



# Library boosts discovery of print and electronic resources with WorldCat Local

*Kreitzberg Library implements new technology to enhance user discovery*

## Situation

Located in the rugged Green Mountains of Vermont, just 20 minutes from Montpelier, is Norwich University. The University, which was founded in 1819, is a unique higher-educational institution that offers two college paths for its students—traditional and military.

In 1827, the first librarian at Norwich University reported that the library housed 1,100 volumes and served a student body of 252. Today, Norwich's Kreitzberg Library is a full-service academic library that contains more than 140,000 print books, subscribes to over 100 online databases, and provides access to more than 42,000 full-text titles. Its 3,300 students also have access to millions of resources held at other libraries through interlibrary loan (ILL).

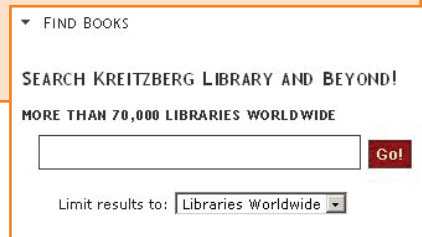
The library's main objective is to provide the best possible facilities and resources to meet the expanding needs of today's students and faculty. By 2009, library staff learned that some members of the university faculty were telling students to search WorldCat.org™ rather than the library's online public access catalog (OPAC) because they preferred the user-friendly Web access it provided to library resources.

## Solution

"One of our library's year-end goals was to investigate and implement technology aimed at enhancing user discovery. We looked at a few different tools, but found subscription costs, hardware requirements or time investments to be too steep," explains Elliot Polak, Systems Librarian, Kreitzberg Library.

## AT A GLANCE

- The Kreitzberg Library on the campus of Norwich University is managed by 18 librarians and staff members.
- The library serves 2,100 cadets, civilian residents and commuters, and about 1,200 graduate students, along with 112 full-time faculty members.
- The 58,000-square-foot Kreitzberg Library also houses a computer lab, as well as the University's Academic Achievement Center and Counseling and Psychological Services.



***“The faceted searching, coupled with the power of the one-stop index of WorldCat Local ‘quick start’ has brought unprecedented efficiency and research potential to our patron base.”***

*Elliot Polak, Systems Librarian,  
Kreitzberg Library, Norwich University*

Since the Kreitzberg Library was already an OCLC® FirstSearch® subscriber, library staff decided to take advantage of the WorldCat® Local “quick start” option. (Available at no charge to libraries that subscribe to WorldCat® via FirstSearch, “quick start” helps libraries get started with WorldCat Local quickly and easily.)

\* A reclamation project matches an individual library's holdings with WorldCat. This is an important step in preparation for WorldCat Local or WorldCat Local “quick start” to make sure that the majority of a library's collections are represented in WorldCat. This one-time synchronization is free to libraries implementing WorldCat Local.

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The library staff originally chose to use WorldCat Local “quick start” to simply clean up their cataloging records through a reclamation project.\* The cataloging staff was very supportive of transitioning to WorldCat Local, which brought to their attention previously undetected cataloging anomalies. But once the library staff realized all the benefits of WorldCat Local “quick start,” they decided to truly seize the opportunity and fully implement it.

The library staff then rapidly began coordinating their efforts. Polak notes, “One of the benefits of being such a small library is that we can make big changes very quickly without having to push through a large bureaucracy.”

First, they met to discuss the impact of the change and identified the four primary areas of the library that would be highly affected: library users, cataloging, interlibrary loan and reference.

Once the reclamation project was complete and the up-to-date MARC records had been loaded in the library’s OPAC, Polak began to work on the configuration of WorldCat Local “quick start” for the library. The interface configuration took about a half hour, and by the end of that day he had a search widget up on a test Web page for the library staff to try.

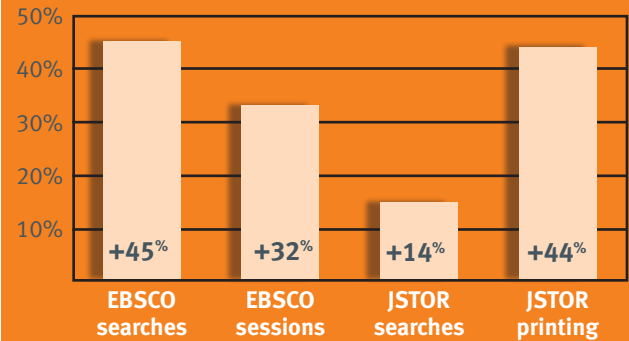
Three days before the spring semester was set to begin, he added the WorldCat Local search box to the library’s Web page. Polak believes that the process for implementing WorldCat Local was simple and straightforward enough for even mildly “tech-savvy” librarians to tackle.

Polak distributed a plethora of e-mails to library staff weeks in advance of their release, to keep them informed about the transition to the new service. To promote the service campus-wide, the library sent a press release to the University News page. The student newspaper also helped spread the word by doing a story on the new library catalog.

## Results

With their implementation of WorldCat Local “quick start,” the library staff feel that they achieved what they had set out to accomplish. All of the library’s users see “quick start” as a huge improvement over what they had before and the library staff agrees. And the university faculty have been very vocal in their support of the new service.

**Increase in usage at Kreitzberg Library with WorldCat Local**



“Once we decided to feature WorldCat Local ‘quick start’ [on our library’s Web page], it was our hope that students and faculty would be able to find information more easily, and based on the feedback we have been receiving, it appears they are. The faceted searching, coupled with the power of a one-stop index, has brought unprecedented efficiency and research potential to our patron base,” says Polak.

The library is only in its first months since implementation, but its statistics look very promising. EBSCO searches and sessions have gone up by 45% and 32% respectively, while JSTOR searches and printing went up by 14% and 44% respectively. It is still too early to tell how ILL requests will be impacted.

Following their initial implementation, library staff modified their site with additional configuration to simplify the integration of access to the library’s ILL service for off-campus users. “In the end, we decided to link the FirstSearch ILL button to our ILL policy page, which provides links to our electronic request forms,” says Polak.

Polak shares some advice with other libraries considering WorldCat Local: “The key to championing a new technology like WorldCat Local is to garner support from management and grassroots support of users alike. I went to our head of cataloging, who was excited about cleaning up our records, as well as our resident Web 2.0 guru, who immediately recognized WorldCat Local’s potential in terms of usability. I also did a lot of proselytizing myself, presenting WorldCat Local to circulation staff, students and other librarians.”