



Workshop #1 Google, Amazon, and Libraries



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Changes in the information landscape

- Users access online information directly
- Users obtain materials directly
- Searching is not controlled by library-defined rules
- Users rely on other users—explicitly or implicitly—and not on librarian's guidance
- Users publish their materials and describe them using their own terms

Libraries are in a crisis

- What are the current interaction points between libraries and Amazon, libraries and Google?
- Is Google good or bad for libraries?
- What about Amazon?
- Why do people use Amazon, even if they don't want to buy the book there?
- When do people use the library?

Q1: What is a library collection?

- The things that the library manages
 - The things to which the library adds value
 - The physical things the library has
 - The things that make the library unique
- If a collection is what the library has 'exclusively' or the things that the library produces, is there a future for public libraries?

Q2: What is the role of the library?

- Public library
 - Meeting place, physical space
 - Internet access point
 - Place for human interaction
 - Localized view

Is there a future in lending books?

Q2: What is the role of the library?

- National Library
 - Serving as legal deposit
 - Guarding national heritage
 - Managing long term preservation
 - Giving better access through digitization

Should they make an effort or wait for Google to digitize their materials?

Q2: What is the role of the library

- Academic libraries
 - License materials
 - Expose university products
 - Teach information literacy
 - Offer new services to researchers, e.g., archiving data sets
 - Expose their materials as much as possible and let others provide discovery tools

Q3: Is there a need for specialized catalogs?

- Is a 'world catalog' enough?
- There is certainly a need for specialized services on a global catalog
- There is the history of existing, non-compatible catalogs
- What about local branding?

Q4: Can we let Google to take care of the world's heritage ?

- No!
- This is not their interest
- Google should provide discovery services but not replace the library in maintaining the library collections
- When Google scans books, they do not allow libraries to offer the scanned copies on a global scale. What does that mean?
- Do libraries need to complement Google's scanning? Rescan, so they could have rights?

Q5: Will cataloguing remain relevant?

- What are cataloguing practices?
 - Everybody seems to be copy cataloguing, mostly via a national union catalog
 - Almost all libraries modify their local copy, especially adding subject headings

Q5: Will cataloguing remain relevant?

- We spend a lot of money cataloguing and lack funds for digitization
- Very few use subject headings explicitly (3% in Austria)
- There are very good algorithms that give better subject descriptions
- How about user tagging?

Q6: What kind of local interfaces do we need?

- Google like?
- Explicitly different (since there is Google)
 - Browsing interfaces (faceted browsing)
 - RSS interfaces
 - Focused search scope
- Use catalog as a hub to get to the right copy
- Make sure to have as many alternative entry points
- Integrate

Q6: What kind of local interfaces do we need?

- The NELLI portal is very successful in Finland (1,000,000 searches a month)
- How do we remain visible without a local interface?

Conclusions (1)

- Google and Amazon do not stir the same emotions in librarians
- Libraries don't trust to Google to guard their data, and give Google their holdings with mixed feelings
- Libraries trust Google's services
- Amazon is seen as complementing library services and the relationships between libraries and Amazon are mutual
- In many countries Amazon does not compete with public libraries

Conclusions (2)

- Libraries need to expose their collections to as many interfaces and gateways as possible
- Libraries need to make sure their services are integrated within user workflows
- Libraries need to rethink cataloguing practices
- Libraries need to build their collections and maintain them

Thanks

- We would like to thank Google for providing all the necessary background information needed for this workshop.

See you next year!