Users’ searching behaviour in using online databases at Vietnam National University – Ho Chi Minh city

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Introduction to the study

Background

- Staring provision of online databases in 2005
- Promoting more services in 2009
- The usage of databases has been steadily increased, but still is scarce

Purpose

- Providing identifications of users search behaviours, their difficulties and expectations that can help in assisting uses in using online databases more effectively.
Introduction to the study

- Data collection
  - Usage Reports of Proquest, SpringerLink, ScienceDirect, Emerald, MathSciNet and Wilson
  - Survey by emailing
  - Interviews

- Findings
  - Main purpose
  - Preferred reading type of materials
  - The ways to learn searching
  - The ways to search
  - Difficulties
  - Expectations
Most users used the databases provided by the Central Library for their learning then for doing research and for keeping updated with new information rather than for their teaching.
More users employed the databases to search for articles and theses than e-books.
Preferred reading material type

Users requested for articles overwhelmingly preferred having the full-text versions rather than abstracts.
Learning to search

Users learn using the online search by different ways
Learning to search

Most users had no specific preference, many intended learning in their own
Users most often used Simple search techniques (using Keywords, Titles and Authors), and then advanced search techniques (using search limitations) and less used expert search techniques (using operators).
# Frequency of usage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total in 2009</th>
<th>Total in 2010</th>
<th>Increasing from 2009</th>
<th>Total in 2011</th>
<th>Increasing from 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Searches</td>
<td>47,150</td>
<td>62,387</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>79,317</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sessions</td>
<td>28,605</td>
<td>35,394</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>44,958</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The totals of searches and sessions increased yearly*
Most users only occasionally used the databases provided by the Library.
Difficulties in using databases

- Poor skills in database search
  - Not often use
  - Not develop skills

- English language
  - Determining the search terms
  - Understanding functions or options of search interfaces
  - Spending a lot of time for browsing and reading

- Speed of online transmission
Users’ expectations

- Upgrading infrastructures
  - Increasing the speed of data transmission
  - Changing anew computers

- Increasing the amount of databases
  - More databases and more full-text provision

- Improving the communication between the library and users
  - Providing information and services via email
Identifications of users’ online database searching behavior

- Amount of usage is increasing but still low
- Search for research works and study rather than for teaching and updating
- The articles are most used
- Keywords or subjects are most used
- Website is preferred source for search learning
- Difficulties: search skills, English and Speed of online transmission
- Expectations: Speed of data transmission, amount of databases and email as important communication means
Library’s actions

- Optimize the use of the budget
- Increase the speed of the internet
- Encourage users use their laptops and assist them
- Further efforts on the training and promotion activities
  - The list of e-journal titles on the websites with the link to the journals
  - Working with faculty members
  - Utilize email system, create email alerts, update users via emails
YOUR COMMENS AND SUGGESTIONS

THANK YOUR