Collection and Discovery Services Open Forum:

The CGP of the Future

Lessons Learned from Depository Library Council's Open Forum, October 20, 2021

Depository Library Council

Collection and Discovery Services Working Group

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The video recording, chat transcripts, and presentation slides from the open forum are available at:

https://fdlp.gov/training/2021-fdl-conference-cgp-future

Introduction

The Collection and Discovery Services Working Group of the Depository Library Council (the Working Group), held an open forum at the fall 2021 Federal Depository Library Conference (October 20, 2021) in accordance with its charter to:

- Act as an open forum for communications among Federal Depository Libraries (FDLs), the Government Publishing Office (GPO), and other stakeholders in the sphere of Federal government information production, dissemination, and utilization
- Act as an open forum for the discussion of major developments in the fields directly impacting the management of FDLP collections and for developing collaborative plans and actions to assist FDLs to incorporate such changes to the operations and workflows

In 2021, GPO's Library Services & Content Management unit (LSCM) received funding for a "next generation CGP" and moved forward with planning the modernization of the *Catalog of U.S. Government Publications* (CGP), which was launched on March 9, 2006. The Working Group planned an open forum discussion program for the fall conference in order to learn what features Federal Depository Libraries (FDLs) wanted in their ideal online catalog/discovery tool to best serve their patrons' needs.

The Working Group designed a series of five discussion questions and five poll questions in order to elicit feedback from meeting attendees on their use of the CGP, desired catalog functions and features, and training materials and topics. The Working Group asked attendees for ideas, suggestions, and questions related to the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications.

Discussion Questions

1. For what purposes do you access the CGP?
2. How do you most often begin your search in the CGP?
3. What current features and functionality of the CGP do you want to keep in the new CGP?
4. Please tell us about functions and features that you use in your library catalog that you would like to see in the new CGP.
5. What training materials and topics for the CGP would you like LSCM (Library Services and Content Management) to offer?

Open Forum: Polls, Discussion Questions, and Attendee Responses

Polls A and B

In order to get a sense of who was attending the open forum and how often attendees used the CGP, the Working Group ran two simple polls before asking the first discussion question. Following are the two poll questions with their respective answer choices, response results, and percentages:

Poll A: In your position, what is your primary area of responsibility? (select all that apply)

a. Government Information Librarian: 78/173, 45%
b. Cataloging/Metadata Services: 59/173, 34%
c. Reference: 58/173, 34%

d. Collection Development: 49/173, 28%
e. Acquisitions: 24/173, 14%
f. Instruction: 29/173, 17%
g. Preservation/Conservation: 15/173, 9%
h. GIS/Data Services: 7/173, 4%
i. IT: 4/173, 2%
j. Other (please specify in the chat) 13/173, 8%
    a. Responses typed into the chat include circulation, ILL, liaison, department head, LIS professor, and gov pubs processing
k. No Answer 57/173, 33%
l. 24 responses unaccounted for

Poll B: How often do you use the CGP?
a. 1-5 times per day: 17/175, 10%
b. 6-10 times per day: 10/175, 6%
c. 1-5 times per week: 21/175, 12%
d. 6-10 times per week: 14/174, 8%
e. 1-5 times per month: 39/175, 22%
f. 1 time per year: 7/175, 4%
g. Do not use: Do not use 6/175, 3%
h. No answer 61/175, 35%

Open Forum Discussion Question 1

For what purposes do you access the CGP?

After reviewing responses to the two polls, the Working Group opened up the discussion with the question, **"For what purposes do you access the CGP?"** The Working Group was interested in learning how and why conference attendees use the *Catalog of U.S. Government Publications*, for example, are users looking for known titles or links to online publications? Are users checking on holdings or SuDoc numbers?

Attendees typed a great deal of responses into the chat. The first attendee to respond provided a very comprehensive description of their reasons for using the CGP:

1. Find items for library patrons.
2. Identify shipping list numbers for physical items we have not received, where we have new cataloging records from MARCIVE.
3. Find what has been distributed under a given item number.
4. Find out what format GPO has cataloged and item under, i.e. cartographic, monograph, continuing resource.
5. Review New Electronic Titles.
6. Check for call number changes.

