

Modelling the Library Domain: a consultative workshop

Friday 19th June 2009

Briefing Sheet for Discussion Groups

Please read this Briefing sheet and the [Modelling the Library Domain](#) briefing paper before the day.

1. What is the purpose of the Discussion Group sessions?

The purpose of the Discussion Group sessions is to help find answers to the following questions by exploring each of the 'realms' in the Library Domain Model.

- Does the Model have value in illustrating where and how electronic library services 'fit' in the wider electronic information environment – both now and in the future?
- Does it cover all library domain activity?
- Should it be developed further?

2. How will the Discussion Group sessions be organised?

You will be allocated to one of three Groups: A, B or C. Group membership will be noted against your name on the List of Delegates available on the day. We have tried to get a mix of delegates with different roles in each Group. There will be a pre-arranged facilitator and record-keeper for your Group.

3. Morning session: 12.15am to 13.00: What's in a 'realm'?

Each Group will discuss two of the three realms, spending about 20 minutes on each. Groups will move to a new table for each realm as follows (the room is noted in bold after the table number):

	From 12.15	From 12.35
Group A	Corporation (Table 1) Maxwell	Channel (Table 2) Maxwell
Group B	Channel (Table 2) Maxwell	Client (Table 3) Faraday
Group C	Client (Table 3) Faraday	Corporation (Table 1) Maxwell

What are 'Realms'? See *TILE 06 Domain Model* report, section 3 for the full detail (<http://ie-repository.jisc.ac.uk/293/>)

As a starting point, we have characterised the library domain, at the highest level of abstraction, as having three core 'realms': the 'client', the 'channel' and the 'corporation.' The idea of a 'realm' is felt to be useful in distinguishing 'library' activities at the highest level according to functional and interest boundaries – in this case suggesting that the

perspectives of the corporation, the channel and the client should be considered as distinctive and potentially bounded.

This model therefore proposes that library domain and its business processes should be defined in terms of the interactions within and between the three 'realms':

- **The Corporation** – an organisation involved in the 'back office' administration of knowledge assets (e.g. originals, copies, licenses, metadata) and / or specific groups of clients (e.g. student records). Corporations within the library domain include all Universities, some JISC Services, National Libraries and publishers.
- **The Channel** – a means of delivering knowledge assets to Clients, not necessarily restricted to the holdings or the client base of any particular Corporation, Channels within this model range from local OPACs to national JISC services and 'webscale' services such as Amazon and Google Scholar. Operators of channel services will typically require corporate processes (e.g. a library managing its collection, an online book store managing its stock). However, there may be an increasing tendency towards separation, channels relying on the corporate services of others and vice versa (e.g. a library exposing its records to channels such as Google or Liblime, a bookshop outsourcing some of its channel services to the Amazon marketplace).
- **The Client** - an individual (student, researcher, librarian, business or community partner, etc) accessing the broader information environment (not just libraries, VLEs and repositories but also the wider web world) in the context of an academically or learning motivated workflows.

These relationships and interactions between the realms may usefully be characterised by the metaphor of an ecosystem, with a high degree of dynamism and potential for symbiosis, as well as an inherent drive for survival in response to competitive threat. Given the characteristics of the evolving web world, this might be a more useful metaphor than that of an 'architecture', which suggests different attitudes to design, build and longevity.

Network (or Business) Intelligence might also be considered as a distinct element in the top level model, a fourth dimension underlying the interactions of Corporations, Channels and Clients. Based on approaches currently deployed and realising tangible network effect in Web 2.0 aware service domains, this dimension could incorporate:

- User behaviour – from searches to transactions, represented in attention and activity data
- Perhaps user generated content – notably contributions such as ratings, reviews and lists. However, it may be more typical for these to be withheld and retained as channel specific assets. Would a commercial business want to share its ratings and reviews?
- The means of aggregating, processing and sharing any or all of that data independently the originating corporations, channels and clients – a possibility raising architectural considerations.

The questions to be considered for each realm include:

- Do you agree with the proposed definition of the realm?
- What examples of 'actors' and 'stakeholders' in the realm can you think of?
- Has the role of that realm changed or is it changing? If so, why and how is it changing, both generally and specifically?
- Do you perceive some types of future change as inevitable?
- What are the current and potential future activities and functions within the realm?
- How does the realm need to interact with the other realms – now and in the future?
- What business intelligence (e.g. user activity) is generated or required by the realm?

The facilitators will synthesise a view of each Realm over lunch and present a brief overview of the synthesis after lunch.

4. Afternoon session: 14.30 to 15.20: The realms in action: scenarios

Each Group has been assigned a realm and will develop scenarios (please see the Appendix) for it as follows:

Group A: Corporation (**Table 1 in Maxwell**); **Group B:** Channel (**Table 2 in Maxwell**); **Group C:** Client (**Table 3 in Faraday**)

14.30-14.50	Define 1 or 2 scenarios (from 1 example provided and/or 1 originated by the Group) that illustrate activity within that 'realm' and its relationship with the other realms (if any) and with business intelligence
14.50-15.05	Send out 3 members to describe the scenarios to another group, which will provide feedback from their realm perspective (as well as from their practical experience)
15.05-15.20	Review the feedback from the returning members and fine tune the scenarios
15.20-15.40	Break
15.40-16.10	Groups report back on their 'best' scenario [5 minutes each; then general discussion]

Appendix: Examples of scenarios

1. Corporation Realm Scenario

Title

Reduction in local cataloguing

Proposal

We propose to limit institutional (corporation) cataloguing activity to the addition of local detail, such as shelf marks and circulation specific information (e.g. short loan designation). We will add value around those catalogue records through services such as Reading Lists, which should remain locally originated and directly linked to courses and units.

