

Case Study

Westminster College

Powerful Search Tool: No-Hassle Implementation

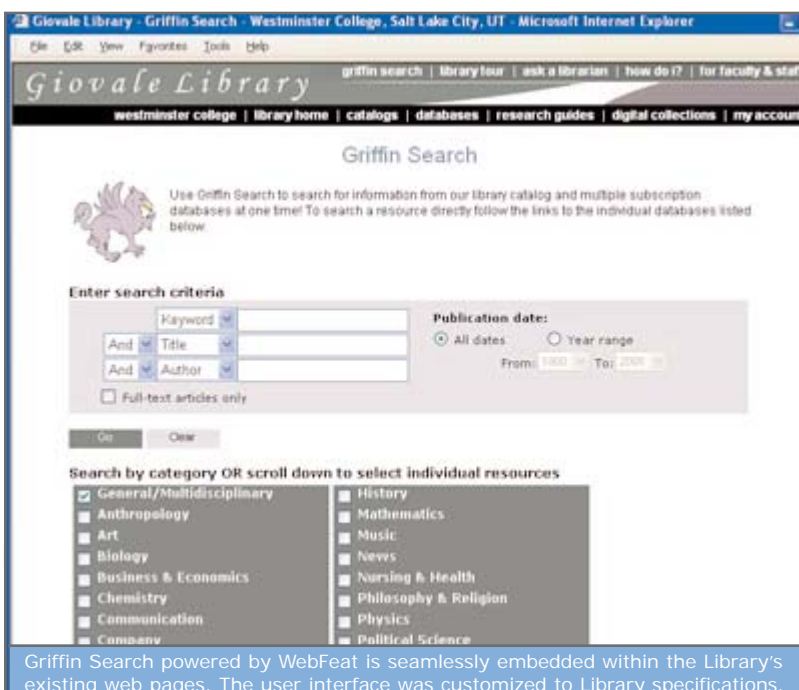
Westminster College in Salt Lake City, Utah is consistently ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* in the top tier of regional colleges and universities in the West. At the core of the college's cutting edge academic programs is the Giovale Library which offers access to 88 online databases and electronic resources. In early 2004, library administrators recognized the value of providing a federated search tool to maximize these electronic resources. However, after a year and half of disappointing results from their local federated search provider, the library realized it needed a better solution. Enter WebFeat.

In October 2005, Giovale Library launched "Griffin Search," a custom designed federated search solution powered by WebFeat. Griffin Search enables Westminster's students, faculty and staff to simultaneously search any of the 88 electronic resources offered by the library - including the library's catalog. Griffin Search is compatible with all of the Library's electronic resources and provides a wealth of features unavailable with the library's previous federated search offering. Most importantly, the library was able to implement Griffin Search without the costly investment in staff resources and hardware required with their previous solution. Though custom-configured to library specifications, the entire implementation schedule for Griffin Search took just 90 days from contract signing to system launch.



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-David A. Hales
Director, Giovale Library



Griffin Search powered by WebFeat is seamlessly embedded within the Library's existing web pages. The user interface was customized to Library specifications.

"I was thoroughly impressed with the staff at WebFeat and the speed in which they were able to get our site up and running and with the quality of work they delivered," said Jennifer Foy, Systems Librarian at Giovale Library. "We simply provided the general parameters for the look and feel of our site and the WebFeat team put that into effect. Griffin Search blends seamlessly with our website and is so well designed and well integrated into our website that users have actually asked if we designed the pages and engine ourselves. This is a great compliment to WebFeat because they have taken a technology which is intrinsically complex and made it appear seamless on our website."

Compared to its earlier solution, Giovale Library also recognized a remarkable savings in staff time required to not only build the WebFeat system, but maintain it as well. Prior to working with WebFeat a dedicated staff member was required to implement the (continued)

