M25 Bath Profile Project

M25 Systems Team

Library System Interoperability Guidelines

- Aimed to document the extent to which certain library system Z39.50 servers are compliant to the Bath Profile Release 2.0.
- Guidelines include general details of Z39.50 server operation, hints and tips plus compliancy data. Systems covered:
  - Aleph (Ex Libris)
  - Galaxy (DS)
  - Horizon (Dynix)
  - Innopac (Innovative)
  - Plus (Geac)
  - Unicorn Standard and Bath (Sirsi)
  - Voyager (Endeavor)
  - Ztarget (Talis)
- Available via M25 Systems Team

Project Event

"The Bath Profile four years on: what's being done in the UK ?"

- A one day conference to advocate the profile and highlight some of the technical and commercial issues with its implementation
- Carrol Lunau (National Library of Canada and profile editor) gave keynote speech
- Vendors and JISC services represented
- Highlighted the challenges facing the designers, commercial implementers and institutional end-users of the profile

The Bath Profile:

What is it ?

*"The Bath Profile: …*identifies those features of the Z39.50 standard that are required to support effective use of Z39.50 software for a range of library functions, such as basic searching and retrieval of bibliographic records for cataloguing, interlibrary loan, reference, and acquisitions. Release 1.1 of the profile defines both a core set of basic author, title and subject search and retrieval specifications across a variety of library databases, and a set of more complex searches. Release 2.0 adds additional functionality by including specifications for the retrieval of holdings information from a local OPAC or union catalogue and the specifications for authority record search and retrieval…"

Lunau, C, *The Bath Profile: what is it and why should I care?* May 2003, (available at http://www.collectionscanada.ca/bath/91/bathfaq.pdf)

Why do we advocate it ?

To effect semantic interoperability, thereby to ensure consistency in performance when searching multiple disparate bibliographic catalogues.

What success have we had ?

- Promotion of the profile to library system vendors e.g. most Sirsi Unicorn Z-servers on InforM25 now accept Bath compliant searches
- Raising awareness of the profile within the community
- Demonstrated the need for the profile in distributed search environments such as InforM25, CAIRNS, RIDING, WiLL (What's in London's Libraries)
- Ties in with independent outcomes of CC-interop Project

Gate-Z Robot Testing

- Gate-Z Robot developed further by Crossnet Systems to test for Bath Release 2.0 Functional Area A Levels 0-2 (excluding Scan)
- 52 servers tested covering 7 system types
- Testing recorded how server responds to an incoming Bath search
- High level of consistency in server implementations suggests little server re-configuration takes place
- Good support for Level 0 search types (Author, Title, Subject, Any) – so use them !
- Support for Level 1 & 2 searches more patchy:
  - Standard identifier mostly unsupported
  - Date of Publication searches problematical
  - Server not supporting Position attribute value 1 (first in field) causes many Level 1 searches to fail
- Z39.50 diagnostics do not necessarily disclose full reason for server's searching behaviour
- Testing many servers can identify other issues such as result set size limits previously unknown

Further Information

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Bath Profile Release 2.0 - http://www.collectionscanada.ca/bath/tp-bath2-e.htm

Gate-Z Robot installation & user guide - http://www.rdn.ac.uk/projects/gate-z/user-guide/robot/

Project Bath Event Report – http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue36/bath-profile-rpt/

Bath Profile Maintenance Agency – http://www.collectionscanada.ca/bath/tma-bath-admin-e.htm

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