

Library Portal

- Multiplicity of information resources presents organizational challenges
- Confounding navigation with seemingly seamless avenue of access
- Confusing jargon complicates choices
- End-user evaluation is a necessity as Internet resources continue to proliferate

Conclusion

- Increased expectation for online resources
- Increased costs resulting in fewer resources
- Jargon makes identifying *best* resource difficult
- Confusing array of access points for online resources
- Not clear which online resource is most appropriate and when
  - Online Catalog
  - Journal Index
  - E-journal
  - E-book
  - Free on the Internet

E-Sources: Challenges for the Library End-user

Librarians' Observations

- Complexity of information sources
- Current students are familiar with the 'Net, adept with search engines (Google, Yahoo) and e-mail
- Less familiar with libraries' terminology, organization, resources
- Student self-assessment of ability to locate and access quality e-sources may be unrealistic

Librarians' Observations

- Students may assume that their Web search skills apply automatically to library databases

- They can get frustrated, may think that the library does not have sufficient, quality resources

- Librarians must do a better job teaching students to recognize differences among information sources

Librarians' Role Today

- Explain the nature of information
- Foster sophisticated search skills
  - value of creating a search strategy
  - carefully considering which type of database to choose based on info need

Sophisticated Search Skills

- Interpreting search results
- Employing creative approaches to refining search statements
- Critically evaluating sources
  - Which search results to choose?
  - Define need and desired qualities
  - How to detect and assess authority, accuracy?

Librarians' New Role

- Most e-sources lack effective ways for students to get immediate, efficient assistance

- Need ways to "push" information to users to help with failed searches

- Aim to offer help at point of need…. Libraries are beginning to offer 24/7, chat communication for reference service

Librarians' New Role

- OCLC study indicates that most students prefer to ask for help from a live person at their side

- Impossible to be by every users' side, so we need effective online education tools

Librarians' New Role

- Acknowledge that we miss opportunities to teach at the point of library users' need – both local and distant library users

- Must also evaluate effectiveness of any mechanisms we develop to provide help

Librarian / IT Partnership

- Librarians need to make e-sources & databases more like Google, Amazon.com to meet "market" expectations
- Problems…
  - Few librarians have developed skills to create such tools
  - Ineffective communication with vendors who create products libraries buy

Librarian/IT Partnership…

- Strengthen ties between library resources and course management software (CMS) systems
- Librarians should participate in their institutional CMS and portal software purchase decisions (or development)
- Librarians and instructors should collaborate to feature library's collections of databases and web sites

Librarian/IT Partnership

- "Do Course Management Systems and library digital collections contribute substantially to improvement of education and efficiency of course administration?"

  - David Cohen, Chair, Academic Library Advisory Committee of Council on Library and Information Resources, EduCause review, May/June 2002, p. 13

Conclusion

- Not unique challenges
- Technology changes not only the way we produce, store and access information, but also . . .
- . . . the role of the library professional

Role of Librarian

- Intermediary vs. gatekeeper
- Intermediary role more prominent, if not urgent
  - To keep us from drowning in information
  - To help us navigate uncharted waters
  - To help us read the river
  - To chart the waters
  - To help us choose the appropriate course

Where is the intersection between library and information science and instructional technology?