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# Library Portal & Linking Technology:

# An Alternative New Way of Delivering Information

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## OVERVIEW

→ Digital Library and single search/linking systems

→ Definitions and standards

→ Functionality of single search & linking products

→ Use / User behaviour

→ Benefits

→ Disadvantages

→ Conclusions

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# DIGITAL LIBRARY AND SINGLE SEARCH/LINKING SYSTEMS

## Digital library

→ provides a wide range of library services  electronically to users anywhere

→ more than digital collections/repositories

→ includes support & training

→ a virtual library *service*

## Single search/linking solutions

→ enable integration across digital collections

→ cut through complexity and chaos of multiple publisher interfaces, variable search strategies & record structures, output formats, etc.

→ provide deep linking to full-text & other services

→ offer customisation

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# DIGITAL LIBRARY

→ "A system providing the services of a library in digital form." (Johnston, Gregory et al, 2000)

Portals   (Single search interface & linking solutions)

→ "…virtual libraries, with a range of services equal to those currently provided in the library."

→ "A portal combines powerful searching with the diverse resources and services that patrons find when they use a library.  Portals should provide library experience of that quality without requiring people to come to the library."
 (Jackson, 2002)

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# DIGITAL LIBRARY AT UTS

Integrated content provision

→ major emphasis on digital resources

→ integrated delivery of databases, e-journals, e-books & print

→ SuperSearch (MetaLib/SFX) crossfile searching & linking

→ E-reserve and course materials, linked to UTSOnline (Blackboard)

→ developing UTSePress

→ ADT participant

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# DIGITAL LIBRARY AT UTS, contd.

Support & training

→ online live reference (ALIVE); 24x7; collaboration

→ online tutorials

→ user guides, online help, FAQs

→ online generic information skills program

→ learning commons

Platform of value-added services - under development

# STANDARDS

→     MARC

→     Z39.50

→     Open URL

→     HTML

→     XML

## Significance

→     results retrieval

→     retrieval variations (native vs generic interface)

→     finding fulltext vs not finding fulltext

→     number of clicks needed to reach fulltext

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# FUNCTIONALITY OF PORTAL & LINKING PRODUCTS

→ subject gateways

→ simultaneous searching – integrated searching across multiple databases

→ merging / deduping results

→ quick searching across a few specific databases

→ links to full-text

→ links to library services, e.g. online realtime reference, interlibrary loans, web search engines, etc.

→ e-journals list, A-Z

→ customisation,e.g. e-shelf, my resources, my e-journals

→ alerts

→ pushing new resources

→ integration with ILS

# USE / USER BEHAVIOUR

SuperSearch launched Dec 2001

Uptake

→~ 40% of UTS community used it by Jan 2003

→~ 50% of UTS community using it by Aug 2003

Popularity (survey data, Sep.2002)

→ ~60% off-campus users

→ mostly u/grads & coursework p/grads

→ faculties of Business & Social Sciences

→ customisable features well-used (My Resources, e-shelves)

# USE / USER BEHAVIOUR, contd.

'Hot' databases

Usage of UTS' Fulltext Databases From SuperSearch
Semester 1-2, 2002

Jan to June 2002
July to Dec 2002

PQ ABI Inform, PQ 5000, Ebsco Masterfile, World Magazine, Ebsco Online, Ebsco Prof Devmt, Science Direct, Health Business, PQ Accounting, IEEE, Acad Sch Elite, Business Source, Wiley Interscience, Journals @ Ovid, Acad Press Ideal

