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12-16-2014

Yale Library IT News, 16 December 2014

Yale Library IT Staff

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Recommended Citation

Yale Library IT Staff, "Yale Library IT News, 16 December 2014" (2014). *Yale Library IT News*. 4.
http://elischolar.library.yale.edu/yul_litnews/4

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Yale Library IT Newsletter

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Happy Holidays from Library IT!

Library IT would like to wish everyone a very happy and relaxing holiday season!



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Spotlight on Library IT Staff: Workstation and Technology Services

Following on the staff bios for the Digital Library & Programming group and the newly reorganized Enterprise Systems & Services group, Library IT would like to turn the spotlight on the Workstation & Technology Services group.

Here is a closer look at the members of the Workstation & Technology Services group:

Greg Blasko; Manager, IT Infrastructure & Client Services

gregory.blasko@yale.edu

An employee of Yale University since 1996, I have spent a majority of my career supporting various technologies in the School of Medicine's [Keck Foundation Biotechnology Resource Laboratory](#). At Keck, I managed all IT operations including supervising desktop support specialists, providing server support, and designing mission critical FileMaker Pro databases used to manage all financial aspects and laboratory operations of the department. In October of 2013, I joined the Yale University Library and now manage a team of support technicians maintaining the reliability and security of a large computing infrastructure for Library staff and patrons. Some accomplishments during my first 14 months here at YUL include the adoption of ServiceNow as a ticketing system, the reduction of backup overage charges resulting in savings of over \$5,600 per month, the successful migration of over 100 workstations from Windows XP to Windows 7, and the establishment of several key relationships between YUL and Central ITS. Some of my favorite off hour activities include skiing, mountain biking, playing guitar and most of all being a dad!

Reon Keller; IT Support Technician

reon.keller@yale.edu

I started working at Yale 2003 as a casual, providing remote access support including but not limited to VPN. In 2008 became a permanent employee for Technical Support. I have a strong background in desktop and mobile device support and networking. With some years under my belt, I now provide technical support throughout YUL. I deliver hands-on support and collaboration in special projects, software training, software upgrade and rollouts, to name a few things.

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Frederick Rodriguez; IT Support Technician

frederick.rodriguez@yale.edu

Before coming to the Library in 2010, I worked as a researcher in the Department of Immunobiology at Yale Medical School for 7 years. The former 4 years of my work I performed experiments and analyzed data to look at Stat-6 regulatory gene in a mouse EAE model and the proliferation-activated receptor-γ agonists remodeling of human artery induced by allocative T-cells. The latter 3 years, I co-lead the implementation of a database that stored both human and mouse tissues for the Yale JDRF Center. When I joined Workstation and Technology Support unit, I was tasked with converting all of my support units and public computers to Windows 7, and managing Mac computers along with iPads for the library as a whole. I have worked on a few special projects such as Office 2007 training, upgrading AV infrastructure and scanners in public areas, managing the iPad teaching initiative pilot along with ITG, and maintaining a standard computer image both 32- and 64-bit. On my personal time I enjoy running, watching “Newsroom” and “The Big Bang Theory,” eating chocolate :-), drinking wine :-), and reading about theoretical computation, robotics, biological science, and the latest technology.

Jerzy Grabowski; IT Support Technician, MSSA / Beinecke

jerzy.grabowski@yale.edu

As an accomplished Information Technology support professional with over 12 years of comprehensive experience in a multi-site, multi-host, networked environment, I appreciate supporting clients on both sides of the Wall Street tunnel, effectively delivering technical advice to Library personnel. I'm the newest member of the Workstation and Technology Services Staff, starting my career at Yale in January 2013 as temporary employee. Since July 2013, I have supported both Manuscripts and Archives and Beinecke Library staff. It is awesome to work for Yale University Libraries. My pastimes are tennis, skiing and fishing.

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Quicksearch December Update

Many things have happened in the Quicksearch Project in the last month. We have rolled out important new features, conducted user studies, and addressed over half of the 100 or so issues reported by you. For example:

- Quicksearch can now display special circulation messages generated by [Orbis status patrons](#).
- Search results in the Articles+ column are now pre-limited to Yale licensed materials, eliminating a major source of confusion in Quicksearch results.
- Jenn Nolte and Katie Bauer coordinated an [initial round of user testing](#), with help from a number of staff from around the Library system. More details about the results of the user studies will be available soon.

We still have a lot of work left to do.

For example, we are working to improve relevancy ranking for popular journal titles like 'Nature,' 'New York Times,' and 'New England Journal of Medicine' that are difficult to find in Orbis. Other improvements currently in progress include:

- Improved response time. Thanks to everyone who has reported slow response time; resolving this problem with our Solr index is our number one priority.
- Displaying all fields in Quicksearch that display in Orbis
- Identifying Chrome-specific problems with displaying certain non-roman characters
- Improving the Orbis record extract to include fields like 856 links in MFHD records.

