Acquisitions Institute at Timberline Lodge  
May 2003

The Journal Stop: A Complete Serials Information System

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Ranganathan's Five Laws

Books (journals) are for use.
Books (journals) are for all; or Every reader his book (journal).
Every book (journal) its reader.
Save the time of the reader.
A library is a growing organism.
— Shiyali Ramamrita RANGANATHAN (1892-1972)

New Laws of Librarianship:

- Libraries serve humanity.
- Respect all forms by which knowledge is communicated.
- Use technology intelligently to enhance service.
- Protect free access to knowledge.
- Honor the past & create the future.

— Michael GORMAN (American Libraries 9/95)

As we continue to move from a collected-based view to an access-based view of the library, we at Albertsons Library, Boise State University, needed to find a way to manage access to our journals. Our goal was, and continues to be, to give our users access to the information they need regardless of where that information is located, within a database, on our shelves, or at a publisher’s website, and in whatever format it occurs, paper, microform or emerging e-formats.

The old man was peering intently at the shelves. "I'll have to admit that he's a very competent scholar."
"Isn't he just a librarian?" Garion asked, "somebody who looks after books?"
"That's where all the rest of scholarship starts, Garion. All the books [journals] in the world won't help you if they're just piled up in a heap."

King of the Murgos, 1998 Del Rey.

— David EDDINGS
For over a decade a printed list of serials in the library had been produced and distributed around the building. By late 2000 that list had become unwieldy to produce and outdated as soon as it was printed. In addition, it cost over $9,000 in direct costs, plus staff time for pin-binding, to produce the necessary copies three times a year. That list also included none of the titles in aggregator databases, as maintaining such records would have been overwhelming for library staff. For a year we had used the open-source service jake to provide information about journals in databases, which was of some assistance. The combination of services required users to check the online catalog, a separate and incomplete e-journal list for individual subscriptions only, a printed list, and jake to determine the availability of a journal title.

We have the technical expertise in the library to design and implement an in-house journal management system; that approach, however, can be very costly both in staff development time and in maintenance. In addition, maintenance would be difficult should there be staff changes. Therefore, we decided to explore commercially available options. If a suitable commercial product could be located, the results we hoped to achieve were:

1. an accurate representation of ejournals inside aggregator databases
2. representation of ejournals that are subscribed to through vendors or directly from publishers, including ‘free’ journals
3. a “one stop shopping” list of not only our journals but all of our serial holdings regardless of format, and
4. use statistics at the title and database levels

Beginning in the late spring of 2001, a committee composed of the Head of Cataloging, Head of Serials, Network Information Coordinator, and Collection Development Librarian, began locating and investigating companies who were marketing ejournals management products. Three vendors were identified at that time: TDNet, JournalWebCite, and Serials Solutions. TDNet, a subsidiary of Teldan Information Systems Limited, an Israeli based company, was incorporated in the US in February 2001. Serials Solutions was
founded by Peter McCracken, Coordinator of Reference Services for the Odegaard Undergraduate Library at the University of Washington, and incorporated in March 2000. Benjamin Adams, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, founded JournalWebCite in November 2000. Since that time, several other companies have entered the marketplace, and JournalWebCite has been purchased by TDNet. Links to information about the three companies we investigated and the more recent ones are in the handout.

We identified and talked with customers of TDNet, Serials Solution, and JournalWebCite, read company literature, visited their web sites, and make numerous conference calls to the various sales representatives. We summarized the information in a comparison chart of the three systems which you can find at http://lester.boisestate.edu/tdnet/comparisontable.htm


