

Roy McCready on putting the Summon™ web-scale discovery service to work at the University of Liverpool Library

SUPPORTING ACADEMIC RESEARCH THROUGH TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION



University of Liverpool Library finds a practical breakthrough in the Summon™ web-scale discovery service

At University of Liverpool, the Library plays a key role in supporting the school's intensive research and teaching by taking a proactive path and applying the best new technology to its services. The library is constantly on the prowl for the next big innovation that will make its wealth of resources easier to use and access. Its approach is assertive but disciplined, adopting early only on *bona fide* advances: those that take finding and using information a full step ahead.

Consider its take on the evolution of discovery. While Roy McCready, the Library's Systems Manager, and his staff had been eagerly evaluating new services, they found it a waiting game. "We've been looking at resource discovery engines, but haven't seen how they would fit into our portfolio because all that we've seen depended on federated search," says Roy. "We've been looking for a discovery service that quickly delivers simultaneous results from *all* platforms."

Roy and his staff found the match they were looking for when Serials Solutions launched its revolutionary new Summon™ web-scale discovery service in early 2009. In fact, the library jumped at the opportunity to become a beta site for the service – the first in the UK. Roy and his staff were intrigued with the Summon™ service's use of a single search-box as an entry to the breadth of the collection – physical and digital. Plus, it aligned with the library's profile as an innovator at the University, pioneering all-new technology built to serve next-gen end-user expectations for a simple search.

"Summon™ delivers simultaneous information and results from our local catalogue and our remote electronic resources," says Roy. "It's the first discovery engine we've seen that promises to achieve this effectively. And that's what our Library users want."

The Summon™ service's simplicity – an instant search from an obvious starting point—masks an intricate behind-the-scenes operation that marries local and remote content. At its core is a massive content index of nearly half a billion records from 6,000 content providers. These include major aggregators such as ProQuest, Gale and LexisNexis Academic, along with Springer, Taylor& Francis, SAGE, IEEE, Emerald, Scitation and Ingenta publishers, the Royal Society, scores of scholarly publishers and university presses and so many others that a single search can stretch into the most remote corners of the Library's collection.

University of Liverpool Library began its beta testing with library staff, but within a few short months opened the Summon service to faculty and students – an aggressive schedule by anyone's measurement. Roy

attributes their speed to the Library's drive to be at the forefront of the delivery of electronic resources – a zeal the Library feels should be shared with the rest of the University. "We showed the Summon service to selected Library staff and users and they liked it, so we feel we should share the experience with the University community," says Roy. "It's giving useful results already for many subjects and this provides a great opportunity to make our Library users feel involved in the development of the service. They're providing feedback to the Summon team based on real usage."

The Summon™ service is the right fit for this forward-thinking library, providing an effective strategy for showcasing quality content – far superior to what's available on the open Web – without revealing complexity. "A key part of the Library's commitment to the University is employing the latest technology to improve tools and interfaces for finding information," says Roy. "We view Summon™ as the centerpiece of this strategy for us."

Visit the University of Liverpool Library at www.liv.ac.uk/Library/. Learn more about the Summon™ web-scale discovery service at www.serialssolutions.com/summon. Serials Solutions is a business unit of ProQuest.

Hear more from early library partners and adopters 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 replay at your convenience at www.libraryjournal.com/webcasts.



Summon™

Web-Scale Discovery

One search box... your library discovered.