2015 promises to be an exciting year full of anticipated new features: a 'Resources about Yale' facet focusing on Yale-oriented special collections, implementation of dynamic statuses from Morris using the Innovative Interfaces API, requesting directly from the Quicksearch beta interface, and more.

Many thanks to all of the members of the Implementation Committee, Discovery Metadata Committee, and numerous volunteer testers who have worked so hard this year on the implementation of Quicksearch beta.

While we continue moving toward our goals, please understand if our progress slows somewhat during the coming year. The library has several time-sensitive projects moving forward in 2015, and at times other projects will have to take precedence. Thank you for your patience, continued participation and support.

Quicksearch Feedback form: https://yalesurvey.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_ePRYbhHrT3D2eEd

Current list of **Reported Issues**: <http://tinyurl.com/lit-qs-issues-xlsx>

Current list of **Requested Features**: <http://tinyurl.com/lit-qs-requests-xlsx>

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Service Disruption Notification System - Trial

Library IT will soon begin rolling out a new solution for the Library community that will provide fully automated service disruption and restoration notification of critical public services. [Over the last several weeks Library IT has been investigating potential options in order to provide consistent and timely information regarding the availability of systems to all staff.](#) We have selected a solution that meets our criteria and will run a public trial of the service beginning now through February 2015. Over the next several days the service will be configured to alert all staff when unanticipated outages occur. Details regarding the notification solution are as follows.

If you have any questions or concerns, please send email to Ray Frohlich (raymond.frohlich@yale.edu).

[Additional information about the underlying solution selected can be found here](#) and in the news item below.

What services will be monitored?

During this initial rollout, services listed on the Library homepage will be included. These services will be monitored 24*7. The preliminary list is below and includes services managed by Library IT, Yale ITS, other Yale departments, and vendors.

- Aeon (BRBL, MSSA, and the routing layer)
- Ares
- Articles+
- Ask Yale Library
- BorrowDirect
- Digital Collections (ContentDM)
- EliScholar
- FindIt
- ILLiad
- MORRIS - Yale Law Library Catalog
- OCLC WorldCat
- Open URL Resolver (360Link)
- ORBIS - Yale University Library Catalog
- Overdrive
- Yale Finding Aid Database (YFAD)
- Yale Library Subject Guides (LibGuides)
- Yale Study Spaces Scheduling
- Yale University Library Website

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Who will be contacted?

All staff included on the YULIB mailing list.

When will the Library have an opportunity to comment on the service?

This is a trial and your input is greatly desired. Library IT will send around a survey to staff to evaluate your impressions of the service in February/March 2015. If staff find it helpful, we will look to expand the services monitored. If staff find it to be burdensome, we may opt to discontinue use going forward.

Will there be an opportunity to expand use to include additional services?

During this initial trial phase, other than the services listed above, no additional services will be added. If the alerting service is of value and staff indicate a desire to see use continued, we will reach out to the broader community to expand use.

Is there a place to view real-time status availability of these systems?

Yes, please visit <http://status.library.yale.edu> for current status of all the systems listed above. The status site is hosted outside of Yale, so it should be available even if a major on-campus outage occurs.

What will a typical message look like?

Below is an example of a typical alert message when a system becomes unavailable.

[This is a message from the Library IT automated monitoring service.]

Dear Colleagues,

ORBIS, the Yale University Library Catalog, is currently experiencing a service disruption. The incident occurred within the last fifteen minutes and persists for public users of the service.

Library IT staff have already been alerted and we are addressing the issue. Watch for another email from our automated monitoring service when ORBIS is restored. Until then, Library IT staff will also provide status updates to this list as necessary. You can also monitor status availability in real time here:

<http://status.library.yale.edu>

Thank you for your patience. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

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Service Disruption Notification System - Details

In an effort to provide consistent and timely information regarding the availability of critical systems to the Library community, Library IT is introducing a new automated monitoring and alert system. A public trial of the service will begin now through February 2015.

The service uses two different hosted solutions to achieve the intended result:

Pingdom

[Pingdom](#) is a hosted service that tracks the uptime, downtime, and performance of websites. Staff can access a [public status page that provides real-time information about service status](#) as well as historical availability information.

Zapier

[Zapier](#) is a hosted task automation tool that connects online applications. Library IT has configured the service to monitor status in Pingdom and generate a staff friendly email using the Library IT Gmail account.

At the end of the trial period, Library IT will survey staff to determine whether the solution has been of value. [More information regarding the trial can be found here.](#)

Emerging Technologies + Libraries discussion in January

The second Emerging Technologies + Libraries discussion, sponsored by Yale Library IT, is scheduled for **Friday January 23rd 2015** in the Bass L01 classroom from **3-5pm**.

