Take it or leave it?

A review of Voyager at NLS

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About NLS
- Based in Edinburgh
- Legal deposit library
- More than 13 million physical items
  - But not lots of “e”
- Digitisation
- Trusted Digital Repository
- John Murray Archive
- Scottish Screen Archive

Why review Voyager
- in place 7 years
- Hardware replacement
- Library strategy

Strategic objectives
- Mission critical requirements
  - Access
  - Interoperability
  - Support for collection development
  - Efficiency

Access
- Seamless, unhindered access to all Library resources
  - Easy-to-use
  - Flexible
  - Accessible
  - Content rich environment
  - Service rich environment

Interoperability
- Internal systems
- External systems
- Exploit open standards
Support for collections
- Acquisitions
- Metadata recording & management
- Respond to changes in metadata rules & encoding
- Support for non-print formats

Efficiency
- Reporting
- Smooth workflow processes

Methodology
- Read a lot of stuff
- Interviewed module leaders
- Spoke with external colleagues

Findings - Access
"The Voyager OPAC has little to recommend it as an information retrieval system that is easy to use and accessible … ."
"… opportunities available to side step OPAC …"
"…consider use of third party products …"

Findings - interoperability
"…perhaps one of Voyager’s great strengths is its support for the MARC21 standard … ”
"… concern regarding ability to interoperate dynamically with internal and external systems … ”
"…limited support at the service layer. There are no APIs … ”

Findings – collection development
"… supports requirements for purchase of materials regardless of format … ”
"… the cataloguing API enables use and development of additional functionality … ”
"…only supports MARC21 … ”
"… is fully adaptable to RDA … ”
"… should be adaptable to FRBR … ”
Conclusion

• “The OPAC sucks …”
• Support for traditional Library backroom business processes is adequate
• Complacency on the part of suppliers and customers
• Change for the sake of change is disruptive and expensive
  – Alternatives? What alternatives?
• Retain the status quo but …

Next steps …

• RD, access & delivery project
  – Do something about the OPAC
  – Do something about interoperability with internal systems
• Influence LMS development
• Replace hardware
• Look elsewhere?
  – Ask Amazon?

Thank you

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