

Library Technology in France

Users, Expectations and Some Open Source Options

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Democratic technologies and the library patron

- Early 1980s: the Minitel
- Mid 1990s: cell phones and “textos”
- Early 2000s: Web 2.0
- Free wi-fi hotspots in Paris
- Extensive use of Second Life during May 2007 elections
- **Open source software**



1982-era Minitel

<http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minitel>

[Open source software philosophy]

- Open source software (OSS)
 - Des logiciels libres (LL)
 - Source code is available to the users
 - Can be used, studied, modified, copied, given and sold
- Promotes equitable access to resources

Government (non-library) uses of OSS

- Gendarmes, Ministry of Culture and Communication, and Parliament
 - Operating system (Linux)
 - Word processing (OpenOffice)
- USB keys with open source software packages
 - Given to Ile-de-France high schoolers, apprentices, and teachers
 - Program ran during “Back-to-school” 2007

[French patrons are sophisticated]

- “Older” age groups
 - Tech-savvy
 - Have had years of exposure to new technologies
- Net-generation French
 - Like our Millennials
 - Similar comfort levels with technology
 - Expectations and uses comparable to American Millennials

[Library-related OSS uses]

Four examples of French library work with open source software

- Electronic theses
- Digital libraries & finding aids
- Integrated Library System (ILS)
- Next generation OPACs

[Electronic theses]

- CyberThèses (Cyberdocs)
 - A francophone project archiving theses, making them accessible electronically
 - Housed at University Lyons II
 - Currently contains 65 997 documents from 56 institutions
 - Uses open source software

[Digital libraries and finding aids]

- Greenstone
 - Digital library platform
 - French interface and documentation available
 - Example: Fonds Louis Dupasquier, Bourg-en-Bresse

- PLEADE (supporting EAD)
 - Finding aid
 - Example: Archives, Bibliothèque Municipale of Lyons

[Integrated Library System (ILS)]

- Koha

- Système intégré de gestion de bibliothèque (SIGB)
 - OPAC
 - Cataloging
 - MARC
 - Circulation
 - Periodicals
 - Acquisitions
 - Z39.50
- Supported in France by Tamil
- Examples
 - Centre Roland Mousnier (Paris Sorbonne)
 - Mediatheque Intercommunale Ouest Provence

[Next generation OPACs]

- VUfind (open source library resource portal from Villanova University) supports:
 - Catalog Records
 - Locally Cached Journals
 - Digital Library Items
 - Institutional Repository
 - Institutional Bibliography
 - Other Library Collections and Resources
- “On a unimarcisé Vufind” blog post
- Criticism (summer 2007) that no blogging library in France has OPAC 2.0 functionalities

[Other technology of note]

- French blogs
 - Library blogs: [biblioblogs](#)
 - Blogs by/for library professionals and educators
 - Not easy to find in Technorati (search engine for blogs)
 - Create RSS feed in personal [RSS reader](#)
 - Create Google alerts to be sent as emails
- Download open source software in French
 - Framasoft: <http://www.framasoft.net/>

[Final thoughts]

- Perception (from library student blogger) that French librarians are not interested in excelling at providing new technology-based services
 - Status as functionaries?
 - Personal experience visiting ENSSIB last year
- Evidence to the contrary seems compelling: librarians ARE listening to patrons and ARE creating systems that respond to user need