Project's Original Goals

- Streamline resource management and increase e-journals holdings.
- Link to e-journals via subscription, full-text databases, and for free.
- Add, update, and delete e-journals holdings via online forms so web page immediately reflects changes.
- Create system flexible enough to handle e-textbooks and databases as well as e-journals.

Interdepartmental Collaboration

- Reference Librarian designed database and initial interface while working through ColdFusion courses.
- Serials Librarian advised on fields to include and information useful for tracking.
- Electronic Resources Librarian negotiated and tracked licenses and availability.
- Web Librarian improved user interface and data tracking.
- Electronic Resources Committee provided guidance and feedback.

Questions during development

- How much full-text should be available for us to link to it?
  - At least one year.
- Is one source (i.e. Ovid, Publisher) preferred over another?
  - No; link to everything available even if multiple sources are available.
- How do we link to journals 'buried' in databases?
  - Link to top page and provide search tips.
- Should we link to journals that provide full-text of archives only? Rolling availability?
  - As project developed, we expanded from 'through present' journals to include those with archives only and rolling issue availability.
- How should we handle websites that provide a username/password for access?
  - E-Journals links only to publicly accessible or IP-verified titles.
- How to integrate with online catalog?
  - Provide link from catalog to e-journals page but don’t track details of access in catalog.

Project Outcomes

- E-journals available increased from under 100 to over 800 over 12 month period.
- E-texts web page is now generated from same database.
- E-journals and e-texts managed via web forms.
- Updates, additions, and deletions to holdings available immediately to clients.
- Resource extremely popular with clients.
E-Journals – Toward Expanded Access and Efficient Data Tracking
Laura Abate, MLS, Leah Pellegrino, MSLS, Michael Acadia, MLS
Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library
The George Washington University

Managing the Database

E-Journals Selection Criteria
- Available in electronic format on WWW.
- Title must be indexed in MEDLINE, CINAHL, or PsycINFO.
- Must be freely available on WWW or through IP-verified system.
- Title may be available for direct linking to list of issues:
  - Publisher
  - Ovid
  - Ingenta/Catchword
  - Science Direct
- Title may be available as part of a database:
  - MDConsult
  - ProQuest
  - LEXIS/NEXIS Universe
- Online content must closely reflect print edition.

One Problem: The Date Debacle
- Coverage dates not initially tracked.
- As e-journals exploded, coverage dates became vital.
  - JAMA via Publisher available 1997-Present
  - JAMA via Ovid available 1993-Present
  - JAMA via ProQuest available 1991-Present
- Decision points: Improved access and usability versus huge data entry project and ongoing data tracking.
- Additional issues: current issues versus archives only, ‘rolling’ issue availability (e.g. most recent 12 months), standard format for dates.
- Process: Librarians checked date availability during free moments on Reference Desk over approximately 4-week period. Data entry completed by Electronic Resources Librarian to ensure consistent formatting.
- Outcome: not as difficult to manage as initially believed and of great value to our clients.

Maintaining the Database
- All e-journals links checked 4 times per year by library assistant.
- Problem links reported periodically by clients and library staff.
- Access options can be ‘hidden’ so that record remains in database but specific access option is not viewed by clients while other access options remain visible.
- Lists of ‘hidden’ and new titles sent to Cataloging Librarian monthly so Library Catalog is updated.
- Lists of ‘hidden’ and new titles sent to Reference staff.
Design Evolution

- Started as static html page; cumbersome to update.
- Once in ColdFusion format, moved from single page alphabetic list to single page per letter as number of titles exploded.
- Added search function.
- Enhanced page format and added copyright statement.
- Tracking evolved to up-to-the-moment tracking system.

Administrative Functions

- Data entry editing: automatically checks duplicate titles, required fields, corresponding on-campus & off-campus access options.
- Data tracking: terms used to search journals to help understand how clients use e-journals; hits per target tells us how many times a page was viewed and how many times a particular journal link was used, and unique referrers (i.e. where users are coming from).
- Computes rolling archives: ColdFusion script determines availability by automatically translating a number (ex. 6 month delay) into month name when page is displayed.
- Database flexibility: designed to track and display e-texts (already in use) and databases (prototype ready).

Data Editing

- One title can have multiple access options.
- On-campus and off-campus options must be selected as matching pairs as set in database.
- Coverage can be full (ex. September 1997 – Present) or archival (Oct 1997 – Sep 2001).
- If coverage is archival and follows pattern with specific start date and rolling updates, enter the number of months delayed.

Future Enhancements

- Add list of top 5 e-journals to Library homepage, updated weekly.
- Merge search function to search all resource types.
- Generate databases page from same database.
- Add subject/category headings.
- Brief description of resources.
- Indicate format provided (HTML w/ images, HTML w/out images, PDF, etc.).
- Additional integration with MEDLINE and other databases.