Hybrid Online Tools
Final Summary Report and Recommendations June 2015
(Browzine, Curriculum Builder, Datazoa and SharedShelf)

Background Overview and Summary

In August 2014, Texas State University's Alkek Library formed a larger Hybrid Online Tools team to identify and pilot appropriate strategies in implementing, marketing and assessing a new category of online hybrid resources. The initial pilot consisting of the online tools: **Browzine, Curriculum Builder, Datazoa and Artstor Shared Shelf** and the larger team was divided into an oversite group and four subgroups. Each subgroup was responsible for implementation/assessment oversight for one of the tools being piloted . After approximately 8 months of marketing, implementation and assessment, the group made recommendations to adopt three of the tools (Browzine, Datazoa and Curriculum Builder) for the pilot's second year and to not renew the subscription for one of the tools (Artstor Shared Shelf). This report overviews individual tools and summarizes results and recommendations going forward. Larger individual operational reports on each of the tools are available upon request.

Larger Rationale for the Pilot and Study

Recent developments in academic library technologies enable faculty and students to harness data and share information in new and powerful ways to support research and teaching. However, it is often difficult to find financial support for these technologies on campuses, as the tools bridge several disparate areas – academic disciplines, technology, and support services.

Research universities are interested in these tools as they help faculty and students to achieve research, learning, and teaching goals in ways not previously possible. Due to their unique position at the intersection of disciplines and information technologies, staff in university libraries also need to gain awareness of these tools as these new areas of library applications emerge.

In June 2014, Dr. Van Wyatt, Vice President of Information Technology approved funding for a pilot program in which the University Library licensed select tools representative of this trend to make them available to the university community.

Guidance to the group from Dr. Wyatt included: *Creating project plans for implementation and marketing for the tools which should engage the scholarly community, faculty and students; employing a deployment plan for each applications for various populations, engaging subject librarians to reach out to their various disciplinary channels and including an assessment and recommendation at the end of the study for second year funding recommendations going forward.*

An advisory leadership team and various tool subgroups were formed and project implementation plans and timelines were developed with all groups meeting regularly from September 2014 to April 2015. At the end of the first year of the pilot, each group produced a separate report with the current report being a summary of all four subgroups recommendations going forward.

EBSCO Curriculum Builder

Curriculum Builder was a tool which consisted of an online add-on to the Sakai Learning Management system. The tool formed an interface between the Sakai Learning Management System (TRACS) and EBSCO Discovery Service to allow the creation of online reading lists. The Curriculum Builder study focused on training and implementation to a small test group of faculty during the pilot period. Due to the nature of the tool being a third-party addition to TRACS learning management system, this software needed to be thoroughly tested and vetted not only by members of the Curriculum Builder team but also by members of the TRACS university support team. Through the year the team accomplished several milestones divided into 2 phases .

October – December 2014 Milestones:

- **Implementation**: Customizing the Application, Testing the Application
- **Training**: Learning and Gaining Expertise, Identifying Training Methods, Scheduling and Conducting Training Sessions
- **Marketing**: Identifying Early Adopters, Defining Features and Benefits and Contacting Early Target Adopters.

January 2015 – April 2015

- **Implementation**: Pilot,
- **Assessment**: Quality and Quantity of Use Training and Marketing

The group's recommendations after the first year of the pilot were that the library continue to have access to this tool and work with TRACS support to fully integrate it into TRACS. While the Curriculum Builder Tool was in an early version with not all bugs worked out, the group felt that with continued feedback from users the tool will continue to improve and should be piloted for a second year trial. The sub-team recommended that next steps included a revised implementation plan for April –August and looking to EBSCO Curriculum Builder Enhancements in Late Spring and Summer.

dataZoa

dataZoa is a tool which allows users to import or link to statistical series and easily make graphs or charts from one or more series. The user creates an account and downloads the dz-DOT browser add-on. This dZ-Dot allows certain data to be dragged and dropped into the dataZoa product. The creator of dataZoa has to have already programmed the dZ-Dot to work with that specific website and the tool currently works with 62 websites. dataZoa was originally conceived as a way of assisting financial presentations on Wall Street. Therefore, most of the data available is financial in nature and dataZoa is limited in the types of data it can extract and manipulate. The advantage to dataZoa would appear to be its easy-to-use user interface to create simple graphs without exporting data. There is an accompanying product, DataZephyr, that may be downloaded onto a desktop to create a dashboard of financial data in the form of line graphs. This product currently works with PCs, but not Macs. Many options in DataZephyr, such as the ability to use advanced formulas, are only available in DataZephyr Pro.