This attendee's comments covered most of the reasons that other discussion participants cited in their comments. A number of people specifically mentioned confirming SuDoc numbers and/or linking to the

full text of the document. Other common usages were to verify known items, searching for PURLS and OCLC numbers, and collection management (i.e., filling in gaps or weeding). One individual stated that there was a lot of heavy use during the time when teaching a class to LIS students. The multitude of responses prompted Laurie Hall (Superintendent of Documents and Managing Director of LSCM, GPO) to comment, "you don't know how great this makes me feel, since Cindy [Etkin] and I were in on bringing this tool to the GPO in 2006!"

Poll C

Prior to the second discussion question, the Working Group ran a poll to discern attendees' CGP searching methods. Following is the poll question with answer choices, response results, and percentages:

Poll C: How do you most often search the CGP? Select your top three methods.

   a. Agency name: 31/189, 16%
   b. Conference name: 1/189, 1%
   c. Item number: 20/189, 11%
   d. Personal name: 6/189, 3%
   e. Series: 15/189, 8%
   f. Subject: 28/189, 15%
   g. SuDoc number: 76/189, 40%
   h. Technical report number: 4/189, 2%
   i. Title: 103/189, 54%
   j. Other (please specify in the chat): 15/189 (8%)
         a. Responses typed into the chat include OCLC number, CGP system number, keyword, in advanced search 90% of time (to limit by field), shipping list,
   k. No answer: 75/189, 40%

The response rate for Poll C was 60.3% (114 of 189 attendees). The total number of answers was 300. The top two responses were:

- Title (103 | 34.3%)
- SuDoc number (76 | 25.3%)

Together these answers represent 60% (179) of the total. Only three other search types garnered more than 20 responses:

- Agency name (31 | 10.3%)
- Subject (28 | 9.3%)
- Item number (20 | 6.7%)

These three responses combined represent 26% (79) of the total. The respondents mentioned several significant search types at very low rates:

- OCLC number (5 | 1.7%)
- Keywords (3 | 1.0%)
- Title keywords (2 | 0.7%)

The predominance of the two search types, title and SuDoc number, is quite predictable. The prominence of SuDoc searches illustrates the importance of this metadata element. The low response rates for OCLC number and keywords are rather surprising.

Open Forum Discussion Question 2

How do you most often begin your search in the CGP?

After using the poll question to gather initial data about attendees' catalog search methods, the Working Group asked attendees to discuss how they most often begin a search in the CGP.

The response rate for Discussion Question 2 was 32.8% (62 of 189 attendees). The response rates of the five CGP search modes were:

1. Advanced (22 | 32.8%)
2. Basic (12 | 19.4%)
3. Browse (4 | 6.5%)
4. Expert (3 | 4.8%)
5. Specialized catalogs (2 | 3.2%)

The advanced search received one-third of the responses (22 | 35.5%). The respondents selected the advanced and basic searches for more than half of the total (34 | 54.8%). Titles were mentioned eleven times as a key factor (17.7%), and SuDoc numbers were mentioned seven times as a key factor (11.2%). The next most reported key factors were OCLC numbers (6 | 9.6%), keywords (4 | 6.4%), and PURLs (3 | 4.8%).

One-third of the responses (19) were other answers. Four were mentioned twice:

- Remember you're asking gov docs librarians
- Use the "You can revise your search" field so don't have to go back to the main search page, such as when searching multiple OCLC numbers
- Usually use other databases that search across several indexes. When [I] use the CGP it's because didn't find it. So looking for PURLs, or only have a report number or conference date
- Usually use the CGP only for known items, such as PURLs, prefer WorldCat for researching topics

Open Forum Discussion Question 3

What current features and functionality of the CGP do you want to keep in the new CGP?

The Working Group felt that it was very important to find out what current CGP features and functionality are most valued by attendees.

The response rate was 38.1% (72 of 189 attendees). The answers are grouped into five broad categories. Some responses are counted in more than one group.

