

Making e-book collections visible to readers

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Introduction

It has always been a challenge to make virtual library collections visible. Options for physical signposts to e-books are limited – users cannot browse the shelves to see what is available, look at a new book display, or discover a book on the reshelving trolley – all of which puts more emphasis on the effectiveness of the library catalogue as a means to highlight the availability of library e-books.

However, the cataloguing of e-books presents some significant challenges, and a recent report found that many libraries struggle to catalogue all of their e-book holdings (Research Information Network, 2009).

Conversely, the visibility of e-books in the wider world has increased significantly in recent years. The increasing popularity of e-book readers and now the iPad has raised the profile of books in e-formats, and, with their facilities for full text searching, sites such as Amazon and Google Book Search make e-books for consumers easy to find and purchase. For those trying to make *library* e-books visible however, this creates another challenge. If libraries are to be effective in connecting users with their e-books, they need to consider additional options which could offer more effective and efficient ways to increase the exposure of library e-books, alongside the traditional library catalogue.

E-books on the web

Studies show that a decreasing number of library users start their search with the library catalogue, and are instead beginning with Google and other search engines (CIBER, 2008). For users, these offer two major advantages over the library catalogue: they can search in more detail, and they can cover more content. As Anderson (2010) points out, a catalogue listing the contents of a local collection was an acceptable discovery tool in the past, where the average user only had access to whatever was available in the library. But in a world where search engines make it easy to both identify and gain access to full text content outside the library collection, users wish to search beyond the limits of the local catalogue.

So if users are not coming directly to the library catalogue, is it possible to make library content discoverable via search engines? In theory, link resolver services or widgets such as LibX can provide links from search engines to library content, so that when a user discovers a book in (for example) Google Scholar they are presented with a link to the library's copy of the e-book. In practice however, discovery of library collections from search engines does not match the standards of accuracy and reliability that would be expected from a library catalogue. The quality of metadata is variable, which affects not only the quality of search results but also the accuracy and reliability of the links. Nevertheless, embedding links to library content into search engines is a useful complement to the catalogue and despite these limitations

represents a good opportunity to increase the visibility of library e-books.

In the longer term, is it possible that web search could replace the library catalogue?

As well as offering a more effective search, it would also be a more efficient way to make library content discoverable. As Anderson (2010, 37) points out, creating a local catalogue is inherently inefficient since much of it duplicates metadata which is already available elsewhere. If reliable links to library holdings could be attached to the metadata already available on the web, there would no longer be a need to create a catalogue of local metadata.

This is not a goal which is likely to be achieved in the short term. Improving the reliability of linking from search engines raises significant technical challenges, including issues surrounding metadata quality and standards, and the interoperability of search engines with library management and linking systems. Moreover, it is not just technical issues that need to be addressed. As the RIN report (2009) notes, it is not clear how supporting the discoverability of library content would fit with the current business models of search engine providers. But there is no doubt that the focus of resource discovery is moving away from the local catalogue and towards web-scale discovery.

E-books in shared catalogues

Another option for increasing both the effectiveness and the efficiency of resource discovery is to move towards a greater use of shared catalogues. Many libraries are

already using consortia catalogues on a local or regional scale, but the trend now is to develop shared catalogues on a larger scale – either nationally, for example the current project on the feasibility of a national catalogue for UK academic libraries (SCONUL, 2009), or internationally, for example increasing use of OCLC WorldCat Local. Large-scale shared catalogues offer a more efficient way for libraries to catalogue their local collections, and they also significantly broaden the range of content covered, thus coming closer to competing with web search engines.

E-books in other systems

More immediately achievable options for increasing the visibility of library e-books are also available. Creating browseable A-Z lists of titles, or highlighting collections by subject or genre on library web pages, offer a simple way to introduce relevant e-books to users. In the academic context, e-books can also be embedded into online resource list systems such as Talis Aspire (see www.talis.com/aspire), and virtual learning environments, an option which is discussed elsewhere in this volume.

