

# Using a Wiki to Promote Collaboration among Members of the Fresno CyberTools Union Catalog Group

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## Objective:

To create an electronic forum to share information pertinent to the CyberTools cataloging system among five medical librarians in Fresno, California.

## Background:

- Five medical libraries in Fresno, CA, share a union catalog developed by CyberTools for Libraries:
  - Children's Hospital Central California
  - UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program
  - Community Regional Medical Center
  - St. Agnes Medical Center
  - VA Central California Health Care System
- Union catalogs require a collaborative effort. It is important to agree on the scope of the shared electronic resource component so that it meets each member's needs.
- Certain cataloging issues unique to union catalogs need to be understood since MARC records are shared.
- Librarians have different areas of expertise using the CyberTools platform and have useful tips to share with each other.

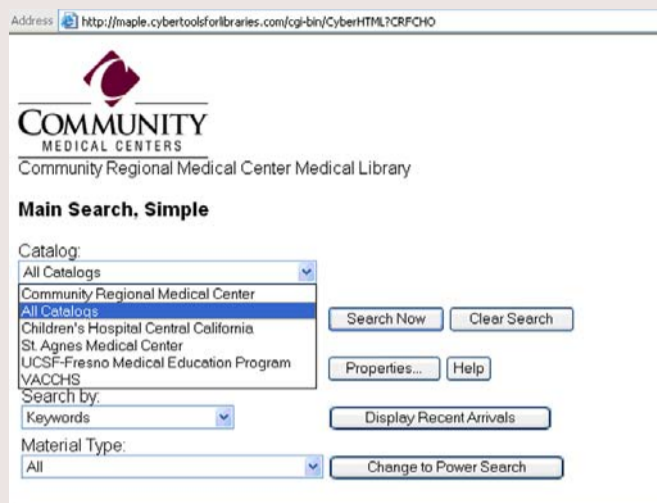
## Methods:

- March 2008: Fresno CyberTools Union Catalog Group had grown to 5 members
  - Children's Hospital (oldest CyberTool user, since July 2005) to VACCHCS (newest CyberTool user, since February 2008)
  - Communication primarily via e-mail, imposing limitations for discussion and problem-solving
- April 4, 2008: First group meeting with live demonstration to answer questions, share problems and solutions
- August 25, 2008: Second group meeting to address scope of shared catalog
  - General consensus: Include licensed electronic resources within individual catalogs, and open access electronic materials within shared catalog
  - Since most members are solo librarians, in-person meetings difficult to attend off campus. Web 2.0 technology discussed with decision to set up a wiki that would be restricted to the 5 librarians
- August 26, 2008: "Fresno Union Catalog" wiki set up using Wetpaint.com
  - Wiki created solely for 5 members of shared CyberTools union catalog in Fresno
  - WetPaint is free to use and easy to set up (follow prompts at Wetpaint.com)
  - Purpose of the Fresno Union Catalog wiki is to:
    - Allow members to discuss issues related to the catalog
    - Post "how-to's"
    - Troubleshoot problems
    - Provide tips
    - Share learning experiences

## Conclusion:

- Advantages of wiki collaboration:
  - Excellent forum to post instructional guides and answers to frequently asked questions
  - Librarians having worked with CyberTools Support to find a solution to a problem can post a synopsis that will save others time and trouble
  - Newly discovered useful applications can be shared as tips
  - Wiki can serve as depository of informal documents created by librarians to remember the steps for infrequently-used cataloging tasks
  - As the CyberTools system evolves, changes can be made to wiki content by any member
  - Newly posted wiki content alerts are automatically e-mailed to each member (good reminder since checking the wiki regularly is generally not on anyone's radar)
  - Content can be organized by page titles to allow quick retrieval
  - Easy accessibility on any computer
  - Restricted group permissions allow sharing of protected information
  - Good mechanism to encourage supportive community
- Disadvantages of wikis:
  - Wikis are an at-your-fingertips collaborative forum that might make in-person meetings more difficult to convene. Periodic face-to-face discussions with live demonstrations will continue to be helpful.
  - Document attachments appear at the bottom of wiki pages, so members need to be alerted they need to scroll down to find links to attached documents.
- Comments:
  - Frequent use is unnecessary. Contributions to the wiki can be made as each librarian's expertise grows.
  - The usefulness of the wiki is limited to the input provided by the librarians. It requires the dedication of at least 1 member to post content, and will become more valuable as others participate.

## Union Catalog



## Results:

