Six Years of CISTI Source at the University of Calgary

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The University of Calgary has used CISTI Source as an unmediated document delivery service since 1998. CISTI (Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information) essentially functions as Canada’s national science library. CISTI's role as a source for scientific, technical and medical information both in Canada and internationally has been well documented.

What is CISTI Source?

From the CISTI Source Website: "CISTI Source is an integrated current awareness and document ordering service. It is made up of two distinct but interrelated parts: its databases (CISTI Source Articles, CISTI Source Journals and the CISTI Catalogue) and its alert services (Article Alert and Journal Contents Alert)."

The CISTI Source Articles database indexes articles from 17,000 different journals worldwide in all subject areas. Most of the titles are scholarly in nature, though some popular magazines are indexed as well. Indexing coverage is from 1993 onward.

As of November 9, 2003, CISTI held 9,397 of the 17,000 journal titles indexed in CISTI Source. While the CISTI Source indexing covers social sciences and humanities journals in addition to scientific, technical and medical (STM) journals, the journals that CISTI holds are predominantly STM journals.

At present, the McGill University Library is the only other library to document its experiences with CISTI Source. A primary difference in implementation is that McGill distributes accounts and passwords to a number of departments whereas the University of Calgary uses IP recognition and a proxy server to authenticate users.

How do University of Calgary users access CISTI Source?

Because of the costs involved, we authenticate all users (students, faculty, staff) both on and off campus through our proxy server. Due to our combination of IP recognition and the proxy server, we have not implemented some of the services that come with password access to CISTI Source. This includes CISTI Source's Table of Contents Alerts.

Once a user is authenticated, there are several ways to search the CISTI Source database. Options include searching for the tables of contents of journals; searching the article database by author, title or keyword; or searching the CISTI Catalogue for all of CISTI's holdings. While our users use all the search options, we usually instruct our users to find references to STM articles in other indexes and then search CISTI Source by the Table of Contents.

After our users find an article that interests them, they are presented with three options:

- If the Library does not own the journal and CISTI can provide the article, an order form allowing the user to request the article appears.
- If the Library owns the journal, a statement appears indicating that the journal is held by the University of Calgary Library.
- If neither the Library or CISTI can provide the article, a button to request the article through our regular Interlibrary Loan service appears.

Users can choose one of two pick up locations for articles. Additionally graduate students, faculty and staff can choose to receive articles by campus mail. Users are advised to pick up CISTI Source requests after 48 hours. Frequently articles arrive the same day that they are ordered. Users are only notified if CISTI has to cancel the request for some reason.

It is also important to note that we do not charge our users for interlibrary loan, regardless of whether it is our regular service or CISTI Source.

Why did we start using CISTI?

From 1992 through 1996, the University of Calgary's collection budget dropped in inflation weighted dollars. The result was a series of heavy cuts to our serials holdings. Consequently, our credibility dropped with faculty and students. In the late 90's with an improving collections budget, we were looking for ways to better manage our collections and to restore credibility with our users.

In 1997 using funding from the Webster Foundation, the library held a five week trial of CISTI Source (or SwetsScan/CISTI Service as it was known at the time). The trial was open to graduate students and faculty from the Faculty of Science. 62 people used the service during the Summer of 1997, ordering 1357 articles of which 871 were from journals not held by the University of Calgary Library. There was no blocking of journal titles during the trial. Based on the results of this trial, the library implemented CISTI Source for all students, faculty and staff in May 1998.

Statistics about CISTI Source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>MacKinnie (Main) Library</th>
<th>Health Sciences Library</th>
<th>Total CISTI Source</th>
<th>Percentage of Total ILL Requests Filled</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Requests Filled</td>
<td>Requests Filled</td>
<td>Requests Filled</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998/1999</td>
<td>3,996</td>
<td>2,114</td>
<td>6,110</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999/2000</td>
<td>6,644</td>
<td>3,843</td>
<td>10,487</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000/2001</td>
<td>9,739</td>
<td>5,227</td>
<td>14,966</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001/2002</td>
<td>8,778</td>
<td>5,530</td>
<td>14,308</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002/2003</td>
<td>8,520</td>
<td>5,274</td>
<td>13,794</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
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continued on page 58