There are also other resource discovery systems which can improve the search offered by the library by increasing both the range of content and the level of detail which can be explored. Federated search systems such as MetaLib (ExLibris), 360 Search (Serials Solutions), SwetsWise Searcher and EBSCOhost Integrated Search offer the potential to complement the title-level search offered by the library catalogue with full-text searching of the library's e-book collections. 'Pre-harvested' search services such as EBSCO Discovery Service, Primo (ExLibris) and Summon (Serials Solutions) can extend the range of the library catalogue by querying a centralised

database of metadata taken directly from vendors and publishers, and integrating the results with those from the library catalogue. Both systems can potentially reduce the amount of metadata which has to be added directly to the library catalogue.

There are limitations to what these systems can deliver, and neither is yet an ideal solution. Not all e-book websites are compatible with federated search systems, and not all e-book packages are indexed by pre-harvested systems. Moreover, neither system can entirely replace the local library catalogue, so they must be maintained as additional systems, at additional cost (for more detail see Stone, 2010; Walker, n.d.). But they do provide a way to extend search facilities beyond the title level offered by the library catalogue and therefore have the potential to significantly improve the discovery of e-books.

E-books in the library catalogue

In the longer term, search engines and shared catalogues may replace the local library catalogue, and in the short term, options such as federated search and pre-harvested search offer valuable complementary data and search services. But despite its limitations, the humble catalogue can still make an effective contribution, a point confirmed by both the SuperBook study (Rowlands, 2007) and the JISC National E-books Observatory project (2009) which found that usage of e-books increased if they were listed in the catalogue. Therefore, adding e-books to the local library catalogue is still a worthwhile enterprise, and the rest of this chapter looks at how to achieve this effectively.

Creating a cataloguing policy

When cataloguing e-books, the aim is to offer the best possible search experience, with each book catalogued with rich, accurate metadata, which can be found via multiple discovery points. But the extent to which these aims are achievable will be constrained by costs, including both direct costs such as paying for imported records, and the indirect cost of staff time spent creating, editing and updating records.

The tasks involved in cataloguing e-books are similar to those for print books: adding records for new books, making changes to new records to bring them up to required standards, and deleting records for items withdrawn from collections. However, although the tasks are the same, the workload for e-books is likely to be on a much larger scale. Instead of adding and deleting individual records, libraries acquiring packages of e-books may find they have to work with hundreds or even thousands of new books at a time. E-book collections can also be more dynamic than print collections, with frequent changes to titles included in packages, so as well as adding records for new e-book packages it may also be necessary to add records for books which are newly included in existing packages, and to make changes to keep existing records up-to-date, for example if URLs change.

As with print cataloguing, it is essential to maximise efficiency by outsourcing and automating processes where possible, and by minimising the need for in-house editing of records. But even the most efficient cataloguing processes may struggle to cope with the scale of work involved in cataloguing e-books. So it is necessary to

make a realistic assessment of what can be achieved with the resources available, to evaluate the costs and benefits of each option, and to formulate a cataloguing policy which sets priorities as to which books to catalogue, and the quality required for each record.

Choosing which books to catalogue

Many libraries will purchase individual e-books to meet specific users' needs.

Although the cost per book of cataloguing individual titles can be relatively high in terms of staff time, making these books discoverable is likely to be the highest priority. However for e-book packages, especially for very large packages, a more selective approach may be required.

Firstly, it is necessary to establish whether it is actually possible to catalogue the titles in a package. For some packages, especially 'mixed-content' databases including e-books, e-journals and other items, it may be difficult to find out which e-book titles are included. If there is no easy way to find out which books are in the package, and to keep up-to-date with any changes, then it may not be possible to catalogue the titles at all.

Secondly, for those packages where it is possible to catalogue the individual titles, it is necessary to consider the costs and benefits of cataloguing on a case-by-case basis. The cost per book may be relatively low as packages can often be catalogued in bulk. But given that e-book collections may range in size from fewer than 100 to over 100,000 titles, the overall cost to catalogue an entire package could be

substantial. There may also be other less obvious costs of adding such a large number of records to the catalogue database. A Library Management System (LMS) vendor's fees may be related to the size of the catalogue database, so adding a large number of records could result in higher software maintenance fees, and hardware costs may also rise if additional servers are needed to support a much larger bibliographic database.

