

Primo Boosts Information Literacy at the University of Bridgeport

To better prepare students for today's information-intensive world, the University of Bridgeport has launched a campus-wide initiative to improve information literacy.

Challenges

Focused on information literacy and a school-wide curriculum delivery vehicle, the University of Bridgeport was looking for a system that could support these requirements.

Solution

Primo, together with Voyager, MetaLib, and SFX, provides users with one-stop access to all library resources and services, including the library catalog, federated search, and article linking.

Results

As part of the university's information literacy program, Primo has enabled the University of Bridgeport to add twelve new databases and greatly

"One of the important goals at the University of Bridgeport," explains University of Bridgeport president Neil A. Salonen, "is to create an information-literate student body. Our academic deans and librarians selected Primo®, along with MetaLib® and SFX®, as an intuitive entry point for our learning community to discover scholarly content. The integrated search feature spans multiple database services, internal content repositories, and our online catalog."

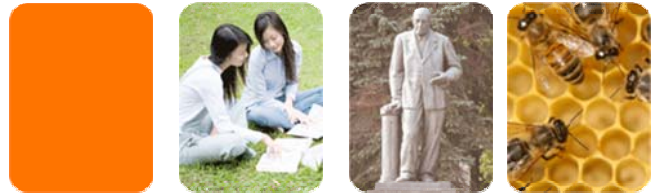
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A Shared Vision

Founded in 1927, the University of Bridgeport (UB) is located in the urban center of Bridgeport, Connecticut. The University enrolls 4,700 students and features numerous degree offerings for undergraduate, master's level and doctoral programs. Academic programs include arts, business, engineering, dental hygiene, chiropractic, and acupuncture.

Together with administrators and faculty, the University of Bridgeport Magnus Wahlstrom Library leadership set out to acquire a next-generation software solution that would meet their requirements for information literacy. "We wanted more than just a library system; we were looking for a platform that would serve as a school-wide curriculum delivery vehicle," explains University Librarian Diane C. Mirvis, one of the driving forces behind the information literacy campaign.

The system envisioned by the library management team would provide Google-like search capabilities across multiple information resources, material delivery options, and



increase usage of databases and library resources.

full-text linking, all made available to users via an attractive and customizable user interface.

With 25 percent of its students hailing from more than 80 countries, UB required a system with strong multilingual support. “We are an international school. Information literacy means being able to search in the languages students are comfortable in,” says Mirvis.

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Fast Track Implementation

Technology Librarian Elsa Anderson, who serves as the Primo implementation project manager, led a blended team of library, IT, and Ex Libris specialists. Ex Libris worked closely with the university—a Primo Charter Member—to facilitate a fast track implementation plan that included Primo, MetaLib, SFX, and an upgrade of the Voyager® integrated library system. With faculty eager to test out Primo’s features and the start of the academic year fast approaching, the university began implementation on June 19 and went live on August 21. “Ex Libris was great. They accelerated times and addressed issues expeditiously for us to make sure we met our target dates,” comments Anderson.

The focal point of the new platform is Primo, which UB has branded “Eureka! Discover a universe of information.” With Metalib and SFX in place, Primo provides users with one-stop access to all library resources and services, including the library catalog, federated search, and article linking. “The integrated search feature allows novice searchers to easily find what they need. The customizable help features also greatly assist our students,” says Mirvis.

Primo gives the library staff a comprehensive tool set, enabling them to easily add links and resources, update the list of databases that are searched, and customize user settings. “The management tool set has been extremely helpful. We make changes to the Website, to the look and feel and to services, quickly and efficiently,” remarks Anderson.



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Information Literacy in Action

Since implementing Primo, the University of Bridgeport has seen an increase in the use of databases and library resources. The modern Primo interface, with its social computing tools, concept grouping aids, and ability to customize help screens, appeals to our Internet savvy students," says UB president Salonen.

Students can now search multiple databases via a single, user-friendly interface. "As part of the information literacy program, we have added twelve new database services," says Mirvis. "The easy-to-use Primo interface has facilitated this process."

UB faculty are taking greater advantage of library resources as well. "Faculty can use Primo to teach not only searching and research skills but also the importance of language and critical thinking," comments Instruction and Information Literacy Librarian Andrea Sicari. Furthermore, UB librarians now have a more visible role in guiding both faculty and students. "Primo has made the library into a key instructional center for information literacy."

As the University of Bridgeport's information literacy vision continues to evolve, its use of Primo will grow and develop to support that vision. The university plans to tailor information access to specific academic department needs by adding local repositories and custom content. "Our plan is to embed Primo in the systems that students use—everything from departmental Web pages to the Blackboard® course management system," says Mirvis.

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