APIs to Enhance the User Experience

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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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User Experience Goals

Provide scaffolding to help users

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



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Some Secondary Motives

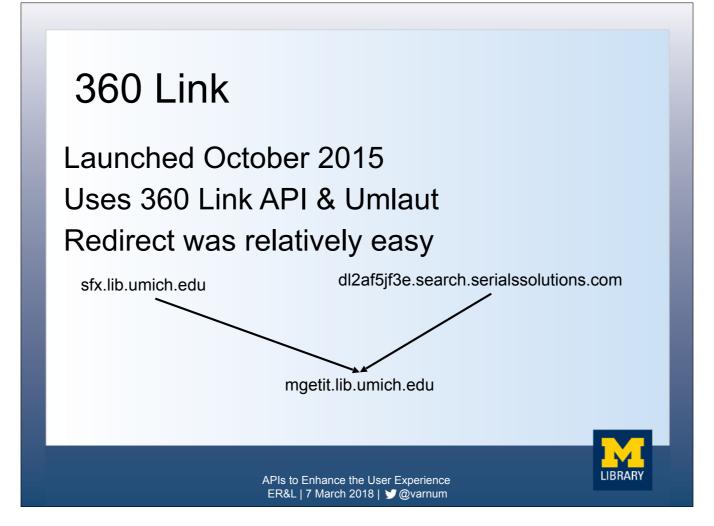
User confidentiality Analytics

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

Holistic experience

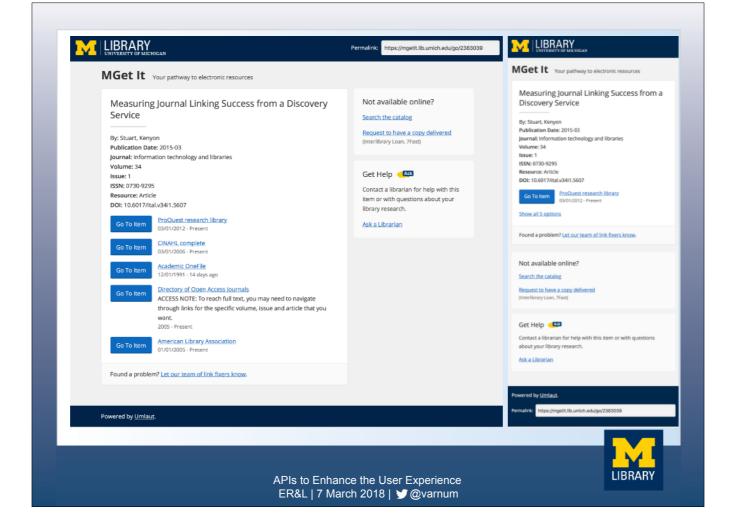


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Umlaut is open-source software designed to work with Link Resolver APIs. Originally written at Johns Hopkins for SFX. We provided connector for 360 Link.

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



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

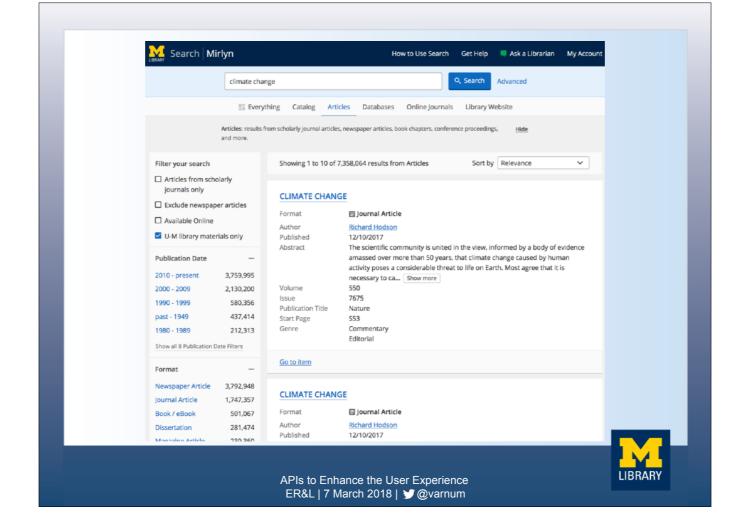
We only use Summon for licensed content Built our own front end



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Not our catalog

Will show new front end, not old one.



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



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