

InstantILL: Simplifying Content Delivery, With or Without Subscriptions

Tina Baich, IUPUI University Library

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Presentation Notes

Slide 1

I want to start with a bit of context for why I became involved in this project.

For a number of years, I've studied the intersections of open access and interlibrary loan. In 2017, my research evolved into a call to action for my resource sharing colleagues. Beyond utilizing open access for the benefits it brings to ILL — faster delivery, reduced cost, and greater fulfillment of requests, ILL practitioners are perfectly positioned to advocate for improvements to library systems. Our users want convenience and speed, while we as libraries continue to offer a fractured discovery environment that leads to poor user experience. This steers traffic away from library collections & services, which in turn gives libraries (and campus administrators) a false impression of user needs and could lead in reductions in library funding. These same issues, plus the myriad search options for locating open access content, have lead our users to turn to alternative methods for obtaining articles — methods that aren't always legal. Large-scale copyright violation through the use of tools like Sci-Hub could also lead to suspension of library access by publishers. I called on my colleagues to push their libraries to take action to address the underlying discovery issues that plague our users.

Slide 2

And so I and others in my library have been working with the Open Access Button to develop InstantILL, a single, simple user interface that brings together our link resolver results, open access searching, and ILL request submission. In addition to simplicity for the users, it was also important to us, in terms of encouraging future adoption, that it be simple for libraries to implement. That's why significant effort has been made to ensure that InstantILL can be easily set up by any library in 30 minutes or less.

Slide 3

You're probably wondering is InstantILL really that simple? Well, let me show you how it works from a user perspective.

[GIF] Subscription availability via link resolver

Slide 4

[GIF] Open access availability via Open Access Button

Slide 5

[GIF] ILL request submission

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The fact that all of these checks are done before the ILL request is submitted also simplifies staff workflows and reduces the amount of time spent on requests for already available articles (which is more time than you might think), improving overall turnaround times and allowing staff to focus on the more difficult requests.

And while InstantILL doesn't solve all our discovery problems, it is a firm step in the right direction and does enhance the benefits of OA to ILL and creates a single, simple user interface that users expect.

Slide 6

To learn more, visit InstantILL.org or catch me or Joe, OAB's Director, here at CNI.