The Libraries acquired Ebscohost Integrated Search (EHIS) in July and Ebsco had most of the third-party databases profiled for testing by late August.

Since that time, the Web Development Group has, in consultation with reference and subject librarians and members of the InfoLinks Review Committee, worked to tweak the EHIS interface to prepare for its public debut. Implementation efforts have consisted of:

- 3 meetings with public services staff to solicit feedback and suggestions
- Approximately 40-60 hours adjusting settings and creating custom database clusters through the admin interface, reporting bugs to Ebsco and working with Ebsco technical staff to resolve problems, and testing
- Development of graphics and branding materials
- Creation of a user survey for student and faculty feedback (http://libinfo.uark.edu/eresources/wholehogsurvey.asp).

We have attempted to maximize the user benefits of this new “Whole Hog” Search while at the same time minimizing the buggy or confusing aspects of the interface. The service will launch in January as part of a reconfigured home page, and we hope to gather feedback from users across the campus on its value.

However, there are several outstanding issues that lessen the value of this product. In the words of one member of our group, the service “does not necessarily make the search experience better. In fact, it often just seems to make it more confusing.” Some of the most serious problems are:

- **Books and Catalog Metadata**
  An original goal for a discovery service / federated search project was to offer one-stop searching for books, videos, audio, and articles in one place. However, during the EHIS implementation, it quickly became apparent that adding results from the catalog and from WorldCat to the article citations proved confusing and, to novice searchers, even disappointing.
    - A bug in the system places records from the catalog and WorldCat into the “limit to full text” sets. This issue was reported in August and has not yet been resolved. Similarly, these records are not excluded when one limits to scholarly journals or by date.
    - The metadata from book and other catalog records includes only author and title; without a date, publisher, format, or other information, it is very difficult to see what one has retrieved.
Because the book results are unhelpful, the group decided to create separate search interfaces for articles, books, and reference sources (encyclopedias and dictionaries). Though there is still a “While Hog” search that will search all profiled databases, the article search will be placed on the main home page as the featured part of the service.

- No Access to the Find it! Button
  We have taught students well to use the Find it! service to locate online full text of articles. Unfortunately, the EHIS platform does not retrieve enough metadata (specifically issns) to support an openurl service.

  To use Find it! from EHIS, students must click through to the native database (i.e., to ProQuest or Web of Science, etc.) and then click the Find it! button. This is cumbersome and may limit most students to the full text they locate in EHIS, since it will not be obvious how to find other available full text.

- General Interface Issues
  - Full text and scholarly journal limiters are erratic. In theory, these should limit to only Ebsco materials, where there is sufficient metadata to create a limited set; in practice, in addition to citations from the catalog and WorldCat showing up as “full text,” records from Web of Science are listed as :full text” and records from Lexis Nexis show up as scholarly journals.

    Limiting within Ebsco search results, which should be reliable, is also unpredictable. For instance, USA Today (the newspaper) shows up in sets limited to scholarly articles.

  - The link text to view the record in the native database (e.g., ProQuest or Web of Science) is “Retrieve item.” This implies that the user will get the full text, which is not always the case.

  - Index Arkansas entries are labeled “library catalog” after the first result.

  - “Add to Folder” functionality for saving, emailing, etc. works differently from Ebsco databases. Non-Ebsco items are sent to a separate folder, labeled “Other Content Sources.” This is terribly inconvenient for users, who will find that their folder is lacking items they wish to print, email, save, or export to RefWorks.

  - Similarly, the non-Ebsco items do not seem to export well to RefWorks and at times give an error message.

  - It is impossible to limit by format, such as video or audio, in WorldCat or InfoLinks.

  - It is impossible to sort by date of publication, since the record metadata is so poor.

Some of the comments we have received on the survey thus far:

  “I just find it to be more limited than the other databases that I'm used to using.”
  “I retrieved a fair number of items, only the top 10-20 seemed relevant, even when I changed from keywords to subject terms... it's hard to tell if a source is relevant.”
“The first article in my list was good, but it didn't have a link to find the article...no retrieve item or anything.”
“I would like to see a help button that might tell more about what I was searching.”

In short, while we look forward to hearing user comments about the service this spring, we remain skeptical about its overall effectiveness.

If, at the end of our yearlong subscription, the service remains this buggy, we would like to propose that we either:

- scale back the number of databases profiled considerably
- create a homegrown search box on the main page that offers search options for our most popular article platforms.

The second would provide optimal functionality (folders, limiting, Find it!) while still reducing the number of choices facing the beginning student. The consolidation of ProQuest, CSA, and Lexis Nexis means that we could provide large and wide retrieval with just a few services:

Search for Articles in Journals and Magazines

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the EHIS implementation.