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TOOLS YOU CAN USE: LibX AS AN ASSISTANT FOR COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

LibX, a browser plugin for both Firefox and Internet Explorer, has generally been used by libraries to provide users direct access to their library's resources. As of October 2009, there were over 665 libraries worldwide that offered a public LibX edition to their constituents. However, in addition to connecting users to their library's resources, the LibX plugin can also be used by those in collection development to obtain additional information about materials under review for a library's collection.

LibX editions can be customized to include several different library catalogs and resources to be used by bibliographers. Additionally, when used in the Firefox browser, multiple LibX editions can be stored on the same computer by creating different profiles of the Firefox browser, adding additional flexibility and usage of this tool for those with collection responsibilities in multiple subject areas. The first part of this paper discusses how LibX can be used as a collection development tool; how bibliographers can assess their library collections as well as compare resources with peer collections. Part two of this paper describes describe how to use parts of the LibX Edition Builder in order to get a basic understanding of how to create a LibX edition for personal use.

Part 1

What is LibX?

LibX (<http://libx.org/>), an open source project, has commonly been used by librarians to provide users with direct access to their library's resources while doing research on the internet (Bailey & Back, 2006) using either the Firefox or Internet Explorer browsers. A LibX edition is created and maintained by a designee(s) of an institution who selects specific resources for LibX to provide seamless access to for their users. Most often this is the library's online catalog system, list of electronic journals, and/or other library databases. In October 2009, there were over 665 public editions of LibX being offered by libraries worldwide. While LibX has primarily been developed to connect users to their library's resources, LibX is not solely limited to this application. The first part of this paper will demonstrate how librarians can use many of the features of LibX to assist with collection development decisions. The second part will describe how to use parts of the LibX Edition Builder in order to get a basic understanding of how to create a LibX edition for personal use. As libraries have unique workflows regarding collection development, in this paper the term "bibliographer" encompasses anyone who is working on analyzing resources to be added to a collection, whether it is a librarian, staff member, student worker, or volunteer.

Checking your library's collection

There are many resources in print and online that bibliographers use to find books published for their subject areas. A few examples include review sources such as Choice and Library Journal, book sellers such as Amazon and Barnes & Noble, databases such as WorldCat and Books in Print, as well as through dealers such as Yankee Book Peddler (YBP) and Blackwell. LibX provides multiple ways for bibliographers to quickly check their own library's holdings to determine if the book is currently owned or not, without having to switch back and forth between another browser to check their library's catalog.

Cues

If a bibliographer is on barnesandnoble.com, or Amazon.com, LibX is able to place a cue (*Fig 1*) on that page. LibX has been designed to locate the ISBN information on the page to create a cue that

sends the ISBN information to the first library catalog in that particular LibX edition. The bibliographer can then click on the cue to check the library catalog for holdings information regarding this item. LibX is also able to place cues on web pages that support the use of COinS (Context Objects in Spans), but these cues will link to the library's OpenURL Resolver..

Figure 1

As some materials have related ISBNs, it is possible the library might not have the exact ISBN that is listed on the page the bibliographer is originating from. LibX uses the xISBN service to pull up any related ISBNs to the work, so the bibliographer can easily check the library catalog for any related ISBNs. If the bibliographer is initially shown the ISBN is not found, by clicking on the other ISBNs listed in the left hand column, the bibliographer can check all related ISBNs for that item. Figure 2 demonstrates that the second ISBN in the list was owned by the bibliographer's library.

Figure 2

Autolinking

Not all web pages support the use of COinS yet many web pages, such as those that offer book reviews, are often used by bibliographers to locate materials to be added to their collections. Many of these web pages include ISBN (or ISSN for journals) as part of the description of the item that is being reviewed. In these instances LibX is able to automatically generate a hyperlink based on the series of numbers displayed that it perceives to be ISBN or ISSN numbers (Fig. 3). LibX "lays" this hyperlink on top of the webpage. Anyone who does not have a LibX edition installed in their browser will not see the hyperlinked ISBN. One characteristic of this generated hyperlink is that it appears as a multi-dotted line, so it is distinguished from other standard links that are a part of the

page broadcasted from the hosting server. This generated hyperlink goes directly to the first library catalog that is listed in the LibX edition, and again utilizes the xISBN service for books to find related ISBNs for a particular work (Fig 4). The autolink function is able to be turned on and off, based on the preferences selected by the user of the browser.

