

2004 LibQUAL+ Survey Analysis of Comments re: Interface / Library Website / Authentication

I. Remote Access / Authentication

>> FACULTY / STUDENT COMMENTS:

- *"The server should recognize user's computer so that one doesn't have to sign in each time to access an ejournal."*
- *"Needing to use my prism ID and password everytime I need to access electronic information is really annoying."*
- *"Remote access to restricted subscription databases via GT ID and password does not work reliably - that's the most important part to correct."*

>> LIBRARY RESPONSE:

OIT's Network Security requested that we make everyone outside the Library log in with their GT account and password. Other universities were being threatened with legal action because of open proxy servers running on their networks. If someone finds an open proxy server running on a network, it makes it look as if they are a valid user on that network. Having our users log in with a GT ID and password prevents non-Georgia Tech users from accessing resources that are licensed by and paid for by the Library, thus violation of our licenses and prevention of possible future legal action. OIT's Network Security found many open proxies running on the Georgia Tech network. In early 2004, there were problems with remote access to the *Science Direct* database, which have been corrected. We have had no recent reports of this event.

II. Access to Journals / Articles / Databases

A. Using electronic journals with SFX

>>FACULTY / STUDENT COMMENTS:

There were 6 comments about the difficulties in using electronic journals through SFX:

- *"The online journal resources section has become less user-friendly after the recent changes (such as using SFX)."*
- *"(1)The links to e-journals don't distinguish between years that are accessible versus years which are not accessible; this can be puzzling when the requested article doesn't come up. (2) One library page helpfully asks what journal/volume/page of an e-journal article is requested, but it only gives a link to the catalog entry and possibly journal homepage, but not the actual article."*
- *"And the search engine system needs to be updated promptly. I have been using the library for two years, and always have to try different search methods for one single article. I admit it has improved a lot since 2003, but isn't it weird that I am always told by the webpage that "no match found" doesn't mean we don't have this book/article"?"*

>> LIBRARY RESPONSE:

The Library implemented SFX to provide powerful linking services for our electronic resources. In many cases, we provide links to full text. The SFX menu offers a link to our catalog so that

patrons can see if the Library has the print version. SFX also provides a link to an interlibrary loan form for material that the Library does not own.

Availability is not displayed on the primary listing for journal titles, but it is displayed once a title has been selected. This was done to reduce the amount of time required for scrolling through the primary listing. We are exploring ways to display the list in order to improve this feature. Subscription vendors offer different levels of service for their products. In some cases, the publisher may only allow us to link to their home page and not to a specific article. Although the Library is committed to providing electronic access to journal subscriptions whenever possible, some journal articles are not available in full text.

SFX uses the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) to locate journals. In a few cases, such as conference proceedings, the ISSN may not be present in the catalog record. This could result in a 'no match found' when the Library actually owns the title.

B. Using online databases

>>FACULTY / STUDENT COMMENTS:

There were 6 comments about the difficulties in using online databases:

- *"I would really appreciate improved access to online or electronic journals. Frankly, I find the system of databases very confusing. I have no idea where to look for certain journals, where some disciplines fit in your categories of databases, and whether some databases might cover the same things (overlap.)"*
- *"I find the on-line library to be difficult to get to the information that I'm looking for. There does not seem to be a good way to get where I want to go and the links are so non-descript that I'm not sure what I'm clicking on and have to guess most of the time. Galileo and Lexis-Nexis are some of the most popular resources but don't have an easy way to get to either of them from the www.library.gatech.edu page."*

>> LIBRARY RESPONSE:

The number of scholarly information resources that the Library provides for our users is increasing at a rapid pace. Library users need to find out about resources relevant to their area of interest and learn how to use diverse interfaces and searching methods. We understand this and so we are working with GALILEO to evaluate possible solutions. We are considering software that provides federated searching across multiple databases and a set of personalization functions enabling users to customize their search environment.

III. Using the Interface

>> FACULTY / STUDENT COMMENTS:

There were 9 comments about the interface.