Implementation and Recommendations

The dataZoa team reached out to an anticipated audience with emails, social media posts, workshops, newspaper interviews, and by featuring dataZoa on the main library page. The team also conducted a survey at one of the workshops which was also linked to by the dataZoa resource page. The response from people who took the survey was mixed. A constant refrain from survey participants was a desire for a wider range of data that could be easily imported into dataZoa. If we find there is a continued need for a data aggregator in the next year, we may wish to search for alternatives to dataZoa that feature a wider variety of data. By late winter 2015, 83 accounts have been opened (according to the company representative). This represents the period from early fall 2014 to late winter 2015.

The team recommends renewal and that additional time to evaluate usage and gather additional feedback may be useful for one more year in order to reevaluate usage after an extended period of time. The team will continue its established marketing plan of contacting relevant departments, individual professors, featuring the product on the library homepage, and conducting workshops. Future enhancements to the marketing plan include reaching out to student organizations and the university entrepreneurship center.

Browzine

Through a mobile app interface, Browzine allows users to browse current and archived academic journals within the library's holdings from a mobile phone or tablet device. Usage statistics for BrowZine show a steady increase in the adoption and use of the product through the year. The purpose of BrowZine is to keep current on research subjects of interest so Table of Contents views are a key indicator of use and one that would be appropriate for cost per use calculations. The Browzine subscription totaled $6995 and TOC views from September 2014 through March 2015 total 3455.

 Marketing efforts for Browzine variously worked, as evidenced by the range of places where respondents first learned about BrowZine (website, workshop, librarian). Most Texas State University BrowZine users access it on iOS devices, which was also borne out by the usage statistics. The majority of respondents did not use BrowZine on multiple devices. Half rated the Browzine app as "very easy" to use, with the other half rated it "difficult" or "very difficult." 75% use Browzine at least less than once a week (one respondent in this group used several times a day). 75% of respondents were satisfied with the app and will continue to use it.

The BrowZine team recommends continuing with the subscription with the expectation that use will continue to gradually increase. Marketing in multiple places and venues seems to be working. Graduate students and faculty should also continue to be the main targets for further marketing efforts, though effort should be made to market this app to upper-level undergraduates, who presumably have a greater facility and preference for mobile research apps.

Artstor Shared Shelf

Artstor Shared Shelf is a web-based media management software system developed to promote the sharing and archiving of these digital images   While Artstor Shared Shelf held out initial promise, the promises did not satisfactorily deliver and/or fit the goals of Texas State researchers or infrastructure staff at this time. After a year of piloting this tool on various in-house university archives, special collections and image-based projects,

the Shared Shelf subcommittee collectively felt that the product did not yet yield an effective way to enable faculty to have unmediated access to upload and manage images. Specifically, Artstor Shared Shelf failed to satisfactorily deliver in the evaluative categories of :

- meeting needs and attracting multidisciplinary interest of faculty
- internal system performance
- University IT Security concerns.

Through the year, the Shared Shelf subgroup variously attempted to market and attract wider, multidisciplinary interest. Through emails, a university newspaper article, a library newsletter article, and prominent display on the library's website, the Library reached out to a wide variety of faculty members and promoted Shared Shelf. Various workshops were conducted in November and January. None of the faculty members who initially expressed interest chose to follow through with projects and no one who signed up chose to attend workshops. In response to these and internal infrastructure issues regarding university IT security stipulations and internal staff evaluation, a sub-team of the library SharedShelf group was charged with looking at alternatives that might meet future needs in this area. This subgroup team also recommended that Artstor Sharedshelf not be adopted and that OMEKA open source software be used to support the library's needs for public image galleries, and that Ensemble, the university's new streaming server, be suggested as an option to external university departments for their image archiving and streaming media (video) needs. At this time, the subcommittee felt that SharedShelf should not be continued as a pilot for second year purchase.

Conclusions and 2nd Year Pilot Recommendations

While intensive in workload and involving many stakeholders in the library, the Hybrid Tools project was an excellent opportunity to pilot and explore the viability of new paradigm hybrid online library tools. The tools variously bridged research, teaching, traditional library online databases and new software research possibilities. They ranged from data intensive applications to mobile hardware related tools to online learning bridge mechanisms between library and university online learning directions. For FY2016, three of the original four original hybrid tools have been recommended for budgetary allocation for a second year of funding for a second year of pilot study.

In 2015, the pilot allowed, new infrastructure to be laid for the further exploration of this new class of library application and for new bridges to be engendered among library subject liaisons and university faculty and students. Going forward, university IT and IT security bridges were also engendered to better work out these new models' necessities. For the second year of the study, both oversite team and subgroups will meet on a quarterly basis to further assess the viability of the tools. From here and a final evaluation from the two years of study and data will be gathered. A final recommendation as to whether to more permanently fund these tools will be presented in July 2016 with final evaluative comments regarding the larger project at the end of the pilot's second year.