1. Searching (34 | 47.2%)

    a. Search by SuDoc (5 | 6.9%)

      b.   Advanced search (4 | 5.6%)

      c.   Browsing (4 | 5.6%)

      d.   Search by PURLs (4 | 5.6%)

2. Record displays (30 | 41.4%)

      a.   MARC view (14 | 19.4%)

      b.   SuDoc sorting in the results (3 | 4.2%)

      c.   New Titles lists and tab (3 | 4.2%)

      d.   Holdings display for serial titles (3 | 4.2%)

      e.   PURLs in the records   (3 | 4.2%)

3. Other (8 | 11.1%)

      a.   Remember that librarians use CGP differently than the general public. Don't make mistake that make [many] agencies do and change for general public and remove tolls [tools] librarians need (4 | 5.6%)

4. New features (4 | 5.6%)

      a.   Make sure that the new system uses all of the fixed fields, such as for serials (2 | 2.8%)

      b.   It would be cool if we could switch our default view (as into MARC) (1 | 1.4%)

      c.   I would like to see a way to create folders so I can save searches along with records for each search while working on specific projects while searching before I download them (1 | 1.4%)

5. Use of records (3 | 4.2%)

      a.   Ability to email records (1 | 1.4%)

      b.   Ability to easily export lots of new electronic docs (1 | 1.4%)

      c.   My bookshelf (1 | 1.4%)

The most frequently repeated responses were that the new CGP should retain a MARC display view and should offer functionality designed for the general users as well as those specifically designed for librarians and Federal depository library staff members. Recommendations for new features included limit by format (this may have been temporarily removed from the CGP) and the ability to email records in the MARC format.

Poll D

The working group next ran a poll to ascertain how many attendees used the CGP to download bibliographic records into their library catalogs. Following is the poll question with its answer choices, response results, and percentages:

Poll D: Do you currently download CGP records into your catalog?

      a.   Yes: 4/183, 2%

      b.   No: 39/183, 21%

      c.   No answer: 140/183, 77%

Open Forum Discussion Question 4

Please tell us about functions and features that you use in your library catalog that you would like to see in the new CGP.

As different Federal depository libraries use a variety of integrated library systems, the Working Group wanted to find out what favorite catalog functions and features attendees would like to see included in the new CGP.

Responses included desired functionality as well as desired content displayed in CGP records. Comments can be grouped into the following categories:

Download/export content:

- Ability to download more than 20 results, or to download all results from a search
- Export full results in .csv or Excel
- Export for citation purposes (mentions of Zotero, RIS, BibTex)

Search results:

- Display "most relevant" results at the top
- Include record results more like this
- Include what libraries have an item (true union catalog)
- Include in results "most viewed or popular"
- Expanded number of search results (beyond 10)

Refining of search results:

- Limit by online only or the entire catalog
- Limit results via facets (specific facets were not identified)
- Search within results
- Limit by government agency
- Limit by format, language

Functionality:

- Save URLs to searches without long URLs
- Keep browse by SuDoc number (this was popular among respondents)
- Search by item number
- Search by popular name
- Include variant/outdate SuDoc numbers for items
- "one thing we like about worldcat.org is that the URL contains the search string - which means we can program searching and pulling in the results. that would be great in CGP."

Poll E

The Working Group ran a final poll to rank the types of training materials and opportunities that attendees would like to see LSCM provide for the current CGP. Following is the poll question with its answer choices, response results, and percentages:

Poll E: What types of training would you like LSCM (Library Services and Content Management) to provide for the CGP? (select all that apply)

   a. Webinar (live): 84/189, 44%
   b. Tutorials: 83/189, 44%
   c. Hands-on training (in person or virtual): 48/189, 25%
   d. Other (please describe in the chat): 8/189, 4%
   e. None, I do not want CGP training: 2/189, 1%
   f. No answer: 93/189, 49%

The responses and percentages are based in response to the number of attendees in the session. Five participants noted in chat that the option was missing, with four chat responses indicating a desire for pre-recorded webcasts. Additionally, a participant recommended "Short video demos on specific tasks" which received two additional positive responses from other participants. Another participant mentioned "short youtube(sic) or tiktok(sic) style recordings of specific searching or sorting or downloading functionality." This response received 2 +1[1] or positive responses from other participants. It was noted that small videos could also be embedded in LibGuides. It would have been advantageous to have Webcast (pre-recorded) as a response option, though the response of "Other" (please describe in the chat) brought out the preference for Webcasts.