Furthermore the benefits of cataloguing some packages may not justify the costs involved. For example, packages are sometimes highly specialized in nature, for example Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO). The value of these collections to users often lies more in the full-text content in totality, rather than the specific titles they contain, and if users are searching by subject rather than seeking particular books, basic title-level records may be of limited use. It is therefore worth considering whether adding title-level records is likely to benefit users sufficiently to justify the costs. Instead of listing the individual books, a more cost-effective solution may be to create a collection level catalogue record and use this to direct users to the website where the books are hosted so that they can search the full text on the supplier's platform.

As well as cataloguing e-books which the library purchases, there may be demand to catalogue selected free titles of particular interest to the library's users. But although the content may be free, the staff time needed to catalogue the e-books is not, and careful consideration needs to be given to the feasibility and costs of obtaining metadata, keeping records of the titles added to the catalogue, and keeping these records up-to-date if the book changes, moves, or disappears entirely.

Setting quality standards

As well as assessing the number of e-books to be catalogued, it is also necessary to consider the quality of cataloguing that can be achieved, both in terms of the level of detail in each record, and the accuracy of the data.

Ideally all e-book records should include an appropriate level of detail, and should be checked and edited to ensure they are completely accurate. But more detail usually results in higher costs, both for the records themselves and for the time spent checking and editing them. So it may be necessary to accept a lower level of detail, especially for large packages where obtaining or creating full MARC records could be very expensive, or for free e-books, where the value of the resource may not merit cataloguing in as much detail as paid-for titles. Similarly, rather than aiming for complete accuracy, it may be necessary to adopt a more pragmatic approach and accept that some records may be missing, some may have a less than ideal level of detail, and some may contain errors in the data.

As with print books, the minimum acceptable level of detail will depend on the type of collection and the needs of its users. A collection of research monographs in an academic or national library may require more detailed records, including subject headings where possible, whereas for a collection of fiction it may be sufficient to provide a more basic record giving just author, title, publication details and ISBN. Developing a specification document listing the fields required in MARC records for

e-books can be a useful tool for clarifying requirements, and for use as a benchmark in assessing the quality of supplied records.

Managing workflows

As well as creating a policy on what to catalogue, it is important to make best use of staff resources by developing efficient workflows to streamline the processes of creating and maintaining the catalogue. To a large extent it is possible to align e-book workflows with those for print, especially for individually purchased titles. But there are some differences to workflows for e-books which may require adjustments to ensure that the workload is managed efficiently.

In particular, it can be more difficult to track the progress of e-books through cataloguing. New processes therefore need to be developed to monitor the 'arrival' of new books, and ensure that all newly acquired books are catalogued and linked. It is also necessary to develop procedures to track changes to e-book holdings. When managing print collections, changes are usually initiated by the library, for example staff decide which books to withdraw from the collections, or which books need to be relocated and reclassified. Coordinating any necessary changes to the library catalogue is therefore a straightforward issue of internal communications. But when dealing with e-books which are hosted on remote websites it may be the vendor who initiates changes to the content or location of an e-book package, and they may or may not send notification to the library. So procedures need to be put in place to ensure that any notifications of changes sent by the vendor are received and acted

upon as appropriate, or, if no notifications are provided, that library staff proactively check for changes.

Managing MARC records

Having defined a cataloguing policy, the next step is to put it into practice. The next section outlines some of the solutions available for obtaining and managing the MARC records which will show users what is available, and looks at how to add the links needed to direct users from the catalogue to the e-books.

Using supplied MARC records

As with print books, sourcing MARC records from external suppliers is usually the most cost-effective way to provide title level metadata for e-books. In many cases e-book vendors may provide MARC records, either included in the purchase price of the book, or for an additional charge. In some cases a basic record may be provided for free, with a higher-quality record available for an additional fee.

When purchasing individual e-books, the records may be automatically loaded into the catalogue as part of the ordering process. For large packages of e-books, the records are likely to be provided as a single MARC file which can be downloaded from the supplier's website or FTP server.