This month's discussion will center on virtual reality technology, including Google's [Cardboard](#) software and peripherals!

Get in on the action: [download](#) one of the cardboard apps to your smartphone and bring it to the discussion.

You can also make one of your own viewers by following instructions [here](#).

No expertise required, just bring your brain!

Hope to see you on the 23rd!

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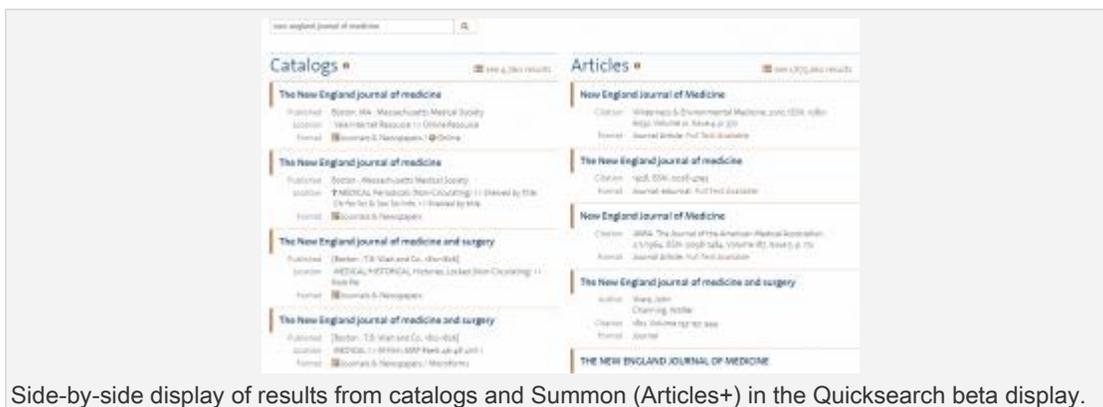
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Update on Usability Testing for Quicksearch beta

Quicksearch beta, a Blacklight-powered library search of the Orbis and Morris catalogs, along with Articles+ from Summon, has been available for library-staff testing since October 2014. Recently staff from around the library conducted usability tests of Quicksearch beta with 14 students. Tests took about half an hour to complete, and consisted of a set of typical library search tasks such as finding a book by title and author, looking for a journal, finding books and articles in a topic, and saving/requesting and citing material. Teams of library staff worked on tests, with one person recruiting testers, a second asking the questions and running the tests, and a third person recording the sessions. Test takers were asked to think aloud during testing and their comments and actions were written down by the observer staff person. These types of "think aloud protocol" usability tests are considered an inexpensive and reliable way to uncover problems with digital interfaces, and are conducted as standard parts of interface development cycles.

Usability testing was done in large part to determine if Quicksearch beta is ready for wider release to Yale students and faculty in the spring semester. During testing the only problem uncovered which must be addressed before Quicksearch beta can be more widely disseminated to the Yale community was that response time slowed considerably, to a level which is not acceptable in a search interface. Modern expectations of search is that results will be returned within one second on average. Anything longer than two or three seconds causes users to question if an interface is working. LIT staff are now working to address the slow response times. Culprits may include the SOLR index used in Quicksearch beta, the Blacklight application, the hardware environment, or a combination of these three things. This complexity makes troubleshooting a challenge.

Quicksearch beta includes results from books and articles, which are presented side-by-side in one screen. Labeling in this display was problematic for test takers. The use of Catalogs (to represent material from the Orbis and Morris catalogs) did not seem to mean much to test takers. We recommend that Catalogs be replaced by Books+ to make the material found in Catalogs clearer and to draw a more obvious distinction with Articles. We also recommend changing Articles to Articles+, and to be consistent with this wording throughout the search application.



Side-by-side display of results from catalogs and Summon (Articles+) in the Quicksearch beta display.