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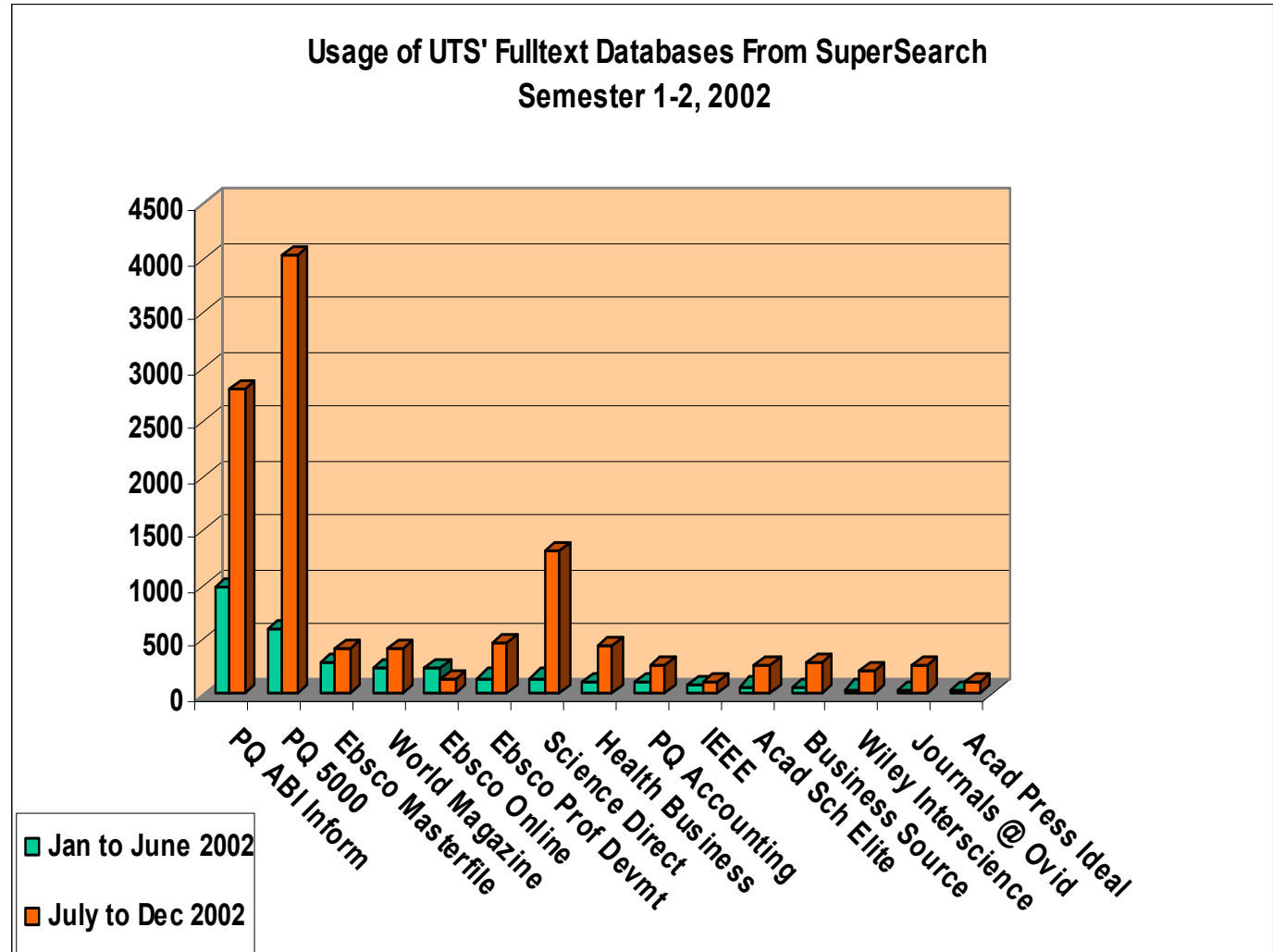
# USE / USER BEHAVIOUR, contd.

