Designing a New Web OPAC at the MIT Libraries

Erja Kajosalo

222nd American Chemical Society National Meeting Chicago, IL, August 26-30, 2001
Introduction

- The catalog of the MIT Libraries is named Barton in honor of William Barton Rogers, MIT's founder
- Old Library Management system: Geac Advanced with telnet and web versions
- Fall 2000 chose Ex Libris Aleph 500
I Will Talk About...

- Design principles
- “Highly customizable”
- Search screens & search results
- “Your account” & order forms
- “Your bookshelf”, help & tutorials...
- Ask Us! vs. webopac-feedback@mit.edu
- Challenges & next steps
Design Principles

- Usability studies – old Web Barton, other Aleph sites
- We knew that users ...
  - see catalogs just another web page
  - do not understand library terminology
- Clean, simple look
- Easy to use (including vocabulary)
- Basic search & brief results display enough for most users
“Highly Customizable”

- HTML & Tables
- Frames & JavaScript
- Logical bases -- subsets of the full catalog – journals, conferences, MIT Theses, (Course Reserves)
- Learning curve for staff...
Basic & Advanced Search

- URL:  http://libraries.mit.edu/barton/
- Default basic search is very broad keyword search
- Basic search menu includes both keyword and browse searches
- No limiting on the basic search (solved a technical problem as well)
3rd Barton -- Basic Search

Basic Search of Full Catalog

Search type:

Keyword

Search for:

Example(s): darwin origin (woman or female) and scien*
Advanced Keyword Searches
Advanced Browse Searches

Limit search to LIBRARY (e.g., Science or Music) or to PHYSICAL FORMAT (e.g., DVD, Government Documents, internet resources)

Search hints:
Lower-case letters will find matches of capitalized words also. For example, computer will find matches for computer, Computer and COMPUTER.

Boolean AND is assumed between words. You may use the Boolean operators AND, OR and
Limit Search

Full Catalog - ALEPH main menu - Netscape

Limit your search by:

Location

Divisional and Branch Libraries

- Aeronautics and Astronautics Library
  - Reference Collection
  - Journals
  - Stacks
- Barker Engineering Library
  - Reference Collection
  - Journals
  - Stacks
- Dewey Library
  - Reference Collection
  - Journals
  - Stacks

Physical Format

- Books
- CD-ROMs
- Electronic Resources
- Government Documents
- Journals
- Maps
- Microforms
- MIT Theses
- Serials
- Audio Visual and Music
  - All Music Sound recordings
  - All Video Recordings
“Logical Bases”

- Subset of the full catalog
- Journals
- Conferences
- MIT Theses
- Special case: Course Reserves
- Choosing Basic or Advanced Search will get you back to full catalog
Search for Journals

- Keyword anywhere as default
- Journal title (keyword & browse)
- Abbreviated journal title
- Organization name
- Subject
- ISSN, CODEN
- Call Number begins with ...
Search for Conferences

- Just a box – enter whatever you know
- Examples:
  - To find "Materials Research Society symposia proceedings; v. 416" try "Materials Research Symposia 416"
MIT Theses

- Keyword
- Thesis supervisor
- Thesis department (not working fully)
- Thesis title
- Thesis Author
- Thesis subject pre 1986
Course Reserves

- Instructor name
- Course name
- Course Number
- Author name
- Title
- Department
- Period (term)
Brief Results - Monographs

2  [Display full record]
   Author: Berry, R. Stephen, 1931-
   Title: Physical chemistry.
   Series: Topics in physical chemistry
   Format: Book
   Subjects: Chemistry, Physical and theoretical.

3  [Display full record]
   Author: Whittaker, A. G.
   Title: Physical chemistry
   Series: Instant notes series
   Format: Book
   Subjects: Chemistry, Physical and theoretical.
   Availability: Science Library - Stacks | OD453.2.W45 2000
Brief Results -- Journals

1. [Display full record]
   - **Title:** Journal of organic chemistry.
   - **Published:** [Washington, D.C., etc.] American Chemical Society [etc.]
   - **Format:** Serial
   - **Subjects:** Chemistry, Organic -- Periodicals.
   - **Holdings:** Click on Library Name below to see range of years owned in each location.
   - **Availability:** Internet Resource - Electronic Journal | **See URL(s)**
     - RetroSpective Collection - Microforms | MFILM QD.385
     - Science Library - Journal Collection | QD.385
     - Science Library - Journal Collection | QD.385
     - More Locations
   - **URL:** http://pubs.acs.org/journals/joceah/index.html

2. [Display full record]
Your Account

- Place holds items checked out by other users
- Request items from remote storage(s)
- Renew your books
- View your own account (fines, books on loan, requests pending)
Your Account – Sign In

Please sign in:

MIT ID _____________________________
Password __________________________

Send

Don't forget to sign out if you're on a public or shared workstation!

Please visit the circulation desk at any library to get your password.

If you are not a member of the MIT community or do not know your password, please use these order forms to obtain service:

- RSC delivery
- ILR (MIT only)
Your Account Information

Account Information for KAJOSALO, ERJA H

Library messages for you

Change your password

Your activities
(click to view more information, renew, cancel requests, etc.)

Items on loan 0
Holds/PSC requests 0
Fines owed 0.00

Please contact any library to update your address
Personal Profile

Records per page:  3  10  15  20
Cut-off for full display:  0  5  10  15
Format:  Title only  Brief view-table  Full view  Custom view
Select search sub-library:  Aeronautics and Astronautics
Select fields for custom view:
- Author
- Subject
- Series
- Title
- Edition
- ISBN
- Imprint
- LC number

Go  Close
Order Forms

- RetroSpective Collection (RSC)
- Interlibrary Borrowing
- BookPage
- Suggested Purchase
- Copy Services
Your Bookshelf, Help & Tutorials

- Bookshelf – valid only during session
- Had to rewrite all help
- Context-specific help implemented later
- Link to Instruction Committee’s “Tutorials” page
Feedback

- Ask Us!
- webopac-feedback@mit.edu
Challenges & Lessons Learned

- Communication during transition
- Implementation time 6 months
- ADA complacency & can we fully remove all JavaScript [two versions?]
- User education issue with Barton, Vera, Bell...
- 3rd Barton OPAC team (& other functional teams)
What’s Next?

- Implementation of frameless, no JavaScript version (Jan/02)
- Make forms more interactive
- Add context-specific help
- Improve authorities (add board and narrow terms)
- Prelimit by date
- and ...