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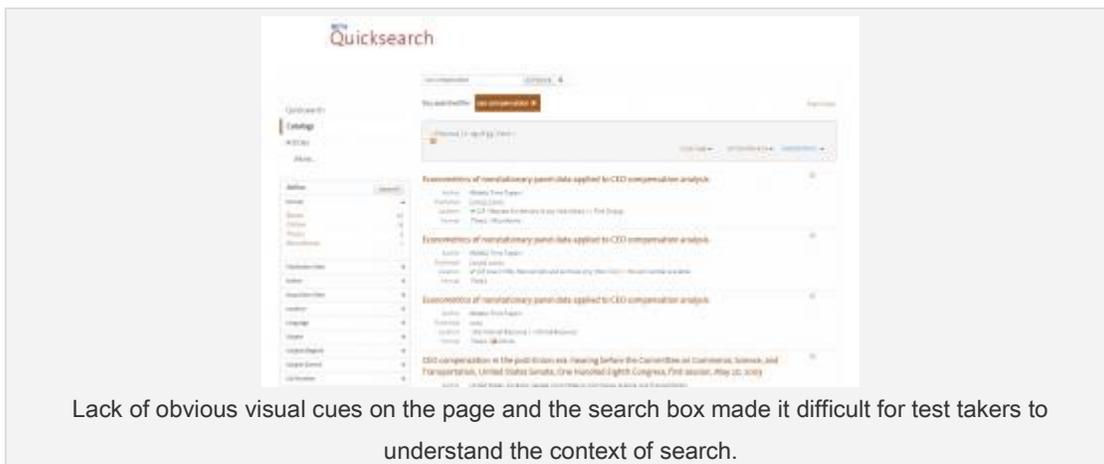
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Test takers had some trouble with complexity of moving between areas for books and articles, and understanding when books were being searched, when articles were being searched, and when both types of materials were being searched. Visual cues need to be added to the books only and articles only areas so that that the material searched there is more obvious.



One task for which Quicksearch was not successful for most users was finding a recent issue of a journal. The search did not do a good job bringing a journal title to the top of search results. The SOLR index and relevancy ranking can be manipulated to make this type of search function better, or other targeted ways of doing a journal title search need to be added to the Quicksearch beta interface.

Another problem was seen when users were asked to limit a set of book results to a more targeted set of books in a subtopic (in this case, books that were about the law or legal aspects of a subject such as CEO compensation, Ebola, or climate change). The Quicksearch beta interface should make such a task straightforward, or at least that the hope, through the use of subject facets. Most users could not, however, complete this task using subject facets. There was a greater rate of success (73% success versus 46% success) when users were asked to do a similar narrowing of results of articles. Users are presented with different sets of facets for books and articles, and there are actually less facets available for articles. It could be that the simpler list of facets makes the topic facet more easy to spot and use in article search results.

Other aspects of Quicksearch beta worked very well and caused few problems for most users. All test takers were able to successfully find a book by a known title, identify where it was in the library system, and navigate to the order form. Most test takers were also able to save article records for later use and email citations.

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Probably the biggest win from Quicksearch beta is just the simple fact of the single search of Orbis and Morris in one interface. There was not a lot of name recognition of Orbis demonstrated by these students and even less of Morris. The chance of a student searching one of these resources seems to be decreasing over time, the chance of searching both of them for material seems unrealistic. Quicksearch beta successfully combines both resources in one search, thereby saving time for Yale users and potentially surfacing far more library material in the process.

Read the [summary](#) or get the [full report](#).

ScholarSphere Conference at Yale University Library

Yale University Library and Yale ITS are pleased to sponsor a conference and public lecture on ScholarSphere, a software project developed at Penn State University, based on the same open-source Hydra/Fedora framework in use at YUL.

Yale University Library and ITS are investigating the possible adoption of this solution to enable Yale faculty and researchers to self-archive their own digital content in a managed, secure repository for controlled or open dissemination as well as for their own use. Our speakers will talk about the ScholarSphere project both from a technical perspective and as a service model. More information on the ScholarSphere website [here](#).

Speakers:

Patricia Hswe, Digital Content Strategist and Head, ScholarSphere User Services at Penn State University

Daniel Coughlin, Ph.D. Candidate at Penn State University

via [Yale University Library News: ScholarSphere Conference Archives](#).

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Presentation on Digital Repository Development at CNI Fall Meeting

Library IT CTO Michael Dula presented on digital repository development last week at the Coalition for Networked Information's fall 2014 meeting in Washington D.C. The presentation is linked [here](#).

via CNI.org: The Coalition for Networked Information (CNI) is dedicated to supporting the transformative promise of digital information technology for the advancement of scholarly communication and the enrichment of intellectual productivity. Some 220 institutions representing higher education, publishing, information technology, scholarly and professional organizations, foundations, and libraries and library organizations make up CNI's [members](#); CNI is entirely funded through membership dues. Semi-annual [membership meetings](#) bring together representatives of CNI's constituencies to discuss ongoing and new projects, and to plan for future initiatives.

Update on Office 2013 targeted deployment at YUL

The IT Infrastructure & Client Services unit continues its work in automatically deploying Office 2013 to select Library workstations.

So far:

- 648 machines are now on Office 2013 (24 are 64-bit installs and the rest are 32-bit)
- 63 machines still require an upgrade

In summary, **over 91% of staff systems have been successfully upgraded** to Office 2013.

See posts on previous Office 2013 deployment work [here](#) and [here](#).

Questions? Please contact Greg Blasko (gregory.blasko@yale.edu)

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