Friday, September 20, Room D, 11.00

Electronic Resource Linking: SFX at Yale University

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Quick and easy linking from databases to full-text - and other services – is much desired by library users, a fact not lost on many database vendors and information providers. Their proprietary linking solutions are, however, fraught with problems and shortcomings. Some solutions are prone to the "appropriate copy" problem where the user is directed to where the publisher would like them to go rather than to the best version of the fulltext available to a user from a particular institution. Such non context-sensitive linking does not take into account the user's affiliation and the user may be locked out of a resource to which they should have access, or they may be presented with links for resources for which they do not have access, thereby leading to user frustration. Open linking solutions - such as those based on the OpenURL standard – are required to enable a library to determine the interlinked environment for their users.

This paper will review the Yale University Libraries' attempts to address the above problems, first in creating a home-grown linking solution and then in implementing a commercially-available local link server, the SFX server from ExLibris. Configuring such a link server to meet local needs will be discussed as well as the rollout of the system and user education issues.

Particular attention will be paid to the roles of the librarians from the Yale Medical Library and the Epidemiology and Public Health Library and how the unique needs of these libraries' user communities helped to drive the decision making process.