Library Voice of User Survey for the Future Digital System

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BACKGROUND

In August 2005, GPO submitted a survey to all federal depository libraries regarding proposed features and functions of GPO's Future Digital System (FDsys). More than 400 of the approximately 1,250 depository libraries responded to GPO's request for feedback.

Each respondent ranked a list of proposed GPO Services by level of interest, with "1" indicating very high interest through "5" indicating very low interest. The compiled responses are listed below, and are also available online at http://www.gpo.gov/projects/fdsys.htm. Respondents were also encouraged to list additional services they would like FDsys to provide. Finally, respondents were encouraged to provide additional written comments.

FINDINGS

Part 1- GPO Services

The results for the GPO Services questions are organized by highest respondent interest. The three most requested features were:

- Access to authentic and official Government publications
- Migration of digital media to prevent technological obsolescence
- Access to digitized publications with full search capability

Respondents also expressed interest in multiple levels of search, access to the version information for a publication, and the ability to pull bibliographic records from GPO. The full results are outlined below.

(Note: In addition to indicating library interest, respondents were asked to rank GPO Services based on their patron's interests (to the best of their ability). A significant number of respondents did not provide any answers to patron interest questions, and other respondents chose "I don't know" for patron interest questions. Additional comments provided by respondents indicated that many libraries serve multiple user types, each having their own set of needs and wants. Other respondents indicated that they inferred patron's interests to the best of their ability, but no data existed to back up their answers. Due to these comments and the general lack of response, GPO Services "Patron Interest" information was not evaluated.)

FDsys Functional Category	Service	Library Interest							Interest Rated 1	Combined Rating of 1s and 2s
		High		=	Low		?	NA		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Authentication	Access to authentic and official Government publications	334	31	9	3	0	6	16	89%	97%
Preservation	Migration of digital media to prevent technological obsolescence	313	48	8	1	5	5	19	83%	96%
Delivery	Access to digitized publications with full search capability (e.g., scanned documents with corrected Optical Character Recognition)	281	69	18	1	1	10	15	76%	95%
Preservation	Emulation of digital media to prevent technological obsolescence	263	59	21	3	6	26	16	75%	91%
Authentication	Ability to view integrity marks associated with authentic and official Government publications	268	56	29	11	6	12	12	72%	88%
Cataloging	Ability to "pull" bibliographic records from GPO	244	77	27	3	10	16	16	68%	89%
Preservation	Collecting and preserving publications in their original format	257	75	33	13	5	5	11	67%	87%
Search	Ability to search at different complexity levels (e.g., simple, advanced/fielded)	246	97	27	10	2	5	13	64%	90%
Versioning	Access (e.g., links) to all versions of a publication	240	95	27	11	5	7	13	63%	89%
Versioning	Ability to view chain of responsibility information for a publication (e.g., who created the publication, when was it created, who approved the content for release)	233	96	26	8	11	7	16	62%	88%
Versioning	Notification when new versions are available	233	101	28	12	5	7	11	61%	88%
Versioning	Ability to view version information located in metadata	214	88	44	10	6	19	15	59%	83%
Support	Access to a GPO helpdesk and knowledge base (e.g., FAQs)	219	107	33	16	5	6	13	58%	86%
Delivery	Ability to "pull" content from GPO	191	108	36	11	4	29	12	55%	85%
Cataloging	Automatic "push" of bibliographic records from GPO	192	77	59	11	19	20	17	54%	75%
Delivery	Ability to request print on demand publications	198	116	37	15	9	9	14	53%	84%
Support	Context specific help (e.g., help functions related to what is being viewed)	198	129	33	11	4	10	11	53%	87%
Search	Ability to search for conceptually related terms	181	139	44	8	6	8	11	48%	85%
Support	Access to interactive online training	178	128	52	15	7	10	8	47%	81%
Delivery	Ability to request on demand digitization of publications	161	124	56	18	8	17	12	44%	78%
Search	Ability to save and export searches in multiple formats (e.g., e-mail, tagged text, XML, formats used by standard citation packages)	163	120	62	19	14	11	8	43%	75%
Delivery	Automatic "push" of content from GPO	129	99	75	23	23	33	11	37%	65%
Search	Tools to analyze, cluster, and/or display search results graphically	125	109	79	32	13	31	7	35%	65%
Support	Real-time, interactive information exchange with GPO employees (e.g., chat, discussion groups, web conferencing)	108	112	93	39	21	14	12	29%	59%
Support	Alert services based on user preferences	92	123	93	30	32	15	11	25%	58%
Support	Access to a customizable online interface and toolsets (e.g., a "My GPO" page)	91	107	113	38	21	14	14	25%	54%
Delivery	Ability to create a custom publication by putting together pieces of other publications	73	82	97	50	41	34	15	21%	45%
Search	Personalized offers based on user request history (e.g., "you may also be interested in…")	62	92	119	53	41	13	15	17%	42%

