

UC Office of the President

Works from UC Libraries SILS Project

Title

Phase 4 Communicating What SILS Is, And Its Value

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4tz1s6wf>

Author

University of California Libraries

Publication Date

2020-10-20



Communicating What SILS is, and its Value

What is SILS?

To improve collaboration involving the University of California's library collections and related services, in 2017 the Council of University Librarians (CoUL) charged a working group to oversee the implementation of a shared, innovative **systemwide integrated library system** (SILS) across all 10 campuses, two regional library facilities and the California Digital Library. UC Libraries are enabling an enhanced and user-centered level of integration in core functional areas: circulation, management, and sharing of print, media, and electronic collections. These collective resources will become accessible at both the local and systemwide levels via a modern discovery platform, which for users means faster and easier access to the materials they seek. ExLibris – through its Alma and Primo VE services – was selected in a competitive RFP process as the vendor best positioned to meet these systemwide project goals. With a continued commitment to systemwide collaboration and decision-making, the UC SILS project is currently in phase 4 (implementation) and will go live on July 27, 2021.

Service Value Propositions

A shared ILS makes campus collections integrated, shareable, more diverse, and user-friendly, reinforcing the mission of the UC. From Davis to San Diego, patrons will gain direct access to the bedrock of the UC Libraries collection: 40+ million physical items - plus digital collections - reducing existing fragmentation and integration shortcomings of library services. With insightful systemwide analytics, users will benefit from the libraries' ability to make data-informed decisions around collections development and new services. Moving to a shared ILS today also positions the UC Libraries of tomorrow to collectively leverage yet-to-emerge collections management and access products when those tools become viable. With the ability to integrate additional third-party collections databases that are currently only offered to patrons as stand-alone services (e.g. HathiTrust Digital Library, open access journals, etc.), a SILS moves closer to becoming the library portal for all patrons across the UC.

Library Infrastructure Value Propositions

The current configuration of ten separate systems creates increasing challenges and puts essential library services at risk. Upgrading to a shared system is mitigating these risks. The UC SILS will enable library staff to innovate and create new services that were not possible in stand-alone campus ILS environments. Moving to a shared ILS today also positions the UC Libraries of tomorrow to collectively leverage future tools once they become viable. Meanwhile, SILS presents opportunities for integration with a variety of other library services and related products, such as learning-management systems, potentially improving workflows and reducing redundancies. Staff can look forward to greater collaboration in developing, managing, and analyzing the numerous and various UC collections.



Financial Value Propositions

The current configuration of ten separate systems creates increasing challenges and puts essential library services at risk. Upgrading to a shared, modern system mitigates these risks and keeps systemwide costs low. Additionally, the need for additional systems infrastructure is greatly reduced. If carried out independently, UC's total annual cost - including a number of additional services needed to connect and communicate between individual library systems - would have been 40% higher. The UC Office of the President is contributing significantly towards the total cost of this system through subsidies over the first three years of the contract, and is paying additional implementation costs outright. If a shared solution were not being pursued, several campuses would still need to individually update their aging systems. Some campuses may see a cost increase once they move to SILS, but it will be less than had they negotiated individually while they are gaining additional features. With the implementation of SILS, UC Libraries gain the ability to analyze how the collections are used, aggregating data that is critical for making collection development decisions as well as for vendor negotiations. Meanwhile, SILS presents opportunities for integration with a variety of other library services and related products, such as student information systems and financial systems, potentially improving workflows and reducing redundancies.