'Hot' e-serials

→ NY Times

→ BRW Australia

→ Bulletin With Newsweek

→ Economist

→ HBR

→ Wall Street Journal

# USER / USER BEHAVIOUR, contd.
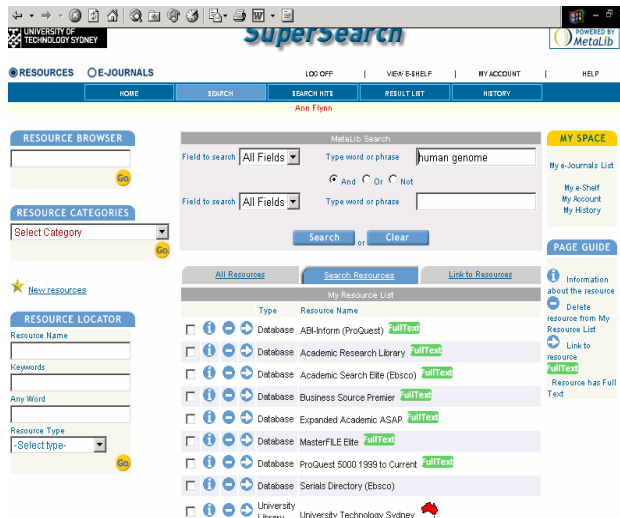
## Portal search capability vs native interface search capability

### Portal (generic) interface:
→ Non-specialised functionality
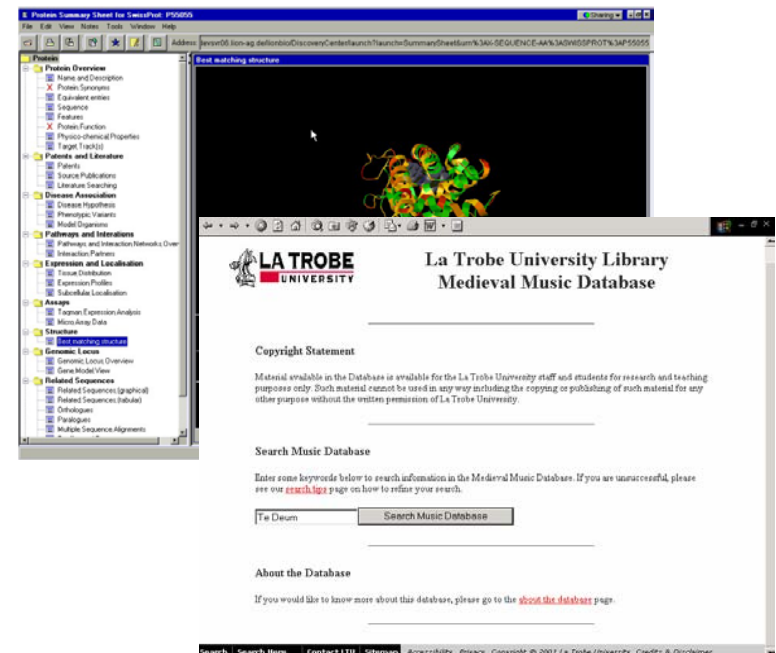
→ Fewer results via less sophisticated search functionality; no thesauri

→ General users

### Native interface:
→ Specialised functionality expected

→ Maximum results via Advanced searching & thesauri

→ Expert users

## BENEFITS

→ your valuable e-collections will be used more

→ more efficient resource discovery paths

→ consistency – search strategies, record structures, results displays

→ popular with users, particularly off-campus users

→ library staff develop new skills

→ usage statistics support informed decision-making for better e-collection management

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## DISADVANTAGES

→  specialised functionality of native interfaces not available

→  products are in development

→  need for different approaches to training, e.g. focussed
   sessions, online tutorials, etc.

→  there's work involved!

→  discover your inadequate skillbase!

# CONCLUSIONS

## Questions / Choices

→ 'Better the devil you know'?

  → keep maintaining your A-Z lists of databases and e-journals?

  → keep expecting your users to navigate the minefield of e-resources?

→ Are portal & linking systems still too underdeveloped?

→ Which product(s) to buy? What's best for *your* users?

→ 'Get with the strength' (consortia), or 'go it alone' (bleeding edge)?

→ What is *really* involved in implementing portal & linking technology, and is it worth the effort?

# Any questions for me?

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