

LibX – Putting Millennium and WebBridge in Firefox

Annette Bailey
Newman Library, Virginia Tech
May 21, 2006



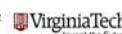
LibX - Overview

- LibX is a localized Firefox extension that integrates access to library resources into the browser
- Motivation – why do we need it?
- Background – why did we build it?
- Demonstration – what does it do?
- Editions – how to get one for your library?

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The Age of Google

- Study by Fast & Campbell 2004
 - *I still like Google: university student perceptions of searching OPACs and the web*
- Tampa Tribune article July 11, 2005
 - Professors frustrated with students relying solely on Google for research
 - Students respond that using the library is “work”

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What Users May Not Know About Google

- Google does not vet sources
- Google's page ranking algorithm does not reflect relevance
- Google lacks metadata
- Google does not provide access to all possible sources (e.g., print holdings)
- Google does not know about local resources

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What Users Like About Google

- Google is easy to use and convenient
 - Handles queries robustly
- Google is a one stop information resource
 - Web, Print, News, Scholar
- Google is fast and available 24/7
 - Search is integrated in most browsers

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Our Challenge

- Can librarians provide patrons with resources that are
 - Relevant
 - Authoritative
 - Complete
 - Accessible
- while providing the ease of use, integration, and availability of modern search engines?

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LibX History

- Idea developed in summer of 2005
 - Researched existing library toolbars & extensions, scripts, bookmarklets,...
 - Found a number of toolbars
 - FASTJack, HALbar, etc.
 - Web localization services
 - Library Lookup project (Bookmarklets, Greasemonkey scripts)
 - WAG The Dog project
- However...

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LibX History (cont'd)

- Existing toolbars were not adaptable (or adoptable!) for use by other libraries
 - Or it wasn't easy to do so
- Existing toolbars were limited in functionality
- We wanted an easily adaptable infrastructure on which to deliver a wide variety of services

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LibX

- Provides shortcut to library resources
- Uses Firefox browser extension technology
 - Integrated into the browser's user interface
 - Installed on the client-side



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What LibX Provides

- Direct Access to OPAC(s)
 - Integrated toolbar
 - Smart context menu
- Direct access to OpenURL resolver to find appropriate copy
 - Directly via toolbar or indirectly through Google Scholar
- Localization
 - Research companion that "hints" at library resources
 - Support for COinS

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OPAC Access

- Toolbar User Interface
 - Supports single & multi-term searches
 - Not intended to replace "advanced search page" – captures common search pattern
 - User can set display preferences
- Right-click context menu
 - Adapts to selections
- Support of different OPACs
 - Millennium, Dynix/Horizon, Voyager, Aleph
 - Configurable to support multiple OPACs simultaneously

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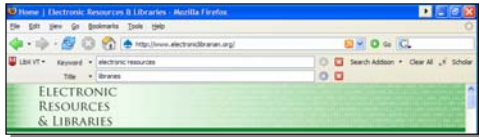


Demonstration 1

Toolbar, Context Menus



OPAC Toolbar



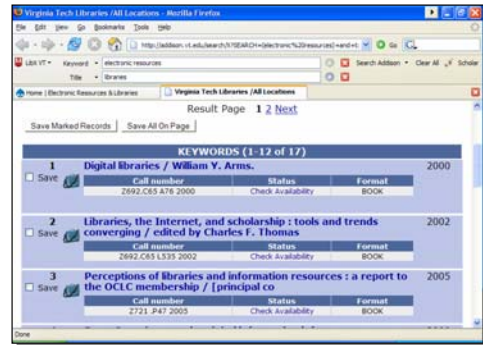
- Expands automatically for multi-term searches
- Offers commonly used search types:
 - Keyword, author, title, isbn, call number

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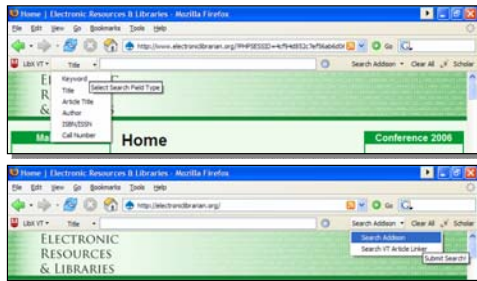
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OPAC Toolbar (2)