Part 2- Other Services (Free text)

The "Other Services" free text answers allowed respondents to mention any services not listed in the section on "GPO Services". The three services most frequently identified by respondents were harvesting, training, and cataloging.

The most requested service was the harvesting of fugitive documents, along with full cataloging of harvested content. Both manual and automated harvesting were mentioned. Harvested content as defined by respondents included errata and supplemental materials in addition to the complete publications.

Training sessions were requested, with in-person, live, hands-on, and regional training mentioned. Additional library and user input will be needed in order to identify library needs for FDsys training.

Multiple respondents requested creation of MARC records for all electronic documents. Cataloging at the piece level to easily determine the latest issue of a serial/annual was also requested.

Additional services requested by multiple respondents include preservation in multiple formats, RSS feeds, and the ability to refine searches based on item number and SuDoc number combined with other criteria.

Part 3- Additional Comments

One of the initial survey questions asked participants to rank document formats (printed, online, microfiche, CD/DVD/floppy discs, and others) based on their patron's preferences for US Government publications. An overwhelming number of the additional comments focused on how format preference is dependent on multiple factors. The general consensus was that quick, easy access to government information was the key need. Whether printed documents or online content best fulfill that need depends on a variety of factors including the content, purpose, intended audience, end user requirements, and other characteristics of the individual document.

Aside from this issue, the additional comments primarily focused on three categories: support, preservation, and delivery.

Support: Respondents requested quick responses to questions, late hours for users on the west coast, and communication with GPO information specialists when needed. Other support requests include training in accessing government information in both old and new formats, and GPO facilitated contact with expert users.

Preservation: Comments regarding preservation included support for harvesting and preserving content from agency websites. Respondents expressed some confusion regarding the processes used to preserve digital content (migration and emulation), and extremely careful consideration of these processes was advocated.

Content Delivery: Several respondents requested more information regarding "push" and "pull" of content and bibliographic records to/from GPO. While several respondents indicated interest in push technology, many expressed concern that they are unequipped to receive large amounts of electronic content from GPO.

NEXT STEPS

GPO received a significant number of comments requesting clarification of various terms and concepts. Many respondents also expressed frustration with the unknown aspects of the system. GPO intends to take the following steps to address these concerns.

1. Definitions and clarifications of terms used in the survey that respondents indicated were confusing will be posted by October 21, 2005 to the Library Survey Results page on the FDsys Web site located at http://www.gpo.gov/projects/fdsys.htm.

2. The survey results indicated areas of interest most important to the library community. Additional interaction with GPO's library partners is required to validate these findings. GPO will use library focus groups and other means including face-to-face meetings, conference calls, and web conferencing to obtain this input. This initiative will begin in late October 2005.

3. Feedback from library partners is highly encouraged. All appropriate questions and comments submitted to the FDsys blog (http://fdsys.blogspot.com/) or the Office of Innovation and New Technology's e-mail address (int@gpo.gov) will be promptly answered. INT will also make questions and answers to frequently asked questions available on the FDsys blog.