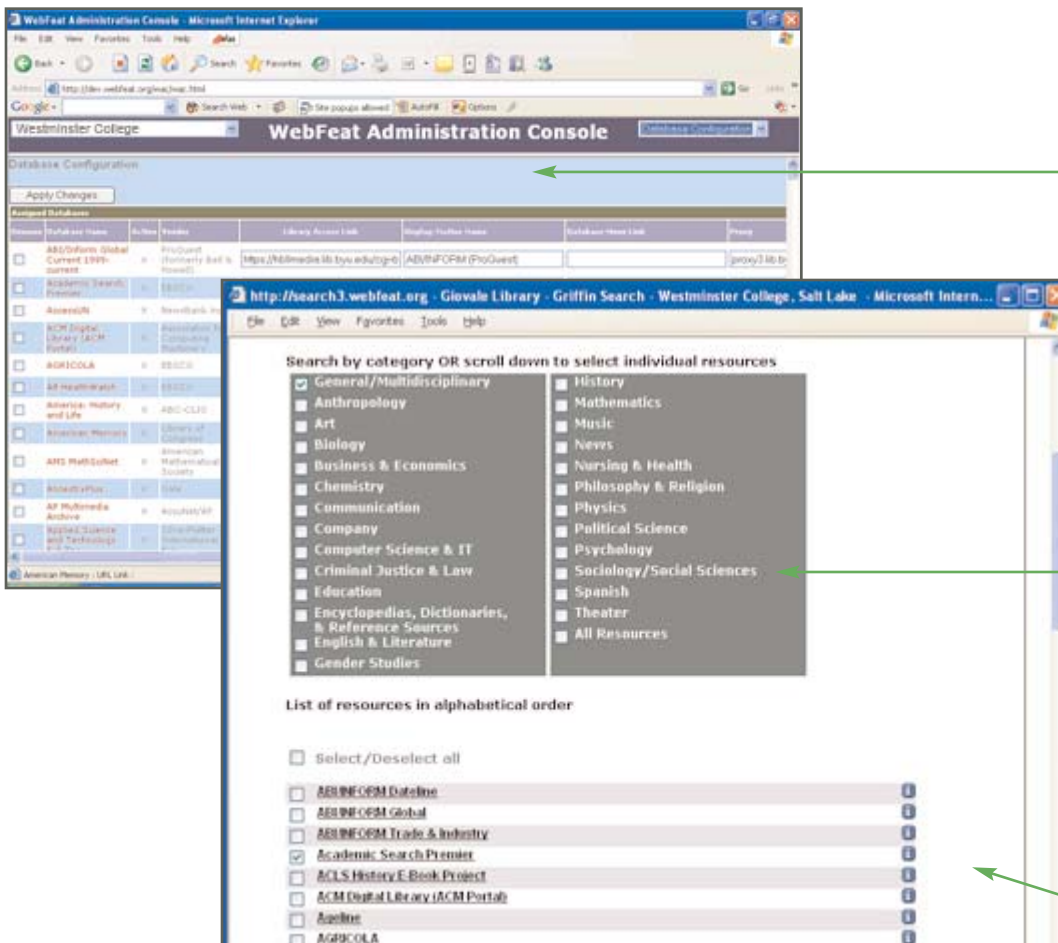
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library's federated search application and to keep it running. Foy explained, "When researching the different federated search products on the market, I ran across an article titled 'The Truth About Federated Searching.' The article states that 'federated searching is software but it is best consumed as a service'. When you treat federated searching as software, in which you host the system, it takes a tremendous amount of time and resources to simply maintain the system. System Administrators like myself want the ultimate control over the product; however, with that control comes a lot of responsibility and staff time that isn't always planned and budgeted for when selecting a federated search partner. With WebFeat, in my opinion, you buy federated searching as a service but still retain the desired 'control'."

While WebFeat quietly works behind the scenes, proactively monitoring and updating the system and its database translators, Giovale Library staff can manage Griffin Search's configuration using the WebFeat Administrative Console (WAC). WAC enables library staff to manage a variety of system attributes, such as database menus, subject categories, and custom help screens. Additionally, WAC includes a resource management system (eResources Vendor Management), which enables the library to enter and track basic information on library resources, such as vendor/contact information and term of subscriptions.

Upon the launch of Griffin Search, Giovale Library was able to realize its primary objective for federated searching, that of driving up usage of its electronic resources. "Our students have access to 88 varied electronic resources, said Giovale Library Director David A. Hales. "WebFeat makes it possible for our students to find the sources they need without having to know which databases to select to best fit their research. WebFeat also spares our students the inconvenience and complexities associated with having to search each resource individually. Although we have only had Griffin Search up for a short time, our statistics show that our databases are being more heavily used."

Griffin Search database usage is tracked and reported using WebFeat's SMART™ (Statistical Measures Available Real Time) COUNTER-compliant database usage tracker. SMART tracks a variety of key database metrics, including the



Although Griffin Search provides custom user-interfaces that are imbedded in the Library's web pages, configuration of databases as well as adjustments to database menus and subject categorization can still be made by library staff using WebFeat's Administrative Console (WAC).