TDNet offered the broadest range of services and we selected it in October 2001. Although the other two products handle the information on titles in aggregator databases, they didn’t provide statistical information on usage of the titles or databases. They also lacked an easy method of integrating locally owned print and microform holdings and were also updated less frequently than TDNet’s weekly updates. We considered frequent updates to be a critical service as databases change on an almost ‘daily basis’ and we have been fortunate to be able to add new databases on a regular basis. The other products did have the advantage of being considerably less expensive, however. Either of them would have saved in comparison to the printed lists instead of costing somewhat more. Finally, TDNet offered the ability to provide weekly current awareness notifications by title or subject for users who had established personal profiles with the MyTDNet service.
We originally planned to have the service operating by early November 2001. However, the addition of our locally owned print and microform titles turned out to be more complex than originally anticipated, and there were some difficulties performing the integration. We introduced TDNet to our staff and patrons on January 7, 2002. At the time of our implementation, we were the second site in the U.S. and the only TDNet customer using the database to provide a complete list of all of serials holdings whether in print, microform, or electronic format, current and dead or discontinued titles.

At first the service ran from an off-campus site hosted by TDNet in the United States. Since we prefer to manage our own services whenever possible, and since we were experienced with Microsoft SQL Server 2000 and Windows 2000 Server, we later moved the installation to one of the servers in the library. The nine hour time difference and the different work weeks provided a few communication problems, but they were resolved quickly. We continue to work closely with the TDNet staff to add, delete, and correct title records in our list of serials and to request and monitor changes in the databases. This takes more staff time than we initially realized but still takes considerably less time than an locally produced system.

Our patrons and staff are pleased with the excellent information they receive from the TDNet service. Faculty are particularly pleased with the weekly notices of new articles or journal issues of potential interest. The direct links to the content of ejournals has greatly increased the usage of these resources. We are able to provide the full electronic resources of the library to all of our users, wherever they are located, by the use of EZProxy to connect remote users.

Added Bonuses
Customer Relations: We have been very happy with the customer service from TDNet. We work closely with them and have found they are extremely attentive to costumer input and suggestions. They have made numerous changes to the database dated on that input,
examples are true word searching, removing unnecessary X icons, quick search box.

**Updates:** TDNet provides us with a weekly update to the EZProxy configuration file, eliminating the time consuming manual update of that file.

**TOC:** The table of content alerting service, My TDNet, sends weekly notices directly to subscribers’ email. This was not on our list of requirements for a journal management package but has been a welcomed addition.

**Future Improvements**

TDNet does have subject searching; however, we are hoping for an improvement in this feature. The fact that subject searching is not the strongest feature in TDNet has not been a significant problem for us, as we do not encourage patrons to use TDNet for that purpose. The primary purpose of the database, at Boise State, is to give access to specific, known titles. TDNet is a list of available serial titles not a subject database. Subject/article searches should begin in the subject appropriate database, i.e. America History and Life or ERIC. The results of those searches should then be checked in TDNet.

*Libraries are not made; they grow.*
— "Book Buying". *Obiter Dicta.*
Augustine BIRRELL (1850-1933)
In order to improve communication among TDNet customers, Albertsons Library, Boise State University, established a LISTSERV® that anyone may join to discuss issues or have questions answered. Further information on all aspects of our TDNet implementation is provided at the links below.

Additional information about TDNet may be found at:
http://lester.boisestate.edu/tdnet

The Boise State University installation may be seen at:
http://tdnet.boisestate.edu

Additional information resources:

We previously used earlier versions of jake
http://www.jake-db.org/

We examined these products/services
http://www.tdnet.com
http://www.serialssolutions.com
http://www.journalwebcite.com

These products/services have been developed more recently
http://www.openly.com/1cate/
http://www-us.ebsco.com/home/ejournals/
http://www.creativelib.com/

Further information available from
Dan Lester, dlester@boisestate.edu and dan@riverofdata.com
Peggy Cooper, pcooper@boisestate.edu

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DAN’S NOTES

1. Show TDNet home page
   Quick title search - added at our suggestion
   0-10 Number search – new in this version

2. TITLES TO SEARCH
   AMERICAN HISTORY
   BANKING
   SHO – BAN NEWS
   I icon for given additional information about titles, i.e. incomplete coverage
   TIMBERLINE
   Example of what we mean when we say all titles, even dead titles

3. MY TDNET
   table of content alerting service