In each case it is necessary to assess the records, preferably by obtaining samples from the supplier, and then to decide whether or not they are of sufficient quality to add to the catalogue:

1. Are the records from a bibliographic supplier (such as Library of Congress, OCLC, British Library) or are they created by the e-book supplier?
2. Are the records compliant with cataloguing standards? Are the records in your preferred MARC format? If standards change, will the supplier provide replacement records which match the new standards? For example, will they offer records which meet any new requirements introduced with the Resource Description and Access (RDA) guidelines?
3. Is the data accurate? Is the level of detail sufficient for the library's needs? For example do the records contain subject headings and additional author entries, or just basic author, title and publication details?
4. Are the records specific to the e-book format, or are they actually records for the print equivalent? Do the records correctly identify whether the e-book is a reproduction of a print work, or a 'born digital' work?
5. If the library has a local specification for e-book MARC records, can the vendor supply records which meet the library's requirements, such as adding local fields, customising link fields, or deleting fields not required? If so, would they charge for any amendments or enhancements required? If they cannot supply records in the desired form, would it be possible to use the functionality of the library management system to automatically make any necessary amendments when uploading new records?

Adding records

If new titles or new editions are added to e-book packages, it is necessary to establish if, how and when MARC records will be updated:

1. If books are added to the package, are new MARC records provided by the vendor? If so, is there an additional charge for the new records?
2. Will notification be sent when new records are available, or is it necessary check the vendor's website regularly?
3. How are the updated files made available for download? Is there a single file of all updated records, and if so is there a list of which books are included? Is there an option to obtain selected updates? Can individual records be downloaded, or is it possible to obtain a batch file which includes any records added since the previous file was retrieved?
4. If titles are added to the package in batches, for example as quarterly updates, are new MARC records made available at the same time? If titles are added on a rolling basis, are MARC records supplied individually as new titles are added, or as a batch file some time after the new content has been made available? If there is a delay between books being added to the collection and MARC records becoming available, how long is that delay and is it acceptable?

If MARC records for updated titles are not supplied or are supplied late, then some of the content which the library has paid for will effectively be invisible to users. This may reduce the value of the e-books, particularly in subject areas where the usefulness of the content lies principally in its currency, for example computing or law.

Deleting records

Records may also need to be deleted, either for individual books which the vendor has withdrawn from a package or for whole packages if a subscription is cancelled by the library. If only a few titles are withdrawn, it may be simplest to obtain a list of the titles and delete the records manually. If large numbers of titles are removed, the vendor may supply a 'delete' file which can be uploaded to the catalogue. If all the records for a package need to be taken out of the catalogue, the bulk update functions of the library management system could be used to delete a whole set of records.

Updating records

When managing large numbers of additions and deletions, it can be difficult to keep up-to-date with the changes. If the vendor offers a single file containing all the MARC records in the current package, it may be simpler to delete all the existing records from the catalogue and reload the new set. However, regularly adding and deleting large sets of records may have an adverse affect on the indexing of the catalogue, so caution is required before making bulk changes to record sets.

As well as adding and deleting records, it may also be necessary to make amendments to whole sets of records, especially if links change. Once again, the simplest option may be to delete and reload new records. Alternatively, if new records are not available or are too expensive, it may be possible to use the bulk update functionality of the library management system to make the changes locally.

Creating MARC records in-house

There may be cases where using the vendor's records is not a cost effective option, for example if the quality is such that they would need substantial manual editing, if the supply process is unworkable, if the delay in providing the records is unacceptable, or if the cost of the records is prohibitive. In some cases, particularly for aggregated databases which include both book and journal content, the vendor may not supply records at all. In these cases it may be possible to obtain records from an alternative supplier, for example OCLC or SkyRiver. If not, it may be necessary to create records in-house.

For small, static e-book collections, it may be feasible to catalogue individual e-books manually, using templates to minimise the amount of information entered in each record and to ensure that all records meet minimum standards. However for large packages containing hundreds or thousands of titles, a more efficient and scalable solution is required. One option is to use an open-source MARC conversion tool such as MarcEdit or MARCConvert from OCLC. Conversion tools can import data in a standard format, for example a list of titles in a spreadsheet, and convert it to basic MARC records. Alternatively if programming expertise is available in house, it may be possible to create a custom MARC conversion programme.

Whichever option is used, a source of bibliographic data listing the titles to be catalogued will be required. There are several potential sources:

- the vendor may supply a list, or it may be possible to download one from their website

- if the vendor provides usage statistics at title level, then a usage report may also function as a title list, although it may be necessary to establish whether the report includes all titles in the collection or only those which have registered some usage
- if the library uses a link resolver service it may be possible to obtain a list of titles from the knowledgebase, subject to permission to re-use the data.

As with any title list for a large e-resource collection, the quality of information in the list may vary:

- some titles may be missing, or the list may not have been updated to reflect changes to the content of the package
- the information about each title may be limited, for example it may not include the author, the date of publication, or the edition
- the accuracy of the data may be poor, for example the list may not distinguish between authors and editors
- the format of the list may be unmanageable, for example it may list author and title in the same column.

In some cases it may be possible to improve the list. For example, if lists are available from two or more different sources, each of which contains different information about the books, it may be possible to combine the lists to capture more detail about each title. But if improvement is impossible or unreasonably time-consuming, then it will be necessary to decide whether the metadata is worth using at all. In some cases the accuracy may be so poor that it would be better to leave the books uncatalogued than to fill the library catalogue with poor quality records. If the

accuracy is acceptable but the level of detail is low, it may still be worth using the metadata because even a record simply giving the title of an e-book may be better than no record at all.

Managing links

A signpost is of no use if it tells users where they can go, but does not show them how to get there. So as well as showing users which e-books are available, the catalogue should also provide links to the e-books themselves.

Users will expect these links to be reliable, direct and seamless, but creating and maintaining such links presents a number of challenges:

1. Most library e-book collections are hosted across a range of different websites, so there will be a number of different sites to link to, some of which may be more difficult to manage than others. For example, some sites may not support direct links to specific e-books, while others may require a complicated login process.
2. As well as supporting links *to* a number of different sites, it may also be necessary to support links *from* multiple sites. For example it may be necessary to support links not only from the library catalogue but also from an A-Z list, a VLE, a federated search engine, or a reading list system.
3. As both the contents of e-book collections and the websites on which they are hosted may be subject to frequent changes, it is essential to find an efficient method of keeping links up-to-date.

There are various options for providing links from the catalogue, each of which has advantages and disadvantages.

Embedding URL links

The simplest option is to embed the URL for the e-book in a field within the MARC record, and then configure the catalogue to display the field as a hyperlink. Vendor-supplied MARC records will almost always include a URL link, which can be customised to suit local requirements if necessary. For example, the URL can be amended to direct users to the library's chosen login point, or to link via a webpage giving additional information such as help screens or terms and conditions of use. The link becomes active as soon as the record is uploaded to the catalogue, so the initial set-up is relatively quick and the costs are low.

However, MARC record links have the major disadvantage that they may require ongoing maintenance. Because they point to a specific URL, the links will need to be amended if the publisher changes their platform or if the library moves its login point. If the URL for an entire e-book package changes, updating all of the affected records could create a significant volume of work. If MARC records are provided by the vendor, they may be able to resupply the records with the updated URL, but in many cases it will be necessary to make the changes in house.

Using DOI links

Alternatively, links based on Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) can minimise the need for local maintenance. DOI-based links can automatically redirect the user to the

current URL for the e-book, so even if the e-book moves there is no need to make changes to the link embedded in the catalogue record. However because they use redirects, DOI links may restrict the librarian's control over exactly where the user is directed. For example, if an e-book is available from multiple websites, the DOI may not necessarily direct the user to the site to which the library has access. So whilst DOI links may reduce the workload of link maintenance, this may be at the expense of usability.

Using link resolvers

A more flexible but more complex option is to subscribe to a link resolver service such as 360Link (SerialsSolutions) or SFX (ExLibris). Like DOIs, link resolvers can automatically redirect users to the current URL, minimising the need to make changes to catalogue records. But unlike DOIs, where a book is available from more than one website, a link resolver allows the librarian to retain control over which website the user is directed to. Link resolvers therefore have the potential to strike a balance between the efficiencies gained by outsourcing maintenance and the effectiveness of providing links customised to local requirements.

Links supported by resolvers also offer potentially greater flexibility than either direct or DOI-based links. Resolvers create links 'on the fly' by picking up metadata from the catalogue records and matching it to a URL recorded in a central database, so they can be configured to work with any compatible system containing bibliographic metadata. This gives the potential to add links to library e-books from multiple discovery points, including VLEs, reading list systems, and even external search engines, all with very little additional maintenance input from the library. They

therefore represent a highly efficient way to extend the visibility of library e-books beyond the library catalogue.

