Discovery tools and services for libraries: Issues and challenges

Dr.Bhojaraju Gunjal
Head & Deputy Librarian,
Central Library, National Institute of Technology Rourkela,
Odisha 769008. INDIA. bhojaraju.g@gmail.com

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Abstract

Libraries invest huge amount in its collection development thru various information resources or platforms every year but most of such resources sometimes found under-utilized due to lack of powerful search tool that provide single interface. Library users may also get distracted because of varied platforms which has bombarded with huge volume of content. In such scenario, library professionals play a prominent role in enabling tools to its users that can be made accessible such resources to enhance its usage.

This scenario is raised due to huge amount of information is being generated in various resources using diversified platforms and demand from users to access these resources are increasing. Due to enormous growth in content and not adopting proper tools by libraries, users may fail in accessing the relevant information from such resources. This will also distract the users' interest and hinders in achieving the objective of library i.e. connecting the right information to the right user at right time. Hence libraries identified web-scale discovery as a potential successor to federated search and identified a way to make the library's print resources more visible to library users by providing a single search interface that could serve the needs of the diverse populations that use the library resources.

Discovery services first started in late 2007. Discovery tools help users to search seamlessly across a wide range of local and remote library collections and provide relevance-ranked results. Web-scale discovery services for libraries help to (i) connect users with the content from different sources, (ii) those services capable of searching quickly and seamlessly across a vast range of local and remote pre-harvested and indexed content and (iii) provide relevancy-ranked results in an intuitive interface expected by today's information seekers.

This article tries to cover the comparison between Federated Search and Discovery Service. Various tools on discovery services (commercial and open source tools) are explained here by presenting how these tools will boost the search and support researchers in organizations. The major tools from commercial vendors such as ProQuest, EBSCO, OCLC and ExLibris play a prominent role in enabling the discovery services. Similarly few open source tools or locally controlled tools such as VuFind, Blacklight, Mango, Scriblio and XC. eXtensible Catalog.

Furthermore, this paper also cover Issues and challenges associated with these discovery tools and how various initiatives around the world are working together to provide solutions to such issues. Finally, the paper will conclude with some remarkable results, regarding the literature review study and its analysis.