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LIS 531: Cataloging

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Catalog Evaluation of Bentonville Public Library

Search Types, Access Points, Arrangement

A keyword search on the word "atlas" retrieved 171 titles. Each record displayed the title and statement of responsibility, author, date of publication, locations, circulation information, format, hold request, and "Found As:" which displayed the field in which the keyword was found (author, title, note, subject, series, etc.). The records were arranged alphabetically by title and there was the option to sort by title (default), author, publication date, availability, and material type. The second level display takes you to the individual record.

I determined the default Boolean operator is "and" by doing a new keyword search on "world atlas" and got 74 results arranged alphabetically by title. If it had been default OR search, I would have retrieved all the titles on atlas and all the titles on world, which would have been over 1000 items.

The catalog searches across multiple fields of the same type when doing a title, author, or subject keyword search. A title keyword search on "Hamlet," retrieved "Novels, 1936-1940 / William Faulkner," which had Hamlet in the 740 field (and nowhere else) whereas other results listed Hamlet in the 245 field. An author keyword search on Shakespeare retrieved the title "Antony and Cleopatra [videorecording]..." in which Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616 was listed in the 700 field. A subject keyword search on "Lewis" retrieved books with Carroll, Lewis, 1832-1898 in the 600 field as well as books with Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806) in the 611 field.

The keyword search looked for the fields 100, 245, 260 when applicable (for example, when searching for atlas 2000, the publication information was included in the search), 500, 650, and 700, but did not look for 250 or 300. A keyword search on "medical" retrieves items that have medical in the 100, 245, 500, 650, and 700 fields, but if you do a keyword search on "30 cm.," (300 physical description field) you retrieve no results and when you do a search on "edition," you only retrieve results that include edition in other fields and not the 250 field. I was able to determine that the keyword search looked at the 700 field because I searched keywords on "American Medical Association," and found items in which the term was only listed in the 700 field. Corporate authors must be sought in the author browse search (see below).

A browse title search for "atlas," retrieved records in alphabetical-by-title order that displayed the titles and statements of responsibility, see references (rarely), and the number of matching items. When a result only matches one record, the second level display shows the individual record with fields of the title and statement of responsibility, author, imprint, physical description, subject, library, shelf location, call number, and item status. When a result matches more than one items, such as The Da Vinci Code / Dan Brown which matches 2 items, the second level display shows a listing of the books arranged alphabetically by title with the fields that were discussed in the keyword search results above.

I browsed titles for "an atlas" and determined that the system does not drop an initial article (a, an, or, the) automatically in a title browse search because the results listed "An Atlas of Breast Disease" and "An Atlas of Gibson and Pike Counties, Indiana" before going on to "An Atomic Romance".

I browsed titles for the number 8 and determined that numbers are arranged in a file-as-is order, in that the first entry was 8,000 More Vital Records..., followed by 8 ½ [videorecording], 8.4, and then the number 8 followed by words in alphabetical order. Eight is included in the search, but is found alphabetically under "E."

A browse author search for "Jordan," retrieved records in alphabetical-by-author order that listed the author field, "see" or "see also" references (occasionally), and the number of matching items. For results that match more than one item, such as Jordan, Apple which matches 8 items, the second level display brings you to an alphabetical-by-title listing of materials with that author name, displaying the same fields as a level-one keyword search.

Corporate authors (110 and 710 fields) are found in the author browse search. I browsed authors for American Medical Association and the MARC display for the six records that matched that term showed American Medical Association in the 710 field. If you do a title browse search for American Medical Association, you only get results in which American Medical Association is part of the title (245/246 etc. and not 110 and 710).

I browsed authors for "Shakespeare," and got a list of results organized alphabetically by author. The results within the Shakespeare, William 1564-1616 (the field that matched the most number of items), the items are arranged by the title proper (245) instead of by uniform title (130 or 240) or any other title fields. Antony and Cleopatra [videorecording] has a 246 field which says that the container title can be read as William Shakespeare's Antony & Cleopatra, but only the 245 field is used in the alphabetical arrangement.

I browsed subjects for "Civil War" and the first level display was a list of subjects ordered alphabetically by subject, the number of matching items, and a "see" reference if

applicable. The second level display shows an alphabetical-by-title listing of materials with that subject, displaying the same information as a level-one keyword search.