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Context Menu

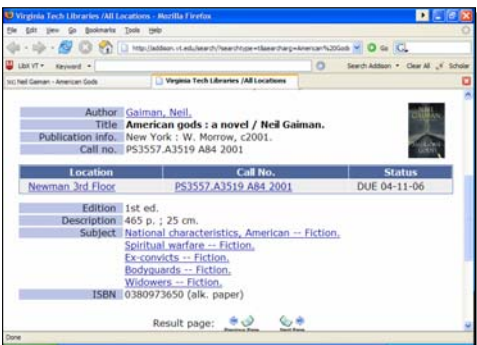


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Nested Context Menu



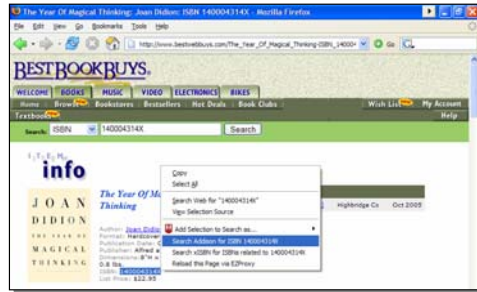
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Adaptive Context Menu

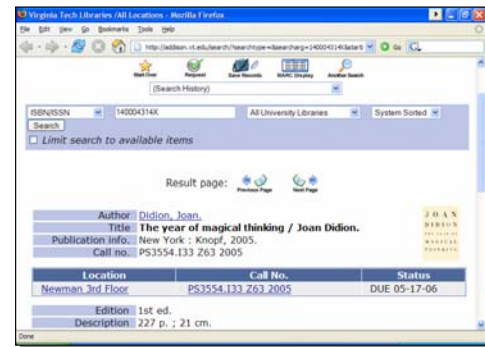


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Display Preferences & Links



- Users can set preferences on how results should be displayed
- Libraries can configure links that are being displayed to users

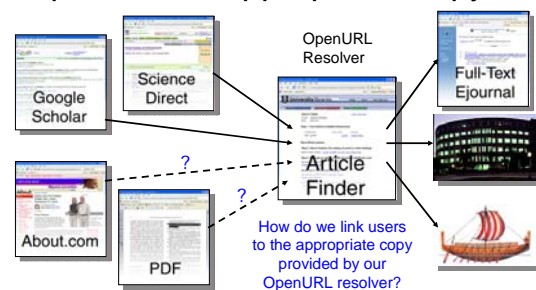
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OpenURL & Appropriate Copy



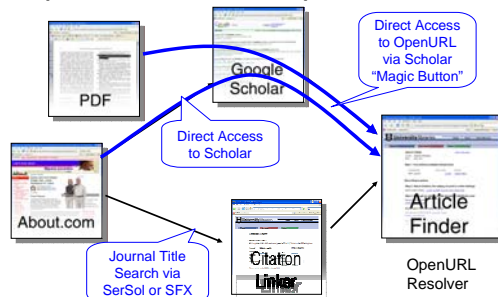
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OpenURL Access Options in LibX



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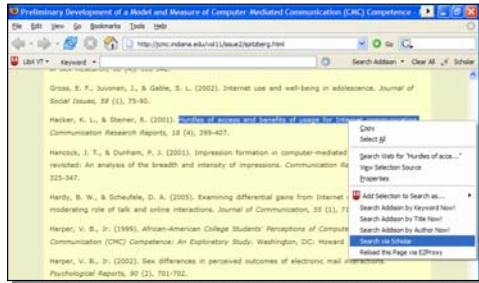
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Demonstration 2

OpenURL Access &
The "Magic Button"

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OpenURL Access via Scholar



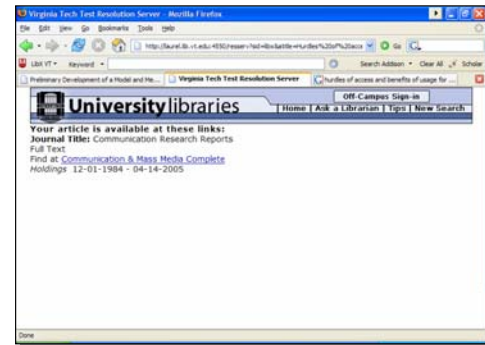
Source: <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol11/issue2/spitzberg.html>

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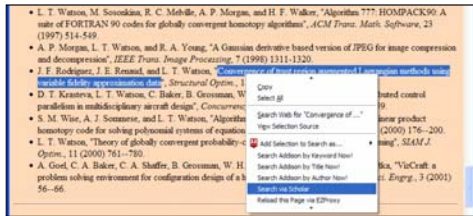
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OpenURL Access via Scholar (2)

