

Next Generation Discovery to Delivery Systems: a Vision

Our Vision

We envision a future state where system interoperability and communication replace today's silos. Local identity management systems authenticate patrons and display appropriate available services to them in the discovery layer(s) while request placement and routing is managed by back office platforms communicating between each other using library defined automated routing, APIs and other tools or protocols. In our vision, a unified single patron interface displays all loans, requests, and fees regardless of which library backend system manages or fills the request. Patrons choose when and how they receive communications regarding request statuses and item transit updates.

Current State

Discovery systems, link resolvers, interlibrary loan systems, and library services platforms all run independently of each other with limited cross-communication. As a result, the patron's experience navigating between these services is often jarring with unclear routes to acquiring the identified resource.

Recommendations

The discovery platform should display potential options for an identified item such as: "it is available immediately here," "we'll deliver it to your pickup location or email address in two days," "we will provide you a scan of a section of the book in 24 hours," or "we don't know at this point whether we can get this item for you, but we will investigate and have more information for you by Tuesday."

1. Develop a resource sharing standard protocol that allows local institutions to profile delivery options so that they can be exposed and integrated into disparate discovery systems.
2. Leverage current and emerging technologies such as web services, APIs, standard protocols as tools for systems to communicate with each other to process, route, update and provide status information about requests to both patrons and staff.
3. Extend requesting mechanisms to accept not just OpenURLs, but other structured formats such as ISO 18626, formatted citations (individually or in batch), and APIs in addition to a "get it" button functionality.
4. The discovery platform presents access and delivery options per the library's policies driven by smart automated availability and fulfillment.
5. Develop a standard way to present all loans, requests, downloads, fees, and associated actions in a single library account "my account" interface regardless of backend systems.

In conclusion, we envision a frictionless patron-focused delivery experience that allows patrons to concentrate on their work rather than learning and navigating our disparate library systems.

This vision statement is, in part, based upon the [A Vision for Next Generation Resource Delivery](#) report the Big Ten Academic Alliance Discovery to Delivery Action team prepared in November of 2016. Questions should be addressed to Kurt Munson, kmunson@northwestern.edu.