Griffin Search allows users to simultaneously search databases grouped by categories. Checking these boxes lets the user search a set of databases that the library staff has identified as the most relevant for that topic.

Experienced researchers who know what sources they want to use can select from a traditional A-Z menu of databases. WebFeat will simultaneously search all of the databases that the user selects from the A-Z list.

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number of searches and full text requests, most-requested search terms, and searches by individual, library, branch, or department. SMART offers convenient standard web reports, as well as the option to download usage information into a spreadsheet, DBMS, or statistical analysis package for further analysis. These reports can be specifically useful to the Library when making future resource allocation decisions. Web reports include tabular presentation, as well as graphical displays for trend analysis.

"I have been extremely impressed with the WebFeat statistics which are available for our Griffin Search system," commented Foy. "Having seen and worked with the types of statistical reports available from database vendors I really appreciate the detailed information I can gather from our WebFeat statistics. I especially like seeing the average response time for each database and if users are experiencing any turnaways for a database so I know if we need to modify our concurrent user limit for our subscriptions. The SMART Reports are also available by day and by hour which can help us in many ways such as with staffing levels throughout the day since they can be overlapped with our circulation statistics, door counts, and database usage statistics."

SMART Reports

Select Start Date: October 1, 2005
 Select End Date: October 20, 2005

Report Type: [Day Activity](#) | [Hour Activity](#) | [DB Activity](#) | [Top Usage](#) | [Database Metrics](#)

DATABASE	SEARCHES	FULL RECORD	NEXT SET	TOTALS
ABI_INFORM (OCLC FirstSearch)	60	2	0	62
Academic Search™ Elite (EBSCOhost)	3	2	0	5
AccessJN (NewsBank)	54	0	0	54
African-American Biographical Database (AABD)	54	0	0	54
All HealthWatch (EBSCOhost)	42	18	8	68
America: History and Life (ABC-CLIO)	54	0	0	54
Annual Reviews - BioMedical Sciences	64	0	0	64
Annual Reviews - Physical Science	30	0	0	30
Annual Reviews - Social Sciences				
Anthropological Index Online				
Applied Science and Technology Abstracts (OCLC FirstSearch)				
Applied Science and Technology Abstracts (OCLC FirstSearch)				
ArtAbstracts (OCLC FirstSearch)				
ARTbibliographies Modern (CSA)				
ArticleFirst (OCLC FirstSearch)				

Sample Database Activity Report: displays number of searches per database for a specified date range including number of full record searches.

SMART Reports

Report Type: [Day Activity](#) | [Hour Activity](#) | [DB Activity](#) | [Top Usage](#) | [Database Metrics](#)

Database	Total Searches	Avg. Response Time	Turnaways
African-American Biographical Database (AABD)	2315	2.823485	0
Historical Abstracts (ABC-CLIO)	2341	6.533204	0
America: History and Life (ABC-CLIO)	2373	5.029944	0
Academic Search™ Elite (EBSCOhost)	3712	6.675762	72
Anthropological Index Online	2125	29.371224	0
All HealthWatch (EBSCOhost)	2138	8.963644	0
Annual Reviews - BioMedical Sciences	2041	5.705301	3
Annual Reviews - Physical Science	1858	5.789639	0
Annual Reviews - Social Sciences	2620	6.007213	0
ArtAbstracts (OCLC FirstSearch)	1732	4.276304	0
ARTbibliographies Modern (CSA)	1711	9.693269	0

