

Catalog Enhancements

OPACs lack many of the features that students have come to expect from their interactive online information sources. As a gateway to a library's collection, the OPAC needs an upgrade. Reinventing the OPAC has become a lot easier with the advent of catalog enhancement products, which allow a library to dramatically improve the catalog's look and feel, search capabilities, and social interactivity without having to go to the effort and expense of replacing the entire ILS. VuFind, LibraryThing for Libraries, and WorldCat Local are three catalog enhancement products that will engage students with a more familiar interactive experience.

VuFind

[VuFind](#) describes itself as a “discovery layer” for library catalogs. In addition to giving the catalog an entirely new look, it helps users to interact with a library's collection through social features such as commenting and tagging. VuFind is an index unto itself that works on top of a library's existing catalog to provide live record status—availability of resources, due dates, holds, etc. VuFind is open source, which gives libraries the ability to customize the look, feel, and inner-workings of the catalog overlay as well as create widgets.

The screenshot displays the VuFind search results for the query 'social network'. The interface includes a search bar at the top with the results count 'Showing 1 - 20 of 1568 for search: 'social network''. A 'Sort' dropdown menu is set to 'Relevance'. Below the search bar, there are 'Search alternatives' for 'social network' leading to 'social networks' and 'social work'. The main results area shows four entries, each with a thumbnail, title, subject, call number, location, and availability status. The first entry is 'Social networks' with call number HM131 .S59 and is available. The second is 'Social networks : a developing paradigm / Published 1977' with call number HM131 .S593 and is available. The third is 'Social networking : the essence of innovation / by Liebowitz, Jay, 1957- Published 2007' with call number HM786 .L54 2007 and is unavailable. The fourth is 'Social networks : development, evaluation and influence / Published 2008' with call number HM741 .S637 2008 and is unavailable. On the right side, there is a 'Refine Search' panel with filters for 'Collection' (Digital Library), 'Format' (Book, Online, Conference Proceeding, VHS, DVD), 'Year of Publication' (From/To range), 'Classification' (H - Social Science, B - Philosophy, Psychology, Religion, J - Political Science, P - Language and Literature, T - Technology), and 'Topic' (Social aspects, Social networks, History, Social conditions, Online social networks).

VuFind's features of note:

- **Faceted search**—after initial search, users can narrow search by format, year of publication, classification, topic, author, language, genre, etc.
- **Similar Items**— similar resources are displayed when users view an individual book record.
- **Organized lists and Citation Generator**—the combination of personalized resource lists and citation feature allows users to quickly create bibliographies without additional citation applications.
- **Embedded content**—professional reviews from Amazon.com and biographical information from Wikipedia are incorporated into book record pages.
- **Catalog language**—there are many translations available, and the English translation can be edited.
- **Access to data**—many APIs available for search, data, etc. as well as complete access to indexed data through Solr.

VuFind is available as a free open source download that can be installed on a dedicated server. Libraries are free to modify and customize the source code to best suit their needs. If a library has the personnel to setup and manage VuFind locally, this is an extremely cost effective option. Since most community college libraries do not have the luxury of an in-house programmer, there are hosted options that are reasonably priced. On the VuFind website, there is a list of software consultants that can setup, customize, and host a VuFind catalog for much less than commercial overlay options.

Libraries that support VuFind in-house have access to online documentation and a thriving online support community. Libraries can also sign up for a support contract with the software consultants mentioned above.

VuFind is developed and maintained by the Villanova University Library. Visit their [catalog](#) to see VuFind in action.

