Project Title: Florida Electronic Library Usability Testing & Development- Phase 1
Investigator(s): Dr. Charles R. McClure and Dr. John C. Bertot
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The Florida Division of Library and Information Services (FDLIS) contracted with the Information Institute to evaluate three current pilot programs of the Florida Electronic Library (FEL). The pilot programs were:

1. the Ex Libris Metalib/SFX Portal Project;

2. the Digital Collections Catalog (DCC) component of the FEL; and

3. the FEL website interface.

The methodologies presented in the evaluation process would allow the Information Institute to provide FDLIS, FNLC, and other interested parties with assessments of the:

1. Functionality, usability, and accessibility of selected and modifiable features of the Ex Libris Metalib/SFX product developed for the FEL portal component;

2. Usability and accessibility of limited collections of materials through the DCC interface as part of the statewide FEL union catalog; and

3. Usability and accessibility of the existing FEL Web page interface (existing FEL home page interface) as part of the FEL portal component.

This research was part of an ongoing effort by FDLIS in the continuing development of the FEL. Study results provided data that informed FDLIS, FNLC, and FEL work groups or other interested parties in the decision-making process for continued implementation of the statewide electronic library portal.

The project was designed to develop assessment criteria that could be used to evaluate specific aspects of the Florida Electronic Library (FEL); to assess the degree to which the pilot version of the portal meets selected functionality requirements and was usable under various resource seeking and retrieving conditions; and to test a pilot implementation of a state-wide union catalog of materials in the Digital Collections Catalog. The completion of this project phase helped facilitate the overall development of the FEL.

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