The subject browse search looks for name-as-subject fields in the 600 fields. I determined this by doing a subject browse search on Clinton, Bill and looking at the MARC displays for many of the 26 matching items for Clinton, Bill, 1946- subject, all of which were in the 600 field. Doing an author browse search on Clinton, Bill yielded results in which Bill Clinton was listed in the author field (100, 245, but not 600).

I browsed subjects for "water" and determined that subject headings are arranged in an unstructured arrangement. The results are arranged purely alphabetical: water, then water animals, then water animals – encyclopedias, then water based paints, etc. In a structured arrangement, all the subjects about water would be collocated together, but this one puts water next to water animals next to water based paint, all of which are different types of subjects.

What drove me crazy were the different search mechanisms that yielded vastly different results. In my opinion, there are too many different ways to search (keyword search by title/author/subject, contains/begins with/sounds like, browse search by title/author/subject/etc.) and it would be better to do a few really well than a ton so-so.

Record Display Issues

The individual record includes title and statement of responsibility, author, publishing information, the physical description, notes, contents, subjects, a summary, shelf location, a picture of the book cover, call number, the number of times the item has been checked out, and the number of hold requests. Labels identify the author, publication date, imprint, locations, physical description, note, summary, and electronic resource fields with a subject label on a right side-bar of "related

searches" in the individual record display. No label is used for the title and statement of responsibility field.

The record displays available are the default brief display, the long display of an individual, and the MARC display. The MARC display includes the label description (date, ISBN, Geog. Area, LC Call, Dewey Class, ME, Title, etc.), the field, the indicator, and the field data.

I think the "Found As: ____" feature of this catalog system is great, especially because when you do a mouse-over, text shows exactly how the item was found (subject, notes, etc.) with the words in bold of what you searched for—this is a very unobtrusive way of showing the patron how the search was retrieved. I also like that the results show the item status, including due date and whether the item is reference or lost.

Overall, I thought the record display was useful for patrons, displaying the right amount of information in the brief display and further information in the longer display.

Authority Control and Vocabulary Control

The catalog does have name cross references in the browse search with a "see" or "see also" reference, but it does not seem consistent. A subject browse search on "Clinton" yields the result Clinton, William J. (William Jefferson), 1946, in which you have a see reference to Clinton, Bill, 1946, but you also get a result of Clinton, Bill that matches only 1 item without a see reference. This means that the system does not collocate well all the works of an author.

The catalog has subject cross references in the form of "see" or "see also"—a subject browse search for movies gives a see reference to motion pictures, a subject browse search for M.B.A. gives a see reference to Master of business administration degree, and the process of using them is

the same as using name cross references. What is weird is that the motion picture see reference from movies has only 5 matches, but if you do a subject browse search on motion pictures, you see a bunch of other see references related to genre. You would only be able to see those if you thought of doing another subject search on motion pictures! What would be more helpful is to provide those other subject see references when you follow the movies see reference to motion pictures.

The catalog uses mostly LCSH terms, but does not use them exclusively. Going through the results from a subject browse search for "contracts" and checking them against LCSH reveals that many, if not most are found in LCSH, but some are not, such as convention & visitors bureaus, and the catalog does not distinguish what type of vocabulary is being used. This is not probably a big deal to patrons since they do not think at the level of subject vocabularies. Dewey call numbers are used to collocate items in this catalog. Overall, I am not impressed by the presentation of authority control and name access because the structure is not apparent to users and many terms only match to one or two items.

Ease of Use

After searching this system for books related to my collection development project (finding juvenile books on humans and the environment), what I determined is that the system is pretty easy to use if you are looking for a specific book or author, but not helpful for browsing, with no options to filter further and the subjects listings often only matching to a few items, forcing you to go back and forth. A structured subject heading listing would be helpful so all the books on "Native Americans" for example would be collocated together. Related subject searches, which are currently listed on the individual record, should also be listed on the title results page. In order to get all the books I wanted on the topic I was searching for, I had to do a

ton of searches and even then, I was not convinced I got the books I wanted because of all the places you had to look and move around to.

Conclusion

This catalog is good at helping you find the item you are looking for and easily determine whether the item is available and where it is located. The catalog does a good job in the keyword search function of telling the patron how that item was found with the "Found As" feature. I also liked the feature in the individual record of telling you how many times the item has been checked out.

However, the catalog is not great at assisting with browsing. When you browse for a keyword, there are too many entries that match only one item and the entries are not organized in a structured way. Additionally, it is unclear how the entries were pulled. If I were a user, I probably would not use the browse search more than once.