Sciences

★ Egan, Timothy. **The Big Burn: Teddy Roosevelt and the Fire That Saved America**. Houghton Harcourt. Oct. 2009. c.352p. photogs. index. ISBN [978-0-618-96841-1](#). \$27. SCI

In this unique chronicle of the 1910 forest fire that burned more than three million acres in two days, killed at least 80 people, and destroyed five towns, Egan, author of the National Book Award-winning *The Worst Hard Time*, tells a complex and intriguing story: the confrontation between wealthy industrialists who built railroads and stripped the land of its natural resources and those men, including President Theodore Roosevelt and his chief forester, Gifford Pinchot, who diligently worked to preserve the West's vast forest resources. The "big burn" complicated this showdown by swaying public opinion in favor of the idea that natural resources belonged to the public and that fires could be controlled by human efforts. **VERDICT** Historians will enjoy Egan's well-written book, featuring sparkling and dynamic descriptions of the land and people, as a review of Roosevelt's conservation ideas, while general readers will find his suspenseful account of the fires mesmerizing. [See Prepub Alert, *LJ* 6/15/09; for more on Roosevelt's conservation efforts, see Douglas Brinkley's *The Wilderness Warrior*.—Ed.]—
Patricia Ann Owens, Wabash Valley Coll., Mt. Carmel, IL

Figure 3

Figure 4

Right-click context menu

LibX also utilizes the right-click context menu. Bibliographers can highlight text and then use the right click option on the mouse to open the right click context menu. Using the context menu, bibliographers can choose to search the highlighted text in their library's catalog by keyword, author, title, subject, etc (Fig 5) depending on the options available to them in that catalog. Options listed in the right-click context menu are also customizable, based on the resources included in the LibX edition.

Figure 5

Additionally, the right-click context menu of LibX was designed to be "smart." If text is selected, the context menu will include the option to look for title, author, keyword, etc in the catalog. However, if a series of numbers is highlighted for the right-click context menu, then LibX offers the ability to search the catalog for either the exact ISBN or related ISBNs (Fig 6).

Figure 6

Toolbar

Another option bibliographers can use is the ability to search with the LibX toolbar (*Fig 7*). This toolbar is located below the browser's URL toolbar, and has the option of being displayed or hidden. Bibliographers can select fields to search based on the options available from their catalog, such as keyword, title, journal title, author, subject, ISBN/ISSN, and call number. A search is initiated once the bibliographer clicks on the "search [resource]" option (e.g. "search Addison" in *Fig 7*) in the toolbar. At this point, a new tab or window, or in the same screen (depending on how the user has set the preferences) will open that searches the selected resource.

Figure 7

Checking other library collections

LibX can also be used to access other library catalogs that are included in that particular, customized edition. Bibliographers need only select the catalogs or resources they wish to have included in the LibX edition, which is explained in part two of this paper. Once the resources have been added to an edition, the bibliographer can use many of the same options to search for resources in other library catalogs, save for the embedded cues and autolinking features, as these options are only able to search the first catalog that is listed in the edition (generally bibliographers will select their own catalog to be the first library catalog listed in their edition).

Toolbar

Just as the toolbar was used to check the bibliographer's library holdings, the toolbar can also be used to check the catalogs of other libraries. Figure 8 demonstrates how to select the catalog from the list of resources in the edition to be searched, and Figure 9 displays the multiple tabs and results of this title search. Bibliographers can then compare the holdings of this item in their peer libraries to help determine if it is something to be added to the collection or if the money should be used for other acquisitions.

