

# APIs to Enhance the User Experience

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Who I am, my experience with discovery, project management now.

# A Bit of Background

Locally managed discovery since 2009

- Catalog: Aleph-to-Solr-VuFind
- Articles: Metalib X-Server
- Other web content

2010: Summon replaced Metalib for articles

2018: Launching a new interface



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Launched site in 2009, using Solr  
Summon replaced Metalib for article discovery. We kept our articles and our catalog separate.

# User Experience Goals

Provide scaffolding to help users

- Within our site
- As long as possible
- Keep the 'back button' alive



# Some Secondary Motives

User confidentiality

Analytics

- To further improve our systems
- To understand usage
- To connect with campus learning analytics

Holistic experience



# 360 Link

Launched October 2015

Uses 360 Link API & Umlaut

Redirect was relatively easy

sfx.lib.umich.edu

dl2af5jf3e.search.serialssolutions.com

mgetit.lib.umich.edu



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Umlaut is open-source software designed to work with Link Resolver APIs. Originally written at Johns Hopkins for SFX. We provided connector for 360 Link.

We had long branded our resolver as "mgetit.lib.umich.edu";

The screenshot displays two versions of the MGet It website interface. The left version shows a search result for the article 'Measuring Journal Linking Success from a Discovery Service' by Stuart, Kenyon, published in 2015-03. It lists metadata such as the journal 'Information technology and libraries', volume 34, issue 1, and ISSN 0730-9295. Below the metadata, there are five 'Go To Item' buttons linking to different sources: ProQuest research library, CINAHL complete, Academic OneFile, Directory of Open Access Journals, and American Library Association. The right version of the page shows the same article but with a 'Not available online?' message and a 'Get Help' section. The 'Get Help' section includes a 'Request to have a copy delivered' link and an 'Ask a Librarian' button. The footer of the page includes the text 'Powered by Umlaut.' and a permalink: 'https://mgetit.lib.umich.edu/go/2383039'. The University of Michigan logo is visible in the top left and bottom right corners.

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Benefits:

- Permalinks
- Problems get reported to our Ask a Librarian service -> and where those reflect bad data (not user issues), to Technical Services
- Options for other delivery mechanisms
- We can learn about inbound and outbound usage patterns; where do people arrive from? Where do they go?

# Summon

We only use Summon for licensed content  
Built our own front end



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Not our catalog

Will show new front end, not old one.

The screenshot displays the M Library Mirlyn search interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "climate change" and a "Search" button. Navigation links include "How to Use Search", "Get Help", "Ask a Librarian", and "My Account". Below the search bar, there are tabs for "Everything", "Catalog", "Articles", "Databases", "Online Journals", and "Library Website". The main content area shows search results for "Articles: results from scholarly journal articles, newspaper articles, book chapters, conference proceedings, and more." A filter sidebar on the left allows users to refine their search by format, publication date, and availability. The main results area shows two entries for "CLIMATE CHANGE", both identified as "Journal Article" by "Richard Hodson" published on "12/10/2017". The first entry includes an abstract: "The scientific community is united in the view, informed by a body of evidence amassed over more than 50 years, that climate change caused by human activity poses a considerable threat to life on Earth. Most agree that it is necessary to ca..." and a "Show more" button. The second entry is partially visible. The M Library logo is in the bottom right corner.

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Basic functionality of Summon

Everything in the site (search result, item) has a stable URL

Will be adding 'select and act' interactions, and long-term "favorites"

User data – can understand user behaviors at whatever level we decide is needed, for various purposes

Same problem-reporting functions as in link resolver – so when direct links fail, users can tell us immediately



# Concluding Thoughts

Several goals in our work:

1. Keeping users in our context
2. Affording them opportunities for help
3. Learning from user behavior
4. Relying on our partners for data & content