OpenURL can lead user to print resources if no electronic copy is available



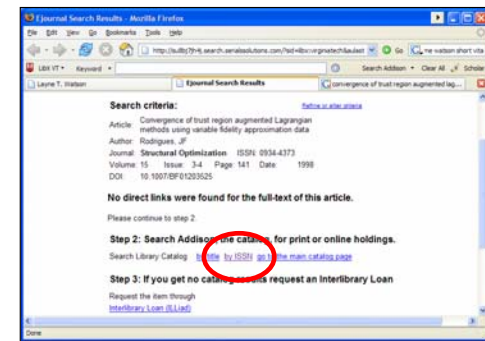
Source: <http://people.cs.vt.edu/~ltw/shortvita.html>

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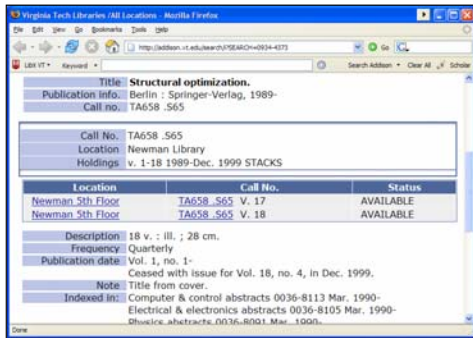


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Localization via LibX

- LibX enriches web pages before they are displayed to the user
- Inserts hyperlinked "cues" that point at local library resources
 - E.g., amazon.com page points at library record of same book
- Implemented for: google.com, yahoo.com, bn.com, NY Times, Books in Print, ...
- Includes support for COinS (ocoin.info)

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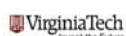
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Demonstration 3

Localization using Cues



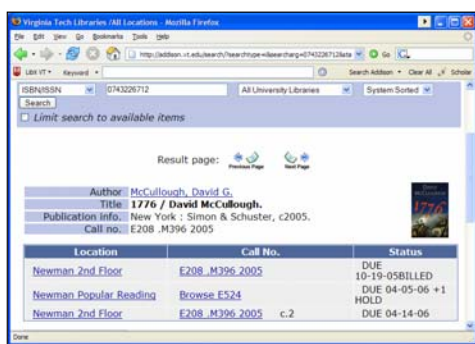
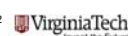
Cues on Amazon



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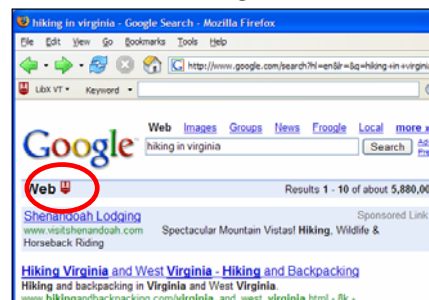
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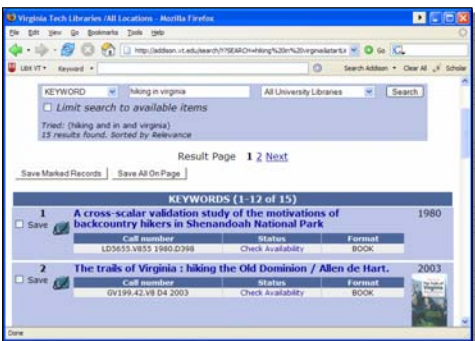
Google



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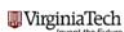
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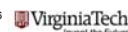
Try LibX!

- LibX is available for your library!
- It's nifty
- It's free
- It's Open Source
- Go to <http://libx.org> for more information

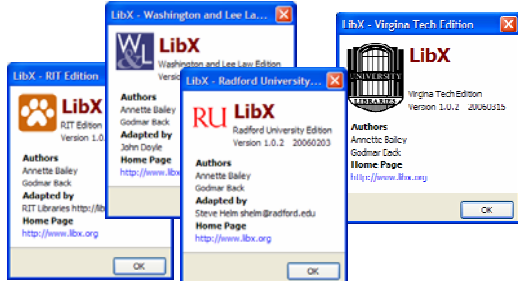
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Currently Deployed Editions



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Future Work

- Edition builder interface
 - Currently building an extension requires creating a config file which must be uploaded and checked
 - Goal: develop a wizard-type web interface where libraries can build a LibX edition interactively

- Create a LibX plug-in for Internet Explorer

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Questions?

- Thank you from the LibX Team

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Additional Material



LibX & Privacy

- Key goal: protecting LibX users' privacy
- Users do not reveal more information than they would if they used the library catalog
 - Exception: Referrer URL
- Tenet: Do not run queries unless user explicitly clicks on a link
 - E.g., no automatic holdings checking if user visits amazon
- Trade-off Privacy/Convenience

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LibX & Security

- Firefox extensions are trusted
- Users must trust that extension is not malicious
- LibX does not support user-provided scripts
 - More secure than Greasemonkey
- Source code is available for anybody to inspect
- Future: sign extensions

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