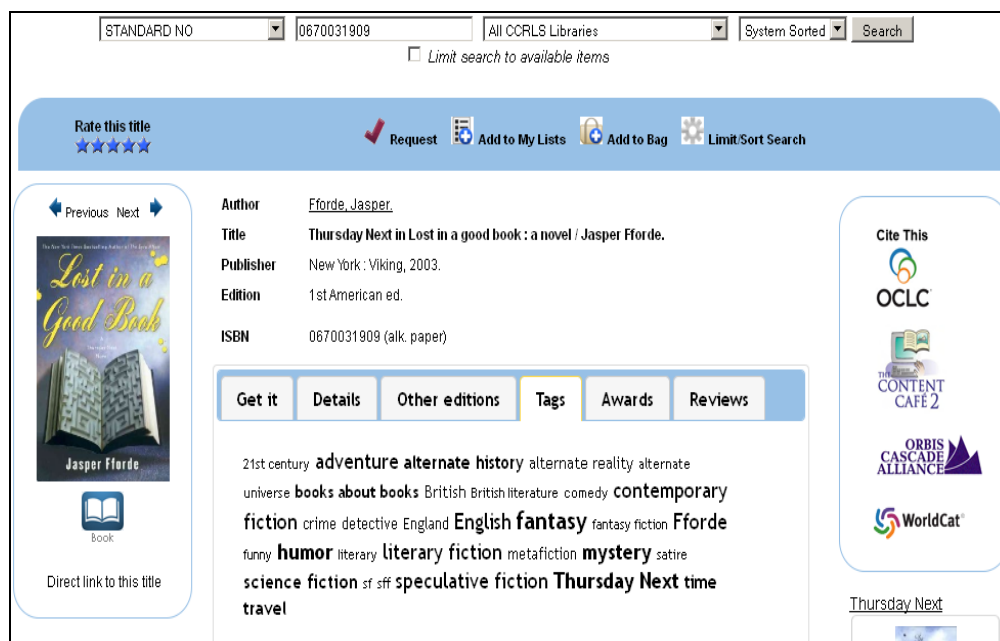
LibraryThing for Libraries

[LibraryThing for Libraries](#) (LTFL) is a system that works within a library catalog, making it more engaging by providing Web 2.0 features to catalog users. Subscribers immediately have access to the data from the world's largest personal- and social-cataloging site, LibraryThing. Since 2005 LibraryThing members have added over 61 million books and 75 million tags.

LTFL's features of note:

- **Book recommendations**—"recommended" or "similar" books that can be found in the library offer reader's advisory on the spot. Recommendations cover more than 5 million ISBNs and are based on data collected from the over 61 million books.
- **Tag browsing**—catalog users can search and brows the catalog by tags. LTFL provides over 78 million tags, vetted by librarians.

- **Patron reviews**—if enabled, this feature allows patrons to add ratings and reviews for all items in the catalog. Reviews can be moderated by librarians with a built-in moderation panel.
- **Widgets**—the blog widget allows libraries to promote its collection on the library webpage, library blog, etc. Widgets can include reviews for new items, book club selections, or specific subject selections. Library patrons can embed their reviews into their Facebook pages and blogs.
- **Shelf Browse**—patrons can have the serendipitous experience of browsing a physical shelf. LTFL uses a library’s shelf list, ties it to cover images, and displays a virtual shelf in the catalog record or a separate shelf browser.
- **Awards and honors**—draws from 25,000 different awards and honors, from the National Book Award and the Booker Prize to the Salon Book Award and New York Times Notable Book of the Year, or even Oprah’s Book Club selections.
- **Mobile** – LTFL does not include a mobile version, but the company does offer another product, called Library Anywhere, which creates mobile versions of library catalogs—both native apps and browser based.



LTFL is a hosted enhancement. The LibraryThing data is brought into the OPAC through snippets of HTML code that can be easily inserted into the OPAC. LTFL provides flexibility throughout the testing and installation process; it can be tested in-house without patrons noticing any changes or tested live on a library’s site in order to get feedback from patrons. It can also be turned off at any time. According to the company website, “LTFL will work with every major OPAC/ILS, and most of the minor ones too.”

LTFL does not provide any formal training on the product, and stresses its ease of installation and use. According to the LTFL website: “[LTFL] enhances your catalog with a few lines of

HTML and a file of your records. Installation is extremely easy - you cut and paste some HTML we give you, export a list of your records, and you're ready to go." There are detailed FAQ pages and instructions on the LTFL site as well as a LTFL hosted Google Group to discuss enhancements and keep customers up-to-date on newly added or soon-to-be added features.

LTFL is distributed by Bowker. The vendor charges no fees for setting up and testing LTFL. The vendor charges a yearly subscription and will provide pricing upon request.