Benefits

We expect this to save cataloguing resources in most HEIs, enabling us to redeploy effort in to learner and academic support and to improving the quality of reading list / recommendation and related subject information.

Implications

Corporation - This has implications for the location of and responsibilities for the 'core' catalogue to which we propose to make local additions. We expect the remote catalogue system will also cover circulation. We do not however expect local data such as reading lists to be entered directly into the catalogue as it could be linked through an open interface. These changes will impact LMS providers and catalogue records supply.

Channel – What is the channel being asked to provide? Is it a union catalogue in a traditional sense? Whatever it is, there is an important decision whether this channel service is provided by the sector for the sector or as part of something larger like Worldcat or Amazon.

Client – This should have no impact on the client experience of the catalogue, though these economies should mean that the overall library service is improved

Other Possibilities

This may signal the death of the local OPAC. It may also lead to open interfaces to catalogue records that will encourage other developments.

Some Other Corporation Scenarios

- Liberation of local catalogue data for wider services
- Enhanced local catalogue combining library, VLE & repository assets

2a. Channel Realm Scenario 'A'

Title

National recommender service

Proposal

We propose a national sector approach to the aggregation of explicit and implicit recommendation data. Explicit data, also known as User Generated Content (UGC) will come in the form of ratings, reviews and shared lists. Implicit data will be aggregated from national services, institutional library and learning systems – drawing on records of such as circulation, content downloads and reading lists.

Benefits

National aggregation has the potential for critical mass in most subject areas. Inclusion of implicit recommendations derived from activity data and reading lists means data would be visible at Day 1 regardless of UGC levels. Handling at national level relieves the requirement for each LMS and VLE vendor to address this issue and for each HEI to implement a solution.

Implications

Corporation – willingness to share activity data; use of common Digital Object Identifiers for learning objects; legality of sharing data that may be tracked back to an individual (in cases of 'singleton' records); risk that local reading lists and collections will become open to criticism

Channel – someone needs to develop and provide the service, within the HE community or a third party; the service would need to de-duplicate linked assets in an appropriate manner

Client – success will be dependent on motivation and visible payback; factors may include the interface, integration with social networks and bookmarking services, openness of the data for mash ups and lack of restrictions on participants

Other Possibilities

If successful, the recommender service could provide a platform for further interactions with the 'catalogue' such as tagging, for qualification of recommenders according to status and for a variety of personal list functions

2b. Channel Realm Scenario 'B'

Title

Sector-wide e-content licensing

Proposal

We propose the establishment of a legal and operational platform (channel) for Sector-wide licensing of and access to e-journals, e-books and consequently for other emerging electronic media.

Benefits

A sector-wide channel would benefit all parties – corporations (both publishers and HEIs) and clients (undergraduates, researchers, etc) – in terms of cost and efficiency and in terms of equal access. Savings will be leveraged not only through buying power but also in reduction of overheads incurred by all sides in the current sales and supply processes. Access should be improved where clients are currently subject to institutional purchasing decisions.

Implications

Corporation - this model would significantly change local systems requirements for Electronic Resource Management (ERM). There would remain, however the challenge of dealing with highly specialised publications where a national deal may be inappropriate.

Channel – this would transform the requirements placed on the SUNCAT service, which may actually become part of the solution. It may have implications for Shibboleth, assuming that there would be considerable loadings.

Client – this should herald equity of access, where any UK HE student could access any of the licensed publications.

Other Possibilities

The opportunity for hosting value added information (such as reviews and ratings) would increase as the service would attain (be guaranteed?) a critical mass not achievable by a discovery (search / locate) service. The national user activity data would be of significant value in ongoing publisher negotiations.

Some Other Channel Scenarios

- HEI holdings records incorporated in a wider commercial service
- 'First stop' sector wide online 'subject librarian' support service

3. Client Realm Scenario

Title

Subject based forums

Proposal

We would value the opportunity to meet other students in a national forum where we could exchange information in a subject specific context, including but not limited to information sources, recommendations and reviews.

Benefits

This service will be particularly valuable to undergraduates and masters students on very specialised or low volume courses (such as Anthropology) and modules. It could also be a platform to provide variety for and to address special interests for very large course cohorts (such as Engineering) that do not typically benefit from personalised material.

Implications

Corporation - Student records information would need to be shared outside institution boundaries, which would have Data Protection Act implications. This may pose a perceived retention threat to institutions with poor levels of specialism. The authorities may also fear increases in plagiarism.

Channel – There may be issues of academic integrity and quality (and therefore potential costs) if the service is perceived to be operating beyond the boundaries of community administration.

Client – we assume clients would wish / be required to make individual choices about joining such a service.

Other Possibilities

From our perspective as students, this could open up many possibilities, though not all will be in the interest of our own university; for example -

- Guest lectures – an incentive to visit and engage in the space
- Specialised resources – for example, in e-science
- Online support – subject information specialists, like subject librarians
- International links – providing critical mass in small subjects

Some Other Client Scenarios

- One stop discovery source across library, VLE, etc for local resources
- 'People like me' service – just like Amazon or e-Music

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