

Ron Berry on putting the Summon™ web-scale discovery service to work in the Grand Valley State University Library...

# ELIMINATING CONTENT SILOS TO MOVE BEYOND “THE A’S”



## Grand Valley State University uses web-scale discovery to get the most from collections

Located near Michigan's western coast, Grand Valley State University (GVSU) is experiencing record enrollment in 2009 – about 24,000 students spread over two main campuses and a variety of satellites. Staff who manage its library system are proving to be innovators, taking smart risks that pay off in better service to this growing population of users. For example, to accommodate the university's distributed campus system and robust distance education program, the library has steadily grown the electronic portion of its collection, which is now larger than the print components. But with that change comes challenge.

**“Our information was too compartmentalized. It was embarrassingly confusing for students,” says Ron Berry, the library's Director of Technology and Information Resources. “Too often libraries, ourselves included, rely on A-Z lists of various databases on our websites. In our case, we spend approximately \$4 million per year on our collections; I want to get exposure for the resources beyond those that start with ‘A.’”**

That predicament drove Ron to explore the **Summon™** web-scale discovery service, a groundbreaker from Serials Solutions that enables users to search the breadth of library collections – physical and digital at the article level – from a single search box. With its unified index of pre-harvested content, the **Summon™** service turns the library search experience into one as familiar and simple as searching on the open Web.

To ensure the **Summon** service could thoroughly represent the library's collection, Ron first put it through rigorous search paces. He looked at the library's top 100 downloaded titles from EBSCO's Academic Search Premier and compared them against the **Summon™** list of content. The results: 99% coverage. He then compared the top 50 JSTOR titles and top 50 titles from its OCLC databases. “In both cases all of the titles were indexed in **Summon,**” says Ron. “This was compelling evidence to the power of a unified index and the ease of which our users could gain access to core academic titles.”

The comparison came after Ron's initial review of the titles indexed in the **Summon** service. The service was still in beta, but at that point had indexed 400 million records from about 5000 content providers, including major aggregators ProQuest and Gale. “I felt the content was comprehensive. But then comparing these titles with actual usage of our subscribed content was impressive and the clincher for our decision to move forward with **Summon.**” GVSU launched the world's first live **Summon** service site in August 2009, with just six weeks of implementation.

Since then, the **Summon** service has added hundreds more content partners including Ingram Digital, LexisNexis Academic, Thomson Reuters ISI Web of Sci-

ence,® Publishing Technology -- provider of the scholarly research platform IngentaConnect™ – and ABC-CLIO. In total, the **Summon™** service includes content from more than 6,000 publishers and has indexed a half-billion records... and those numbers continue to climb.

**Its content scope enables the Summon™ service to reach deep into the library collection, exposing its richness to users. “I'm absolutely confident that we are providing access to the breadth of our collection,” says Ron. “All it takes is five minutes of searching to see how many of our licensed resources are being utilized in the Summon result sets.”**

For GVSU, the **Summon** service means a dramatic upgrade in simplicity for users. “**Summon** is a game-changer in how we provide access to our content,” says Ron. “Students and Faculty could easily get lost in the various choices of platforms to search for their information, but **Summon** gets right to the heart of the content and provides easy linking to material in its native database or catalog.”

Visit the Grand Valley State University library at [www.gvsu.edu/library/](http://www.gvsu.edu/library/).

Learn more about the **Summon** web-scale discovery service at [www.serialsolutions.com/summon](http://www.serialsolutions.com/summon). Serials Solutions is a ProQuest company.

Learn more from library partners and users of the **Summon** web-scale discovery service in the free Webcast series, “Returning the Researcher to the Library,” hosted by Serials Solutions and *Library Journal*. The series is archived for viewing at your convenience at [www.libraryjournal.com/webcasts](http://www.libraryjournal.com/webcasts).



**Summon™**  
Web-Scale Discovery

One search box... your library discovered.