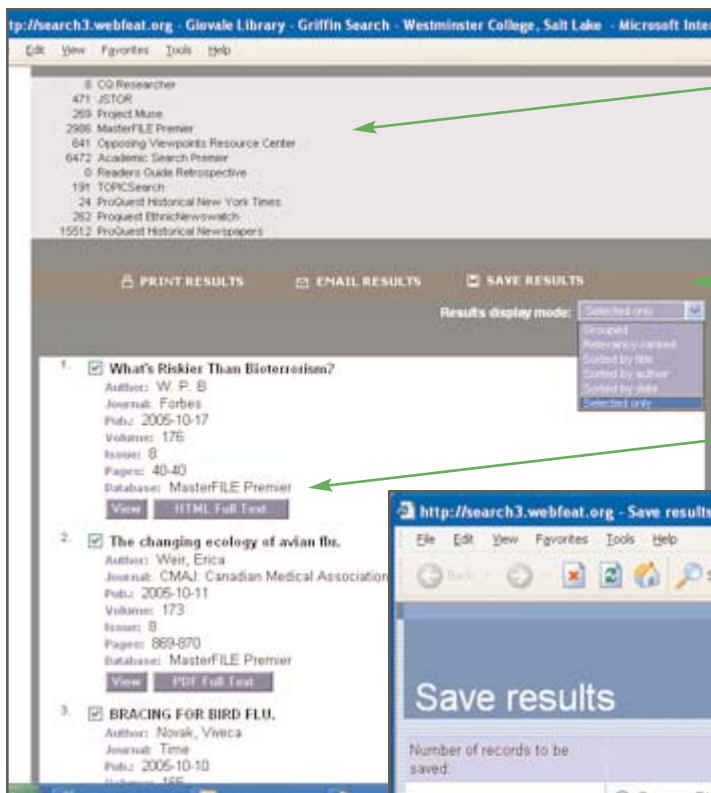
Sample Database Metrics Report: displays total number of searches per database, average response time and number of turnaways.

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The Giovale staff also found that their Griffin Search system provided their users with a rich assortment of features in the results set. "WebFeat posts accurate results for our users and it does so quickly," noted Foy. "Instead of waiting for each database, or resource, to respond before posting results, the numbers of hits are posted in a 'scoreboard' immediately as the results come in. Our users also comment about the ease by which they can access full text if it is available for a citation through WebFeat. If full text is available for a result the user can click on a link to the PDF or HTML through WebFeat and doesn't have to click on the citation first. This puts the information users are looking for one step closer for them and is as easily accessible to them as if they were searching in the native database."

The Library's prior federated search product delivered limited results sets, often necessitating users to switch to searching the native databases to get complete results for a particular search. The WebFeat system not only displays all results returned by a searched database, but results can be sorted in a variety of useful ways including by relevancy, date, title, author, and publisher. WebFeat also makes it easy for users to save, print and email citations. Westminster College has a campus-wide subscription to the popular bibliographic management tool RefWorks. "Our users really appreciate that they can export the citations they identify via Griffin Search directly to their RefWorks account," noted Foy.

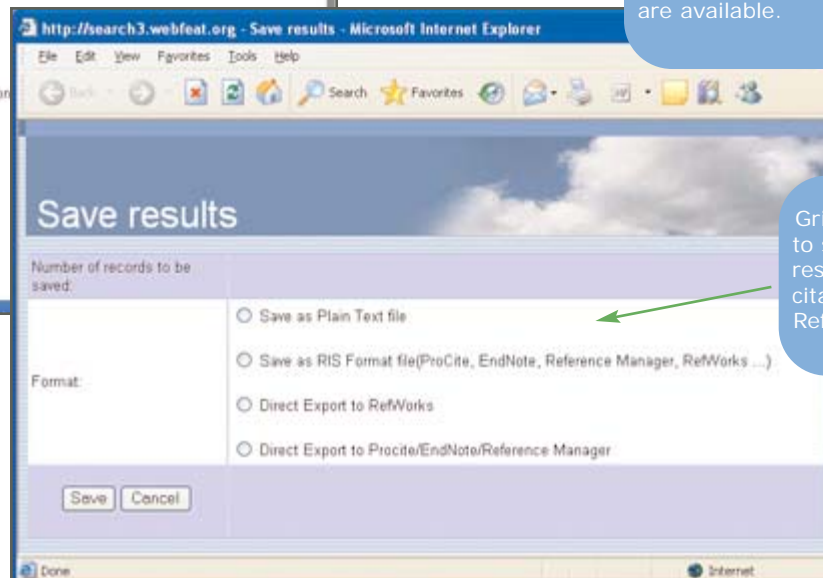
Hales summed up Westminster College's experience with WebFeat: "WebFeat has been very responsive to our individual needs. We are especially pleased that we are able to provide this excellent search tool without library staff having to spend hours of time doing individual programming and maintenance. We have a small staff, all of whom have multiple responsibilities, so WebFeat's full-service approach has been the perfect fit for us. WebFeat enabled us to launch Griffin Search in a short time without draining staff resources."



The Griffin Search results scoreboard returns results in real time and displays the number of "hits" per database along with convenient links to each resource.

Users have a number of options for displaying, sorting and saving results.

Embedded links enable users to view all results within their true native databases and the system provides links to full text whenever full text records are available.



Griffin Search allows users to save, print, and email results, as well as export citations directly to their RefWorks accounts.