Open Forum Discussion Question 5
What training materials and topics for the CGP would you like LSCM (Library Services and Content Management) to offer?

For the final discussion question, the Working Group wanted to expand beyond ranking training options and have attendees describe what they wanted LSCM to offer in the way of training materials and topics.

Based on the polling data, there is a training interest for webinars (live), tutorials, and hands-on training. Additionally, during the open discussion, attendees communicated in the chat an interest in pre-recorded training videos. One participant mentioned a preference for written instructions instead of videos, which received a +1 from another participant.

The following topics were noted as of interest for training: (+1s from other participants are noted in parenthesis)

   • Search options and examples
   • Searching "tips and tricks"

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[1] "+1" is a "post in a forum/message board that indicates the person agrees with a previous or quoted reply to a thread," (https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=%2B1 (last visited April 5, 2022).

- Advanced and expert searching
- Refresh training
- Downloading records directly from the CGP, alternative to OCLC paid service (+3, note there were 2 different comments from the same participant, it is unclear which comment the +1 responses were referring to; however, in this case the +1s are being added to the comment which is in closest proximity).
  - Z39.50
  - Adding/processing electronic resources
- Tips for teaching patrons to use the CGP
- Specialized catalogs
  - Historic Shelflist (+1)
  - Cross between specialized catalogs and national bibliography

Open Forum Lessons Learned – Conclusion

As the finding tool for electronic and print publications that make up the National Bibliography of U.S. Government Publications, the *Catalog of U.S. Government Publications* is an essential resource employed by the Government Publishing Office to advance its vision of America informed. The Collection and Discovery Services Working Group learned during its open forum that librarians and staff at Federal depository libraries use the CGP for multiple reasons, among them – to find U.S. government information products for their patrons, to manage and develop Federal depository collections, and to instruct and inform library community stakeholders.

One important point made clear in the open forum is that librarians don't want to lose the CGP features and functionality that they rely upon to do their work in Federal depository libraries. For example, multiple commenters expressed concern that the ability to "Browse by SuDoc" would be removed from the next CGP, based on experience with system migration at their home institutions. Another salient point articulated during the discussion is that librarians use the CGP differently than the general public uses the catalog – commenters urged LSCM not to remove the key tools and functionality that librarians need in the CGP or redesign the new CGP solely for the purposes of the general public.

The Working Group commends LSCM for recent updates to the CGP, including new multimedia CGP tutorials, redesigned and enhanced CGP *Help* and *About* pages[2], and a new CGP Data Dashboard[3] and hopes that these resources will continue to be updated, and included in future iterations of the catalog.

As a result of the success of the fall 2021 open forum, the Depository Library Council transmitted a formal recommendation to Director Halpern that GPO continue to involve the FDL community in the development of the new CGP, stating, "Council believes that community involvement is critical to developing a new CGP that meets the needs of its users to the fullest extent possible. [I]nput from [user]

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[2] *Redesigned and Enhanced CGP Help Pages & Updated CGP About Page* (Jan. 27, 2022), https://fdlp.gov/news/redesigned-and-enhanced-cgp-help-pages-updated-cgp-about-page.

[3] *Introducing a New CGP Data Dashboard* (Mar. 24, 2022), https://fdlp.gov/news/introducing-new-cgp-data-dashboard.

groups, through testing, focus groups, surveys, and other measures, will ultimately help create a more functional resource."[4]

From the print *Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications* first published in 1895, to the online CGP launched in 2006, GPO's cataloging and indexing tools have evolved and expanded over time. Modernization continues as GPO's Library Services & Content Management unit develops the "next generation CGP." DLC's Collection and Discovery Services Working Group is eager to collaborate with GPO and lead additional efforts to facilitate communication between LSCM and the FDL community in order to solicit feedback, ideas, and suggestions during the development of the new *Catalog of U.S. Government Publications*.

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[4] *Recommendation and Commendation of the Depository Library Council (Fall 2021)*, December 2021, https://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository-item/recommendation-and-commendation-depository-library-council-fall-2021.