Figure 8

Figure 9

Setting Preferences for the right-click context menu

LibX also provides customization options for bibliographers to utilize, depending on the type of search taking place. As demonstrated earlier in this paper, the right-click context menu can link text or ISBN/ISSN searches back to the bibliographer's library catalog. However, bibliographers

can use the “preferences” menu in LibX to select other options to be displayed in the right-click context menu.

The preferences menu is located under the LibX edition name and icon in the LibX toolbar (*Fig 10*). There are multiple tabs in the preferences menu, including how the results should display to options about the embedded cues and autolinking functions. To alter the options of the right-click context menu, select the second tab, “Context Menu” and check or uncheck options to be displayed (*Fig 11*). The items in the right-click context menu when text is selected are located under “general” while the options for what are to be displayed in the right-click context menu ISBN searches has its own tab.

Figure 10

Figure 11

As an example of these changes, Figure 5 demonstrated the right-click menu options for a title search in Addison when the bibliographer was checking her own collection. Figure 12 demonstrates a right-click context menu title search when the titles for several different catalogs were selected in the preferences option to be displayed when the context menu was deployed,

Title: TENDING FIRE: COPING WITH AMERICA'S WILDLAND FIRES

Author: PYNE, STEPHEN J., 1949-

Publisher: ISLAND PRESS

Pub Year: 2004 **ISBN:** 1423767217

Binding: eBook

Content Level: GEN-AC

LC Class: SD421.3.P96 2004

Subject Headings: 1. WILDFIRES--U.S.--HIST. 2. FIRE MANAGEM

YBP Interdisciplinary Topics: Environmental; Public Policy

Approval Note: AUTH: ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY, A SHEARWA

Geographic Focus: US

Language: English **LCCN:** 2004-8094

Copy
Select All

Search Amazon.com for "TENDING FIRE: C..."
View Selection Source

Search Addison for Title "TENDING FIRE: COPING WITH..."
Search UW Madison for Title "TENDING FIRE: COPING WITH..."
Search Oregon State University for Title "TENDING FIRE: COPING WITH..."
Search Michigan State University for Title "TENDING FIRE: COPING WITH..."
Search Washington State University for Title "TENDING FIRE: COPING WITH..."
Search Google Scholar for "TENDING FIRE: COPING WITH..."
Reload www.gobi3.com via Off Campus Sign In

Supplier	Purchase Option	Price	Availability
+ NetLibrary	Varies by subaccount	25.00 USD	Available

Added To List: 10/26/2009

Library Note: [Add...](#)

Title: WILDLAND FIRES AND AIR POLLUTION

[slip sent\(1/2](#)

Figure 12

Setting up multiple profiles in Firefox

Bibliographers with multiple subject areas can create multiple LibX editions that contain different library catalogs or resources to use as a collection development tool. However, only one LibX edition can be installed in a browser at a time. In the Internet Explorer browser, this means that the bibliographer will need to install the LibX edition for the subject area to be searched, then when another subject area is to be examined, the corresponding LibX edition for that subject will need to be installed. On the other hand, Firefox provides users the ability to create multiple profiles for a single computer, which means that multiple LibX editions can be stored at the same time and utilized as needed.

To create a profile in Firefox, select the "run" option in the start menu for Windows 98, ME, 2000, or XP ("start search" in Vista). Enter `firefox.exe -ProfileManager` and hit "ok." A window will appear to allow users to create, rename, and delete profiles (Fig 13). To create a profile, select "create" and follow the wizard prompts. To access a particular profile, the Firefox browser must not currently be in use. Use the "run" (or "start search") option, enter the `firefox.exe -ProfileManager` command, select the profile to be opened, and click on "start Firefox". More information on profiles is available at <http://support.mozilla.com/en-US/kb/Profiles> and additional information about managing profiles is available at <http://support.mozilla.com/en-US/kb/Managing+profiles>

