Repository content – lost in discovery?

Open Repositories, Helsinki, June 12, 2014 Jyrki Ilva (<u>jyrki.ilva@helsinki.fi</u>)



Discovery systems

 The basic idea: giving the patrons a single search interface into content (both local and non-local) provided by the library

Repositories and discovery

• How does repository content show up in discovery systems, or does it show up at all?

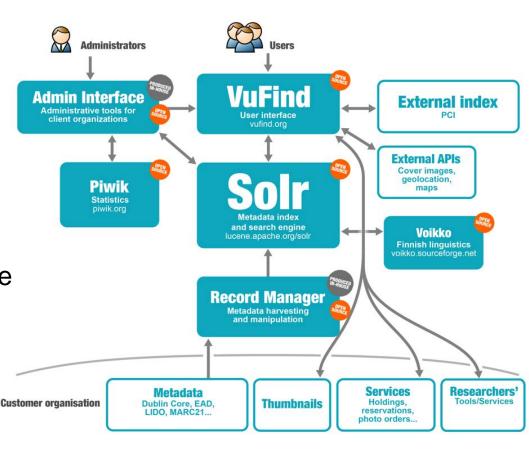
Discovery in Finland

- A national discovery system, Finna (<u>www.finna.fi</u>) for Finnish archives, libraries and museums
- Part of the National Digital Library Project (KDK, www.kdk.fi/en) funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture



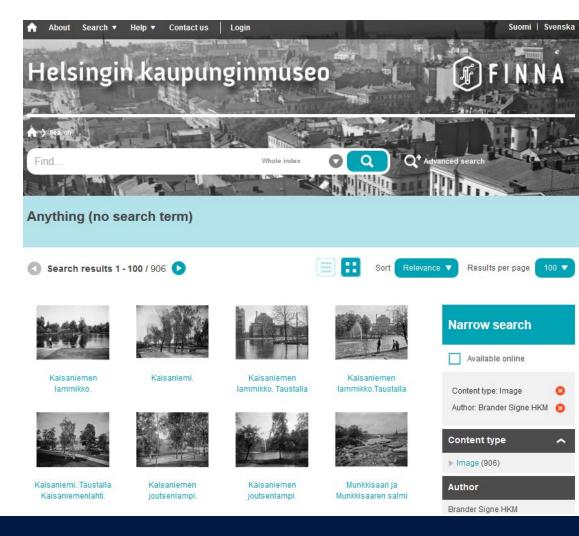
Development of Finna

- Developed by the National Library of Finland
- Based on VuFind and a number of other tools
- Lots of good work done, see <u>https://github.com/KDK-Alli</u>
- Provides both a national interface for publicly available content and also separate instances for individual organizations



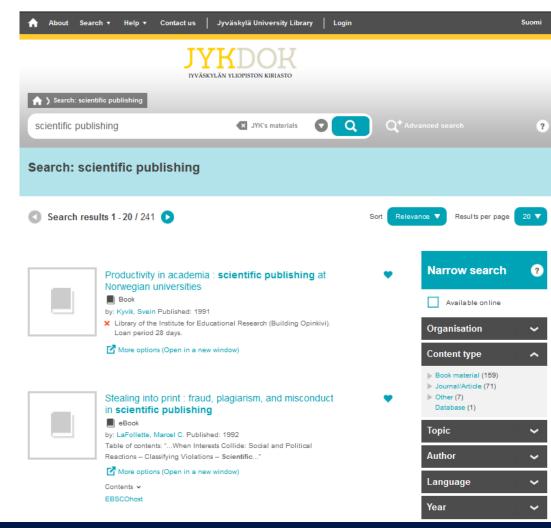
Using Finna on an organizational level (1)

 Helsinki City Museum, https://hkm.finna.fi/



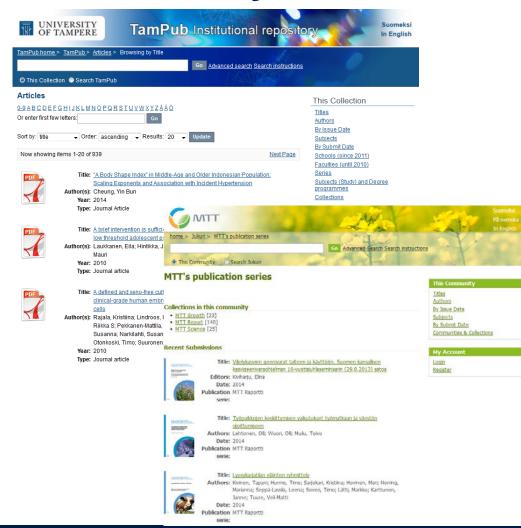
Using Finna on an organizational level (2)

- University of Jyväskylä, <u>https://jyu.finna.fi/jykdok/</u>
- Designed to replace the university level OPAC and meta-search tool



Repository content in Discovery?