- *"Very user-friendly online searching."*
- *"This library is marked by overly complicated, inefficient means of access to materials. The web site looks fancy but works poorly. The emphasis should be on efficiency and ease of access; for a state university in the US this is a library of poor quality."*
- *"It would be useful to link the resources available at the IPST with those in the main library."*

- *“A nice feature you might want to look into would be google's ability to search through the text in pdfs, and also a page/article rating system. There are a lot of pretty useless articles online you have to sort through....”*

>> LIBRARY RESPONSE:

In the summer of 2002, the Library engaged an outside consultant to evaluate our web site and recommend design changes that would make it easier to use. The consultants conducted an extensive user needs assessment which compared our web site with peer academic sites such as MIT. The new web site design that we implemented in August 2003 was based on the findings of that assessment.

The Web Sites Advisory Group conducted a user survey in April 2004. Overwhelmingly (85.2%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed that “the design of the Library’s web pages makes it easy to find the information I need.” Similarly, 83.6% agreed or strongly agreed that the “content of the web pages is adequate for my needs.” A significant majority (78.7%) feel that they ‘find what they are looking for on the Library’s website’, ‘always’ or ‘most of the time’. However, several issues were cited by a significant portion of the participants, in response to a query on what ‘was confusing or difficult when they had problems finding what they needed on the website’. There are ‘too many layers to navigate through to locate information’, the ‘organization of the pages’ was problematic, and ‘online resources do not have clear instructions’. Comments to this question generally indicated that the databases or electronic journals were difficult to find, or that MORE electronic resources (both particular titles/collections, and in general) were needed. The wide variety of responses received (which were often contradictory) points to the necessity for further study. We plan to conduct a formal user assessment study this fall.

We appreciate all suggestions for technologies that would add value for our customers, and we will investigate the options for full-text searching of PDFs.

[We are in the process of integrating the IPST catalog and electronic resources with our own resources.]

IV. Library Catalog

>> FACULTY / STUDENT COMMENTS:

There were five comments about the Library’s Catalog including:

- *“The only thing I can possibly think of to improve is that sometimes the really old journal articles (~1920s-1940s) are actually in the library and not listed in the online catalog.”*
- *“The on-line catalog searching system seems not effective. Sometimes when I look for a book, if I input the name, I cannot find it. But if I find the book from another library, and copy the ISBN here. I can find it. Several friends also have this type of problem.”*
- *“When I was looking for books in freshman English, it was a laborious task.”*

>> LIBRARY’S RESPONSE:

The Library is in the process of cleaning up its journal records’ holdings information to make it more understandable by students and faculty. It’s a long-term process, however, that will likely require two years or so to complete. Our state-purchased Library Catalog system requires placement of that journal holdings information at the bottom of the record such that it’s usually below the horizon and therefore not obvious. Our old Library Catalog listed journal holdings information in the bibliographic record, but it didn’t take into account the electronic holdings, current issues, Storage volumes, etc. In other words, the new way provides more complete information, but it’s not as obvious to the infrequent user. We hope that once all the records are

cleaned up, it will be much easier to find the older journal issues and other information related to journal holdings.

Georgia Tech Library participates in a University System of Georgia (USG) consortium of 35 libraries, all of which are using the same Library Catalog interface. This limits our opportunities to improve our interface. We continue to strive to provide the best interface possible within the limitations of the vendor-driven system that we have consortially purchased. If you are having trouble find a book, keyword searching is recommended in that it provides the most flexibility and functionality [one must keep in mind to drop prepositions, conjunctions, and leading articles when doing "keyword" searching, however]. Also, a combined search of author's last name and a title keyword or two is another search option.

The Library offers classes regularly on using Library resources including the Library Catalog -- we encourage you to take advantage of these:

http://www.library.gatech.edu/research_help/classes.html. Also, please feel free to contact us with any searching problems in one of the ways offered at:
http://www.library.gatech.edu/research_help/ask.html.