Figure 13

Bibliographers can install a specific LibX edition for each profile that is created in the Firefox browser. Bibliographers can then pull up the corresponding Firefox profile associated with the LibX edition for that subject area. This is particularly helpful whether the bibliographer is looking at specific titles, or if the bibliographer is looking to see which of the libraries has a strong collection in a given area. For example, not only can bibliographers search for specific titles across multiple catalogs, but they can also use the toolbar to run a keyword search (e.g. “equine massage”) across the library catalogs in the LibX edition. This can be used to determine which library has the most resources on that subject, which resources are common in the majority of collections, or to help determine where strengths or weaknesses may be in the bibliographer’s own collections based on the materials held by their peers.

Part 2

Setting up your own LibX edition **Basics about editions**

Before creating a LibX edition, bibliographers should determine which catalogs or resources to include in their edition(s). Resources can be added, deleted, or modified at any time, but it’s best to have at least one or two resources to add before creating an edition. The LibX Edition Builder uses a Java-based environment that supports the building of Rich Internet Applications (RIA) and has the feel of a desktop application (Bailey, 2007). The edition builder was designed to allow anyone, regardless of programming experience, the ability to create and maintain a functional LibX edition.

Bibliographers can use the LibX Edition Builder (<http://libx.org:8080/editionbuilder/src/zul/>) or click on “create your own LibX edition now” at the LibX website <http://libx.org> to create and maintain their own LibX edition(s). To create an edition, click on the “My Editions” tab of the Edition Builder,

and enter an email address and password to be used to access an account. If there isn't already a matching email account on file, the user will be asked to register with his/her email address and to create a password. With a registered account, the bibliographer becomes an "edition owner" who will then have the ability to create, maintain, and share LibX editions.

There are a few things bibliographers should be aware of when creating and maintaining editions. The first is to understand the difference between "live" and "public." Live editions are those that have a permanent location to download the plug-in for that particular edition. This allows others besides the edition owner the ability to download the plug-in, which could be useful for groups working with the same subject areas. Public editions are those that are available on the LibX website to be copied and shared by other librarians and staff members (these are searchable in the "All Editions" tab). The philosophy behind this model is that as LibX is an open access tool, those that are a part of the LibX community can share their resources freely with others if they choose to do so. Once an edition owner has constructed an edition that he or she wishes to employ, it is best to make that edition live so that it is possible to download a functional plug-in. However, live editions do not need to be made public, particularly if they are for personal use.

The second concept to understand about the edition builder is the revision management system in place. The edition builder uses "testing," "live," and "archived" to maintain revisions. The testing revision is the one first implemented when an edition is first created. It allows the edition owner(s) the ability to test the resources added before making them available in a live version. While this is generally used for editions that will be used by more than one person (e.g. an edition for a library) it is also useful for an edition owner to test the catalogs before moving to the next step, making the revision "live."

To make a revision live, the edition owner needs to first "build" the testing revision. This is done to set or capture the current configurations of the edition as they are moved into the live edition, similar to a snapshot of that particular time and place of the revision. When an edition is moved to the live state, the edition owner is given a permanent location to download the Firefox and Internet Explorer plug-ins of this edition and all subsequent modifications to the edition. If the edition owner wishes to make changes to the live revision, it must be placed back into the "testing" stage by using the "copy forward" option. Once changes are made and the latest revision is built, that new revision can then be made live. At this point, the version that was live becomes an archived revision, which is still accessible if the edition owner wishes to revert back to a previous version of the edition.

The LibX Team has provided blue icons with a white question mark to offer areas that provide more information. Additionally, edition owners can request help at any time using the "Help me with [edition name]" located on the "My Editions" tab of the edition builder. Figure 14 demonstrates the file management system. In this case the registered user has three LibX editions, and this screenshot is showing that the "testing" revision has been opened for the "Environmental Collections" edition. Using the tabs across the top, the edition owner can move to different areas of the edition builder to make changes to the revision, such as adding or removing a catalog, changing the icon, or making any other changes to the edition.

