Using Discipline-Based Virtual Research Environments (VRE’s) to Inform the Design of a Cross-Disciplinary, University-Wide Scholar’s Portal Implementation @ NYU

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Why a Scholar’s Portal?
Why a Scholar’s Portal?

• Mid-2000s: Assessments of Library services
  ▪ 2 New Generation Working Group Reports
  ▪ LibQual Survey
  ▪ NYU-ITS Client Satisfaction Survey
  ▪ DLF Aquifer project
Survey Conclusions:

• Users accustomed to Web 2.0 technologies.

• Users dissatisfied with library search interfaces, access paths and tools for using and sharing content.

• Lack of infrastructure to support continuing development of services within evolving web environment.
Definition

…A framework of resources to support the underlying processes of research on both small and large scales, particularly for those disciplines which are not well catered for by the current infrastructure (JISC)
Goals-

• *To make cooperation more efficient and hide the complexity of accessing distributed resources...*
Aims-
• **Support researchers by integrating tools, services, and resources into an existing research infrastructure…**
Virtual Research Environments

Principles / characteristics

• quantifiable and coherent research purpose
• allows only authenticated user to contribute to its knowledge base
• promotes collaboration
• mirrors existing research structure
• largely discipline driven & discipline specific
• definable presence
• Without integration into the existing research infrastructure, VRE’s will fail and become yet more underused web portals, or artificial constructs driven by project funding.
Mash-up

- *The term mashup is primarily used to describe a remix of digital data. It implies easy, fast integration, frequently using open APIs and data sources to produce enriching results that were not the original reason for producing the raw source data.* (wikipedia)
Research Mash-up

• A *remix of research data, both discipline specific (data-sets..) and generic research tools and services (RefWorks, chat widget) to aid collaboration and research practices (NTK)*
Facilitating the mash-up
Multi-disciplinary Research Environment

Discover

My Search

Share/Collaborate

My Resources

Manage Resources

Research Portal

My Publications

Create & Publish

Your Online Research Environment
Multi-disciplinary Research Environment

Contexts, customizable views per affinity/role/discipline
- Undergrad instruction environments, e.g., e-portfolio
- Shared documents & calendars
- Content assembly & authoring environments
- Collection publications, Journals, Exhibits
- Research collab., VREs

Reusable Services
- Citation DB
- Content discovery
- Document sharing
- Google apps
- User profile
- Assessment, grading
- Personal tags
- Etc.

Authoritative Sources: Enterprise "value-add"
- Authorization Directory, Affiliations
- Institutional Systems of record
- SIS
- HR
- Authentication, Identity mgmt
- Content

Diagram attribution:
David Millman, DLTS, NYU
Multi-disciplinary Research Environment

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Current work:
1. Improving search and discovery of library and related resources
Next Steps at NYU

Back End Functionality – Workflow Implications

Collections – Libraries’ Curation Role

Diagram attribution: Corey Harper, NYU
Back End Functionality – Workflow Implications

Collections – Libraries’ Curation Role

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Current work:
1. Improving search and discovery of library and related resources
2. Authentication and Authorization – Open SSO
3. Pushing search and discovery tools to users’ environments
4. Building support for new forms of scholarly communication
Developing Alex: Advanced Learning Exchange

- Sakai 3
- Integration with repositories
- E-portfolios
- User profile
- Video streaming
- Tools for assessment
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Reuseable Services

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Sakai-based VRE
Multi-disciplinary Research Environment

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Other V-Environ.

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