

Evaluation of electronic services

Report from workshop no. 7
Part 1

Roy Gundersen
BIBSYS

Participants

- Elisabeth Freyre, Bibliothèque National de France
- Roy Gundersen, BIBSYS, Norway
- Kriistina Hormia, National Library of Finland (day 2)
- Gabriele Lunati, IFNET SRL, Italy
- Bo Öhrström, Danish National Library Authority, Denmark
- Corrado Pettenati, CERN, Switzerland (chair day 1)
- Alexander Plemnek, Association of Regional Library Consortia, Russia
- Natalia Sokolova, St. Petersburg State Technical University, Russia
- Martin Svoboda, State Technical Library, Czech Republic

Main points of discussion

- Which services should be evaluated?
- Experiences in evaluation
- Tools, toolboxes and services for evaluation (not covered)

Resources to be evaluated

- **OPACS**
- **Gateways**
- **Subject portals**
- **Electronic resources (e-journals, e-books)**
- **Reference databases**
- **Production of own e-resources – the need**
- **Electronic document delivery**
- **Research documentation**
- **Virtual exhibitions**

Experiences in evaluation: OPACS

- Not forget a core element
- Elements to be evaluated here, and tools, can often be used in the other contexts
- Log the data → extract the info → statistics
- Identifying a user (without logon)
- Distinguish between http / Z39.50 interfaces
- Interface levels: basic → advanced

OPACS cont.

- Things to log:
 - Number of clicks: find item / topical search
 - Use of help (and where) +/-
 - Response time
- User behaviour: interviews, reports, video, oral comments ... matched with logs
- Response from users: open / structured comments (culture!)

Gateways (web → Z39.50)

- Where are the problems located?
The gateway or the servers covered?
Small libraries
- Explain the function to the user!

Subject portals

- Right number of resources
- Increase the item description
- Links alive, resource updated regularly
- Users' comments and contributions
- Which links are actually used?
- User behaviour

Electronic resources (e-journals)

- Statistical data:
 - The vendors deliver what they wish
 - In the format they wish
 - Details from each vendor, but not the same
 - Definitions: # pages: html / PDF ? Time span?
- Defining our needs in the license
- ICOLC work
- Counter initiative from vendors

E-journals cont.

- Which format suits the user (html / PDF)?
- Service delivery:
 - Minimum uptime / stability
 - Acceptable changes in delivery
 - No delivery with black holes (missing issues)
- Availability of back issues (cost)
- Long time archiving
 - Also an end-user consideration
- Links from references

E-journals cont.

- How to access the journal:
 - Via library catalogue?
 - Reference database
 - Vendors database
 - Journal homepage?
- How can the journal be used?
 - On site / remote access
 - Interlibrary copies (on conditions)
 - → A license db as tool for the library?

E-journals cont.

- A resource db to help the user to identify what is available
- A cross search of different kinds of db and material (a unique interface). The user is interested in getting the information, not deciding on which format: article, book, ...
A recommended approach.

Reference databases

- An important part
 - Which we hadn't time to discuss in detail

Some conclusions from day 1

- Evaluation of electronic resources:
- A complicated mixture of primary and secondary data to be seen as a whole in the environment of the end user
- Many parts to evaluate, how do we do it, what is possible, what do we need for our decisions?
- Most of us have done partial evaluations, but the total is difficult to achieve