- Finland currently has about a dozen repositories, with 50+ organizations and 200.000+ OA full-text publications
- VuFind/Finna can harvest metadata from repositories
- However, it is not always clear how to deal with the repository content in discovery context



Discovery: Conceptual issues

- Finna has two separate indices a local index and a central index
 - The local index contains harvested metadata for the content which may or may not have been previously catalogued into the library OPAC
 - The central index contains metadata for the licensed content acquired by the library
- Should the worldwide repository content and other non-local OA content be available either in the local index or in the central index, or both?

Repositories in a local index

- What should there actually be in the local index?
 - There seems to be a tendency to restrict the local index strictly to the local content
 - For example, only theses produced within the organization, not from elsewhere
 - There are fears that the local content will get lost in the search results, if there is too much outside stuff available
- So, we may end up having the content of the local repository harvested, but not the repository content from elsewhere

Repositories in a central index?

- There are several big commercial vendors providing a central index for licensed content
 - Can we trust them to include open access repository content from all around the world in their product?
 - Currently the short answer is no: to a large extent, the vendors seem to harvest repository content only from their own customer organizations

We are not making it easy, either

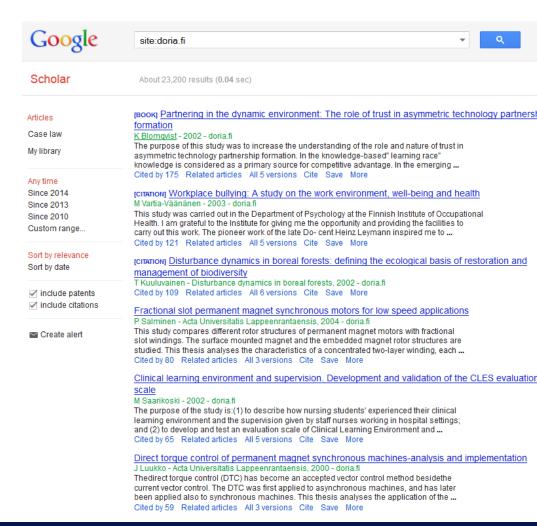
- The repositories contain very diverse stuff should all of this be harvested?
- The repository metadata is far from uniform and has quality issues
- These problems have been well-known for a long time... but we haven't been able to solve them
 - OAlster wasn't much of a success
 - BASE (http://www.base-search.net/about/en/) is much better, but also provides excellent illustration for many of the problematic issues
 - Discovery systems like Finna must deal with the same issues, if we hope them to include the repository metadata as well

Challenges: Metadata formats

- Dublin Core
 - No clearly defined or easy-to-undertand guidance on how to deal with metadata that goes beyond the basic 15 fields
 - Leads to different local interpretations, ad hoc solutions
 - The development of DC itself seems to have just about stalled

Challenges: Google is making us lazy?

- Despite these problems, we have been doing quite well, thanks to Google
- Most of us are getting most of our traffic via Google ... which doesn't really rely on the quality of our metadata



Challenges: Fragmented community

- Unfortunately, the repository community is fairly diverse and fragmented
- There are valiant efforts to solve metadata issues
 - Some may be platform-based
 - Some may aim for coherence on a geographical area
- But it's hard to come up with a global solution that would be adopted by everybody

Should we care? What should we do?

- We may continue to rely on Google even in the future...
 - But what if it really turns evil at some point?
- We should work with the discovery people to make sure that our content is included in a sensible way
- Even if it's not going to be easy, we should do support the efforts for metadata co-ordination

How to fix it for Finna?

- Of course, we just cannot wait for the issues to be solved on a global level (here we go again...)
- We must figure out how much normalization can be done after the metadata is already harvested from local systems
- And we must also figure out what can be done to improve the coherence of metadata in local repositories, at least on a national level

Thanks!

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