However link resolvers do have some drawbacks. Some e-books in the library's collection may not be covered by the service, in which case it may be necessary to wait either for the link resolver's database to be updated, or to add a manual link to the MARC record. Also, although link resolvers may allow savings on maintenance, they are not cost free. In addition to the cost of subscribing to the service itself, they also require staff time and expertise to configure.

Of the various options available for creating links, no single solution is ideal. It may be necessary to take a mixed approach, using a link resolver where possible with embedded MARC record links as a back-up. Whichever solution is used, managing links requires a significant investment of both time and money. As a relatively new aspect of the cataloguing workload it may be more difficult to find the resources required to support it adequately. But providing reliable links is an essential element of an effective catalogue search – there is little point investing time and resources in acquiring high quality MARC records to make e-books visible in the catalogue if poor quality links mean that users cannot access the books once they have discovered them.

Moreover, investing in a versatile solution which can support links from other systems can make library e-books discoverable beyond the catalogue, something that even the best quality catalogue record cannot achieve. As the ability to support multiple discovery points is increasing in importance, investing in link management arguably

makes a greater contribution to the provision of an effective search than managing catalogue records. Finding the resources to support linking is therefore an investment well worth making.

Presenting e-books

Making e-books visible is not just about providing metadata and links. It also involves considering how e-books are presented within the catalogue, which search options to provide and how to highlight e-books in search results.

Users looking for a particular item may want to carry out a single search which returns a results list of all matching items including both print and e-book titles. Where both formats are available they should be grouped together in the results list, and ideally it should be possible for a user viewing the print record to link directly to the equivalent e-book, although this may not be achievable with limited staffing resources.

Where e-books are presented alongside print books, it is useful to provide a clear means of differentiating between the two in search results, for example by adding appropriate icons to the records, and by using clear wording to show which books are located 'in the library' and which books are 'available online' (Figure 3.1.1). Not only does this make it easier for users who prefer e-books to spot them in the results list, but it also highlights the availability of e-books to users who may not be aware of the library's collection.

Royal Holloway University of London

power central middle ages europe [Search Library](#) [Advanced Search](#)

Keep search refinements New search

Search Results: Your search for **power central middle ages europe** returned **27,187** results

Relevance

Refine your search

- Items with full text online
- Limit to articles from scholarly publications, including peer-review
- Exclude Newspaper Articles
- Add results beyond your library's collection

Content Type

- Any
- Journal Article (24,907)
- Newspaper Article (2,194)
- Trade Publication Article (110)
- Book (2)
- eBook (1)
- Conference Proceeding (1)

The central Middle Ages: Europe 950-1320

Author: **Power, Daniel**
 ISBN: 9780199253111 Date: 2006
 Subjects: Middle Ages, History, History
 Availability: On Shelf, Bedford [▶ show 3 more copies](#)

The central Middle Ages: Europe 950-1320

Author: **Power, Daniel** Corporate Author: **Dawsonera**
 ISBN: 9780191531026 Date: 2006
 Subjects: Middle Ages, History
 Availability: Full Text Online

eBook

Figure 3.1.1. Distinguishing e-books in the search results list

It is also important to ensure that the links to online e-books are prominently displayed, so that users can navigate quickly and easily from the catalogue to the book itself. If there are other links in the catalogue which do not lead to a full text, but, for example, to a table of contents, then it is important to differentiate these from e-book links.

As well as providing options to search all books, it may be useful to provide a search which is limited to e-books. Placing an e-book search option on the catalogue front page also serves as a useful way to market the existence of the library's e-book collection. Browse indexes can also be added to draw attention to e-books, offering users the chance to explore the library's collections to find out what is available (Figure 3.1.2.).

