The HIKE project: evaluating Intota and KB+ for the UK marketplace

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HIKE (Huddersfield, Intota, KB+ Evaluation) is a Jisc-funded project managed by Computing and Library Services at the University of Huddersfield and the Knowledge Base Plus (KB+) project at Jisc Collections. We are also working closely with Serials Solutions and their Intota development team.

It is widely thought that the next couple of years will witness radical changes in the academic library world as many of the traditional library management systems (LMS) are finally declared unfit for purpose.[1] Increasingly the LMS is hindering the academic library in terms of:

- staff workload, since the LMS requires a dedicated team of specialists to support it
- inability to deal with the changing formats of resources: digital resources have superseded print collections, which often leads to complaints by staff that the system is not up to the job[2]
- lack of integration with important university systems, such as financial systems, resulting in a duplication of work

New web-scale management systems or 'library service platforms' powered by a comprehensive knowledge base are now emerging onto the market.[3] One such system, Intota from Serials Solutions,[4] is conceived around the principles of linked data, interoperability and lower total cost of ownership. It is hoped that Intota will help librarians work with greater efficiency so they can devote more time to mission-critical activities.

Knowledge Base Plus (KB+),[5] released in September 2012, also aims to remedy some of the challenges currently faced by UK libraries in the management of subscribed e-resources. KB+ has been developed by Jisc Collections on behalf of HEFCE and Jisc to address some of the issues and challenges currently facing UK academic institutions in the management of their e-resources. The service draws from the experience of Jisc Collections in dealing with electronic resource management and the work of SCONUL Shared ERM (electronic resource management) requirements project.[6]

Running from July 2012 to February 2013, the Jisc HIKE project aimed to evaluate the suitability of Intota and KB+ for the UK higher education (HE) marketplace and provide recommendations for further developments of both products. It also worked closely with both the KB+ and Serials Solutions development teams. The project builds upon the work undertaken at Huddersfield as part of Phase I of the KB+ project, as an early adopter of Summon[7] and the TERMS[8] project, in order to carry out a full assessment of the compatibility of KB+ with Serials Solutions and an evaluation of the suitability and potential of Intota to replace the traditional LMS in the UK market, given its relationship to and integration with a knowledge base.

These aims were achieved through a number of different tasks, which are briefly described below:

WORKFLOWS

The approach the project took was to try to understand the issues that arise from the workflows and processes we have in place for the current LMS and related university systems. Once we have established the problems and frustrations of our staff and users, we can identify what we expect from the new systems, and where they can improve on the older models.

An analysis of the workflows of the main processes in the Acquisitions and the Journals teams at Huddersfield was undertaken. It was then possible to create a 'wish list' that highlighted a number of features of the workflows, which it was felt should be addressed by Serials Solutions when they are developing Intota; areas where it was felt efficiencies could be made were also highlighted, and these should also be considered by the developers of KB+.

Knowledge Base +

We populated KB+ with the subscription details of all NESLi2 journal packages taken and 50% of the licensed serials held by the . (NESLi2 is the Jisc Collections model for licensing electronic journals in UK higher education institutions.) This allowed feedback to be provided to the KB+ team for consideration when developing the system, including the basic functionality and the renewals tool.

We added the remaining 50% of our licensed journals to the Serials Solutions 360 Resource Manager databse, which allowed a comparison of functionality with KB+. We compared the aims and objectives of the two systems, data population and the functionality of each. We concluded with an ideal workflow for each system and development recommendations for Jisc Collections and Serials Solutions.

As a result of our work with the KB+ team, we firmly believe that KB+ will reduce duplication of staff time and effort in the population and on-going maintenance of individual knowledge bases and will foster shared community activity and partnership to reduce the amount of work undertaken by each institution.

Intota

We investigated the requirement for Intota to be interoperable with other systems in order to be attractive for the UK marketplace. We began by identifying the systems with which interoperability was desired before moving on to evaluating the importance of each system to the running of the library. We then considered the interoperability of Intota with Dawson Books, Patron-Driven Acquisition and HE financial systems in more depth.

Cultural Change

Furthermore, the project investigated the cultural change required to implement successfully such an innovative system and suggests how to manage such a change in order to ensure that all staff are happy and comfortable with the change.

Jisc HIKE Project Workshop

The Jisc HIKE Project Workshop, held on 26 February 2013 at the University of Huddersfield, aimed to gather information from other UK Serials Solutions customers to help us evaluate the broader suitability of Intota for UK HE. Following

presentations by Jane Burke (Senior Vice-President, Strategic Initiatives at ProQuest), Damyanti Patel (from Jisc Collections) and the HIKE project team, the afternoon session discussed three main areas:

- workflows
- interoperability and APIs (application programming interfaces)
- cultural change

After investigating these areas closely, the HIKE team was curious to see whether other institutions were experiencing the same issues, in order to ensure that our evaluation was an accurate reflection of their situation; on the other hand, if they were facing different issues these would need to be factored into our evaluation. The findings from these exercises allowed a series of recommendations to be produced for further work or study.

Recommendations for Jisc Collections (KB+)

- The project recommends that further development be undertaken by Jisc Collections on KB+ to increase the value of the service to HE institutions and to create further efficiencies in the workflow. Such developments could include:
  - Providing a link between the subscription and the licence that governs it
  - Creating a comparison tool within KB+ (or as an extension of ELCAT), which would allow us to make comparisons between any two licences on KB+, whether nationally or individually agreed
  - Further information on the renewals spreadsheet, such as why titles are missing, andaddition of the JUSP (Journal Usage Statistics Portal) statistics
  - We also recommend further collaboration with Serials Solutions (and other vendors) to develop the ability to transfer all the data from KB+ to 360 Resource Manager via an API. This would mean that both systems would have to display the same fields – or at least a set of core fields – and that the export from KB+ must be able to reflect all the locally made amendments by each institution to the subscriptions. The implication here is that an API should be developed for all library service platforms, rather than individual systems.

Recommendations for Serials Solutions

- Collaborate with Jisc Collections to develop the ability to transfer all the data from KB+ to 360 Resource Manager via an API. This would mean that both systems would have to display the same fields – or at least a set of core fields – and that the export from KB+ must be able to reflect all local amendments made by each institution
- Collaborate with key HE systems such as finance, student records, reading list software etc. in order to integrate with Intota
- Regarding workflows, develop Intota to produce efficiencies by creating quicker, simpler and less staff-intensive ways of dealing with tasks such as budget monitoring and book reporting
- Work with book suppliers, such as Dawson, who participated in the project, to create an online shopping forum linked to all the registered suppliers and displaying all the relevant data, to allow the application of filters to search results, e.g. preferred suppliers through the National Book Contract, maximum price
- Consider and adapt Intota to deal with different acquisition workflows such as Patron Driven Acquisition, Inter-Library Loans and reading lists.

Recommendations for the University of Huddersfield and other HE institutions

- Consider approaching publishers / vendors who do not offer licences to accept the SERU guidelines
- Consider the population of all possible fields in 360 Resource Manager to facilitate and to improve the management of electronic resources
- Consider the use of both KB+ and 360 Resource Manager (or other ERMs) for different purposes, but for those who subscribe to KB+ we recommend that the information about the licences and the changes to identify the core titles and access dates etc. should be enacted in KB+ first and then imported into the ERM to reduce duplication
- Fully embed KB+ into journals workflows
- Consider the cultural change that the implementation of such systems will bring to the institution and the implications this may have, and to plan accordingly to ensure that the implementation will be successful.

Dissemination

The HIKE project has a blog, which is available at: <http://library.hud.ac.uk/blogs/projects/hike/>; a final project report is also available at: <http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/ 17976>

References

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