Figure 14

Adding catalogs

In the following example, a new edition will be created to show bibliographers (referred to here as “edition owners”) how to create their own edition and how to include library catalogs.

Under the “All Editions” tab, select “Build A New Edition.” At this point, the edition owner will be asked to name the edition that will be created (Fig 15). Enter in the information as described by the help tips and examples.

Figure 15

To add a library catalog, click on the “Catalogs & Databases” tab. Here edition owners will have three options to add catalogs and other resources to the edition: Auto Detection, WorldCat Registry, and Manual Configuration.

Auto Detection

To add a resource using the auto detection feature, enter the URL of the library catalog and the LibX Edition Builder will automatically search for any corresponding configuration data that is available. At this point the edition builder queries the catalog in the URL to determine the catalog system (e.g. Voyager, Ill, Sirsi, etc) as well as to look at the public editions located in the LibX Edition Builder database to locate any other corresponding resources that have also been configured regarding this resource. All of this takes place behind the scenes. Once resources have been found, the LibX Edition Builder offers the edition owner the ability to add any or all of the resources found. Once the resource has been added, the edition owner can make additional modifications (*Fig 16*) to that resource.

Figure 16

WorldCat Registry

If the bibliographer does not know the URL of the library catalog, the WorldCat Registry can be useful in locating the appropriate resource: simply type in the name of the institution (e.g. University of Wisconsin Madison) and select “search.” The edition builder will query the OCLC registry of libraries available through WorldCat (*Fig 17*) and will then present matches to the edition builder in the auto detection area, where the desired resource can be added to the list of catalogs. Note, there must be a URL included in the listing for the “Import the profile” option to work.

Figure 17

Manual Configuration

If the resource is not able to be auto detected, nor is there a record of it in the WorldCat Registry, bibliographers can manually add the resource to their edition, but this will require some configuration on the edition owner's part. Fortunately the edition builder provides several help tips to guide the owner through the process. As catalogs and resources are added, use the blue arrows to change the order of the catalogs, as this will affect how they appear in the dropdown menu of the toolbar and right-click context menu. Keep in mind that the catalog that is listed first in the edition builder will be the one that is used for the embedded cues and autolinking options to query once the edition is made available as an operational plug-in. Additionally, edition owners can modify the catalog/resource configurations by checking the box in front of the required, optional, and xISBN settings to open those sections for editing. Edition owners with a little more programming experience will be able to further customize their editions, using the bookmarklet features to create customized search options.

Incorporating images for the edition

Although there are many other areas that can be configured for the edition, the other one that can be useful for bibliographers is the ability to customize the cue images and icons for the edition. This is useful when a bibliographer has created multiple editions to correspond to different subject areas. The cues can be used as a visual reminder as to which edition is currently being viewed before the bibliographer searches the wrong set of resources for the subject area.

The "File Management" tab is the location where edition owners can store images to be used as cues and icons. The LibX Edition Builder provides two default images, an "L" as a cue, and a larger "LibX" icon. Edition owners can download files from URLs, upload local files, change the default images, or add new ones (Fig 18).

Figure 18.

Once images are added to the File Management tab, edition owners can move to the “Options” tab (Fig 19) to dictate which images will appear for a given task. The help icons on the page also describe when certain images will be utilized by the LibX edition.

Figure 19

Each time a change is made in any of the tabs, those changes are automatically saved. Edition owners can test the edition prior to making it live using the “test” feature at the bottom of each tab, or by selecting the “build revision #...” and downloading the plug-in that is available on the test page.

Conclusion

Based on the flexibility of the LibX plug-in, bibliographers can use LibX in multiple workflow settings to aid in the decision process for collection development. Bibliographers can use the LibX Edition Builder to customize multiple editions for their subject areas, as well as utilize the profile option of the Firefox browser to store multiple LibX editions on one computer. Additional information about the LibX project is available at <http://libx.org>.

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