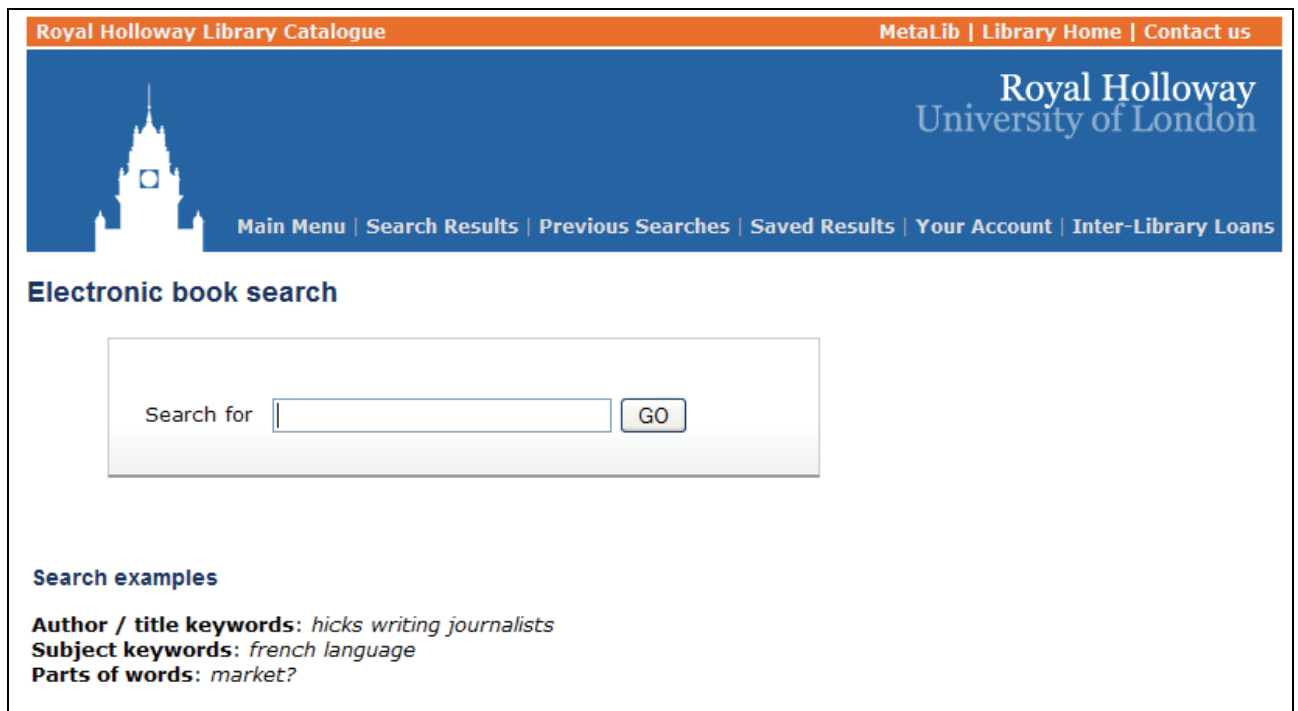


Figure 3.1.2. A dedicated e-book search can be a useful option

Cataloguing in practice

The following section provides a case study of e-book cataloguing policy and practice at Royal Holloway, University of London (RHUL). RHUL is a research focused university with around 8,800 students. The library's e-book collections are growing rapidly, and currently include hundreds of individually purchased items as well as a number of large packages which altogether include well over half a million titles. Staff resources to carry out cataloguing are modest (two part-time cataloguers, with contributions from a library systems officer and an e-resources manager), and workflows for cataloguing have recently been reviewed to increase efficiency by integrating workflows for individual e-book purchases with print procedures. Cataloguing processes for e-book packages do not fit the same workflow, so are

managed separately by the e-resources manager.

The library catalogue remains a key search tool, and the policy is to catalogue individually purchased books as the top priority, to catalogue packages wherever possible, and to catalogue selected free e-books if there is evidence of user demand. Vendor-supplied MARC records are used where possible, and are available for almost all individually purchased e-books and some packages. However records are not available for several of the largest packages, so other options are currently being investigated for making these e-books more visible. A local specification for e-book MARC records serves both as a benchmark for evaluating the quality of vendor-supplied records, and as a template for the small number of records which are created in-house using MarcEdit. Links are provided by a link resolver service (SFX), but several e-book collections are not covered by this, so MARC record links are used as an alternative.