WorldCat Local

[WorldCat Local](#) offers both a visually appealing catalog search layer and gives libraries access to the vast WorldCat database. According to the OCLC website, there are more than 892 million items in their collection. By loading their collection data into WorldCat, participating libraries can use the WorldCat interface to display their local holdings while utilizing WorldCat's metadata to vastly improve users' searches.

Search results for 'social networks' limited to Libraries Worldwide

Format

- All Formats (113,840)
- Article (65402)
 - Peer-reviewed (51510)
 - Downloadable article (2445)
 - Chapter (1069)
- Book (35304)
 - Thesis/dissertation (10248)
 - eBook (8027)
 - Microform (339)
 - Large print (18)
 - Braille Book (13)
 - Continually updated resource (5)
- Archival material (6275)
 - Downloadable archival material (5747)
- Computer file (5062)
- Video (1258)
 - DVD (656)
 - VHS (491)
 - eVideo (86)
 - Film (21)
 - Bluray (12)

[Show more ...](#)

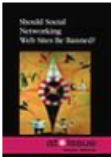

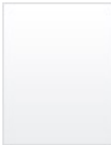
Refine Your Search

Author

- [Inter-University ...](#) (76)
- [United States](#) (71)

Results 1-10 of about 113,840 (.74 seconds)

[Select All](#) [Clear All](#) Save to: [New List] [Save](#)

1.  [Should social networking web sites be banned?](#)
by Roman Espejo;
Book
Language: English
Publisher: Detroit : Greenhaven Press, ©2008.
Libraries that own this item: [MIT Libraries](#)
[Editions and formats >](#)
2.  [The social network](#)
by David Fincher; Scott Rudin; Dana Brunetti; Michael De Luca; Ceán C Spacey; Jesse Eisenberg; Andrew Garfield; Justin Timberlake; Armie H Urbanski; Rooney Mara; Ben Mezrich; Columbia Pictures.; Relativity M Entertainment (Firm);
DVD video : NTSC color broadcast system
Language: English
Publisher: Culver City, Calif. : Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, ©2011.
Libraries that own this item: [MIT Libraries](#)
[Editions and formats >](#)
3.  [Social networks and social influences in adolescence](#)
by John Cotterell
Book
Language: English
Publisher: London ; New York : Routledge, 1996.
Libraries that own this item: [MIT Libraries](#)
[Editions and formats >](#)

WorldCat Local's features of note:

- **Single search box**—search box can be customized and placed on any webpage.

- **Journal search**—integrated A-Z journal list provides search for individual journal titles and links to outside resources via OpenURL. This appears to be a viable replacement for services such as Serials Solutions.
- **Faceted search**—after initial search, users can narrow search by format, author, year of publication, language, content, audience, topic, etc.
- **Mobile search**—users can access mobile version (browser based) of catalog from their phones and tablets.
- **Social Networking Tools**—users can create and share lists of resources, rate resources, and write reviews.
- **Usage statistics**—libraries can access statistics through the WorldCat hosted metrics tool.

WorldCat has agreements with many database publishers for their metadata, which means that WorldCat Local also acts as a federated search. From the faceted search menu, users can include articles in their search results. Users are taken to the full text of articles via a link resolver (that is included in the WorldCat Local subscription).

WorldCat Local is hosted on OCLC servers, so there is no need to install software on local servers. When getting started with WorldCat Local, libraries are assigned an implementation manager, who helps with the initial configuration process. For support after this configuration process, OCLC provides webinars (both live and recorded), extensive documentation, and access to a user support center.

OCLC charges a yearly subscription based on a college's FTE and will provide pricing upon request.

Making the Decision

All three catalog enhancement products are intended to make a library's OPAC interface more interactive and engaging for the user. Choosing which of these enhancement options to go with will depend on a library's resources in terms of both budget and staffing. LibraryThing for Libraries and WorldCat Local do not require a lot of system maintenance or technical expertise on the part of a library's staff, but these options will cost more than VuFind, which is an open-source product. VuFind offers the most flexibility of all of the products; libraries have the freedom to change the source code and customize features according to their needs or preferences. VuFind does require more staff time (for installation and maintenance) as well as technical expertise of a dedicated programmer or in-house staff.