Alongside the catalogue, full text searching is provided by a federated search system (MetaLib), although not all packages are compatible. A new pre-harvested search system (Summon) has recently been implemented. As well as improving the quality of search, it is hoped that this will provide a source of metadata for packages for which MARC records are not currently available, which will both increase the visibility of e-books and reduce the cataloguing workload by replacing the need to load MARC records for other packages.

A number of other discovery options are also supported. There is a web-based A-Z listing of e-book packages, which are also listed on the relevant subject resource pages (Figure 3.1.3.).

RHUL Federated Search

Royal Holloway University of London

Home > E-books

E-books

Search for

[More Options](#)

Core resources

- Dawsonera **Available to Royal Holloway users**
A growing collection of online textbooks in a range of subjects. Individual books are listed in the library catalogue.
- EEBO (Early English Books Online) **Available to Royal Holloway and SWan users**
A growing collection of texts and images of books printed between 1475 and 1700, covering every subject of interest to the Renaissance and Early Modern mind. When complete EEBO will include about 125,000 titles.
- Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO) **Available to Royal Holloway users**
Digital images of 150,000 books published from 1700-1800, covering history, literature, religion, law, fine arts, science and more.
- Literature Online (LION) **Available to SWan and Royal Holloway users**
A collection of over 330,000 works of English and American literature covering poetry, drama, and prose from the 8th to the 21st centuries. LION also includes thousands of critical articles, essays, biographies and encyclopedia entries.
- MyiLibrary **Available to Royal Holloway users**
A growing collection of online textbooks in a range of subjects. Individual books are listed in the library catalogue.

My account

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- [My Saved Databases](#)

Additional options

- [Database list \(A-Z\)](#)
- [Journal list \(A-Z\)](#)
- [Library website](#)
- [Library catalogue](#)
- [Give us your feedback!](#)

Figure 3.1.3. E-book collections A-Z list

Links to library e-books are embedded into online teaching materials in the VLE, and beyond the library, links to the collections are embedded into Google Scholar. The library also has a customised LibX toolbar which users can install in their web

browser as another way to link to library e-books from search engines.

Supporting this broad range of discovery points helps to raise the visibility of the library's e-books but it also takes significant resources. Cataloguing solutions are therefore reviewed regularly to identify which are the most effective, and to focus resources on those which deliver the most impact.

Conclusions: choices, challenges and change

There are plenty of opportunities to draw attention to library e-books in different places – including the library catalogue, federated search tools, and remote search engines – and at different levels of detail, including full text and title level searches. Making e-books visible is therefore about choosing the options which will best suit the needs of the library and its users, based on the size and nature of the collections, the discovery systems in use, and the resources available to support e-formats.

Making e-books visible is also about the challenge of managing scale, providing access to large numbers of books, possibly across multiple discovery points. With the solutions currently available it is difficult to catalogue every book in every discovery system, and with limited resources the cataloguing of e-books also inevitably involves compromises such as:

- How many discovery points can be supported? Should resources be focused on creating the best possible library catalogue search, or on improving the visibility of library e-books within search engines?

- How many books can be catalogued, and in how much detail? Is it best to concentrate on creating quality records for key titles, or on cataloguing more titles in less detail?

Finally, making e-books visible means keeping pace with rapid change, not only by updating the catalogue, but also by responding to wider changes in resource discovery and in the nature of e-books themselves. This evolution demands continual reassessment of the efficiency of procedures and the relevance of specific objectives. For example there may come a time when efforts to include e-books in the library catalogue are no longer beneficial and resources could be better employed in finding new ways to highlight their existence.

Above all, the decisions made by the library to improve the visibility of its e-book collections should be informed by the needs of the users. Whether they choose to search the library catalogue or the wider internet, the user should find clear signposts with direct and reliable links to the content they require, making access as quick and intuitive as finding a book on a shelf and opening it.

Useful links

LibX

<http://libx.org>

MarcEdit

<http://people.oregonstate.edu/~reaset/marcedit/html/index.php>

MarcConvert

www.worldcat.org/devnet/wiki/MARCView

OCLC
www.oclc.org

Royal Holloway, University of London
www.rhul.ac.uk/library

SkyRiver
<http://theskyriver.com>

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